

# The Buildings of Dalhousie University

## Dentistry Building

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Address: 5981 University Av.

Start Date: June 1956      Completion Date: 1958

Architect: J. Philip Dumaresq      Renovation Date(s): 1978-1982 (extension)

Contractor: Cameron Contracting Ltd.

### Building History



Aerial view of Dentistry Building before addition, c1958-1965

In 1912 the Maritime Dental College joined Dalhousie and became the first Faculty of Dentistry in a Canadian university. By the 1950s the Dental School still had only five rooms at the south end of the Forrest Building. The Canadian Dental Association had recently started accreditations, and on a visit in 1951 was critical of the Dental School and its abysmal facilities.

The School's new dean, James D. McLean, and several members of the Board of Governors, sought \$500,000 for a new building. It was a challenging task, however, to convince those in power that building space was the solution to the faculty's problems. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Michigan contributed 10 percent of the funding, but even with federal grants, Nova Scotian and Newfoundland monies and \$34,000 in student fundraising, still only 38 percent of the building's costs were covered. Dalhousie had to supply the rest, to a total of \$1 million.



Dentistry Building, November 1981

The new Dentistry building was designed by architect J. Phillip Dumaresq, in a brick Georgian style matching the Medical Sciences Building and the Public Health Clinic (now the Burbidge Building and Clinical Research Centre). The cornerstone of the Dentistry building was laid on November 2, 1956, by the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, Alistair Fraser. Construction of the three-storey building, under Cameron Contracting Ltd., was finished in 1958. The lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, Edward Chester Plow, was present at the opening convocation on September 25, 1958. The new space allowed the Dental School to increase its enrolment from 12 to 25 students.



By the late 1960s a larger staff and a critical shortage of dentists in the province were placing strain on the Dentistry school. Dean McLean fought hard for a new building, but negotiations over priorities and cost reached a stalemate. Not until April 1978 was action taken, with a compromise made to build an extension onto the 1958 building. The \$21.9 million project was funded by the federal Health Resources fund, the Atlantic provinces and Dalhousie University.

Construction of the northern extension along Robie Street began in June 1978. The addition was designed in-house at Dalhousie. An

Dentistry Building entrance, November  
1981

electrician's strike in 1980 delayed construction, but finally in June 1982, the new School of Dentistry opened with four times the space of the original building. The addition was connected by tunnels to the Tupper, Forrest and Burbidge buildings, creating on the Carleton campus a Health Professions Complex that would encourage sharing of facilities and resources. All faculty were at last brought under one roof, clinical teaching space expanded, and research space significantly increased. The school was able to enlarge its class from 25 to 48. Since then it has grown to offer five different degree programs and enroll 248 students as of 2005.

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- (Dental Building), Dalhousie University, Forrest Campus. n.d. Dental Building [file], Item 17.
- (Dental) Building [under construction]. n.d. Dental Building [file], Item 16.
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- [Dental Building - Aerial View]. n.d. Dental Building [file], Item 15.
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- [Dentistry Building - Exterior - Front View]. n.d. Dental



Dental Building - Aerial View, n.d.



Dental Building expansion, March 1980



Dental Building, Dalhousie University, Forrest Campus, n.d.



Dental Building (under construction), n.d.



Dental Building with Tupper Building, n.d.



Dental Clinic, September 29, 1980



New Dental Building - Interior - Dental Clinic, September 29, 1980

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Dentistry Building - Exterior - Front View, n.d.



Dentistry Building Extension - Construction, October 9, 1979



Dentistry Building - Exterior - Side View (Close-up), c1980s

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Dentistry Building - Exterior - View from Robie Street, c1980s



Dentistry Building - Interior - Staircase and Pillar, c1980s



Dentistry Building - Interior - Upper Floor [1], c1980s

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Dentistry Building - Interior - Upper Floor - Seating Area, c1980s



Dentistry Building - Interior - Upper Floor [2], c1980s



New Dental Building - Interior - Upper Level, September 29, 1980



Dentistry construction begins, n.d.

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The newly modernized and expanded Dentistry building will be officially opened on June 18, June 1982

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