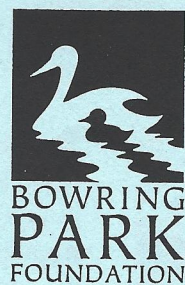
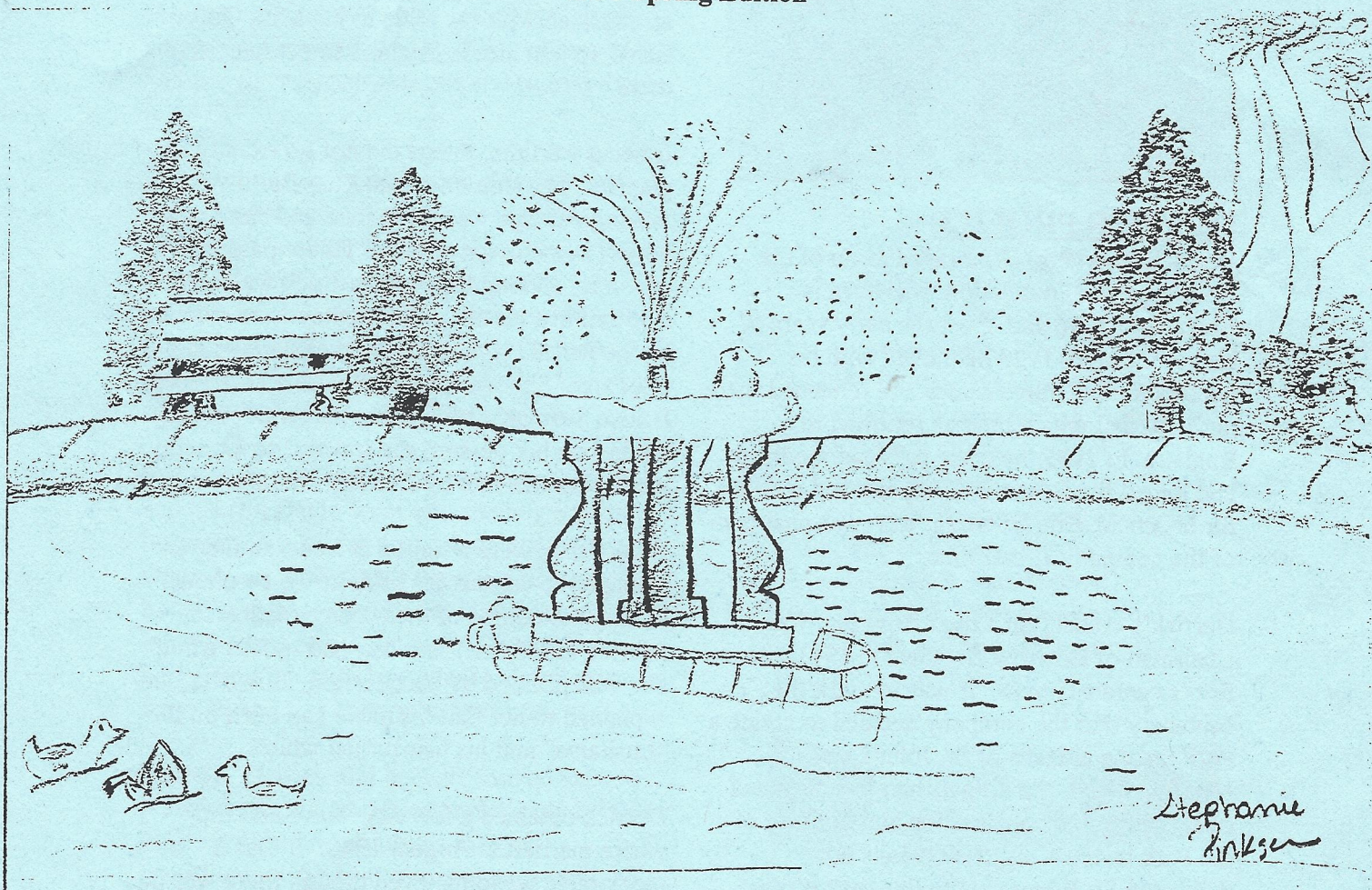


Honorary Patron
Derrick Bowring



WHITE SWAN CLUB NEWSLETTER

1996 Spring Edition



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MEMBER PROFILE

Derrick Bowring, Honorary Patron of the Bowring Park Foundation, was born in England in 1916 and spent the early years of his life there. In 1920 he moved with his parents to the United States and remained there until 1926 at which time he returned to England. In 1935, he came to Newfoundland and joined the Bowring Company and worked for his uncle, Eric Bowring, who was chairman of the company at that time.

Derrick's cousin, Sir Edgar Bowring, was Chairman of Bowring Brothers in 1911, the firm's centenary year. It was to mark the centenary that the company decided to create a Park for the citizens of St. John's and Newfoundland. Sir Edgar therefore presided over the time of construction and opening of the Park in 1914. Derrick recalls how dedicated Sir Edgar was to this park project and he was noted for his many acts of generosity to it.

The war interrupted Derrick's business career when he enlisted in 1940 as one of the first 400 to go overseas with the 166th Field Artillery Regiment. Derrick and his comrades still get together annually on April 14th for a dinner and to remember and reminisce. He is very proud to be a member of this exclusive club which now numbers 130, down from the original 403.

Derrick had planned to get married when the war disrupted his plans. However, not being a person easily deterred by circumstances, on his arrival in England he hastily made arrangements for his bride to be, Miss Gordon Baird, to join him in England to get married there.

It being wartime, things did not go exactly as planned. The ship on which Miss Baird was making passage was torpedoed and she found herself in a lifeboat with her fellow passengers and crew waiting for rescue. Luck was on her side and in a matter of hours they were rescued by the Royal Navy and eventually landed in Scotland. She was provided with a Distressed British Seaman's train ticket and with only the clothes on her person, she traveled to London where she was met by Derrick's family.

Before they were reunited in London, Derrick managed to contact his bride-to-be by phone. During the course of their conversation Derrick asked her if her hair had turned white. She was puzzled by his question. However, he explained to her that his uncle had been on the "Lusitania" and his hair turned white!

Derrick obtained a few days leave and they were married in August 1940. It was a memorable wedding, even though there was no time for lengthy preparations or an extended guest list. Just family and friends witnessed the ceremony as the Battle of Britain raged overhead. (Later in the war, Derrick's brother,

who was a member of Bomber Command, was killed in action and is buried in Berlin.)

In 1959 Derrick became Chairman of Bowring Brothers and served on the Bowring Park Committee. This committee was made up of himself as representative of the company, two members of the public elected by the Board of Trade, three Councillors, and the Mayor of St. John's, who was Chairman.

Derrick was a very busy man in those years and under his leadership, the company expanded from the original store and premises in St. John's to a total of 86 stores across Canada and in the United States. In 1973, he moved to Ontario for business reasons and retired there in 1977.

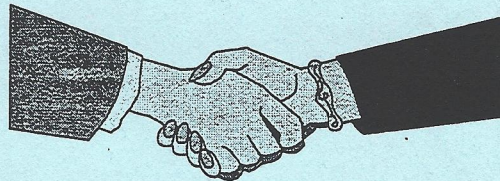
During those years he kept in close contact with Newfoundland and returned each year to his summer home in Burnside, Bonavista Bay. He still maintains this typical Newfoundland- style house at Burnside and during the summer season he can be found pursuing his favorite pastime, sailing the waters of Bonavista Bay in his 27 foot sailboat.

For a change of pace after retirement, Derrick and his son David went into the hog breeding business on his farm near Woodstock, Ontario. Once again his business expertise was evident by the fact that when he sold the farm in 1982, he was marketing 1000 hogs a year and harvesting 10- 40 foot trailer loads of corn from 75 acres of cultivated farmland.

In 1982, Derrick and his wife moved back to Newfoundland and settled at Topsail. It is an ideal spot for him. With his love of trees, flowers, birds and nature in general, he can truly call it his private Bowring Park. He is very pleased with the work of the Bowring Park Foundation and is generous in his praise of the Foundation's Executive and Members.

NEW MEMBERS

Cathrine Picco
Margaret MacDonald
Carrie Walters
Marlene & Basil Hickey
Phyllis D. Hiscock
Harold Hammond
John Abbott & Colleen Hanrahan
John & Hazel Janes
William & Faith Elton
Gerry & Theresa Marshall
Cindy Holden
Leslie & Valerie Simms
Florence Morris
Betty Duder
Captain Jack & Betty Wood
Doyle & Doris Rose
Kjellrun Hestekim
Ann & Ed Pennell
Christopher & Donna Cox
Catherine French & Dan Boone
George Legge & Lisa Tait
Hilda I. White
Neil W. Dawe
R.A. & Barbara Noseworthy
Phil & Karen Seeviour
Charles & Joan Pennell
Louise & Peter Stalder
Hugh & Theresa Cumming
Pauline Hickey



Munch your lunch with mirth and laughter, but **DON'T FORGET** to clean up after.

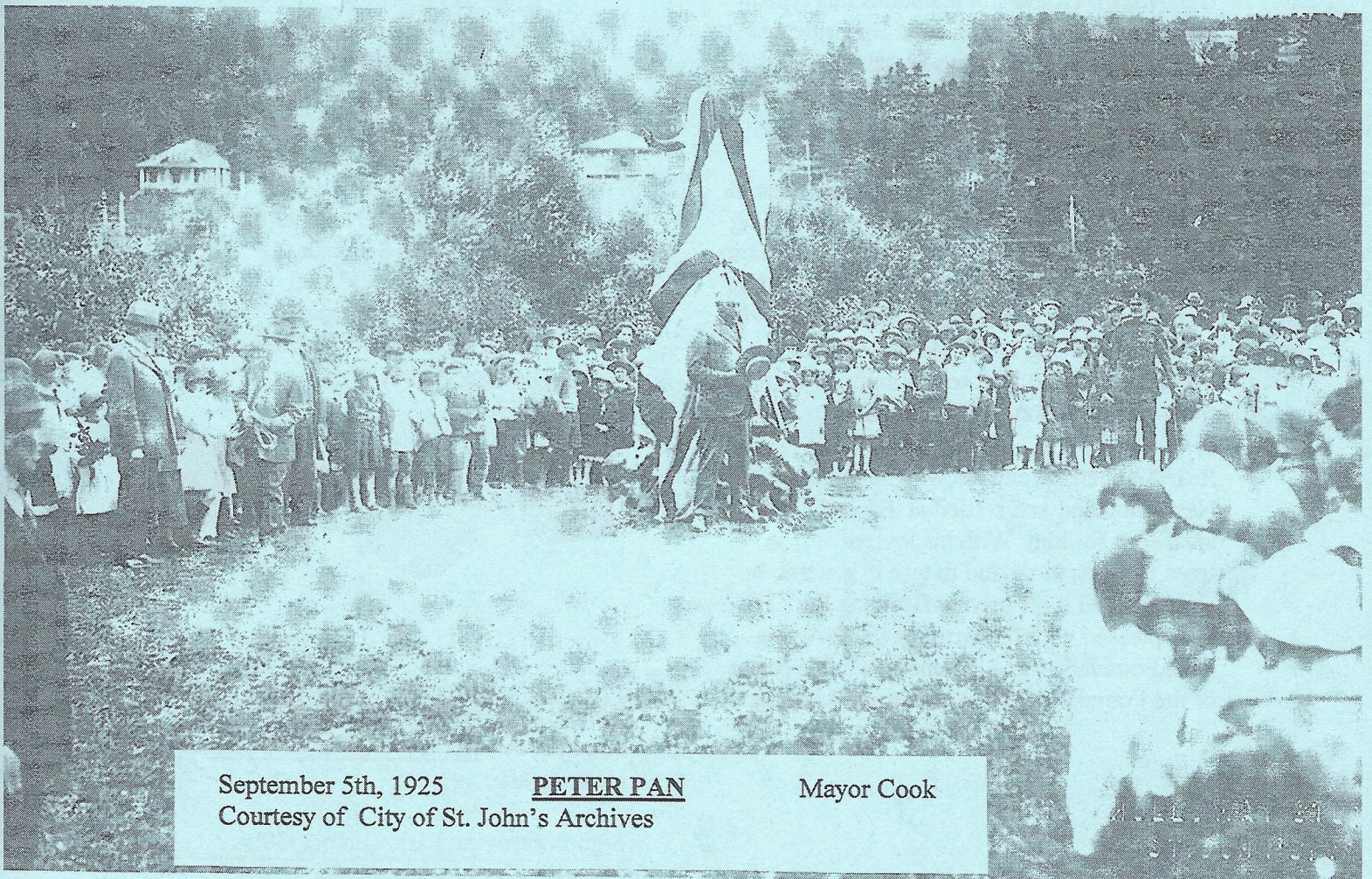
Sign in Bowring Park, Circa 1930's



TO THE BOWRING PARK FOUNDATION

COMPLIMENTS OF

CAUL'S FUNERAL HOME



September 5th, 1925 PETER PAN
Courtesy of City of St. John's Archives

Mayor Cook

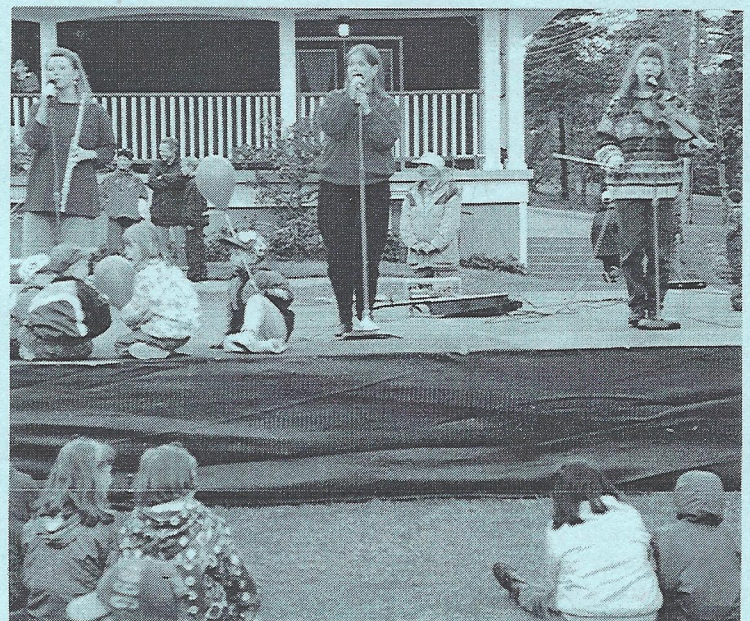
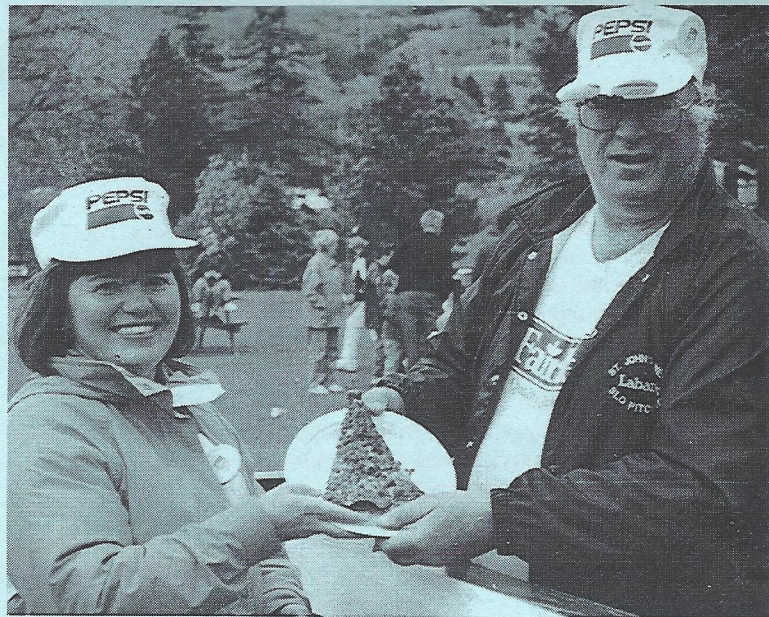
FAMILY FUN DAY

This past Sunday (June 9th) the Bowring Park Foundation and The White Swan Club held their second "Family Fun Day" in Bowring Park. This year we had excellent entertainment by Newfoundland Sound, the Jump Its, Le Ceile and the Petty Harbour Line Dancers. As well, Buddy the Puffin, Whitey, and Buster the Bear joined us. Our emcee for the day was Dick Reeves.

The day began at 9:00 a.m. when the committee met at the Lodge to decide whether or not we should have the event outside or inside. The clouds were heavy in the sky and a chilly wind was blowing through the park but the weather forecast promised that the afternoon would be warmer and that we would see the sun. On this note we decided to hold the event outside and everyone went up to Bungalow site to start setting everything up. By 12:30 p.m. everything was ready to go but we still had not seen the sun and we looked to the sky "willing" the clouds to move on.

By 1:30 people began to arrive at the Bungalow field to take part in the day's events. The children flocked to the "Face Painting booth" to get their face painted by the volunteers from Helping Hands and the pizza from Gus's "Refreshment Stand" helped to take the chill out of the wind. Soon there were two-three hundred people on the site listening to the music and laughing at the antics of "Buddy the Puffin" as he jumped rope with the Jump Its and danced with the Petty Harbour Line Dancers. The fact that we never did see the sun for any length of time that day did not put a damper on any of the activities and everyone in attendance enjoyed themselves immensely.

We would like to thank all the organizers, volunteers, sponsors, entertainers and mascots who played a part in putting together this year's "Family Fun Day." We appreciate your support and generosity.



PARK HISTORY

By Doug Crane

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Continued

TREES OF BOWRING PARK

It would be no exaggeration to say that an individual could travel anywhere in Bowring Park and find themselves in the shadow of trees. The variety found throughout the park is quite impressive to say the least, whether in the naturally wooded areas or among those carefully planted and cultivated. But all trees in Bowring Park share, in many ways, similar beauty and significance. One could write a very lengthy report on Bowring Park's trees alone. However, the constraints of space allow only for the description of a select few, which I shall endeavour to do here. It should therefore be noted that any tree or trees not mentioned is in no way indicative of any lack of significance or level of appreciation.

Many impressive trees come into view immediately upon entrance via Bowring Park's east gate. Some are over 140 years old, planted by William Thorburn, who acquired the property in 1847. Across the road from the duck pond, there are two elm trees with moss on their trunks. It is certainly not unusual to find moss on the trunk of a tree, especially one that is quite old. In Newfoundland, however, this particular kind of moss is quite significant, as it is found in only two places: on both these elms in Bowring Park, and on elms located at the Whitbourne estate that at one time belonged to former Newfoundland Prime Minister Sir Robert Bond. The elm trees at both locations came from England in the same shipment many years ago, and carried with them this moss, which is native to England. That this moss has persisted in Newfoundland since then, exclusively on these trees, is yet another interesting footnote in the colourful history of Bowring Park. Near these trees, one also notices some tall and majestic cedars as well as some lovely rhododendrons. Many trees in this area were planted by the Arbours Society in 1889.

As we continue along this same road, we come to a truly spectacular Linden, or Lime Tree. This was planted by His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught, on the occasion of Bowring Park's official opening on July 15, 1914. Underneath the tree sits the Gnome, designed to commemorate the tree planting. To the right of the Linden tree is a white oak planted in 1920 by Sir Edgar R. Bowring, who was perhaps the greatest benefactor Bowring Park has ever known. On the left is a red oak. This tree was planted on September 19, 1964 by Princess Mary, who was the Colonel in Chief of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in 1964, the 50th anniversary of their involvement in World War 1. She is the niece of the Duke of Connaught, and it is quite fitting that her tree sits in the shade of her uncle's.

Further along this same road, one will notice a Copper Beech standing behind the Horse Trough. The Copper Beech is another very prominent tree found in Bowring Park, and the visitor will notice many of them throughout the park. This particular tree was planted on August 29, 1949, by the then Canadian Governor General Viscount Alexander on the occasion of his visit to St. John's. Standing alone in the middle of this field and surrounded by rustic benches, it is a very attractive stop. In its shade, one will find a commemorative plaque, which is somewhat special in itself, having been made in Newfoundland by the United Nail and Foundry.

The area surrounding the Caribou monument, which is along this road, is not without its own beautiful flora. Indeed, noted horticulturist Mike Manning refers to the entire area as the Caribou Gardens, for obvious reasons. Beautiful trees like the Flowering Dogwood add to an already impressive scene. On the eastern side of the Caribou, one will find a short rustic path leading to one of many shallow pools, and if we look further down river from this location, a magnificent five needle White Pine comes into view. This type of tree is native to Newfoundland, and the one in question was planted in 1913. At one time, it was our country's chief lumber tree, but has grown increasingly scarce over the years. Nowadays, one often sees it planted specifically as an ornamental conifer, which is the case here.

The Van Ginkel vehicular bridge, which divides old and new Bowring Park, offers a vantage point from which to admire many other splendid trees. The always popular Laburnums, as well as many Flowering Crabapples, enhance the beauty of the surrounding valley, which has been a popular picnic and leisure area for a number of years.

The Bungalow lawn plays host to perhaps the most spectacular array of trees in the entire park, many of which having been planted by visiting dignitaries over the years. In the far south-east corner, we see another Copper Beech, planted on August 22, 1955, by Governor General Charles Vincent Massey. On the left is a Beech Tree planted by Sir John Middleton in memory of Dr. Frederick Bruton, who died January 10, 1930. Dr. Bruton was a noted botanist who was among the first to recognize the vast educational potential of Bowring Park, and made it a habit of bringing students here. This tree was planted on August 25, 1930. To the right of the Copper Beech stands a small English oak, planted by Prince Edward on June 9, 1988. Another significant English oak can be found on the lawn's north-west corner, planted on July 9, 1968, by Governor General Roland Mitchener. At one time, there was a tree planted by the Queen Mother near this one, but it became badly damaged and had to be removed.

Bowring Park's most famous and popular tree is also located on this lawn. It is the extraordinary Weeping Beech, one of only a handful of such trees in the world. Planted in 1916, it stands out because it is a grafted tree. The root system for the Weeping Beech is not hardy enough for the Newfoundland climate, so the top part of the tree was grafted onto the trunk and root system of a green beech. One can notice a prominent bump on the trunk where the graft was made. It has recently undergone some repairs and doctoring, which will hopefully ensure that this special tree is around for a long time to come.

THE LODGE

Originally, the Bowring Park Lodge was constructed in 1913, to serve as a residence for Rudolph Cochiuss. Mr. Cochiuss was a landscape architect from the prestigious Montreal firm of Frederick Todds, who was commissioned to design Bowring Park. He resided in this building from its construction in 1913 until March 25, 1917. The succession of park superintendents (Al Canning, Harry Hamlyn, Hubert Noseworthy, and Chris Baird) have all occupied the lodge at one time or another. It presently serves as the City's Park Services office. While having been renovated over the years, it nonetheless retains its rustic beauty. More next time.

BOWRING PARK CONSERVATORY

Work is progressing on the Conservatory and is now expected to be completed early August. City staff are now incorporating an all new interior design in the new state of the art building. It surely will be worth the wait. This project would not have been possible without the bequest of Ms. Doreen Hall

The Foundation would like to thank the following for their kind assistance with this project:

**THOMAS GLASS
NEWFOUNDLAND SLATE INC.
CITY OF ST. JOHN'S**

CAPTAIN'S FALLS BRIDGE

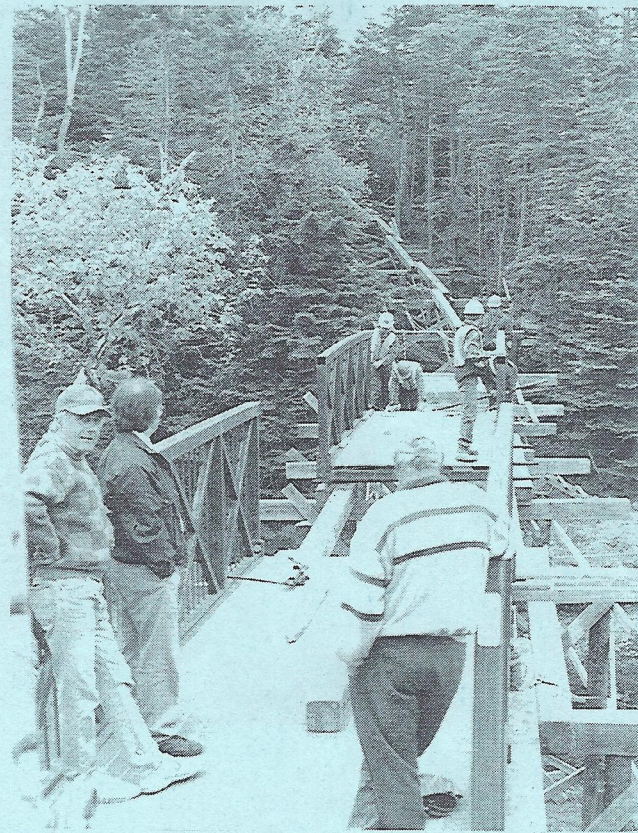
By the time this newsletter goes to print the bridge should be open to Park patrons. This spectacular area of the Park can be **discovered** by proceeding to the extreme west area of the Park, past the Fountain Pond. Follow this gravel road past the back of the houses on Perlin Street, and on down the hill. At the bottom of the hill take the road to the right. You will find the path to the bridge on your left about 100 meters in this road. For the present time, sturdy footwear is recommended for this trip.

The Foundation would like to thank the following for their kind assistance with this project:

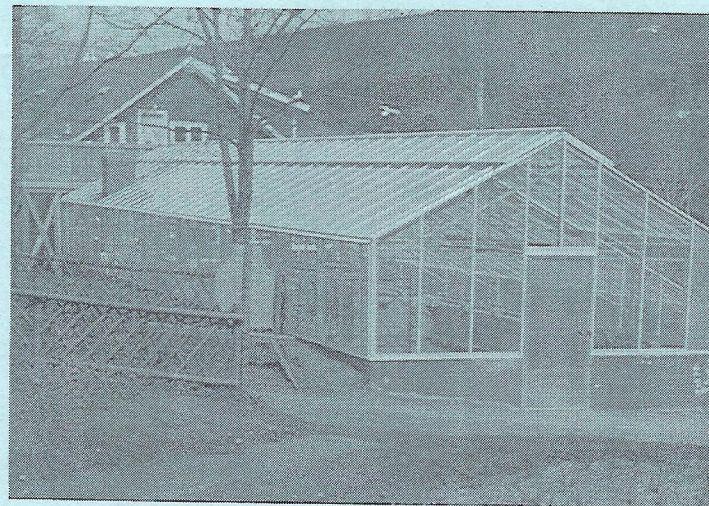
**THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA
CHARLIE HORWOOD
PETER LESTER
RICK TILLER / BFL CONSULTANTS
TRIDENT CONSTRUCTION
CONCRETE PRODUCTS
MACCAFERRI GABIONS
CITY OF ST. JOHN'S**

RIVERBANK STABILIZATION

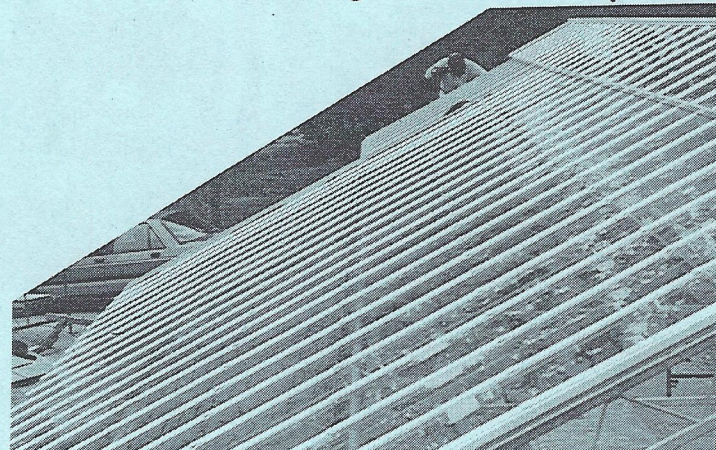
This environmental project will see two major erosion problems fixed on the South Brook River, thus improving fish habitat in the river. Funded by Action 21 Plan of Environment Canada and the Newfoundland and Labrador Conservation Corps, this project will begin in July and be completed in late summer. Watch for it behind the swimming pool and behind the Sir Richard Squires property.

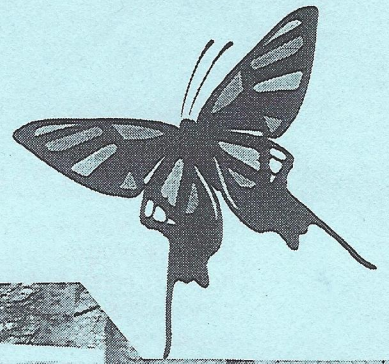


The bridge over Captain's Falls goes in place under the watchful eye of Foundation members.

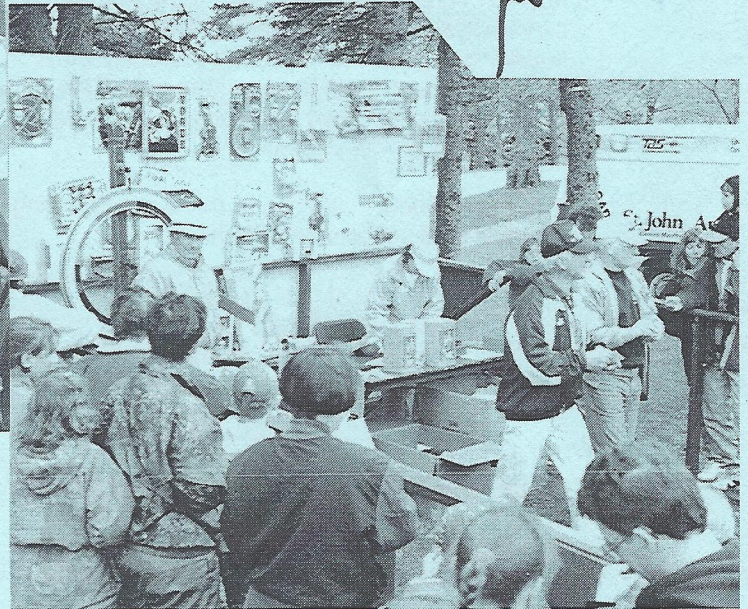


The new Bowring Park Conservatory.

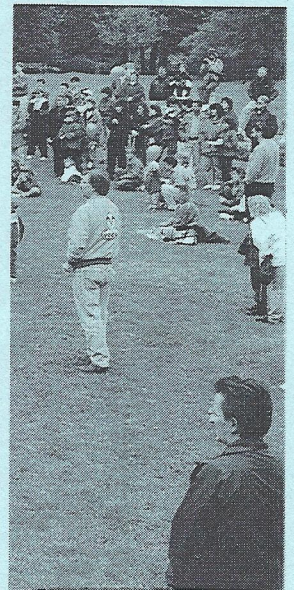




It's Spring. The bird is on the wing. It seems absurd, I often heard, the wing is on the bird.



**A game of chance
"Family Fun Day"**



The Petty Harbour Line Dancers

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Send your article or suggestions to
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Next Newsletter, September 1996