

MEMORIAL PARK

Memorial Park is located on Park Street at the west end of Kentville. Before 1921 there were no grounds in the town available for athletic purposes. For a time games were played at Aldershot, but the need for grounds nearer the town was evident. Professor W.S. Blair and Mr. G.C. Roy suggested that the present property on Park Street be purchased. In 1921 a Memorial Park Commission was formed. The first meeting was held on June 10th. The work of clearing the land and fencing the grounds began.

In 1922 a Park Commission was formed. They undertook the task of developing an athletic field. A ball field was made and a grandstand erected. When this project was completed, the park contained a softball and baseball field. A children's playground was started in 1923. In 1924, a new driveway was opened leading directly from Park Street and some equipment was presented for the playground.

In 1935 a new grandstand was built by M.A. Condon in honour of the Silver Jubilee of George V. In 1941 two rows of maple trees were planted along the sides of Veteran's Drive. Lights were installed in the park and the present grandstand was built in 1953.

At the end of the First World War, the property of Herb Dennison was obtained for the purpose of an enduring memorial to Kentville soldiers who fell during the war, as well as for recreational activities. Kentville's War Memorial was unveiled and dedicated on Veteran's Plaza, in Memorial Park, with an impressive ceremony on October 18, 1954. This Memorial is in the Cenotaph area. In the same year the Little League park was constructed, and shortly afterward the Pony League park was built.

In 1959 the Board of Trade erected the Tourist Bureau. The following year, in the rear of the grandstand, the twenty-five-meter swimming pool was opened to the public. Its purpose was the teaching of water safety to children and adults. It has lifeguards and instructors and is dedicated to those who gave their lives in defence of Canada. Also included is a wading pool. Over ten thousand swimmers per year use the pool for recreational swimming.

Since 1960 the new Pony League park, three tennis courts and a children's playground have been built. In recent years new canteen facilities, broadcast booths, parking areas, and new softball fields have been constructed. There are several baseball diamonds including one equipped with lights for night ball. The park also contains a paved basketball court and a quarter-mile jogging track.

Memorial Park is an important part of Kentville's athletics and recreation. Everything from swimming lessons to the baseball games of the Kentville Wildcats to the Apple Blossom fireworks are held there.

Nichols, Mabel G. The Devil's Half Acre – A Look at Kentville's Past. Kentville: Kentville Centennial Committee, 1986

**HISTORY OF
MEMORIAL PARK**

PARKS &
RECREATION
Kentville