

**Donald A. Cameron**

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15 May 2011

via e-mail

To: President Campbell, Chair McCubbin, Chancellor Mansbridge, All Regents, All Alumni Board Members and other Alumni:

**Re: Mount Allison Memorial Library**

What follows is written with respect to the Office of President of Mount Allison University. I have now had contact with that office for sixty-five years.

Dear President Campbell:

Thank you for your e-mail of 21 March 2011. My delay in responding has been deliberate. In the received message you state: "I am writing in response to your discussions with respect to the University's proposed Fine and Performing Arts Center". I do not consider your email to be a response letter for none of the questions I raised were addressed and no comments resulted from observations I made in my correspondence to you.

Again, with respect, I state that communications to me from long supportive and generous donor Alumni suggest that they find it borders on insulting to have letters to Mount A ignored or responded to by letters that appear to be form letters and sometimes seemingly written or suggested by another, other than the signatory. For example, Gloria Jollymore's letter on the President's page in the last Mount A Record is a rehash of a letter attributed to Bruce McCubbin via a Gloria Jollymore email, under date of February 1, 2011. There, some sentences are indistinguishable save for one word and indeed two paragraphs are basically identical. I suppose this happens when the university uses a "communications officer".

It would seem appropriate, if in the next issue of the Record, the page usually used for Presidential comments could be turned over for a letter written by a member of the Save the Memorial Library Committee and then see what a response that would bring.

I agree that planning the future of Mount A is a challenge. That was made abundantly clear to me when, as a student, I agreed to speak at Maritime United Church services appealing for support to raise funds to eliminate a Mount A debt. In November of 1946, as Secretary of the Freshman Class, I wrote to the President of Mount Allison with a suggestion for raising funds for a new rink. President Flemington responded saying that it was the first supportive proposal they had received. As a result, the Regents set up a planning committee of which I was a member. The recently levelled Allison Gardens resulted and was opened before my Class of 1950 graduated. In my junior year, I was secretary to the then-called Student Union, and in my senior year, president of that organization. These offices brought me in regular contact with

the President of Mount Allison. Then, when employed at Mount A, part of my responsibility was Assistant to the President for Campus Development.

Since graduation from Mt A I have been an active Alumnus, and even in retirement, I have been involved in many special fund-raising projects so I expect I have as much familiarity with fund-raising challenges and difficult decisions facing universities as do present members of the Administration and the Boards of Regents and Alumni.

The present situation is unique in that the cause for turmoil is self-inflicted. Alumni members and the public initially only learned by rumour of the decision to demolish Memorial Library in order to build the proposed Arts Center on that site. Had the Alumni been treated with deserved respect and had they been officially informed of the proposal and invited to participate in open discussions directed at reaching a decision as to the restoration or demolition of Memorial Library, the University would have been working as a true university community.

In her writings in relation to the planned demolition of Memorial Library and the construction of a new Arts Center, Gloria Jollymore has several times used the word "we" to confirm action or decisions taken, but she has never defined who constitutes this "we". I assumed it would be, at least in part, the Board of Regents' own Committee on Property and Facilities Management. So, I am startled to be told that the proposed demolition was not referred to that committee for consideration. And now, one very capable and highly respected member of that committee, a former Regent, has recently resigned from that committee. These questions are more important than ever: Who has been the "we" who took to the Board of Regents the recommendation to destroy the Memorial Library and build a new Arts Center on that site? Were other options considered? If so, what were they? Why were they rejected?

As with other Alumni who have stated their positions, my future interest and commitment to Mount A, to which you do make your usual reference, including provisions in wills, will depend in part on the fate of Memorial Library. Should Memorial Library be destroyed I trust that those who support the demolition will increase their givings and proposed bequests to compensate for those lost from the Alumni and Friends who will no longer contribute in their traditional ways.

If the Administration and the Board of Regents reconsiders their decision and Memorial Library is retained, then I will even more resolutely encourage those devoted to saving Memorial Library to increase their annual givings and intended bequests in order to help restore Memorial Library to its original grandeur, and also to establish new Fine and Performing Arts facilities at Mount Allison.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald A Cameron  
Class of '50, LLD '89, Registrar Emeritus, Former Regent, One-time Honorary President of the Federated Alumni