

Honorary Patron
Derrick Bowring



WHITE SWAN CLUB NEWSLETTER

1998/99 Fall/Winter



IN THIS ISSUE

Gala and Art Auction
The four seasons in the park
Park Memories

COVER PHOTO

A sampling of the Artwork
at the Auction



Judy Pinksen, nee Skinner, was born and grew up in St. John's and was educated at Prince of Wales Collegiate. After graduation in 1971 Judy enrolled in secretarial studies at Abbotts Commercial, a private school in St. John's. In 1972 she graduated and started her career with the Grace Hospital.

Over the years she has seen many changes in the health care system and for her, one of the major changes was leaving her friends at the Grace Hospital to take up new duties at the Health Sciences Centre.

Judy has three children, Kenneth, now working in Corner Brook, Stephanie, soon to graduate and Leanne, following close behind and anxious to get her driver's license.

Growing up in St. John's meant visiting Bowring Park and Judy remembers many picnics, swimming in the old swimming hole and countless other activities she enjoyed there with her parents. She has fond memories of boating on the duck pond and her photo album includes many pictures of time spent in her favourite place.

It is little wonder that when the call came to form the Bowring Park Foundation, Judy was quick to respond. She is a founding member of the organization and a very active member of the White Swan Club. Her first job was membership registration and dues collection, a very daunting task for a growing Foundation. For the past year she has been Co- Chairperson of the Bowring Park Foundation Gala & Art Auction, (see story).

Judy is very dedicated to the Foundation and what the membership is trying to accomplish. She would like to see improvements made to the duck pond in the near future and is pleased with the accomplishments to date.

In order for an organization such as the Bowring Park Foundation to succeed , you must have dedicated volunteers and with a membership made up of people like Judy, success is assured.

Editor
Associate Editor
Contributors

Ed Matthews
Jim Ronan
Eveleyn Bennett
Judy Pinksen
Susan O'Driscoll
Joan Fogarty
Mary Lou Downey

The Bowring Park Foundation's first Gala and Art Auction took place at the Delta St. John's Hotel and Conference Centre on Saturday, February 20.

The ballroom was transformed into a winter wonderland using indirect lighting and displaying outdoor winter artifacts from days of long ago. An old-fashioned horse sleigh borrowed from Rainbow Riders was the centrepiece of the display.

Following the dinner, which featured salmon, auctioneer John Fitzpatrick, offered up the original art pieces by twenty-one local and well-known artists, some of who used Bowring Park as the subjects of their piece. The last item auctioned was a park bench and arbour. Jim Clarke, manager of Park Services for the City arranged to have these pieces designed and built by Gerald Porter and Tim Raymond, using the familiar rustic pattern seen throughout the park.

Board chairperson Bruce Templeton welcomed guests and in a short talk gave some background on the formation of the Bowring Park Foundation and projects it has undertaken. Next Mayor Andy Wells brought greetings from the city and recognized the contribution of the Foundation in the development of the park. He thanked the members for their hard work and dedication. The master of ceremonies for the evening was Mr. Paul Magee.

An added feature during the evening was the display in the Crush Lobby by the White Swan Club and the Planning and Priorities Committee which provided information about the past and future projects of the Foundation. Of particular interest were the architectural drawings for the proposed amphitheatre for the park.

The Gala event was by all accounts a great success and the Foundation sincerely thanks the planning committee

Judy Pinksen co-chair

Evelyn Bennett co-chair

Sheila Barrett

Donna Meadus

for their efforts as well as all those who volunteered their time and resources both at the E. B. Foran Room of City Hall during the exhibition and at the Gala itself.



PARK HISTORY (cont'd)

by Doug Crane

**RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
and PROGRAMS****Lawn Bowling**

By many accounts, the lawn bowling green found at Bowring Park is the best of its kind in the entire province, providing the participant with a lovely setting in which to play this enjoyable game. It has been in place for ten years, having formerly been a soccer field.

Lawn bowling is truly a game for everyone, and the program carried out each summer reflects this. Youth, adult, and seniors groups are offered instruction and playing time daily, under the watchful eyes of trained personnel. If one prefers to play without a fixed schedule, public playing time is also provided. All these services are provided for a nominal fee.

Located just inside the park's west gate on the left, the lawn bowling green is becoming an increasingly popular destination for recreational pursuits. The game itself offers many opportunities for socializing and activity, regardless of skill level, and is a great way to spend a lovely day or cool summer's evening.

Tennis Courts

One of the most popular recreational pursuits among the citizens of St. John's and surrounding areas is tennis, and Bowring Park is a great place to play. The park has four doubles courts and one singles court located next to South Brook near the duck pond, just east of the Pink Granite Stone Bridge. During the warmer months, young and old alike flock there throughout the day to participate in this exciting sport.

Tennis courts at Bowring Park have been in place since the 1920's, when two grass courts were quite an attraction, so much so that people would form long lines waiting to play. Other grass courts were soon constructed to meet the ever growing demand, with hard courts appearing in the 1940's. The courts were also popular in winter, when park staff would flood them to create a skating rink.

Nowadays, the City operates a very successful summer tennis program complete with well-trained and enthusiastic personnel. During the week, these instructors are available for both youth and adult lessons, catering to all skill levels. Private lessons and family tennis activities are carried out on the weekends, complete with instruction. Also, courts can be reserved in advance for those wishing to avoid the ever-present line ups. All is provided for a nominal fee.

More next time.



Captain's Falls Bridge

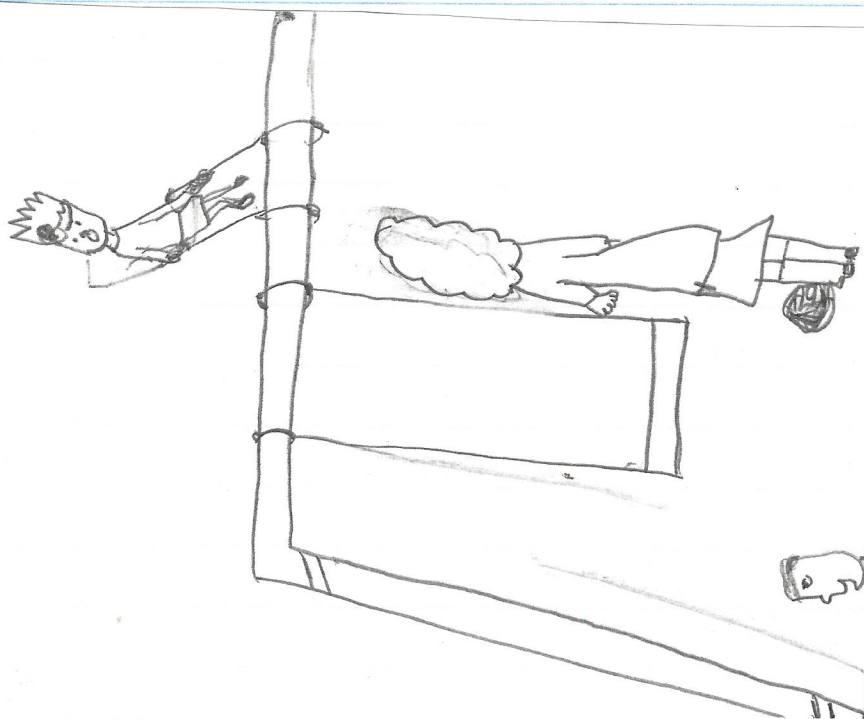
Bowring Park

Bowring park is one of my favorite places to go. I love to play on the jungle jims and take walks on the trail. I love to take rides on the poneyr in the summer time and swim in the pool too. I love to take rides in the sllagh in the winter and also slide down the snowy banks.

My dad pushes me and my brother around and around on the marical rounds, and my mom pushes us up and down on the swings.

My family and I love to have picnicks in the park. Sometimes we eat in the bungalow and sometimes we sit at a picknick table or just sit on a blanket on the ground. Usually when we're finished eating we feed our scraps to the ducks. Then we all sit around and talk to let our food setel before we move around abt agin.

We usually end off our day at the park by playing a good game of hide and go seek. My family and I just love to go to Bowring park.



Robyn Reynolds

Age 10

PARK MEMORIES

SLEIGH BELLS RING

You would never say it if you gazed out your window this winter or even that of last year, but in years past, St. John's would find itself buried deep in snow from November to March. In the 1920's and 30's, snow clearing equipment such as plows and snow blowers were not a part of the municipal council's arsenal against winter's worst. Therefore, cars were forced into hibernation while the horse and sleigh took their place. The roar of the engine was replaced with the welcomed jingle of sleigh bells that could be heard for miles. City streets, which were the domain of the motorcar, were taken over by horses and children who would use the hills of St. John's as their winter playground.

Farmers and the city's more well to do would sit upon the seat of their passenger sleigh, tucked under layers of woolen blankets or fur while their horse, adorned in bells, would take them where they wanted to go. For some, the destination would be Bowring Park. Passenger trains to the Park were halted during the winter months. So the only way into the Park was by foot or by sleigh. Bowring Park was considered quite a distance from town during these years. Some would choose to journey by foot as a means of exercise, but the more preferred mode of travel would be the horse drawn sleigh. During the weekends, couples and families would board their sleigh and take a pleasant trip out of the city and into the wilderness of Bowring Park. What awaited them was a winter wonderland.

Sleighs would meander through the parks pathways with the sound of bells echoing through the snow laden trees. The passengers, bundled against the cold, would look upon the glistening pond, the frozen waterfalls and the landscape covered in a blanket of white. The sleigh, on its runners, being pulled by a trotting horse, would gently glide along the surface of the snow, past the Park's monuments and more notable landmarks; which like the cars appeared to be hibernating, awaiting Spring.

The ride was not always a smooth one. Snow would build up and become packed down in a series of waves on which the sleigh would bounce in a most uncomfortable manner. Hollows formed and when it rained they filled with water which greatly aggravated the driving conditions. But experiencing the natural splendour of Bowring Park was worth a few bumps along the way. If anything, the bumps would make the sleigh bells ring all the louder.

Mary Lou Downey

Near the present site of Corpus Christi Church by the Waterford River in the early 1900's



The Four Seasons in the Park

I love to go to Bowring Park. In the spring, I like to go for walks on the hiking trails in the park. Some of them can be pretty tough, but I enjoy the challenge.

In the summer, I love to go swimming in Bowring Park pool. I always have lots of fun in the pool and swimming is my favourite way in the world to cool off.

In the fall, I play soccer in the park with my brother. After we play soccer, we push a bunch of leaves into a pile and jump in them.

In the winter is when I have the most fun in the park! I go for rides on the horse-and-sleigh and build snowmen. My brother and I **LOVE** to have snowball fights in the park! Bowring Park is one of my favourite places to go.

The End

ADAM REYNOLDS
AGE 12
ST. JOHN'S

We extend a warm **WELCOME** to the following new White Swan Club Members :

Lloyd Burry
Sheila Gushue
Arther George
Cliff George
Ian Sparkes
Stewart Montgomerie
Leona Tooenheimer
Dave Hoddinott
Peter Roberts
Terry Crawford
Carl Stevenson
Tish Holland
Joan Blackmore-Thistle
Stirling Blackwood
Julia Pickard
Frank LaPointe
Ed Roche
Gary Kennedy
Jon Wilkinson
Gerry Squires
Bruce LeDain
Carla Crawford
Lloyd Pretty
Richard Steele
Deborah and Joe Ricketts



Around the Office

Jim Ronan, General Manager

We've done it again! Survived yet another Newfoundland winter that is. And what a wonderful winter it has been. As a matter of fact it has been such a mild winter, the **White Swan Club** has again had to cancel its winter carnival, the Fabulous February Frolic.

We hope that the excellent weather continues so that we can begin construction of the new **Amphitheatre** as soon as possible. The designers are working diligently to have details and documents ready for a May construction start, with an anticipated August opening.

The Bowring Park Foundation (BPF) is hopeful to be able to begin improvements on the **South Brook Trail** soon. The improvements will include, among other things, drainage improvements, rest stops, handrails and directional signs. **The Grand Concourse Authority**, the same agency who did the marvelous job on the T'Railway through Bowring Park last summer, are presently working on the details for the South Brook Trail and will commence work as soon as funds are made available.

Red Oak Catering Inc. has been appointed the Caterer and Concessionaire for the Bungalow and the Park. They are looking forward to a mid April opening of the facility. They will operate a dining room in the Bungalow, to be known as **Peter's Pantry**. Offering light, affordable lunches, it will be a full time operation during the summer months and open on weekends otherwise. **The Bungalow will also be available for meetings, parties, barbecues, weddings, etc.** Red Oak will also operate the canteen at the swimming pool and the Amphitheatre. Red Oak owners John Rogers and David Kannenburgh will be operating from an on site office and would appreciate it if Park patrons dropped by for a coffee or tea to discuss any comments or questions they might have.

The Newfoundland Historic Parks Association (NHPA) will be operating their Gift Shop in the Bungalow this season. Following renovations at the Bungalow, the Gift Shop will be accessed from a new entrance off the verandah. A group of White Swan Club members will be working with the NHPA to

produce a number of Bowring Park related merchandise items that will be offered for sale in the new Gift Shop. Club members will be creating a collection of hand crafted wood pens, letter openers and other items, all made from material pruned from the trees of Bowring Park.

Why not take a family member or friend to lunch, and stop by the Gift Shop for a visit while you're here. Remember, a commission on all sales in the Park is paid to the Foundation to help us with our many and varied projects.

The Foundation's **Gala and Art Auction**, held on February 20th, was a great success. Judging by the response it is safe to say that we will be hearing more from the Committee that organized the event. **Hats off to Committee members Evelyn Bennett, Sheila Barrett, Judy Pinksen and Donna Meadus for a job well done.**

The Shakespeare By The Sea Festival, who had a very successful run of a Midsummer Night's Dream in the Park last year, is proposing a new production for the Park this summer. Further discussions will be taking place soon.

The BPF is working with the City of St. John's to plan a garden party on the Bungalow lawn to celebrate the **International Year of Older Persons (IYOP)**. This special IYOP project is being proposed for July. More details will follow as they become available.

The Foundation is also working with other partners to host a family day this August, much like the hugely successful Punter's and Friends concert last August. Once again, more details will be made available as plans progress.

The many people who dropped by the office last fall with complaints of sewage entering the South Brook near Captain's Falls Bridge will be pleased to know that Environment Canada have detected the cause of the problem and have had the City do repairs to rectify it. Thanks again for your concern. This just goes to show that when you do recognize problems such as this, it certainly is worthwhile to report it.

I do hope that we continue to have exceptional weather right into summer, so that you all can continue to enjoy beautiful Bowring Park.

~ HAPPY TRAILS I ~