

Fellow Alumni and Friends of Mt A,

There has been a lot of activity lately over the Mount Allison Memorial Library controversy. This is an attempt to bring you up to date and ask for your assistance and support once again.

On September 20 the call for demolition tenders closed. The Administration has now indicated that a contractor has been chosen.

On September 22, Moncton's CBC radio program Information Morning aired interviews with a member of the Mt A. Administration and a member of the Save the Memorial Library Committee.

Before sunrise on September 23, seventy-three white crosses were quietly placed on the lawn at the east side of Memorial Library (See the attached photo). Each was inscribed with the name of a WWI fallen Allisonian, age at death, commendations and for many an indication that they have no known grave. The media was on hand and that evening Maritimers tuning in to CBC or CTV/ATV television watched news footage from Mt A during the early evening news. That same afternoon, CBC Radio Moncton's Shift program aired an interview with Prof Emeritus of Fine Arts, Veteran Virgil Hammock, who taught at Mt A for 29 years. He eloquently described why the building MUST not be destroyed. <http://www.cbc.ca/shift/2011/09/26/mt-a-memorial-library-to-be-demolished-despite-protests/>

Also on Sept. 23, two members of the Save the Memorial Library Committee presented compelling arguments directly to the Board of Regents. In addition to issues of history, heritage and architectural worth, they demonstrated how the governance system at Mt A. has failed to represent the "Mount Allison Family" in this issue. Unswayed, by mid afternoon the Administration announced to the media that they would proceed with demolition as planned. A copy of the presentation is attached, complete with information about how the Administration refused to entertain a major offer of financial support to save the Library. This will be posted on the "Smash" Web site. With consent of the authors, several compelling letters referred to during the Regents presentation are also attached.

On 27 Sept. the Globe and Mail reported on Memorial Library (pA11) in an article that was accompanied by a half page colour picture. That story and many comments may be viewed at: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/atlantic/mount-allisons-move-to-destroy-war-memorial-sparks-alumni-uproar/article2181047/>

Also on Sept. 27 CBC Radio As It Happens interviewed a member of the Save the Memorial Library Committee: <http://www.cbc.ca/asithappens/episode/2011/09/27/tuesday-september-27-2011/>
(Go to "listen to part three" and scroll to time 07:40 for the SMAML interview)

On Sept. 28 As It Happens interviewed a Mount Allisonian administrator: <http://www.cbc.ca/asithappens/episode/2011/09/28/wednesday-september-28-2011/>
(Go to "listen to part one" and scroll to time 08:51 for the Admin. interview)

On Sept. 28 the "all news" radio program Jodi Morgan Maritime Today (95.7/ 91.9 FM) carried a mid-day interview with Dr. Jack Diamond of Diamond and Schmitt, Toronto. This internationally respected architect was the principal author of the 2002 Mt A Campus Master Plan which charted a proposed course for development on campus for the next decade and beyond. Dr. Diamond identified many reasons why it would be very imprudent to demolish Memorial Library. He identified that there were other and better options to meet the current and future needs of Fine and Performing Arts on campus that didn't involve razing this Cenotaph. In particular he indicated that Mt A has three choices:

1. proceed as planned to demolish the building and replace it with a new structure.
2. to incorporate Memorial Library as part of a new complex that would be respectful of the building's architecture and history (as per the Master Plan) or
3. to restore Memorial Library to the grandeur it once had as conceived by eminent Architect Cobb in 1927 and repurpose it to house the Archives and Special Collections or for a similar purpose He pointed out that the university is rich in real estate that could be used for other facilities for Fine Art or for the Performing Arts. This choice would eliminate expensive demolition costs.

On Sept. 29 the Argosy carried a front page story, "University's Cross to Bear", and a large photo of the MAML with the crosses standing in remembrance of those Lost But Not Forgotten:

In the same issue(p 27) are two significant letters:

1. An "open letter" sent to NB Premier David Alward "Holding Holder to Account" (<http://argosy.mta.ca/?q=article/open-letter-premier-new-brunswick>) with a photo of Minister Holder (which unfortunately doesn't appear on the Web site).. he is standing at a lectern with these words on the wall behind him: " Never doubt that a small group of concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has".(Mead)

2. A second letter reflects the disillusionment felt by many Allisonians (<http://argosy.mta.ca/?q=article/dear-editor-37>).

By early this past week the Save the Mt A Memorial Library Committee learned that the Tantramar Planning Commission had issued a demolition permit to the university. The Drama Group using the Windsor Theatre had been given notice to vacate the building.

Fast action was imperative. The Save MAML Committee agreed: **Demolition cannot be allowed to happen**. For months many have been asking questions and still there are no answers. For months hundreds from around the world have contacted the Save MAML Committee to voice support. The Alumni presenters to the Regents had informed that meeting that they had sought legal opinion as to the Trust that Mount A has with those early post-war Allisonians and Friends to "**erect a Library Building as a War Memorial in honor of Mount Allison students who have made the supreme sacrifice in behalf of our country**". [Minutes of the Mt A Board of Regents, 26 Nov. 1918 - only two weeks after the war had ended]. The legal opinion confirmed Mount Allison does indeed hold Memorial Library "In Trust" and is the steward of the building. There is cause to seek a legal recourse.

Alumni have been supportive in writing letters (many copied to us) to the Regents and Administration. Supportive Allisonians and Friends have been immensely helpful in keeping this issue in the forefront of the media. Families of those long-deceased Allisonians have contacted us to remind us of the sacrifices made by their loved ones. Your collective ongoing support has motivated us to persevere in this Cause and we thank you.

Soon we will be needing some financial support as well. We now face legal costs that had never been anticipated. Some have already contacted us with offers to help and for that we are grateful. Your generosity has enabled us to proceed without worry. We know that there will soon be need of more generosity. We have faith that our good friends, especially the Allisonian Alumni, will join us in this Cause and we are now proceeding on that basis. We believe that you will step forward when the arrangements for the financial needs are organized and when asked.

Continue to keep an eye on the Web site (Google: Mount Allison Smash) <http://www.eastmarket.com/smash/>

Check the petition site to see many heartfelt comments; we invite you to sign if you haven't already done so: <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/2/save-the-memorial-library/>

We are learning every day that many Allisonians are hearing about the Memorial Library issue for the first time so please share this story with your classmates and friends.

Keep the messages going to the chairman of the Board (bruce.mcCubbin@moosehead.ca) and the President (rcampbell@mta.ca). Copy us if you wish and do let us know if you get a reply.

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