

20 January 2011

Dear Members of the Mount Allison Alumni Board,

As you will know, there is now an online petition to save the Mount Allison Memorial Library, known after 1970 as the student center or STUD. See the attached photos of the plaque which was originally over the main entrance and is now on the landing in the impressive stairwell.

The Memorial Library was officially opened on 8 June 1927, almost 80% of the \$100,000 cost being donated by families and friends of the war dead (ref: Sackville Tribune 9 June 1927). See the original subscription appeal attached. It was and continues to be a solid stone structure, designed and built to stand for centuries as a lasting monument to honour the 73 Allisonians who gave their lives so that we would have the freedom to make responsible choices.

Although those initiating the petition had no access to address lists for alumni and friends of Mt A, they started the petition with the few addresses in their personal electronic address books. The response has been very revealing and many of the comments show how strongly the alumni and others oppose the plan to destroy this outstanding building and war memorial. Possibly one of the most succinct comments says that those proposing to destroy our Memorial Library are guilty of: "Knowing the cost of everything - AND THE VALUE OF NOTHING!"

With results like this from the very limited mail out, consider how overwhelming the response would be if all or even half or even a quarter of the alumni could be contacted.

It is recommended that you look at the names of the individuals who have signed the petition and their comments.

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/2/save-the-memorial-library/>. A very preliminary analysis indicates that:

- at least 16 are current or former Mt A faculty,
- at least 6 are former members of the Board of Regents,
- at least 3 are former members of the Alumni Board,
- at least 1 is a former president of the Alumni Board,
- at least 2 are former administrators of major universities in Quebec and Nova Scotia.
(at least 1 other university/college administrator did not sign the petition but wrote personally to President Campbell expressing his disapproval of the plan and the decision process),
- at least 1 is a former Mt A provost.
- at least 5 are architects (two of the architects, including Dr. Jack Diamond, are from the firm Diamond and Schmidt which did the Facilities Master Plan for the campus in 2002.),
- at least 2 identified themselves as representatives of the philanthropic Bell family, and
- the remaining 485 (and counting) are members of the Mount Allison Alumni (classes 1939 to present), students, prospective students and friends of the university.

Clearly, the alumni and friends of Mt A, many of whom are very highly qualified professionals, do not think that knocking down the Memorial Library would be a responsible choice.

As our representatives on the Alumni Board, please respect the wishes of the alumni, which are now very clear. Make our views known to those who propose to destroy this architecturally important heritage and memorial building.

As I have implied in previous correspondence, as members of our board, we ask you to represent our interests in this important matter. The short sighted decision to destroy the Memorial Library could have a long term devastating effect on the university and none of us would like to see that happen.

Sincerely,
Bruce Coates (69)
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