

NOMINATION FOR SACKVILLE'S SEVEN WONDERS

We call it the Swan Pond today, but this 110 year old 'wonder' was called the Ladies' College Park Pond when it was first built. That was in 1901.

The land lay behind the house of Charles F. Allison, founder of the University, and was unused and swampy. The funds to excavate a pond that would beautify the Ladies' College Park were provided by Sackville resident Josiah Wood (Senator, Lieutenant Governor, Sackville's first mayor).

Mount Allison graduate Raymond Claire Archibald facilitated the installation of the fountain in 1902. He turned to Owens Gallery director John Hammond to design it, and it was made from stone taken from nearby Pickard's Quarry (at the end of Quarry Lane). This beautiful water attraction was an immediate hit. Young damsels could boat on it in the summer and skate or play hockey on it in the winter. In fact, in the beginning the only man allowed to use it was Ladies' College Principal B. C. Borden! Over the years, the pond's restrictions were lifted and citizens and students alike could skate, play hockey, boat, and enjoy the burbling sound of the fountain.

After the closure of the Ladies' College in 1935, the pond became known as the Lily Pond. When swans were acquired for the pond in August 1968, it gradually became known as the Swan Pond and remains so to the current time.

The pond sometimes suffered indignities; at various periods it was choked with water lilies, was waded through by freshmen during initiation, and even had a car parked on one of its islands, courtesy of the Engineers. There were even times when the fountain was in danger of disintegration. But always this was put to rights to allow this wonderful Sackville asset to be enjoyed by all.

When visiting, former Sackville residents and Mount Allison alumni make it a priority to at least drive by the pond, just to ensure that 'home' has not changed, and to gaze and recall memories of times spent there. Those of us lucky enough to call Sackville our permanent home, know that it is still well-used - by prom and wedding photographers, hockey players and skaters, those who like to feed the ducks and swans, or by those who like to sit quietly, listening to the fountain and watching the swans float by. Ah, relaxation.

The pond is surely worthy of a Seven Wonders of Sackville designation.

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Photo: Kip Jackson, 2008



Photo: Courtesy of Mount Allison Archives, 1905