



Memorial University of Newfoundland

Introduction

Established as a living memorial to those who served in the First and Second World Wars, Memorial University of Newfoundland has had a profound impact on virtually every aspect of our society. Since the official opening of Memorial University College in 1925, more than 80,000 alumni have contributed to every discipline in the province and, indeed, the world.

A Living Memorial

Memorial University College was established in 1925 as a living memorial to the Newfoundlanders who had lost their lives on active service during the First World War.

In light of the great loss suffered during the previous war, Newfoundland didn't impose a draft during the Second World War, 1939-1945. However many Newfoundlanders still volunteered. Of those recruits, 310 former students of the Memorial University College offered themselves for active service. Regrettably, 30 of these students lost their lives. Their names are proudly recorded in the front of the university's *Calendar* each year.

In the Arts and Administration Building on the St. John's campus a commemorative plaque, erected by the Newfoundland Command of the Royal Canadian Legion, features this dedication:

This University was raised by the People of Newfoundland as a Memorial to the fallen in the Great Wars 1914-1918 and 1939-1945, that in freedom of learning their cause and sacrifice may not be forgotten.

The plaque was unveiled by HRH the Princess Royal, Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Newfoundland, on Sept. 21, 1964, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the formation of the regiment in 1914.

A Solid Foundation

Our story begins with the end of the Great War. By the end of the war nearly 1,500 of our brave soldiers had died in battle. This tragedy would be mourned for generations to come, therefore it was decided that a school would be established as a memorial to those Newfoundlanders who had died in active service. After all, it was because of those soldiers' valiant efforts that the people of this province now had a solid foundation on which they could build a brighter future. Everyone agreed that a university would be a truly befitting tribute with which to honour our fallen soldiers and their great sacrifice

On September 15, 1925, five faculty members and 55 full-time students opened Memorial University College at Merrymeeting Road and Parade Street in St. John's. This would become an institution of scholarship and quality, opportunity and equality. Over the next two decades enrolment would increase and the college would grow to offer two year pre-agriculture, -medical, -dental and –



engineering programs in addition to teaching training, chemistry, physics, mathematics, history, English, French, German and of course, the Classics.

University Status

Nearly two decades after Memorial University College had been established, the world was thrust into the Second World War. Due to the great loss incurred during the previous war Newfoundland didn't impose a draft. Still, that didn't stop thousands of recruits from bravely volunteering to go into battle.

By the end of 1945, the war had ceased and Newfoundland's soldiers had begun to return home. To commemorate the fallen, the college was rededicated to also encompass the 1,089 lives lost during this war.

As the veterans returned, the college experienced a surge in enrolment. Despite recent events, positivity was abundant and people were eager to pursue a promising future. Enrolment peaked at 434 students in 1946, and as a result, overcrowded classrooms and laboratories became the norm. As a temporary spacing solution, the government acquired two nearby former American military buildings. Increased enrolment, new academic offerings and a shift in social and economical mindset confirmed Newfoundland's need for a full-scale university.

Soon after Newfoundland joined Confederation in 1949, a bill was passed elevating the college to university status. From that moment on, we would be known to the world as Memorial University of Newfoundland.

St. John's Campus

The newly formed university placed a heavy emphasis on broad-based undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences. During the mid-1950's Memorial proudly added its first graduate programs, in English and chemistry, followed soon after by other select disciplines.

Enrolment steadily increased throughout the decade. Despite several temporary measures to accommodate the growing faculty and study body, the Parade Street campus inevitably became over-crowded. Memorial University is an institution dedicated to providing educational opportunity to those who pursue it. Therefore the university deeply regretted implementing a necessary cap of 600 on first year student enrolment that started in 1958. This limitation remained until 1961, when Memorial University proudly opened its new campus on Elizabeth Avenue.

The official opening, held on Monday, Oct. 9 1961, saw a turnout of over 15,000 high school and university students, as well as local schools, businesses and community organizations. Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, Premier Joseph R. Smallwood, the presidents of 41 of Canada's 42 universities, and representatives from the United Kingdom, the United States and Portugal were all present to witness the inauguration of this new campus

Harlow Campus

In an attempt to strengthen relationships between Newfoundland and Britain, President Lord Taylor established a residential campus in the town of Harlow, England, where he had once served as a medical officer.

In 1968 the university purchased several adjoining buildings to accommodate about 70 students, and opened the doors of Harlow Campus one year later. Today, students in a variety of degree programs spend a semester abroad to broaden their academic and cultural horizons and gain invaluable practical experience in disciplines such as engineering, business, social services, arts, theatre, visual arts, sciences and education.

Grenfell Campus

In the early 1970s the university approved the creation of a branch campus to enable students from outside the Avalon Peninsula to study closer to home. Bowater Newfoundland Limited donated 100 acres of land near Corner Brook to Memorial University to build this new regional college.

The West Coast Regional College – named Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in 1979 – officially opened in 1975, housing 400 students registered in first and second-year courses in arts, science and education. Since then the campus has been renamed Grenfell Campus. Students at Grenfell Campus can now complete 16 degree programs there in disciplines such as science, social science, arts and fine arts.

Marine Institute

After Memorial University moved out of the Parade Street campus, then Newfoundland Premier Smallwood opened the College of Fisheries, Navigation, Marine Engineering and Electronics there in 1964. Two decades later the ‘The Fisheries College,’ as it was then known colloquially, moved to a new building on Ridge Road and was renamed the Institute of Fisheries and Marine Technology.

Following a review of the Marine Institute and the community college system in 1992, the provincial government merged the institute with Memorial University. The Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland, as it was named, offered degree programs at the undergraduate and masters levels, as well as diploma programs, short-term training and industry research.

The institute has three primary structures: the School of Fisheries, the School of Maritime Studies, and the School of Ocean Technology. In addition to the St. John’s campus, satellite facilities include ships of up to 130 feet (40 m) in length, training facilities at pier 25 in St. John’s, Offshore Safety and Survival Centre’s training centre in Foxtrap, and the Safety and Emergency Response Training Centre in Stephenville.

Research

Expansion after the opening of the Elizabeth Ave. campus was not measured merely in programs, buildings and student numbers. New and exciting research programs reflected Memorial's continuing commitment to academic excellence, particularly in areas that related to the need and opportunities of this province.

ISER

As part of the university's commitment to Newfoundland, the university established the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) in 1961 to examine relevant issues in the province. Under the direction of Ian Whitaker, Parzival Copes, and Robert Paine, ISER gained international renown for scholarly research and publishing. Today the institute supports comparative research. It undertakes, sponsors and publishes social and economic research within disciplines and parts of the globe that are relevant to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Marine Science Research Laboratory

In 1967 the Marine Sciences Research Laboratory was established at Logy Bay. As part of Memorial University's mandate to foster greater collaboration in marine research and education programs, in 1988 the university merged the Marine Sciences Research Laboratory in Logy Bay with the Newfoundland Institute for Cold Ocean Science to form the Ocean Sciences Centre. This centre's focus was to research the development of aquaculture to support commercial cultivation of mussels, scallops, arctic char, cod and salmon. Recently this site was designated as the Faculty of Science's newest addition, the Department of Ocean Sciences.

Botanical Garden

To preserve and promote the natural history of this province, the university established the Botanical Garden at Oxen Pond within C.A Pippy Park. Since its opening in 1977, the garden has grown from one hectare of land to cover 44.5 hectares. The garden is open to the public, displaying plants native to the province and cultivating plants suitable to the local climate. The garden serves as a resource for basic and applied botanical research and education, particularly for studying the flora of Newfoundland and Labrador.

QEII Library

After the opening of the Elizabeth Ave. campus, the university saw a huge increase in enrolment, and library could no longer meet the needs of the academic body. Built to service 2,000 students in 1961, the library was hard-pressed to accommodate approximately 10,000 students nearly two decades later.

On July 27, 1978, her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh presided over a ceremony to turn a sod, an event that marked the start of construction of the new library – named the Queen Elizabeth II Library in her honour.

Today, the library stands five stories high, filled with material to support the variety of disciplines taught at the university. It contains over 1,058,600 monographs, 93,900 maps, 13,600 audio-visual titles, and over 70,000 journal titles amounting to 303,500 journal and serial volumes. There are designated study areas on each floor. The library houses the Centre for Newfoundland Studies and the Archives and Special Collections Division – a high quality, learner-centered information service supporting research, learning, and writing within the university community, and access point for print, electronic and technology resources.

Academic

When the Elizabeth Ave. campus opened in 1961, Memorial was a small liberal arts institution with miniscule graduate programs, limited research facilities and almost no professional schools. Today, Memorial had grown to become a significant research establishment with several professional schools, each providing high-level training and professional development.

School of Nursing

In 1953, the newly incorporated Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland documented the need for a school of nursing within the province. After a presentation to the Senate, the Department of Nursing was established within the Faculty of Arts and Science, and the first class was admitted in the fall of 1966. After several successful years training nurses for service, the department was elevated to the status of a school in 1974.

School of Medicine

Many years of work and dedication went into the formation of Canada's sixteenth medical school. The Royal Commission on Canada Health Service recommended its establishment, as did the Lord Brain Royal Commission and the university's own McFarlane feasibility commission report. With financial commitments from the federal and provincial governments, a medical program was developed and the first undergraduates were admitted in the fall of 1969.

Faculty of Engineering

Memorial University started offering three-year diplomas in Engineering in 1930, however full degree requirements had to be completed outside Newfoundland. During the mid 20th century the province experienced a demand for civil and electrical engineers. As a result a Senate committee gathered in 1966 to recommend that Memorial establish a degree program in engineering.

Within a year an engineering co-operative program was approved. It was decided that students would alternate academic terms with work terms in industry in order to gain a healthy mixture of theoretical and practical skills by prior to graduating. In 1968 Angus Bruneau was appointed dean, and engineering degrees were offered in four disciplines – civil, electrical, mechanical and mining.

During the 2000s, Memorial reaped the benefits of what was sown in the 1990s with the Opportunity Fund, while the university's programs and outreach continued to grow. The new student centre, the Smallwood Centre (also known as the University Centre) opened in March 2000 and, in



October 2002, the Field House, the centre of recreation and sporting activities on the St. John's campus, officially opened.

Other major infrastructure projects include the redevelopment of the old Thomson Student Centre into the Inco Innovation Centre, an \$18-million rebuild that included research labs, project rooms and a 325-seat lecture hall.

During the 2000s, successive provincial governments continued their support of Memorial University, enacting and maintaining a tuition freeze for students that have kept Memorial's tuition rates among the lowest in the country.

In November 2009 the Board of Regents announced that Dr. Gary Kachanoski would be Memorial's next president and vice-chancellor, succeeding Dr. C. Loomis (President Pro-Tem). Dr. Kachanoski assumed that post on July 1, 2010.

Photograph Album

To view a wide selection of photos that span the 90 year history of Memorial University, please see *Celebrate Memorial! A pictorial history of Memorial University of Newfoundland* (http://www.mun.ca/memorial_history/photo.html).