

To The Editor,

It occurred to me, as I was watching workmen trying to demolish the sandstone wall of the Memorial Library that this building was built to be a memorial for a very long time. It is solid. It was built to last and to be a strong and lasting memorial to those 73 young Mount Allison University students/ alumni who gave their lives in the Great War. A valiant effort was made to build it and a valiant effort has been made to save it for many more generations to absorb into their lives at this University. But now the memorial is being cast off, brought down and evaporated well before its time.

I'd like to draw a comparison. It has been determined that there is a need in our town for a new affordable housing complex. Mount Allison has determined a need for a new Fine and Performing Arts Center. Public money as well as private funds play strategic roles in both of these scenarios. What would happen if the Memorial Park and the cenotaph in downtown Sackville were to be demolished to make way for a spanking new affordable housing complex? Would the Sackville Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion stand silent? Would the Heritage Board remain silent? Would the Minister of Heritage cave in to this? Would a Judge rule this as appropriate? Somehow, I think this would create such a huge controversy in the town that it would not ever happen. In fact, I think it would never even enter anyone's mind to do such a stupid thing, especially because the memorial is in the "zone" and reminds us everyday of its real purpose.

The Memorial Library building at Mount Allison may be demolished but The Save the Memorial Library Committee did the morally right thing to try to protect it. This is a group of committed individuals, mostly with grey hair and on fixed incomes. Most have never been interested in participating in public activism. The combined professional and life experience represented by their effort is astounding. The volunteer hours that they have collectively given to the cause of trying to protect a War Memorial from being destroyed is staggering. They have been creative, resourceful, and persistent. They deserve our respect.

Sackville has lost not only a war memorial but a significant heritage building of architectural interest on an important streetscape. This is exactly what we have been trying to carefully preserve for the future of our community. We are lucky to have these interesting old places in our town centre. Most communities are trying to recreate what we already have here.

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