

## ***“For Truth and Faith, for Justice and for Right”***

They could have chosen to erect a much less costly stone pillar as a cenotaph in front of Centennial Hall. They didn't. They could have built sooner. They didn't. They opted instead to take time and gather together the more substantial resources needed to enable the construction of an even more fitting monument— a living memorial: a library where books, information, experiences, (even relationships) could be discovered, stored, archived, shared, loaned, (even cherished) and generously be available to any and all. They set themselves an ambitious early goal: to raise from the struggling families and friends of the Fallen the sum of \$ 50,000 to build this “living monument”. ([www.eastmarket.com/smash/zd82zkw7.jpg](http://www.eastmarket.com/smash/zd82zkw7.jpg)) Later they increased that target figure. The purpose was real; heartfelt. Everyone contributed what he or she could. They started the project in 1918 but took the time needed – for the resources to accumulate and be at hand, and to “get it right” in terms of design. They celebrated the opening in 1927 and the building, a work of architectural art designed by eminent architect Andrew Cobbs, did become and has remained the heart of the campus. Those days too had their challenges, but determination and cooperation allowed for problem resolution - I heard first hand via Geneve Forbes MacKenzie, Class of '27, (who many will remember as the Dean of Women at Mt A) for whom I house-sat whilst I was in graduate school.

My Farquhar grandparents met in WWI and married in London. Lt. N/S Rubie Duffus was a nursing sister who tended the maimed and mutilated; Captain George Farquhar was a padre who consoled the troops, buried the dead and wrote letters of loss to families back home to report last words from the dying. Fortunately, they both shared some of their war experience. They were profoundly affected by the carnage they witnessed and the souls laid to rest at Vimy, Etapes and elsewhere. They knew that there would come a day when none of their comrades would be able, even left, to tell the stories. That year came in 2010 with the death of John Babcock, who opted not for attention or even a military funeral, saying: “they should commemorate all of them, instead of just one”. My grandparents entrusted their grandchildren to keep those memories alive – and, always, to remember why those sacrifices were made.

War years directly impacted the Mount Allison Bell family. Winthrop Pickard Bell spent the years of WWI interned in a German internment camp. Hazel Deinstadt, Bell's wife, also served as a nursing sister in France during the same period. Winthrop Bell was a brother of the very generous Ralph Pickard Bell (who directed aircraft production for Canada '40-'44) and brother-in-law to Marjorie Young Bell; those names grace several Mount Allison buildings. WWII brought more horror and more sacrifice; more names were inscribed on plaques on the wall of the Memorial Library stairwell. More veterans returned irrevocably changed by their own witness. Mount Allison wept again. We all enjoy our freedom at a price.

Those who left the comforts of campus again in WWII and for other conflicts, to respond to “The Call” - and were fortunate to return - genuinely understood. They breathed it. They smelled it. They tasted it. They saw it. They felt it. They lived it. They experienced it in a way succeeding generations can only imagine. And they so cherished fresh air, sunshine, laughter, joy, peace and freedom when they came Home. They entrusted us to hold and then, in our turn, “pass the torch” of remembrance.

We need to take the time to appreciate those lessons and try to really comprehend. Allisonians and Friends stand in honour when our Mount Allison Alma Mater song is sung. W.P. Bell penned those words. (Listen again if you wish: <http://il.youtube.com/watch?v=GMv7btAfaCw>).

May the Chancellor, the Regents, the President, Alumni, Students, and yes, even Friends, be Bell's vanguard. Remember in your hearts our unique Mt A history as we all rally to do what is right and just and originative, and what will be a tribute to our Mount Allison Heritage. We must work together with passion and ingenuity and creativity to remove the noose from Memorial Library, and indeed for that of the threatened “College Church” next door (where Mount Allison's Methodist origins were nurtured)- and still achieve the needed new facilities for the Arts. Both these buildings merit preservation as National Historic Sites, not destruction. Remember Winthrop Bell's words:

“Now may we all, urged by her noble past  
Her mission grand, her aspirations vast,  
Press forward still, the vanguard in the fight  
For truth and faith, for justice and for right;”

Aye for “the Garnet and the Gold” – and the Memorial Library!

C. Jean Cameron, Class of '78