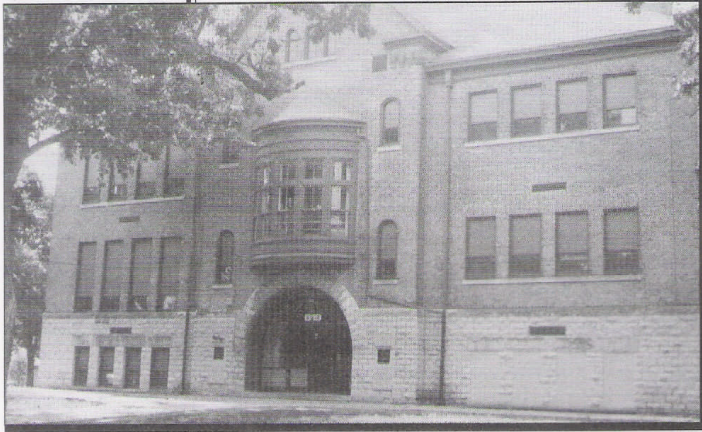




## Washington School

Constructed in 1891, Washington School had stood atop the Chicago Street Hill essentially untouched, for nearly a century. Constructed with Richardsonian Romanesque influence, its architectural integrity has been maintained, even with a 20th-century addition. This was of particular concern when, due to burgeoning growth in the Elgin area, School District U-46 found it necessary to expand the school in order to serve the increasing student population. Evidence of this sensitive update can be seen in the rusticated stone base and lintels over the windows, stone arches at the entries, the oriel

comprised of 5 classrooms, a multi-purpose room, storage, teachers' conference and preparation rooms, toilets, mechanical and office space. With the reconfiguration of existing space, an additional kindergarten was added and the attic was recaptured for a new learning-media center. The classroom size, configuration, materials, and detailing were consistent with addition/remodeling projects being done concurrently at other schools within the District. Also, a west gable was extended to conceal a new elevator, providing handicapped accessibility to all floors.



Of special interest on the interior are some of the original details still visible, such as the bell rope, and the ornate fireplaces, each with a different color tile. The school, which turned 100 last year, is best known for being the first Elgin elementary school not named for the street it was on, as well as the first Elgin school with indoor toilet facilities. These were needed, the board of education argued, because outhouses were an eyesore, couldn't be locked, couldn't be kept free of the most foul smells, and attracted obscene writings and figures on the walls. Having indoor privies did cause one unforeseen misfortune according to one

window on the north facade, brick detailing at the gables, and arched windows, as well as the interior woodwork within the classrooms.

young chap: students no longer had any reason to leave the building, except for an occasional fire drill.

U-46 chose to develop a design program which responded to their educational needs, while at the same time provide an addition sympathetic to the architectural fabric of the existing school. The completed addition is

Washington School's most renowned student was Paul J. Flory, who was awarded a Nobel Prize in 1974 for "fundamental achievements, both theoretical and experimental," in the field of synthetic fibers, plastics and biological compounds.

