

Honorary Patron  
Derrick Bowring



# *WHITE SWAN CLUB NEWSLETTER*

1997 Spring/Summer Edition



## **IN THIS ISSUE**

**Queen's Visit**

**Bowring Brothers Donation  
Member Profile**

**Playground Re-opening**



**Joan Fogarty**, nee Reynolds, is a founding director of the Bowring Park Foundation, a member of the Finance Committee and a very active member of the White Swan Club Committee.

Joan was born and raised in St. John's and with her parents and three younger brothers, spent many an afternoon in Bowring Park. Leaving her home on the Southside for a visit to Bowring Park was always an adventure, and she has very fond memories of the old swimming pool, the playground by the tennis courts, and the people gathered at the large kettles. The highlight of the day would be a visit to the Bungalow for an ice-cream.

She received her early education at St. Patrick's Convent and then went on to Holy Heart of Mary where she graduated with a Business Education Certificate. Her first job as a secretary gave her the required experience to take on the position of Executive Assistant with East

Steel Industries. In 1979 she embarked on a teaching career with a position in the Business faculty of the College of Trades and Technology. Over the years she has experienced many changes at the college, and now with the new age computer technologies she finds the work more exciting and more challenging than ever. Joan holds a Bachelor of Vocational Education from MUN, the CPS designation, and a Diploma of Applied Arts from Cabot College.

In 1966 Joan married Tom Fogarty and they have a daughter Jennifer who is presently working on her Masters of Psychology at the University of Waterloo.

With their backyard bordering on Bowring Park, Joan spent many happy hours in the park with Tom and Jennifer, and she and Tom still walk in the park several times a week. She has a deep love of the park and considers it an integral part of her life. In her spare time, she enjoys quilting, knitting, sewing, travelling, and surfing the Net.

Joan was instrumental in the formation of the Bowring Park Foundation. In 1994 she approached Councillor Keith Coombs to see what could be done on a volunteer basis to restore the Park's lustre, which she felt was fading.

The rest is history and she is very pleased with the progress to date of the Foundation and generous in her praise of the people who support it. Joan's goal for the foundation is to see Bowring Park reach its peak and become the Jewel of the city and a showcase for the province.

**PARK HISTORY** (cont'd)

By Doug Crane

**MONUMENTS****CARIBOU**

Bowring Park's Caribou stands atop an outcrop of rock nestled within a grove of trees, overlooking a shimmering waterfall and a serene, limpid pool. It is a perfectly natural location for this majestic monument, because this Caribou, the symbol of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, is a replica of a woodland caribou. Woodland caribou live a mostly solitary life in the forest, unlike the barren-roaming herds our province is usually noted for.

The Royal Newfoundland Regiment, which celebrated its bicentennial in 1995, possess a long and distinguished history. However, it seems that one event in particular has become synonymous with the Regiment: the tragic battle at Beaumont Hamel, which occurred on July 1, 1916. On that fateful day 752 young Newfoundlanders went "over the top," pouring out of their trenches toward the German front line. The brave young soldiers, picking their way over barbed wire and trenches, were unaware of the impending doom they marched towards. Approximately one hundred feet behind the enemy line, hundreds of German troops were hiding and waiting to reinforce their position. This German unit was known as the 6th (Brandenburg) Division, aptly nicknamed the "Iron Division". When the Newfoundland troops came into sight, they were attacked head on, blasted by heavy shelling and sprayed with machine gun fire; yet they continued their march with unshakeable resolve and overwhelming courage. By the end of the day, only 68 of the Regiment, which had numbered 802, remained unharmed, the rest either wounded or killed. July 1 is, of course, celebrated as Canada Day in our country. But

for Newfoundlanders, July 1 is also Memorial Day, in honour and remembrance of the many young Newfoundlanders who answered the call to arms and made the ultimate sacrifice on that day in 1916.

Before going to war in 1914, the Newfoundland contingent adopted the woodland caribou as its official emblem. In recognition of their battle at Beaumont Hamel, a life size caribou monument was erected there, overlooking the actual place where so many died. There are also two other such monuments in France, as well as two in Belgium, commemorating the Regiment's role in the World War I.

The Caribou monument which stands in Bowring Park was a gift of major William Howe Green. It was presented as a tribute to the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, with whom Major Green served as Musketry Instructor during World War I. Major Green resided in St. John's for a number of years. A successful architect, he designed several buildings in the St. John's area, including the famed Cabot Tower on Signal hill. The bronze memorial was sculpted by Bazil Gotto, and Rudolph Cochius, the man who designed Bowring Park, chose its location and supervised its erection, approximately 100 yards north of the Bungalow. Mr. Cochius had also been responsible for designing the layout of Beaumont Hamel's Memorial Park and the Caribou monument located there.

It is indeed quite fitting that this monument was unveiled on Memorial Day, 1928. It was, at the request of Major Green, a rather low key ceremony. The city Mayor at the time, Tasker Cook, read a communications from Colonel Nangle of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. The Colonel point out that Bowring Park's Caribou should not be considered as a memorial to those who died, the European monuments being testimonials to

that effect. Instead, he continued, it should be regarded

...As an everlasting tribute to the esprit de corps and loyal comradeship during these stirring years when they so gallantly and honourable wore the Regimental Badge and an expression of the hope that the spirit of comradeship then formed shall remain unto the last.

The sacrifices made by the Regiment during World War I are nonetheless recognized at Bowring Park, as is evident by the bronze cross nearby which bears the inscriptions of the battles honours won by the Regiment. Everyone who visits Bowring Park, and all those who cherish it, are, in a way, beneficiaries of the overwhelming courage of so many of these young Newfoundlanders. The beautiful Caribou gardens is a fitting tribute to their memory.

More next time.



Queen greets Bowring Family.

### QUEEN'S VISIT

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II visited Bowring Park to meet the citizens of St. John's. It was a beautiful sunny day, which made the occasion that much more special for the thousands of people in attendance.

Following greetings by His Worship Mayor Murphy and Council, Her Majesty was presented with flowers by Kyle Kearney and Hayley Redmond. She then spoke to members of the Bowring Family, and continued about the Bungalow lawn chatting with dozens of well wisher's. The Queen planted a tree next to the Bowring Park Foundation tree.

Simultaneously, in Victoria Park, Bristol,

England, the Deputy High Commissioner for Canada planted a tree for the Friends of Victoria Park.

The Church Lads Brigade Battalion Band opened the event with "God save the Queen and provided background music during the walk-about. The Cabot Kids sang for the Queen, offering up their St. John's 500<sup>th</sup> Committee anniversary song "The people of Cabot" and their new rendition of the "Ode to Newfoundland".

Judging by Her long visit and comments by patrons, Her Majesty appeared to enjoy Her visit. We look forward to receiving Her again in the future.



### RONALD MC DONALD PLAYGROUND RE-OPENING

The playground site was officially re-opened on June 25<sup>th</sup> by Hayley Redmond and Kyle Kearney. In attendance were His Worship Mayor John Murphy, Mr. Edgar Bowring, Mr. Derrick Bowring, Mr. Jack O'Keefe of the Newfoundland Society for the Physically Disabled and Ronald McDonald himself.

The thousands of children in attendance made good use of the equipment immediately following the opening, and

were provided with cake and refreshments by McDonalds.

The project was a success due to the commitment of Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, the Newfoundland Society for the Physically Disabled, Hickman Saturn, Isuzu, and the City of St. John's. The project was coordinated by your Foundation. Further path development will take place and more stand alone equipment will be installed later this year.

## **CURRENT EVENTS**

The second Annual General Meeting of the Bowring Park Foundation Inc. was held at the Bungalow on June 8th, 1997. The meeting was called to order at 7.30 PM by Chairman Bruce Templeton. In his report, Bruce commented favourably on the activities and progress made in the past year. He thanked the Directors, Committee Members, and Volunteers for their support and hard work.

John Downton, Chairman of the White Swan Club, presented his report and detailed the past year's activities. The Peter Pan Day, Family Fun Day and the Fabulous February Frolic were some of the events mentioned.

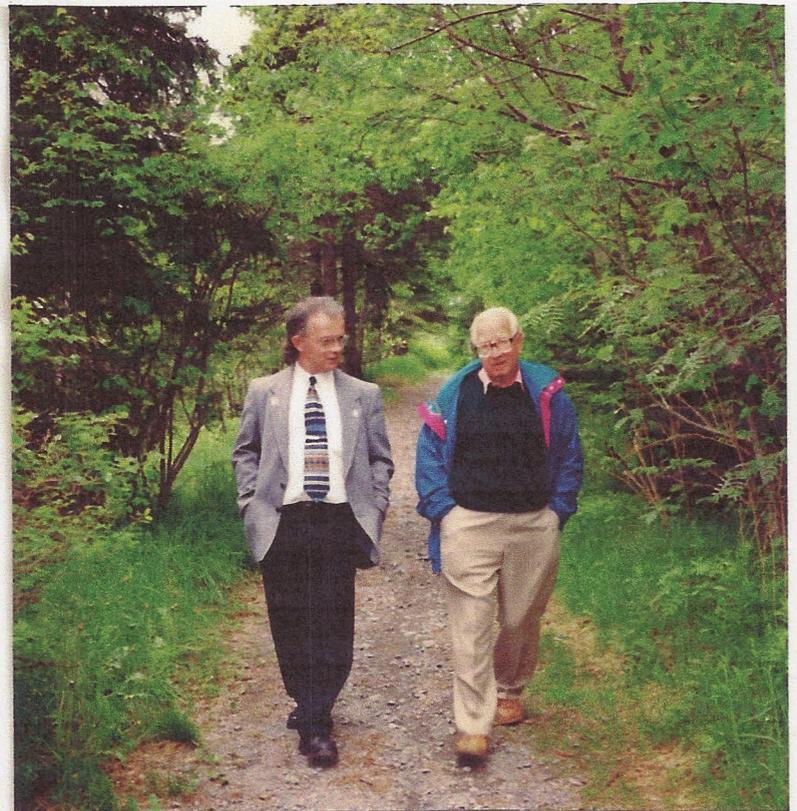
Lorne Warren, Chairman of the Planning and Priorities Committee outlined the projects completed and gave an overview of the projects in progress including the rebuilding of the Playground.

Jim Ronan, General Manager of the Foundation, gave a detailed account of the diversity of business encountered in managing the affairs of the Foundation. Committee meetings, City Council affairs, park projects, and special events are just a few.

Michael Power was elected Secretary/Treasurer and presented the Report and Financial Statements of the Bowring Park Foundation as audited by Deloitte & Touche. Members may view this report at the Foundation Office.

The Election of Officers (four at large Directors) was carried out and elected were Joan Fogarty, John Downton, Thomas Fogarty, and Miller Ewing.

A general discussion and closing remarks by the Chairman preceded the adjournment.



Edgar Bowring and General Manager Jim Ronan walking The Sir Richard Squires property.

Editor	Ed Matthews
Associated Editor	Jim Ronan
Contributors	Mary Lou Downey
	Joan Fogarty
	Susan O'Driscoll
	Kelly Reynolds

## FOUNDATION RECEIVES MAJOR DONATION

Mr. Edgar Bowring visited the Park on June 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> during his Newfoundland visit.

The main purpose of his visit was to present the Foundation with a cheque for \$750,000. The money was a residual amount left in Bowring Brothers Pension Fund following the setting up of indexed pensions for all employees. Through the efforts of Mr. Derrick Bowring and Mr. Edgar Bowring, Pensioners agreed to donating the money to the Foundation Endowment Fund. The interest only from this fund will be spent yearly to enhance and restore the Park.

The cheque was presented to Foundation Chairman, Bruce Templeton on the verandah of the Bungalow immediately following The Queens departure. Many of the Foundation's Directors were in attendance to thank Mr. Edgar and Mr. Derrick Bowring for their efforts. During the presentation Mr. Edgar Bowring explained that the Bowring parent company, Marsh and McLennan were pleased to be able to assist in such a worth while cause.

After the cheque presentation, a reception was held by the Mayor in the Bungalow. The Bowring Park Foundation members had a chance to meet the British Delegation who were here for the "Matthew" visit and to discuss future plans with citizens and Bowring family members.



### CHEQUE BEING PRESENTED

**Back Row:** Mayor John Murphy, Edgar Bowring, Derrick Bowring, Councillor Keith Coombs, Chairman Bruce Templeton.  
**Front Row:** John Downton, Mike Power, Millar Ewing, and Hubert Noseworthy.



Jim Ronan and John Downton show Mr. Edgar Bowring features of the Park.

## GUIDED WALKING TOURS

The Foundation now offers FREE Guided Walking Tours of the original 50 acres of the Park daily at 10 AM , 1 PM & 3 PM. Call the Tour Line @ 576-6112 for more information.

## THE OLD SWIMMING HOLE

Summer is upon us once again! The signs are all around. June 21 has come and gone, warm weather has arrived and children are out of school. But for many children and adults alike, summer has not officially arrived until the Bowring Park pool is open for business. This is a sentiment that has been shared by many of the inhabitants of St. John's and surrounding areas for generations.

In the Park's early days, the man-made body of water know as the duck pond, was Bowring Park's swimming hole. Tents, which served as change rooms, were erected in the area where the Peter Pan Monument now stands. Residents would change into their swimming attire, appropriate for the era, and take a dip in the pond.

In the 1920's , concrete walls were placed along the sides of a portion of the South Brook River near the pink granite bridge. During the Summer months, a wooden dam was put in place forcing the waters of the river to transform into an out-of-doors swimming pool. The waters of the pool gradually increased in depth towards the dam. After a heavy rain, the dam would have to be lifted to return the pool's swollen waters to its pre-rain state. Two low diving boards, covered in a woven fibrous material, were located at the deepest end of the pool. Wooden change rooms were built on the river's south bank near the edge of the pool. Next to the change rooms was a canteen where swimmers could buy an energizing snack. Park benches were located along the pools deck where swimmers could relax and parents would keep a watchful eye.

Throughout June, July and August families would travel to Bowring Park for the purpose of escaping the heat by cooling off in the waters of the pool. Children would ride their bikes for miles to be rewarded with a free swim. Many a resident of St. John's learned to swim in the waters of the Bowring Park pool.

In 1967, Canada's 100 birthday, the Federal Government developed a fund for the beautification of municipalities across Canada. With its portion of the funds, St. John's created several recreational facilities in Bowring Park. Included in the plans was a new modern out-door swimming facility. The old swimming pool in South Brook River was showing its age. Deterioration had set in and the waters of the pool were becoming polluted. Today, all that remains

are some remnants of the concrete walls.

The present day pool was build in the annexed section of the Park on a hill over looking South Brook River. The facility includes an Olympic size pool with diving boards, a small wading pool for toddlers, a changing area, the "basket room " in which patrons clothes are stored, showers, and in recent years a water slide, all of which are surrounded by a large chain-link fence.

Anxious children would purchase tickets at the ticket counter then stand outside the fence waiting for park staff to let them in. Once inside they would rush to the basket counter to get an empty mesh basket, change into their swim suits, exchange their now full baskets for a numbered pin, run through the cold showers and then jump into the heated waters of the pool. Life guards, seated in chairs towering over the water's surface, would keep watch. The blast of a whistle would mark the end of an hour long session. The pool would empty but the waters would not be calm for long as the whole process would repeat itself several times a day.

The old swimming hole of Bowring Park has certainly progressed. It has changed from a man made pond to a dammed in river to finally the modern recreational facility of today. The look of the pool may have changed, as has the bathing suits of those who use it. But the pleasure derived from the act of swimming in Bowring Park has remained constant from generation to generation.

