

President promises announcement soon Multimedia Centre rumors abound

GORDON LOANE

THE BRUNSWICKAN

There is increasing speculation that original plans to construct the Eaton Multimedia Centre on the UNB Fredericton campus have now been cancelled or postponed.

Planning for the \$7.5 million dollar, fifty-three thousand square foot Centre has been in progress for more than a year and up to a few months ago it looked as though construction would begin this year.

But sources close to those involved in planning the Centre told the Brunswickan this week that word has filtered down from Senior UNB officials that a stand alone building may no longer be in the works.

In fact, budget documents supplied to UNB's Board of Governors last week seem to support the speculation.

A line item under capital projects in the 1997-98 operating budget for the UNB Fredericton campus contains zero dollars. Projections

for the next three years also contain no money for new construction on the Fredericton campus.

Instead, it now appears alternative plans are in the works for a Multimedia Centre.

Several sources have told the Brunswickan this week that the university plans to renovate several existing buildings or a building to accommodate a Multimedia Centre.

Contacted at her office on Monday, UNB President Elizabeth Parr-Johnston would not respond to the speculation other than to say that a good news announcement will be coming soon.

"You'll have an announcement as to how we will have a multimedia complex and buildings, it will come," Parr-Johnston told The Brunswickan. Meanwhile, UNB's Associate Vice-President Michael Ryan, who has been overseeing planning for the Centre, has not returned telephone calls from The Brunswickan for several

weeks.

Had the Eaton Multimedia Centre been built as planned, financing for the project was to have come from a one million dollar donation from the Eaton Foundation and UNB Chancellor Frederik Eaton.

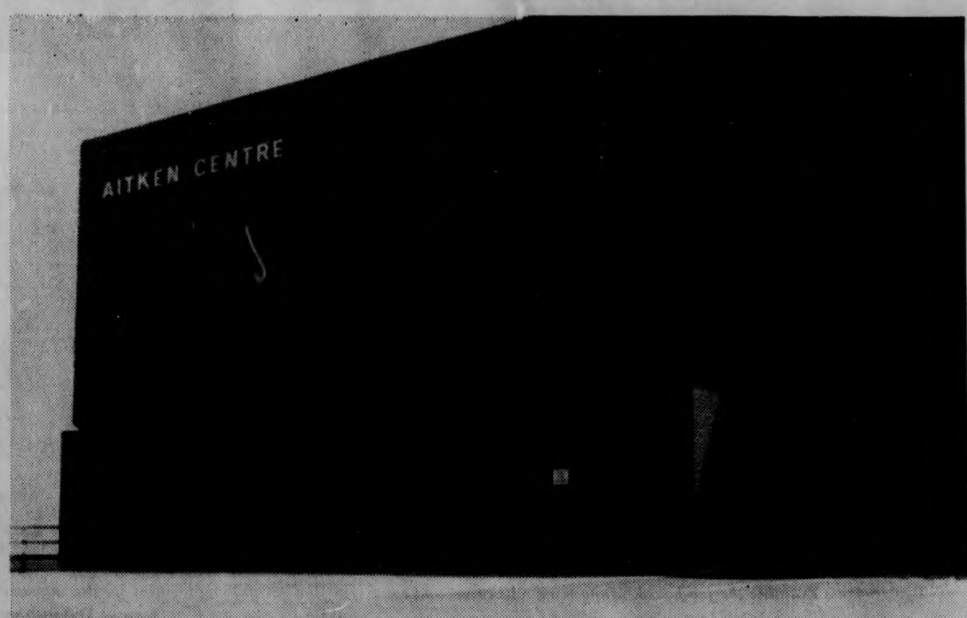
The provincial government planned to provide a further five and a half million dollars.

"The provincial commitment is scheduled to come in three increments of 1.83 million in each of 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000," said Associate Vice-President Michael Ryan in an interview with the Brunswickan in April 1996.

Further funding was scheduled to come from other sources Ryan said at the time.

Meanwhile, UNB's Board of Governors was to have approved a plan last week to proceed with a final design and call for tenders for K.C. Irving Hall on the UNB Saint John campus. The building is expected to cost between four and five million dollars.

Twelve consecutive years of deficits Aitken Centre awash in red ink



The UNB Aitken Centre built in 1976, has had a difficult year balancing the books.

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A planned budget deficit of \$148,829 in 1996-97 for UNB's Aitken Centre has ballooned by a further \$108,400.

As a result the total deficit for the Aitken Centre for the fiscal year ending April 30th, 1997 is projected to stand at \$257,229.

The deficit figures are contained in a budget document prepared for UNB's Board of Governors, a copy of which has been obtained by the Brunswickan.

The extra budgeting shortfall at the Aitken Centre has been blamed on unexpected repairs, according to an internal bulletin written by UNB President Elizabeth Parr-Johnston and distributed by E-mail on the Fredericton campus last week.

Further budget documents obtained by the Brunswickan seem to indicate that the university is planning to run an even greater planned operating

deficit at the Aitken Centre in fiscal 1997-98 than had been projected in budget documents for fiscal year 1996-97.

In 1997-98, UNB's planned operating deficit at the Aitken Centre is projected to be \$188,500 as compared to the planned \$148,829 this year, before \$108,400 in extra unexpected expenses for repairs.

A planned operating deficit at the Aitken Centre is nothing new.

Budget documents obtained by the Brunswickan which outline the detailed university budget for the current fiscal year show a facility awash in red ink for at least the last twelve years.

Over the twelve year period from 1985-86 to 1996-97, UNB has provided a subsidy to cover the Aitken Centre's deficit totaling \$1,910,067 or an average of \$159,172 annually.

The University's financial target is to operate the Aitken Centre on a break-even basis.

"Unfortunately, this break-even

target has never been achieved and for the five year period from 1990-91 to 1994-95, annual operating deficits have averaged \$153,291," said a statement contained in the university's 1996-97 budget documents.

On a more positive note, the 1996-97 budget document also notes that the actual results at the Aitken Centre compare favourably with those for similar facilities located elsewhere in the Maritimes Provinces.

It is not known at this stage what steps University officials plan to take to tackle the deficit situation at the Aitken Centre.

In the past, Fredericton City Council has been asked to help finance the costs of operating the Aitken Centre, as it is a major facility used by many city residents and groups.

The City has so far declined to be involved in financing day to day operations, but Fredericton Mayor Brad Woodside may indeed be receiving a knock on his door again in the not too distant future.

UNB Residence system plans \$1.5 million in renovations, upgrades

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For the third summer in a row, UNB plans to spend a considerable amount of money on capital projects aimed at improving residence facilities on the Fredericton campus.

Some \$1.5 million dollars will be spent this summer on various projects.

A sprinkler system will be installed in both Bridges and Harrison House.

An upgrade of the electrical system, including hookups to the UNB computer network and cable vision, will be carried out in Bridges and Jones House.

"Currently, three rooms are on one electrical circuit breaker, and we intend to install three breakers for each room in Bridges and Jones," said Roy Brostowski, UNB's Director of Housing and Food Services.

"We are clearly at the point now where there is not enough electrical supply to the rooms."

Bridges is set to have its windows replaced as well this summer.

Other projects include a wheelchair accessible entrance and a new entrance to the dining hall at McConnell and phase three of upgrading washroom facilities at Lady Dunn Hall.

At McGee House, the 102 unit

apartment complex owned by the University on Montgomery Street, work will be completed on the roof and washrooms and kitchen facilities will be renovated in various apartments.

The Residence Improvement Fund, established by the UNB Board of Governors in 1987 from donations and the proceeds of certain land sales, will be depleted over the course of the summer after contributing some \$700,000 this year towards renovations and upgrades. The balance of the \$1.5 million slated for capital projects, nearly \$800,000, will come from monies paid in residence fees in 1997-98.

At May graduation ceremonies UNB will honor five individuals

Acclaimed Acadian writer Antonine Maillet is among five distinguished individuals who will receive honorary degrees at UNB's Spring Graduation Ceremonies to be held May 21st and 22nd in Fredericton and May 23rd in Saint John.

Maillet will receive the degree of Doctor of Letters and address graduates from the Faculties of Arts, Law and Computer Science. A native New Brunswicker, Maillet has received international acclaim for eleven novels and ten published plays.

She has received prestigious literary awards such as France's Prix Goncourt and Canada's Governor General's Award. In 1982, she received Canada's highest civilian honour - Companion of the Order of Canada.

Joy Calkin, Vice-President Academic and President of the University of Calgary will receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree and speak to graduates in the Faculties of Kinesiology, Nursing and Education.

A specialist in both Health Systems Management and pediatric Nursing, Calkin spent part of her early career teaching Nursing at UNB Fredericton. She has had a distinguished academic career at

institutions in Canada and the United States.

Paul Giannelis, President and CEO of Strait Crossing Inc. will receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree and address graduates in Science, Engineering, Forestry and

Northumberland Strait Crossing Project from New Brunswick to Prince Edward Island, one of the longest multi-span bridge structures in the world.

A co-founder of the Calgary-based SCI Engineers / W.A. Stephenson group of companies, he served as president and CEO from 1977 to 1993.

Arlee Hoyt McGee, a nurse and author will receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree and address the graduates at UNB SJ.

A UNB Alumna, McGee has been a professor and research associate in the Faculty of Nursing at UNB, a public health nurse, an office nurse and an independent consultant.

Derrick Iles will also receive a Doctor of Science degree in ceremonies at UNB SJ.

A senior scientist with Fisheries and Oceans in St. Andrews, NB, Iles has played a key role in the development of modern fisheries management techniques.

Through his research, Dr. Iles has been largely responsible for the protection and prosperity of the Bay of Fundy adult herring fishing industry - the only large herring fishery to avoid collapse from exploitation.

ENCAENIA CEREMONY SCHEDULE May 21 and 22, 1997

UNB in Fredericton will hold three graduation ceremonies for Encaenia 1997 at the Aitken University Centre. Degrees will be conferred as follows:

CEREMONY A: Wednesday, May 21, 1997, at 2 p.m. Degrees will be awarded to students in the faculties of Kinesiology, Nursing and Education (BPE, BPN, BEd, BOM, MEd and MPE)

CEREMONY B: Thursday, May 22, 1997, at 10 a.m. Degrees will be awarded to students in the faculties of Arts, Law and Computer Science (BA, LLB, BCS, MA, MCS and MScS)

CEREMONY C: Thursday, May 22, 1997, at 2 p.m. Degrees will be awarded to students in the faculties of Science, Engineering, Forestry and Environmental Management, and Administration (B.Sc., B.Sc.Eng., BScE, BSEFE, BBA, M.Sc., M.Sc.Eng., M.Eng., MScE, MR, MS-CE, MFE and MBA)

Please note that PhD recipients are to attend the ceremony at the faculty they are representing.

Environmental Management and Administration. Mr. Giannelis has been responsible for the implementation of the

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