

Dear Friends of the Mount Allison Memorial Library,

The Save the Memorial Library Committee was in court in Moncton this past Tuesday (October 4th) with our lawyer, E.J. Mockler of Fredericton, to try, as a last gasp, to win an injunction against the demolition of the Memorial Library building as ordered by the Administration and Board of Regents. The plaintiffs in the case were our two alumni members, Dr. Jean Cameron and Bruce Coates.

On Friday afternoon, we were informed that an injunction had been denied. The immediate announcement by the University said that “two graduates sought to have a temporary injunction put in place....” “*Two graduates*”!! What they didn't say is that those two represented the deep desires expressed by thousands of alumni, students, faculty and friends.

We feel very badly that our efforts, with your exceptional support, have not been enough to save the building. To those of you who forwarded the Petition, signed the Petition, wrote to Administration and Board members, dug around in musty archives, emailed letters to Editors, invested passion and expertise, and generally offered much-needed encouragement and support, thank you.

We have no regrets about the time and effort we put into the struggle, personally and collectively. We were fortunate (unlike some of the paid employees advocating for demolition of Memorial Library) that we could follow the dictates of conscience in a transparent and open manner. Our only regret is that the corporate juggernaut, which used to be our much-loved and respected *alma mater*, has prevailed in its unfathomable rush to get that building demolished so that people will forget it.

None of us will forget it. Neither, we suspect, will any of you. Reasons will vary: the remembrance of the 73 young Allisonians who made the supreme sacrifice in WW1, and many more in other wars; friends and ideas we met there in the Reading Room, in the stacks or Special Collections or later the Pub; the classic beauty (at any time of year) of the red sandstone, Tudor Revival-style Andrew Randall Cobb masterpiece; its setting down the slope, surrounded by trees. Perhaps all of those things, and more.

Many have had the opportunity to express sorrow at the pending loss of Memorial Library. Many more will never know that it was going, or that it will soon be gone. The Administration apparently had no one with the power or foresight to warn of the damage their action would do to the “institutional memory”, so important in moving forward. No one in the Alumni Office (pardon us, “University Advancement” department) thought any of us had any ideas or alternatives worth canvassing. The Administration did everything possible to keep us in the dark, including not answering questions or acknowledging correspondence. We are still in the dark. Even our presentation to the Board of Regents has never been acknowledged as we were promised it would be.

They have the power, the money, the well-paid professional staff, the wealthy and influential ‘fixers’. They hold all the cards, control all the information flow (such as it has been), manage all the email and other communication lists. ‘Trust us’, they seemed to say, ‘we know what we’re doing’. We have learned that we can’t, and that they don’t. At least they don't in the moral sense, in the community sense, in the Mount Allison sense of freedom, openness and transparency.

Every one of you and each of us now has to determine what’s best in terms of relating to this institution. For many, it will be another struggle. We can only reflect, in the spirit of the Methodist founders, that the requirement to serve the educational needs of all young people will go on. Those who make decisions – whether or not we agree with them – are transient. Administrators, faculty, and Board members will come and go. Despite these dark hours in the story of Mount Allison, the university will endure but she will be forever changed.

The content of this Update will be disconcerting to many of you. It does, however, give us an opportunity to encourage each of you to demand of the Alumni Board and the Board of Regents a genuine sense of ‘ownership’, of ‘stake-holding’, honesty and transparency in return for any future support you consider giving to Mt A.

Should you have any questions or comments, we will continue to respond to emails and other correspondence. Thank you for your interest, your activism, your trust and your support.

Sincerely,  
Save the Mount Allison Memorial Library Committee  
email: [mta.memorial.library@gmail.com](mailto:mta.memorial.library@gmail.com)