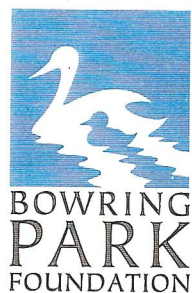


Honorary Patron  
Derrick Bowring



# *WHITE SWAN CLUB NEWSLETTER*

1997/98 FALL and WINTER



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## COVER PHOTO

View looking north  
from Captain's Falls  
Bridge

Newsletter  
printed  
courtesy of  
THE DOCUMENT COMPANY

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### MEMBER PROFILE

*Evelyn Meadus Bennett*, is an Executive member of the Board of Directors of the Bowring Park Foundation. She is also a member of the Ways and Means Committee and co-chairs a committee that is planning an art auction and gala dinner. This event is scheduled to be held at the Delta Hotel this coming fall. The proceeds from the event will go to the Bowring Park Endowment Fund, and Evelyn will provide more information about this in the next newsletter.

Evelyn was born, grew up, and was educated in St. John's. She attended St. Michael's school, Bishops College and then went on to Memorial University, graduating with a degree in Education. She later obtained a Masters degree in Education and made teaching her career. She taught at St. Mary's, and Newtown Elementary until she retired in 1994. Her career encompassed a wide spectrum of teaching, including that of a full time Librarian at Newtown Elementary.

In 1966 she married Gerard Bennett and they have two daughters. Andrea, is married with a son and the family lives in Halifax. This is Evelyn's only grandchild and makes her a very

proud Grandmother indeed. Their youngest daughter Karen, is married and is studying law in England.

Evelyn recalls growing up on Blackmarsh Road with her parents and two brothers and the many trips they made to Bowring Park. On Sundays she went with her parents and the family enjoyed picnics in the park. On weekdays, she went with her brothers and their friends and she remembers it as an adventure as they followed the secret trails that led from Blackmarsh Road, down across Topsail Road and on to the old swimming pool in the park. On occasion they had ice cream at the Bungalow and she is pleased to see the Bungalow open again to the public.

As a teacher, especially when she taught at St. Mary's, she would sometimes, march with her students from the school to Bowring Park to study the plants and flowers. During her years teaching at Newtown Elementary the school always held sports day in the park, and it is this type of activity she would like to see continue and be enhanced with the appropriate park improvements.

Evelyn is a great lover of nature and her favourite hobby is gardening, with knitting and reading backups for cold winter evenings. While teaching at St. Mary's, her route to school took her past Bowring Park. The park with its large trees along the riverbank was a favourite subject to discuss with her pupils as they marked the seasons by the changes in colours.

Evelyn is a tireless volunteer worker for the Bowring Park Foundation and all that it stands for. The park has always been a part of her life and now she would like to give back by way of her work on an ongoing upgrading and improvement program that will ensure the beauty, serenity and charm of Bowring Park are preserved for the generations to come.



**PARK HISTORY** (cont'd)

By Doug Crane

**MONUMENTS****THE GNOME AND THE CONNAUGHT STONE**

When compared to the other attractions and monuments one can find in Bowring Park, this particular little monument maintains a rather low profile. It lays comfortably in the shade and shadow of the enormous and majestic Lime Tree, just west, across the road, from the duck pond and Peter Pan. During the winter months, it often goes through a hibernation of sorts, buried underneath blankets of snow. Given its size and location therefore, it can almost go unnoticed by visitors. Nonetheless, it remains a very interesting and historically significant attraction at Bowring Park.

The small bronze sculpture is known simply as The Gnome, and is placed atop a piece of native granite called the Connaught Stone. The entire monument is situated beneath the tree planted by His Royal Highness, The Duke of Connaught, on July 15, 1914, when the park was officially opened. The idea and design for the Gnome was put forward by Major Howe Green (the man responsible for the impressive Caribou monument), who presented it to Sir Edgar Bowring. Sir Edgar, in turn, commissioned the renowned British sculptor, Edmund Blundstone, to create it. Shortly before this particular request, the Queen herself had purchased some of his work, certainly a testimony to his skill and popularity.

The Gnome was unveiled at Bowring Park on August 31, 1931. An original work, it depicts the little creature sitting at a small writing board, giving the appearance that he

had just finished writing the inscription, which reads:

Lime Tree  
Planted By  
His Royal Highness  
The Duke of Connaught  
on the occasion of the  
opening of Bowring Park

Our dwarfish friend seems to have made a small error, however. The date on the plaque is July 14, 1914. It should read, as it does on the Connaught Stone, July 15, 1914.

The Gnome, a popular figure in legend and folklore, is described as being a dwarfish spirit or goblin that lives close to or underneath the ground, away from sight, and often presiding over treasure of some sort. Bowring Park's gnome is certainly no different, surrounded by mice, rabbits, and toads, the entire scene topped with a crown interwoven with ivy. The watchful expression on his face is certainly not surprising, because his treasure is indeed very large and invaluable: Bowring Park itself.

One of Bowring Park's most intriguing and colourful stories concerns the Connaught Stone, on which this monument rests. This block of native granite was the original foundation for the Gnome, and its exact history is shrouded in mystery. We do know that it was once used as a headstone for a dog belonging to former Newfoundland Prime Minister Sir Richard Squires. The dog's name, "Humber", is still clearly visible on the Stone, behind the Gnome. The Stone itself was put in place at Bowring Park in 1931.

Sir Richard Squires served two terms as Newfoundland's Prime Minister, 1919 to 1923 and 1928 to 1932. At one time, he resided on a piece of property called

Midstream, and his house itself was known as Cherry Lodge. This estate is now part of Bowring Park, and is located near the compost garden operated by St. John's Clean and Beautiful. His house was demolished in the early 1970's, but his well still stands in that area. In 1925, Bowring park's first landscape architect, Rudolph Cochiuș, returned to Newfoundland to take over as Superintending Engineer with the Newfoundland Highroads Commission. During this time, he planned the layout for Squires' estate.

In regards to the origin of the Connaught Stone, one school of thought claims that the Stone originally belonged to Squires, and was given to the park for use as the Connaught Stone. If this was indeed the case, one must wonder why the Connaught Stone was replaced soon after its unveiling in 1931. The original cornerstone for the Reid Sanatorium was the Gnome's foundation for around twenty years, after which time the Connaught Stone was put back in place to remain as we see it now. This brings us to the other belief which claims that the Stone went missing a year or so after its official unveiling, and it was not recovered until the 1950's, when the City acquired an additional 150 acres for the expansion of the park. Included in the acquisition was the Midstream estate, and it was here that the Connaught Stone was supposedly recovered, being used as a headstone for Humber.

All in all, one must draw their own conclusions on this issue, based on evidence that is mostly second hand and scanty at best. But nevertheless, it is worth reiterating what we know for certain: the Connaught Stone was, at some time, used as a headstone for a dog owned by Sir Richard Squires. Also, the Stone was removed for whatever reason soon after it was unveiled,

and replaced by the Reid Sanatorium cornerstone. Still, this situation will likely remain a mystery, one that only serves to enhance this little monument's attraction. Sir Richard Squires must have known the truth, but he took his leave of us many years ago. This only other individual who knows the whole story is content to sit atop the Connaught Stone, shaded by his Linden tree and forever working on an inscription. Chances are no one will ever know because the Gnome isn't talking.



## *The Tea Room*

in the Bungalow

Offering light lunches  
for the whole family.



**Now Open**



**SATURDAY & SUNDAY**  
**10:30 AM to 4:30 PM**

**(7 days a week after May 24<sup>th</sup> !)**

**Delta.**  
**Hotels & Resorts**



## The Fifth Annual Canada Life Walk for Wilderness:

A move from Earth Week to Environment Week

One of the many improvements to this popular St. John's event

The Protected Areas Association invites all White Swan Club members to come join in the fun as we hike up Signal Hill on May 31 in support of wilderness conservation.

This year's Canada Life Walk for Wilderness spotlights the need to preserve the habitat of the endangered Newfoundland pine marten — particularly in the area of Little Grand Lake, where there is a proposed ecological and wildlife reserve awaiting government action.

The Walk has always been a fun event for individuals, groups, and families. Registration will begin around 12:30 PM at the NewTel building at Fort William Place where there will be live entertainment and chances to win terrific prizes - including the Provincial Grand Prize featuring an Air

Labrador trip for two to Happy Valley-Goose Bay with accommodations at the Royal Inn, Tilden car rental, and a Grand River Canoe Company excursion. In addition, everyone raising \$20 or more receives a fabulous pine marten T-shirt featuring the work of local artist Jerry Evans.

This year we've added a few exciting new features to the Walk, including the launch of the first official Western Newfoundland Walk around the Corner Brook Stream Trail. As well, this year we have three team categories and great team prizes so round up some of your co-workers, friends, or family members and share a fantastic afternoon of fun and prizes. Everyone's welcome to attend and we hope to see you all out walking on May 31!

**For more information on the Walk for Wilderness, including sponsor forms and team registration kits, contact Stephen Hewitt at the PAA.**

**Phone (709) 726-2603, Fax (709) 726-2764.**



***Photo: Laura Jackson***



## A SONG OF AVALON

Land of the wild rose, land of the fern,  
List to this song of praise to thee,  
While tranquil summer sunsets burn  
Across each glittering island sea.

Yes, thou art lovely in the days  
When golden sunsets burn  
About thy ponds and mighty bays,  
Land of the rose and fern.

Land of the wood and rugged hill,  
Of mountain ash, and spruce, and fir;  
Land of the forest dim and still.  
Save when the sterner breezes stir.

Land of the lake and glorious stream.  
Of current, fall, and rapid strong,  
Where the salmon leap with sudden  
gleam,  
And the speckled, swift trout dash along.

Land of the lordly caribou  
That roam thy wooded dells and plain;  
Of wild duck whining into view  
With glad but hoarse and raucous strain.

Land of the bracing summer air  
Wafted o'er wood and pond and bay;  
Country of beauteous colors rare,  
While days of summer and autumn stay.

Yes, thou art lovely in the days  
When golden sunsets burn  
Across thy ponds and mighty bays,  
Land of the rose and fern.

**Robert Gear McDonald.**

Editor  
Associate Editor  
Contributors

Ed Matthews  
Jim Ronan  
Stephen Hewitt  
Susan O'Driscoll  
Joan Fogarty

Blame it on El Nino, blame it on Global Warming, blame it on the over population of seals, but please do not blame it on the White Swan Club Committee!

On January the 12th, we held our first meeting to organize this event and set the weekend of February 13th to 15th as the date it would take place (weather permitting). Our first priority was to obtain a sponsor and list the possible weekend activities. A letter was written to City Council asking for park staff support to flood the Fountain Pond and provide snow clearing etc.

The second meeting named a sponsor, Newfoundland Power and also confirmed park staff support. Things were looking good. Lights, music, hot chocolate, skating, horse rides and snow sculpturing would be the events. Ski races, snowboarding and sliding would also be part of the activities if the snow conditions were suitable.

The third meeting of the committee dealt with the final details and the media blitz was started. It was cold for the first part of the week, no snow, but the ice surface was good it looked like a go. Thursday, February 12th, it rained and Friday it rained even harder. **CANCELLED.** Thursday, February 19th, it rained and Friday no improvement. **CANCELLED.** Wednesday, February 25th, spring weather- rain, drizzle and fog, meant the ice was gone. **CANCELLED** until next year, due to lack of winter!

## The CONSERVATORY

is now OPEN

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY  
2 - 4 PM**

- Many thanks to the White Swan Club for offering this service.
- Watch for full time operation in May when Summer staff is hired



## **Around the Office**

Jim Ronan, General Manager

Planning is the key word around here at this time of the year. I am working with the various committees on a number of projects for the coming year.

### **White Swan Club (WSC)**

has organized a crew to keep the **Conservatory open on Saturday and Sunday from 2 - 4 PM.** They are working on getting the Guided Tour Program going again this year. Application has been made through the Student Career Placement Program to have the Tour Guide positions funded. The Conservatory will be opened 7 days a week once the students are hired.

Undaunted by the cancellation of the Fabulous February Frolic, the White Swan Club will be hosting 4<sup>th</sup> Annual

- **Family Fun Day on June 14<sup>th</sup>**
- **Peter Pan Festival August 16<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Planning and Priorities Committee**

is busy with the planning for a number of projects. A new shade cloth will be installed in the Conservatory in April. A new mural will be installed at the Playground before the summer. The large Peter Pan theme mural was painted by the Art and Design House with the material provided by Pratt and Lambert Paints. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank them for there generous donation. We know the children will be pleased.

Frederick Hann and Associates are working on the plans for the Fountain

Pond Reconstruction Project. A team from the Memorial University Engineering graduating class of 1998 is working on a Proposal to Construct an Amphitheater in the Park. We should have a final report from them by mid April which will assist us in moving ahead with the project.

Discussions are underway to have a new playground site established at the South Brook site, adjacent to the tennis courts. This work will be carried out later this summer. Later this summer as well, we hope to begin upgrading the South Brook Trail from the tennis courts to Captain's Falls.

### **Ways and Means Committee**

are moving forward with a number of fund raising initiatives. Chairman Bruce Templeton is always busy with corporate fund raising. Judging by the ambitious project list of the Planning and Priorities Committee for 1998, Bruce has his work cut out for him. They are also working on a fundraising effort to be held throughout the summer.

**The Art Auction and Gala Event** will be held on October 17th. Plans are well underway for this very special evening to be held at the Delta Hotel. Further details in future newsletters.

The committee is planning a merchandising program for this summer, with the plan to open a gift shop at the Lodge in June. The Contribution boxes will be ready for Spring installation. These boxes will be placed at the East and West gates and combined with the sale of food and merchandise will go a long way to support your Foundation's efforts.



# YES YOU CAN HELP!

Your contribution to the

## BOWRING PARK FOUNDATION

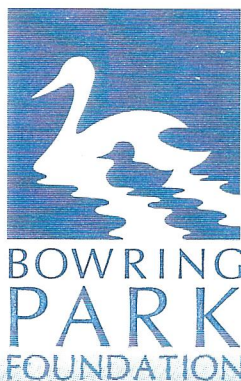
will go a long way toward ensuring that  
the Park remains one of the most beautiful  
parks in all of North America.

My Donation Is: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

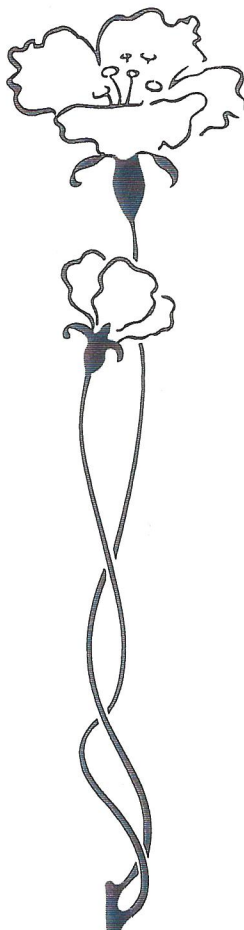
Please make cheques payable to:  
THE BOWRING PARK FOUNDATION INC.

Mail completed Applications, Fees  
and Donations to:

**Bowring Park Foundation**  
P.O. BOX 39085, St. John's, NF  
Telephone: (709) 576-6134  
Registered Charitable # 1045525-53



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## WHITE SWAN CLUB

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Your membership will help to ensure that the Foundation can continue its mandate to restore and further develop Bowring Park. The Board of Directors of the Foundation consists of elected members who are elected by the general membership. First-time Adult Members receive an attractive lapel pin (max. 2 per membership) and children receive a White Swan Club button. All members receive our quarterly Newsletter and updates on projects and special events in the Park. Take this opportunity to help "Polish the Jewel".

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

I Wish To Volunteer YES( ) NO ( )

### MEMBERSHIP TYPE APPLIED FOR

TYPE	YEARLY FEE	(✓)
SENIOR	\$10.00	( )
INDIVIDUAL	\$12.00	( )
FAMILY	\$18.00	( )

Family Membership includes all children 18 years of age and under. Please include names of all additional members

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

### WELCOME TO THE CLUB

This membership expires Dec. 31, 1998

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