



Karen Robinet/Chatham This Week

Mural artist Penelope Duchesne and Win Miller stand in front of the mural Duchesne has painted at Victor Lauriston Public School. They are shown beside a portion of the mural which features two books, one written by Miller and one by her father, Victor Lauriston.

Mural honours school's namesake

KAREN ROBINET
Chatham This Week

The hallowed halls of learning at Victor Lauriston Public School now boast a painted wall of learning, thanks to the efforts of local artist Penelope Duchesne.

Last Thursday, the school held a surprise assembly to thank Duchesne, with special guest Win Miller also on hand.

Miller is the daughter of Victor Lauriston, the school's namesake.

And, school council chairperson Debbie Van Dusen was in attendance.

According to school principal Laurie Welch, staff and students at the school were overwhelmed by the end results of Duchesne's work, which features a scene of children hard at work in the school.

Aside from shelves lined with various books and a map of the world, with the countries all labelled, the mural also features children engaged in a variety of activities, including one youngster painting a portrait of another student.

As an added touch, Duchesne painted two books onto a table; one is Romantic Kent, written by Lauriston, and the other is Years Of Change, by Miller.

At the beginning of the assembly, Duchesne was introduced to the students, most of whom already knew her from her time in the school.

A slide show of Duchesne's work, some of which can be seen in downtown Chatham, was shown.

Welch told students and staff at the assembly that Duchesne "certainly has captured what Victor Lauriston is all about and we will have (the mural) here for years and years and years.

"On behalf of all of us, we're so touched," she said.

Ovation

Following an enthusiastic standing ovation, an obviously moved Duchesne told the students that she enjoyed painting the mural "for all you little ones."

Welch said the funding for the mural was provided by the Lambton-Kent District School Board's beautification fund.

Afterwards, as Duchesne and Miller were posing for photographs in front of the mural, several students stopped by to give Duchesne artwork of their own.