

Honorary Patron
Derrick Bowring



WHITE SWAN CLUB NEWSLETTER

1997 Summer/Fall Edition



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Jim Ronan, is General Manager of the Bowring Park Foundation, and a member of the White Swan Club.

Jim is a native of St. John's and during his early years attended St. Patrick's Hall school. From there, he went on to Gonzaga High School and graduated in 1974.

After graduation, he found employment in the food services industry and also spent some time in Alberta working on construction projects. He returned to St. John's in 1977 and joined the March Group of Companies who were involved in all aspects of construction. In 1984 he became General Manager of the retail and fabrication section of the company, a position he held until 1995 when he took over his present challenging position with the Bowring Park Foundation.

Along the way Jim met and married his wife Janice. They have two sons, Tim, aged 15, who is attending Bishop's College and Jeff, aged 13, who attends I.J. Samson Junior High. Janice is an Aerobics instructor and teaches at the 3F Club for mature adults at the Aquarena. She also coordinates clinics for the V.O.N. She enjoys gardening and has an extensive variety of herbs in her garden. She also likes to try her hand at new cooking recipes.

With their busy schedule the family appreciates the time they can spend at their cottage in the country. Jim enjoys fishing, especially ice fishing, walking and

gardening. His other activities include playing racquet ball and watching car racing on television. His favourite pastime is reading, especially Newfoundland history. Jim is also an encyclopaedia of knowledge on the history of Bowring Park.

Having been a Boy Scout in his youth in 1974 he became Leader of the 1st Kiwanis Scout Troup at the School for the Deaf. Under his leadership the troupe became fully integrated into the Scout program. He was also instrumental in getting the hearing impaired children into the Venture Program, which is the next step up in the Scouting program.

In 1987 he became involved with the Home and School Association at Cowan Heights Elementary and in 1989 became its President. During his tenure, the school introduced a free breakfast program and with the sponsorship of ACOA was equipped with state of the art Computers. By organizing the parents, who provided free labour and donations, a huge playground was built. The association also eliminated the practice of fund-raising by students and instead, parents pledge money for new projects.

Jim is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Single Parent Association of Newfoundland and Labrador. The emphasis of this organization is to obtain suitable and affordable housing for single parent families.

The Bowring Park Foundation under Jim's leadership, has seen a number of projects completed; the bridge over Captains Falls, playground upgrading, the Conservatory, the river bank stabilization to mention a few. The Heritage Monument located across the road from the Gazebo is his latest project.

Jim enjoys his work because it results in improvements to the park that he loves. He is proud indeed, of the contribution he is making to this historic place.

WHITE SWAN CLUB

John Downton, Chair

1997 has been a very exciting year here at Bowring Park. In February the White Swan Club hosted our first Fabulous February Frolic. This event was quite a success and we are now planning for the Second Annual.

On June 25th, the Queen visited the Park and was greeted by thousands of well wishers on the Bungalow lawn. During her walk about, Her Majesty planted a tree among the other trees planted by Royalty.

The Foundation and the Friends of Bowring Park in Knowsley, England exchanged greetings on June 25th as it was a special day for us both. They took possession of their Bowring Park from the City of Liverpool on that day. The Victoria Park Wildlife group in Bristol England planted a tree at the same time that the Queen planted Her tree here in Bowring Park. We have since been in contact with all of these groups and will continue to do so.

On August 10th the White Swan Club hosted the Peter Pan Festival in honor of Peter's 72nd year in our Park. On 1st May, 1997, the White Swan Club sent greetings to the Friends of Kensington Gardens on the occasion of the re-dedication of theirs, the original Peter Pan Statue. Their Peter was a gift of Sir James Barrie, the creator of Peter Pan and was placed in Kensington Gardens 1st May, 1912.

Our Guided Tour Program was a success this summer. Our three Guides: Stacey Squires, Andrew Clark and Dianne Drover did an excellent job. We are looking forward to offering Tours full time again next summer. For Tours, (now offered by volunteers), call the Foundation Tour Line @ 576-6112.

P.S. Please don't forget to return the attached membership renewal.

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Bruce Templeton, Chair

The BOWRING PARK FOUNDATION has come a long way since its inception in 1995. 1997 is proving to be the busiest year to date. Some of the exciting things happening are the special events of the White Swan Club, the active projects of the Planning and Priorities Committees, the planning for next years projects and the partnerships we are fostering with a number of Parks in Great Britain,

The Queen's June 25th visit was the highlight of the summer. The re-opening of the playground with its two new handicap accessible play structures and the beautiful weather made the occasion that much more special.

On the day of the Queen's visit the Foundation was presented with a cheque from Mr. Edgar Bowring for \$750,000. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Derrick Bowring, Mr. Edgar Bowring and Mr. A.J.C. Smith of Marsh & McLennan Companies Inc for their efforts in securing this gift for our Endowment Fund.

As Chair of the Foundation's Ways and Means Committee, I am pleased to report that its members are busy with their fundraising campaign, making plans for 1998 and beyond. The Board has approved the installation of contribution boxes at the East and West Gates. They will be used to collect donations for the Foundation. A Gala will be held in the fall of 1998. More details in the next newsletter. We are also busy with a corporate campaign. Proposals are being prepared for two organizations, one for the Picnic Pavilion and the other for an outdoor amphitheater.

Planning and Priorities has just completed the Confederation Heritage Monument, located across the road from the gazebo. This along with the major refurbishing of the playground and the planning for the Fountain Pond Project

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A WORD FROM THE CHAIR *continued*

have made for a very successful year. They are hopeful that funding will be secured to construct the Picnic Pavilion in 1998 along with the south Brook Trail Project.

Please consider treating yourself or a loved one to a copy of the print on our cover. It would make a wonderful Christmas gift! Remember, all proceeds go back into the Park.

Peter Pan Lawn Bowling Club Midstream Bowring Park St. John's, Newfoundland

1997 ATLANTIC BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP.

Although Newfoundland has, in the past few years, competed in this event, 1997 was the first time it has been held in this province. The Peter Pan Lawn Bowling Club hosted the event, from September 4th-7th at the Midstream Greens in Bowring Park. Eighty players competed in the men's and ladies Doubles and Triples.

The inclement weather for the first couple of days, including RDF, torrential rain and flooding of the greens, caused delays in play, but this did not deter the players from having a good competition. Fortunately, the weather was fine for the remainder of the tournament. From comments made at the time and letters of thanks received from the competing teams from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, since the event, the competitors were very pleased with all the arrangements, hospitality, accommodations and the beauty of Bowring Park and the city.

In the Ladies Triples, the Newfoundland team of Meta Percy, Marg Warr and Betty Bhnisch claimed the bronze. In the Men's Pairs, the Newfoundland team of Mike Murphy and Ray Kennedy also won the Bronze. New Brunswick dominated the tournament by winning four of the five titles and won the Sid Currie Memorial Trophy for the team Championship with 41 points, Nova Scotia was second with 39 and Newfoundland came third with 27, followed by PEI with 21 points. Nova Scotia's Currie Flynn was the recipient of the Sid Currie.

By J.J. Strong

AROUND THE OFFICE

Jim Ronan, General Manager

This summer was a busy one for Foundation Staff. We had 5 summer students working out of our office. Stacey Squires, Dianne Drover and Andrew Clark offered Guided Tours and kept the Conservatory open all summer. Kelly Reynolds was the Foundation's Administrative Assistant for the summer and Greg Chafe worked on a survey of South Brook Trail system.

The playground project is about 75% complete, with the remainder of the design work and construction to be completed early 1998. The Confederation Heritage Monument is completed with the lights being hooked up this week..

We had a number of special guests to the Park this summer. Along with the Queen, on June 25th Mr. Derrick Bowring and a large delegation from Great Britain visited at the Bungalow. Mr. & Mrs. John Empson were here in September from London. Mr. Empson is from the Friends of Kensington Garden. He was given a tour of the Park, taking extra time to discuss our Peter. I had the pleasure as well to give a tour of our Park to the Right Honorable, The Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councilor Joan McLaren earlier this year.

The Tea Room in the Bungalow and the Canteen at the Pool were a hit this summer. The Hamlyn Room at the Bungalow has been quite busy as well, since the Delta St. John's has taken over the facility. The room is available for weddings, conferences, receptions etc. For more information, call the Delta at 570-1609.

14 VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
TO KEEP THE CONSERVATORY OPEN
THIS WINTER. CALL 576-6134
TO VOLUNTEER FOR 2 HRS/ WEEK

PARK HISTORY (cont'd)

By Doug Crane

MONUMENTS

THE FIGHTING NEWFOUNDLANDER

The sacrifices made by the many young Newfoundlanders who fought overseas do not go unnoticed at Bowring Park. The majestic and lifelike "Fighting Newfoundlander" stands as a testament and a constant reminder of the price of liberty. It is located atop a lofty embankment on the far end of the Bungalow lawn overlooking the Waterford Valley, and depicts a soldier in full World War I battle gear, his right arm cocked and ready to throw a Mills bomb while he holds his rifle in his left hand.

This monument, which stands at an impressive height of 15 feet, including pedestal, was unveiled on September 13, 1922. It was donated by Sir Edgar R. Bowring, one of many gifts he gave to the park which bears his family's name.

"The Fighting Newfoundlander" was posed for by Corporal Thomas Pittman, a native of Fortune Bay, who died on April 10, 1966. Corporal Pittman received the distinguished Conduct Medal (D.C.M.) and the Military Medal (M.M.) for his service during World War I as a member of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. He went overseas for the first time in the fall of 1915, with 250 other young Newfoundland men, and was at the front lines during the famous Battle of Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916. Of the 802 young Newfoundlanders there on that fateful day, 752 went "over the top", while the remainder were kept back for defensive purposes. Corporate Pittman was assigned to the latter group that day, but it wasn't long before he found himself plunging headlong into battle. When he did, he was wounded three times - in the shoulder, side and head -

by flying shrapnel. After receiving treatment for these injuries, he returned to the front lines once again, and promptly suffered another injury, a bullet to his shoulder.

One day in 1918, while Pittman and the other members of the Regiment were stationed at Hazley Down Camp near Winchester, England, he was called to the orderly room and given some rather unusual orders: he was to dress in full battle gear and proceed to the Winchester School of Art. Once there, he reported to Captain Basil Gotto, a very famous sculptor commissioned to create a statue of a fighting soldier. Basil Gotto also designed the Caribou monument found at Bowring Park. The artist then closely scrutinized his would-be model before saying simply "all right, you'll do."

Over the next few months, for about an hour each day, Corporal Pittman held a steady pose while Captain Gotto worked away. The original statue, approximately four feet in height, was completed by early 1919. It is believed that this statue was soon purchased by a member of the Bowring family in England, and from that was created the monument which Sir Edgar Bowring donated to Bowring Park. The original still resides in England.

Throughout his two month modelling session, Corporal Pittman was often visited by members of his nearby Regiment, who would come to the studio to see, as they put it, "The Fighting Newfoundlander." This is how the monument got its name.

Perhaps the most striking feature of this statue is its lifelike appearance. Indeed, Basil Gotto's meticulous attention to detail is clearly evident in "The Fighting Newfoundlander", a quality Corporal Pittman himself was not fully aware of until one day in St. John's during World War II.

While visiting Bowring Park with his wife on this particular day, he stopped to admire his 15 foot high likeness. Another park visitor happened to stop by, and remarked that the soldier who posed for the statue must have been "very untidy", all the while not realizing who he was talking with. The stranger pointed out the unbuttoned tunic and the soldier's gas mask which was out of its pack. Corporal Pittman explained:

Well this is true and the way it should be because the statue is supposed to be the statue of a Fighting Newfoundlander. If you notice the shoulder tab is unbuttoned, the tunic is open at the neck and the gas mask has been pulled out and not replaced: this is the way the sculptor wanted it.

Corporal Pittman went on to mention how the heel of one of the statue's boots is worn down on one side, something he had always done inadvertently with his own footwear. "Captain Gotto noticed this," he said, "and put it on the statue."

Corporal Thomas Pittman may not have realized it, but in those two months spent with Captain Basil Gotto, he became a symbol of the brave and gallant Royal Newfoundland Regiment, having himself served with honour and distinction. Bowring Park's "Fighting Newfoundlander" will forever remain, as its inscription says,

A Tribute
To The Undying Memory of
The Royal Newfoundland Regiment
1914-1918.

More next time.

Editor	Ed Matthews
Associate Editor	Jim Ronan
Contributors	Joan Fogarty
	Judy Pinksen
	Susan O'Driscoll



WALKING TOURS

Throughout the summer of 1997, we were employed as tour guides by the Bowring Park Foundation. Our job position was to provide walking tours that lasted from 60 to 90 minutes, and this encompassed the original 50 acres of Bowring Park.

We also had a chance to provide short bus tours of the park with British Island Tours and a few other Bus tours that came through Bowring Park.

Highlights of the summer include the Queen's visit, when she waved to us, Peter Pan Days, and various Cabot 500 functions that were held in the park.

We had a great time learning about Historic Bowring Park, meeting a lot of exciting people, and having Jim Ronan as our boss. By Stacey Squires

PETER PAN DAY

On August 10th, 1997 the White Swan Club Committee hosted its annual "Peter Pan Day". In contrast to last year the weather was fine and this made for a large attendance by families and friends of the park.

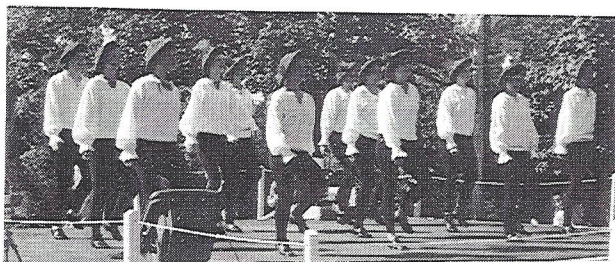
This year as in previous years, there was an uninterrupted schedule of entertainment. The performers give freely of their time and talent and on behalf of the children and the White Swan Club, we say **thank-you** for your goodwill and dedication.

The performances included the Discovery Dancers, the Jump Its, New Found Sound, Jim Joyce, Benny Malone, and the Loyal Shakespearean Company. Our **Peter Pan Mascot** (P.J. O'leary) was presented with a small gift for the enthusiastic part he played in the event.

Face painting, which is always a popular event, kept the volunteers busy all afternoon. The reading tent, hosted by Frontier College, was also a big hit for the younger children. The wheel of chance provided an opportunity for many children to take home stuffed toys etc., and kept the ticket sellers busy all afternoon.

A great deal of time and planning is required to make such an event happen, especially in mid summer when volunteers, like most people, have other commitments. What makes it all worthwhile is watching the children racing around, enjoying themselves, dancing and mimicking the entertainers.

The event this year was co-sponsored by the **St. John's Cabot 500 Committee** and our thanks to them for their support. From comments received, the day was considered a huge success and another opportunity for children to take home memories of the park.



PARK MEMORIES

A CARPET OF COLOURS

The Fall of the year is always beautiful. One need only take a walk through Bowring Park any time from September to the end of November to see how true this statement is. It is during these three months that the foliage throughout the Park puts on a colourful display for Park visitors to enjoy. The leaves on Bowring Park's many species of trees, shrubs and hedges turn every imaginable shade of yellow, red and orange. They then float to the ground to carpet the Park in a rug only nature could weave. This is a scene Park patrons have been enjoying every year since the Park opened in 1914.

Throughout the years, many a young visitor to Bowring Park would come to play on this colourful carpet. They would pile the leaves high and then jump and roll in them until they were practically a part of the rug themselves. Some would search the Park for hours, looking for that perfect maple or oak leaf that they could take home and press between two large books. Others were more interested in the seeds, nuts and berries that would also appear in Bowring Park during Autumn. Seeds and berries were strung and worn around the necks and wrists of young girls. Before leaving the Park, the pockets of young visitors would also be weighted down with acorns and chestnuts. When at home, the chestnuts would be dried, a hole would be driven into them with a nail, and a piece of string or a shoelace would be placed through the hole and secured with a knot. This would then be used in a game played with two players. One player would hold their chestnut steady while the other player would swing and hit it with their chestnut. Each player would take turns swinging. The person whose

chestnut remained in one piece would win. However, both players would usually walk away with more bruises than they started with. Two favourite trees for gathering prized chestnuts would be the tree at the east entrance to Bowring Park and a tree in the west end of the Park on land once owned by the LeMessurier family. This land would also hold another treasure during the Fall of the year; the crabapple. Some of the more foolhardy would venture onto the land in an attempt to steal the apples, only to be met with the wrath of Mr. LeMessurier himself. When the LeMessurier's vacated the property, they left behind not only crabapples but a patch of wild raspberries as well. These berries would be picked and brought home. From them delicious jams, pies and tarts would be made.

So much activity surrounds Bowring Park every Autumn. I suggest you get out and enjoy it before the carpet which covers the Park loses its colour and turns a shade of snow white.

Mary Lou Downey

NEW MEMBERS

Dr. Claire Gillingham
Margaret Madden
Diana, Sheldon & Drew Quinton
Carl & Stephanie Hutton
Ray, Cathy, Melissa, Amanda & Matthew Smallwood
Colin & Elspeth Baird
Richard & Richard Jr. Seypka
Bernard & Sandra Adey
Doug, Darlene & Stewart Scott
Eric & Suzanne Bartlett
Dennis O'Keefe
David, Ruth & Belle Steinhauer
Richard Cashin & Patrica Canning
Donna & Owen Meadus
Vincent Hancott
Gaynor Rowe & Glen Gillard