

Mount Allison Memorial Library – update 2
Sent by email 25 January 2011.

Hello again Mt A alumni and friends of Mt A,

This is another update about the Mount Allison Memorial Library (student centre after 1970).

"If your friend has suffered, if your boy has died, how could you better honor his memory than to have his name placed where it will go down through the years cherished and revered by successive generations of grateful students?"

Those words are from the original appeal for funds when the Board of Regents of Mount Allison authorized the alumni to conduct a fund raising campaign to finance the construction of Memorial Library. See the full text of the original subscription appeal attached. The total cost of the project was approximately \$100,000 and almost 80% was donated by the families and friends of Allisonians who died for our freedom during WWI. (Sackville Tribune 9 June 1927).

On June 8th, 1927, the Memorial Library was officially opened and dedicated as a war memorial. 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 Allisonian who gave their lives so that we would have the freedom to make responsible choices.

Now, the current administration ***plans to knock down the Memorial Library*** (known as the student centre after 1970) to make way for a new centre for the fine and performing arts. This is in spite of the fact that the prestigious architectural firm Diamond and Schmidt recommended it be retained and incorporated into the new centre in the Facilities Master Plan for the campus prepared by them in 2002.

As you will now know, the "Save the Memorial Library Committee" has started an online petition to save this important building. The committee has no access to address lists for alumni and friends of Mt A so the petition was started with the few addresses in their personal electronic address books. The response has been very revealing and many of the comments show exactly how strongly many of the alumni and others oppose the plan to destroy this outstanding building and war memorial.

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 19 are current or former Mt A faculty,
- at least 7 are former members of the Board of Regents,
- at least 4 are former members of the Alumni Board,
- at least 2 are former presidents 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 3 identified themselves as representatives of the philanthropic Bell family, and

- the remaining 630 (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.

If you support saving this architecturally important memorial building and have not already done so, please take a few moments to:

- sign the petition at: <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/2/save-the-memorial-library/>.
- forward this message to other Allisonians and friends so that they too may have the opportunity to sign.

If you wish to further make your views known to the administration, write to President Campbell at rcampbell@mta.ca.

Time is of the essence. The Board of Regents meets on 28 January and it is important that they understand how concerned the alumni and others are about this issue. It is important to express the long term negative impact that the destruction of the Library could have on the university and its relationship with past Allisonians who have been so very supportive (and generous) throughout the history of the institution. It is intended to make the results of the petition known to the Board of Regents prior to their meeting.

For further reading about the Memorial Library visit: <http://www.eastmarket.com/smash/> and the attached letter written by Dr. C. Jean Cameron (78).

Sincerely,
Bruce.
Bruce Coates ('69)
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