

## **Breaking Faith**

"The Centre for the Arts will be constructed around the University's historic Alumni Memorial Library building, mixing the traditional architecture of that landmark with exciting contemporary design and state-of-the-art studios, laboratories, classrooms, and exhibition and performance spaces."

This statement is taken directly from the literature that was sent forward to Alumni and Friends of Mount Allison as part of the *JUMP Campaign* appeal to raise 86 million dollars to undertake various projects, including the development of a 'Centre for the Arts'. The Administration and Regents who organized that campaign were clearly aware of the significance of the 'historic Alumni Memorial Library' in the history of Mount Allison, aware of the value of its traditional architecture in the 'signature look' of the campus, and aware that this Cenotaph was erected in memory of the staggering sacrifices made by Allisonians during the Great War.

It would appear that the Administration and Regents of today are using those *JUMP Campaign*-raised funds under false pretence as they are now planning to destroy the 'historic Alumni Memorial Library'. They are prepared to break faith with their own Alumni who have given generously on the understanding that this Cenotaph would be maintained and restored, and would continue to be a cherished presence on the Mount Allison campus. It was also understood by Alumni donors that the *JUMP Campaign* would raise the needed capital funds required to undertake construction of a 'Centre for the Arts' so there would be no necessity of additional external borrowing nor appropriating funds from the operating budget or from any university endowments. The Administration and Regents are incontrovertibly breaking trust with the Families of the Allisonian Fallen who also gave so generously to construct a lasting memorial to honour their loved ones.

On the *JUMP Campaign* webpage, President Robert Campbell is quoted: "We will be true to our ideals." It is difficult to see how these ideals are compatible with the Methodist traditions of honesty and integrity upon which Mount Allison was founded.

When in 1938 Sir Charles G D Roberts visited the campus, the 'historic Alumni Memorial Library' stood proudly among the majestic trees in the pastoral setting of Mount Allison, and he exclaimed, "It is the most beautiful campus that I know in Canada". If Sir Charles were to make a return visit to the campus on the centennial anniversary of the most catastrophic event in Canadian history for the 2014 opening of the proposed new Centre for the Arts, he would discover that his beloved 'historic Alumni Memorial Library' had perished, with nothing but the once artfully-placed sandstones left, now lying half-buried in dirt, a mere 'echo' of their previous grandeur. These remnant stones of the Memorial Library Cenotaph would be found uncomfortably interred in what had been a carefully crafted garden, the old academic quadrangle - and even the stalwart trees, now standing, which have graced the Cenotaph for decades would be no more. And, an empty doorway to nowhere would be the last vestige of the faith and trust of those that sacrificed their all; emptiness and despair would instead become the homage to the past. Sir Charles would declare, "It is appalling!"

## **Save the Mount Allison Memorial Library Committee**

for more information visit

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