

# IN PIPPY PARK

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

October, November, December, 2009



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## The Friends of Pippy Park at 25

**Founding Member Mike Manning recalls the early days of The Friends.**

**By: Mike Manning**

On Wednesday, February 29<sup>th</sup> 1984, a public meeting was held at Queens College in order to form a new not-for-profit society to be known as the "Friends of Pippy Park". A total of fifty five people attended the meeting.

Pippy Park Commission Chair Tom Doyle hosted the meeting and Mr Joe Moran, Executive Director of the Wascana Centre Authority in Regina, Saskatchewan was the guest speaker.

The Wascana Centre is a large public park in which the University of Saskatchewan, the City of Regina and the Saskatchewan Government are partners. Joe noted that this model has been used to establish Pippy Park, but though Wascana has been established for over 20 years he envied the hills the ponds and especially the trees we

### Founding Officers

**Dr. M. O. Morgan**, *Honourary President*  
**Dr. Doug Eaton**, *Chairman*  
**Dave Howley**, *Vice-Chairman*  
**Jennifer Soper**, *Treasurer*  
**Elizabeth Wagenast**, *Secretary*  
**Darrel Squires**, *Publicity*  
**Dr. Frank O'Connor**, *member*  
**Shane O'Dea**, *member*  
**Colleen Borek**, *member*  
**Carmen Mews**, *member*  
**Dr. Ward Neale**, *member*  
**Peter Strong**, *member*  
**Fred Taylor**, *member*  
**Mike Manning**, *Pippy Park Commission, ex. officio member*

already had. They had to create theirs from a flat prairie landscape.

It was agreed that the objectives of the Friends should be,

1. To raise public awareness of, and interest in Pippy Park
2. To sponsor Federal and other work programmes in the Park
3. To organize and perform volunteer work in the Park
4. To act as a lobby group in the interests of the Park
5. To raise funds for projects and activities in the Park.

The first meeting of the Committee was held in the Boardroom of the old park

headquarters on April 9th.

### First year Activities

Cleanup Campaigns June and October,

Federal Works Programme May-September 1984

Under the Environment 2000 programme the Friends sponsored two projects:

1. Forest Improvement, thinning and cleaning the woods beside Nagles Hill Brook and other areas.

2. Stream Enhancement, replacing culvert at Left Pond, placing spawning gravel in Larry's Bog, Nagles Hill Brook at Left Pond, Leary's Brook and Rennie's River.

Under the V.I.P. (Volunteer Initiatives Programme) two individuals were hired during the winter, one to encourage winter activities in the park and the other to engage in a wildlife study and brochure.

During the year the Friends purchased two animals for the Children's Animal Farm. "Caitlin" was a

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## Inside



### MUNdays Tree Planting



### Christmas in Pippy Park



### 'Deadly Nightshade' on Campus - Dr. Peter Scott





# The Friends of Pippy Park at 25

Highland heifer and “Sabrina” was a miniature donkey. Fundraising was greatly assisted by the committee member Fred Taylor who had raised money to purchase “Harley” the llama for the Children’s Farm. Special buttons were sold to raise money for the purchase of the other animals.

The Christmas celebration at the Children’s Farm with a live “manger scene” consisting of the Junior Friends who volunteered at the farm (plus a new-born “baby Jesus”) and the donkey, llama and a goat from the farm attracted an unexpectedly large turnout and was featured on the cover of the Christmas edition of the Newfoundland Herald!

The event was sponsored by the Friends. The Salvation Army band and St. Thomas’ Junior Choir led the singing of carols. Because of the dangerous congestion both inside and outside of the barn it was decided to hold this event outdoors in future!

In late January 1985 the Newfoundland Herald assisted by the Friends of Pippy Park sponsored the second Family Day in the Park. The weather was snowy but pleasant. The event was widely publicized by the Herald. Sleigh rides, skiing, skating, a campfire with hot chocolate and a marshmallow roast, tips on fitness and orienteering in the “log cabin” were just some of the attractions. The Herald sold woolly toques, with the proceeds going to The Friends. There were prizes and giveaways, and the day

was considered a huge success.

It was estimated at the time that close to 2,000 cars were parked in every available space on that Sunday causing considerable traffic congestion in the whole neighbourhood. Both these winter events had proved too successful!

The previous year the Herald had sponsored a similar event but with the absence of snow the attendance had been quite small.

In February the Friends organized a “Fun Ski” on the Three Pond Barrens in co-operation with the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth, Fitness Division. Trophies were presented to the adult and junior winners in the old “19<sup>th</sup> Hole” Clubhouse.

In June the first Pippy Park cleanup was organized by the Friends with the assistance of the Department of University Works and the City of St. John’s. In spite of less than favourable weather over 50 people young and old turned out and cleaned along the trails and roadways throughout the park. Another cleanup was organized in October but had a much smaller response. Cleanups have been carried out most years ever since.

In partnership with the St. John’s Cross-Country Ski Club the Friends conducted a ski rental programme based at the Park Headquarters. The ski club donated the skis and the Friends administered the rentals.



Sabrina, the Miniature Donkey  
Mike Manning/FOPP Photo



Caitlin, the Highland Heifer  
Mike Manning/FOPP Photo



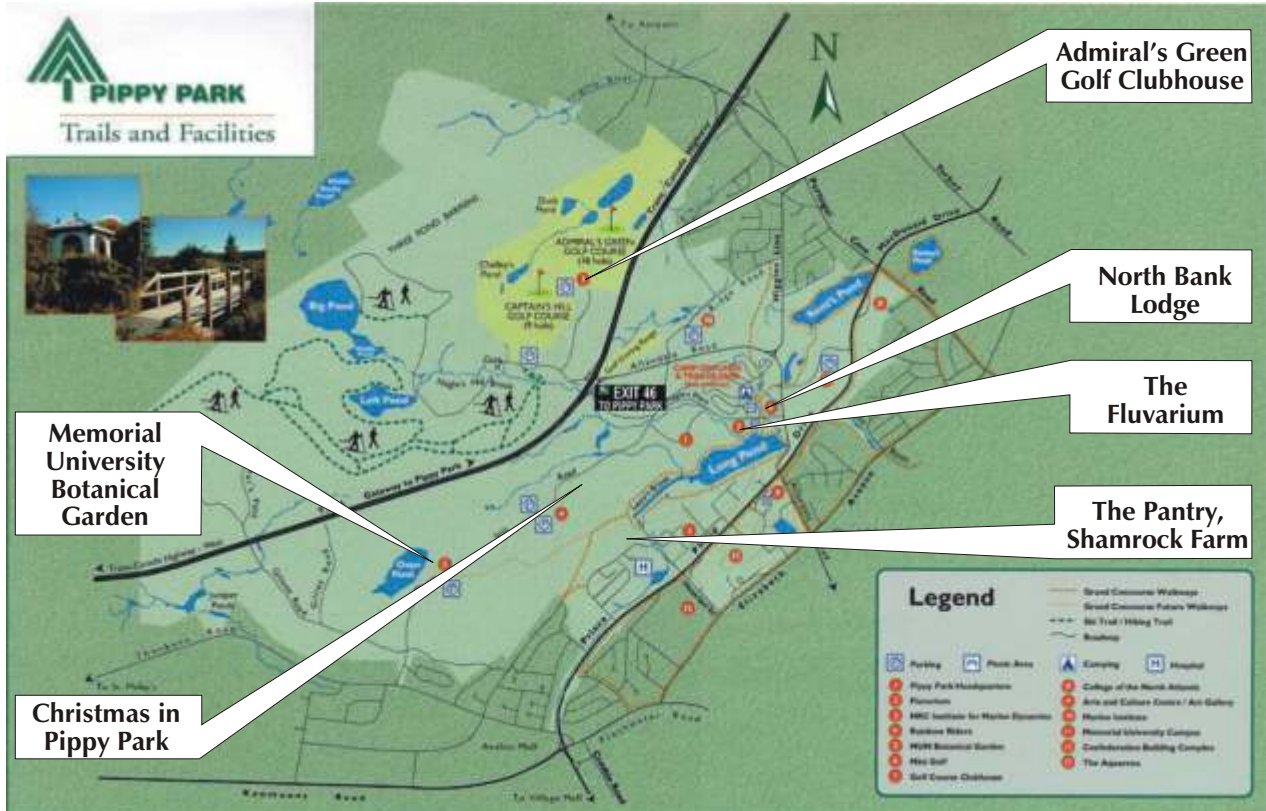
David Howley, newly-elected president of the Friends of Pippy Park and St. John’s Deputy Mayor Shannie Duff, discuss the Quidi Vidi-Rennie’s River-Pippy Park development project during the park group’s annual meeting Tuesday night. Mrs. Duff said one of the projects in the development, a fluviarium, will be built at Pippy Park at an estimated cost of \$175,000.



**The Friends 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon**  
 Wednesday, November 25,  
 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm,  
 Admiral’s Green Golf Clubhouse,  
 Allandale Road, Pippy Park.  
 Tickets \$20 each,  
 RSVP to Mike Manning  
 at (709) 738 3611

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Rainbow Riders

# Christmas in Pippy Park

The Annual “Christmas in Pippy Park” pageant is scheduled for Saturday afternoon, December 19<sup>th</sup> at the Rainbow Riders indoor riding arena on Mount Scio Road. This much beloved event will run from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, and will feature a live nativity scene performed by the Rainbow Rider children, together with horses and other farmyard animals. There will be a Christmas carol sing-a-long, and free hot chocolate and donuts (while supplies last), courtesy of Tim Horton’s.

Parking is limited on site. Visitors are asked not to park on the side of Mount Scio Road.



Avalon East Wellness Coalition

# Winter Wellness Event

On Sunday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, the Avalon East Wellness Coalition and the St. John’s Department of Recreation present an afternoon of fun and activities for all ages and abilities at North Bank Lodge, Nagles Place from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. There will be free snowshoeing, and cross country skiing, and refreshments will be provided.

In the event that the weather is not cooperative, this event will take place on Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup>. More information is available at the Wellness Coalition website: [www.wellnesscoalition-avaloneast.ca](http://www.wellnesscoalition-avaloneast.ca)



I MUNDays

# MUN Students Plant 1000 Trees

For the sixth year, the Friends of Pippy Park and the Pippy Park Commission have partnered with Memorial University’s I MUNDays Community Service Day (held on October 31<sup>st</sup> this year) to plant white spruce seedlings and spring-flowering crocus bulbs in Pippy Park.

This year’s seedlings were sponsored as a carbon-offset initiative by the 2009 Canadian Society for Civil Engineering Conference, held in St. John’s at the end of May.

Also, as part of the same MUNDays event, work was undertaken by MUN students on creating a community garden in Pippy Park, removing invasive non-native plants, and creating a butterfly garden on the MUN campus.





# 'Deadly Nightshade' Growing on MUN South Campus

In our last issue of In Pippy Park, we examined the presence of 'Giant Hogweed' in Pippy Park. In this issue, Dr. Peter Scott, former Director of Memorial University's Botanical Garden and retired Professor of Biology, turns the spotlight on 'Deadly Nightshade'.



Deadly Nightshade Flower (left), Leaves and seeds (right)

Images: [www.nutridieta.com/tag/belladonna](http://www.nutridieta.com/tag/belladonna) and <http://pharmacy63.cade.uic.edu/pharmacy/garden/viewPlant.asp?plantID=5>

By: Dr. Peter Scott

There are many colonies of Nightshade or Bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*) in the St. John's area. It is a scrambling plant with starry purple flowers and clusters of red teardrop-shaped berries. We also have one clump of the classic Deadly Nightshade, (*Atropa belladonna*).

In 1982, the electricians at MUN asked if the lush

icious-looking, shiny, black fruit growing by their workshop was edible - **NO!!!**

The Latin name tells much about the plant. It contains the alkaloid atropine which is used by ophthalmologists to dilate the pupil during eye exams. Medieval Italian ladies considered large pupils attractive; thus, *bella donna*.

Our plant of Deadly

greenhouse on the east side of the Science Building which was originally run by Mike Manning and is now part of the Biology Department. I worked in the greenhouse and as a patrolman in Pippy Park (summers 1966/7). The plant is in a hot, south-facing alcove and probably got established in the 1970's. Its probable origin? Some shrubs were

imported from the Netherlands around that time, where Deadly Nightshade is native, and held in a cold frame by the greenhouse. Seeds could have been in the root ball.

To protect the clump from damage MUN's Horticulturalist, Chris Baird, had a fence and interpretive sign erected. The plant is still flourishing. Our plant was the first record of the species in Canada and may still be the only one - making it Newfoundland's and possibly Canada's rarest plant. In North America, it is occasionally found on the Pacific coast of the US.

To note its special status, I did a watercolour painting of it for the annual exhibition at MUN Botanical Garden which opened in early November.



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## INFORMATION AND EVENTS

## OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2009

Elaine Dobbin Centre for Autism

### The Pantry

The Pantry (phone 722-8200) at the Elaine Dobbin Centre for Autism (Shamrock Farm) just across from the Janeway Hospital is a perfect location to enjoy tasty food in an exceptional quiet, rural setting. Much of the fresh salads and vegetables are now "home grown" right outside the "Pantry" windows! It is open on weekdays 10 am - 4 pm and has become very busy so go early or phone ahead!

Memorial University

### Botanical Garden

32<sup>nd</sup> Garden & Nature Art Exhibition at MUN Botanical Garden Friday, November 6 - Wednesday, December 9. The Garden and Nature Exhibition is an annual event intended to encourage the photography and illustration of natural things. This multi-media show has featured Newfoundland artists of all ages for over 30 years.

The Botanical Garden is located at 306 Mount Scio Road, just north of the main university campus in St. John's. In 2007, the Garden celebrated 30 years of welcoming the public. [www.mun.ca/botgarden](http://www.mun.ca/botgarden) phone (709) 737-8590

[www.fluvarium.ca](http://www.fluvarium.ca)

### The Fluvarium

The Fluvarium 5, Nagles Place [www.fluvarium.ca](http://www.fluvarium.ca) phone (709) 754-3474 provides a unique underwater experience where freshwater wildlife can be watched in their natural habitat. There are lots of exhibits and activities for children. The Fluvarium is open daily.



## IN PIPPY PARK

IN PIPPY PARK is published six times a year by the Pippy Park Promotions Committee. Material published within reflects the events and happenings in Pippy Park and the organizations associated with it.

Contributions are welcome, and all contributions are presumed to be submitted for the mutual enjoyment of readers, thus no payment will be made for contributions.

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