

Thomson TRADEWINDS

DAVID & MARY THOMSON C.I. ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2007

Who's That With Art Milnes?



Art Milnes was no stranger to politics at Thomson in the 1980s, having served as our SAC President in 1984-1985. Since his graduation, he has embarked on a career in journalism, a field which has allowed him to rub shoulders with other government chief executives. A self-confessed "prime ministerial and presidential junkie," he has met and often formed friendships with all our living past Canadian P.M.'s. He has gone fishing with George Bush Senior (and continues to swap stories, lure recommendations and Christmas greetings with him), and this summer had tea (three cups!) with former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher in England.

In the photo above, taken this past summer, Art is sitting in the front bench of the House of Commons in Ottawa beside Brian Mulroney (at his old seat), to celebrate the forthcoming publication of the former prime minister's memoirs, for which Art acted as Research Assistant. The work was a labour of love for Art, now using the more formal byline of Arthur Milnes. To the right, you can read a news account of the work which he has passed along.

Article by Claude Scilley, Kingston Whig-Standard, reprinted by permission

Arthur Milnes remembers well the day he was in the basement of Brian Mulroney's house in Westmount, helping the former prime minister sort through old photographs. Milnes, the former Whig-Standard news reporter enlisted four years ago to help Mulroney write his memoirs, heard a shriek from the other room.

"I thought I was in trouble," Milnes said. "I thought he had stumbled on some horrible photograph."

Not quite.

Mulroney yesterday recalled the episode: "Arthur would bring me these books of photographs and I'd go through them to see if there were any that warranted being sent to Toronto for inclusion in the book. All of a sudden I came upon this picture in Kingston, me standing there having spoken at the 100th anniversary of Sir John A's death at his grave in Kingston, and standing next to me is Arthur Milnes."

It was 1991.

"I said, 'Arthur, how the hell did this happen?'"

If Mulroney didn't know how much of a prime ministers junkie Arthur Milnes is, he did then.

"I certainly knew by then," Mulroney said.

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Arnold Carefoote Was Our First Valedictorian

Bob Heath, a contemporary of Arnie's at Thomson and U. of T., remembers a quiet giant.



Arnie's staff yearbook photo - 1976

Thomson lost one of its originals last May with the untimely death of **Arnie Carefoote**, in his 65th year.

Arnie came to Thomson from West Hill C.I. when it opened in September 1959 and was a member of its first senior class (Grade 12 for that first year). During his two years at Thomson, Arnie starred at both football and basketball. His 6'3" height and 265 lb. weight, combined with an

unusual quickness and agility for such a big man, made him a natural at offensive tackle on the football team, and he was recognized in the 1960 season as a TDIAA All-Star. He also led the Senior Basketball team both years as its starting centre and co-captain.

As a complement to his great athletic abilities, Arnie was also a top student. He was a member of Thomson's first Grade 13 graduating class in 1961, standing first overall with an average in excess of 85% on nine Grade 13 Departmental Examinations. He won an academic scholarship to the University of Toronto as well as being named an Ontario Scholar...a significant achievement in those days when the scholarship was worth \$400, which was just about a year's tuition fee. He was also a member of Thomson's Senior Math Team that stood 4th in Ontario that year. It's an indication of Arnie's popularity with staff and his fellow students that he was chosen as Valedictorian at Thomson's first Commencement Exercises in the fall of 1961.

Arnie went on to U. of T. in 1961 and enrolled in one of its most challenging courses: Honours Math, Physics and Chemistry. He was also a member of the offensive line for the Varsity Blues Football Team. The three to four hours a day Arnie devoted to football during September, October and early November made it very difficult for him to keep on top of his challenging course load; so he decided to take a year away from school in 1962/63, working at an insurance company in the actuarial department. He returned to U. of T. and the Varsity Blues the next September, playing football every year and graduating in 1966.

Arnie was offered a tryout with the CFL Hamilton Tiger Cats, but he decided on a career in teaching instead. He taught Mathematics in a number of Scarborough high schools, Thomson being one of them (1974-76), before retiring as head of the Mathematics Department at Wexford Collegiate.

Arnie was a great friend and athlete, affectionately known Thomson Tradewinds Autumn 2007 page two

to his teammates as "All-Star".

All the years of football took their toll on Arnie's large frame in later years, requiring him to undergo hip replacement surgeries and to walk with a cane. He never lost his sense of humour and was always fun to be around. As an indication of his modesty, when a fellow Wexford teacher, noticing an "A. Carefoote" at the top of the Valedictorian's plaque in the foyer at Thomson, asked Arnie if that was him, he replied, "No...it's my brother." Arnie was an only child!

Farewell, All-Star, and rest in peace!

Other Staff Losses

Shortly after our Spring edition was published, we received word of the deaths of two former members of Thomson's English Department.



The first was **Phyllis Greene**, who came to Thomson in 1976 and brightened our lives until her departure in 1984. She had the enviable knack of being able to enjoy life to the fullest when party invitations were received while devoting herself full-time to the interests of her students when scholarship and dynamic teaching were demanded. Her students and her fellow staff members remember

and admire her for both these qualities.

Phyllis died suddenly on April 10 at the age of 65. We send our sympathies to her family and to all who remember her as a friend and counsellor.



On May 5, we lost a long-time Thomson institution, with the sudden death of **John Moore** (aged 70). John arrived at Thomson in 1967 and, refusing to give in to the "r" word, stayed on until 1997! As private and unassuming as Phyllis was outgoing, he shared with his colleague a real knack of communicating with his students, who were always central to his life. First impressions were of a scholarly academic, but then you would

catch John out circling the track every day, as a fitness buff. If you didn't like Classical music or jazz, you avoided John's home room before 9:00, where he made good use of the old-fashioned phonograph.

John's devotion to his family was unquestioned, and we send them, and his extended academic family, our sympathies at their loss.

We also extend sympathy to **Judy Jensen** (Phys Ed in the mid-60s) on the death of her husband, **Ted**, whose services we used to borrow from West Hill C. I. as wrestling coach.

Our Next Pub Night is November 17

Our Spring Pub Night on Friday, May 11 attracted another goodly crowd, armed with yearbooks and ready to catch up on the latest news. As usual, **Bob Doi** was on hand, camera at the ready. The two photos to the right are among the many he took that evening. Blackmail notices will be going out soon!

We returned to Tapps, which has proved to be the most popular location yet. So we're going for a three-peat this fall, but, in answer to a number of requests, we're trying a Saturday night: November 17. Tapps, 5630 Finch Ave. E., is at the corner of Finch and Tapscott Rd., one stop-light east of Markham Rd., and quite handy to the Markham Rd. exit on the 401 if you are driving from the east, west, or north. Access to the large parking area is off Tapscott Rd., just behind the restaurant.

Some of those Saturday night requests reached us via Facebook, the latest web-site for tracking down and sharing news with old friends. **Bob McBride** has been visiting a number of sites to keep tabs on what's happening. There is a dizzying array of David and Mary Thomson sites, some by dates, some by activities (Varsity Football, Concert Band, etc.), some with photos, and all hoping to let grads reconnect. Our feeder elementary schools have sites as well. So check them out, if you have time and a desire to find old friends. We'll be posting notes about future pub nights there, in addition to including them in this newsletter and for our email list.

Thomson's 50th anniversary in May 2009 will likely be a source of questions and answers on Facebook about our plans. The wheels are in motion at the school to find an appropriate weekend and start organizing the events. Since it's beginning to look as if the old building may not make it intact many years past the anniversary, the 50th could be a last chance to visit the school as you remember it. Keep posted!



Anson Taylor - Former Director of Education

Anson Taylor, who died in mid-July, succeeded R. H. King in 1957 to become Scarborough's second Director of Education and held that post for twenty years until his retirement in 1977. Among the over 100 schools which were built during his tenure was, of course, David and Mary Thomson C. I. Among the innovative ideas he introduced were the BTI's (Business and Technical Institutions), such as our neighbour, Bendale, and Vocational Schools, all with the goal of helping students achieve success at a level and in a field suited to their talents and interests.

His Thomson connections don't stop there, however. After his retirement, the Anson Taylor Award was set up in his honour, to recognize the contribution to education of Board employees, students and members of the community. The first classroom teacher to win the employee award was our own **Stan Farrow**, in 1984.



Anne and Anson in 2001 on a celebratory cruise

He was also quite intrigued by the remedial reading program at our school run by **Anne Ellis** from 1967 to 1984. In 2001, he happened to meet Anne at the Scarborough Golf and Country Club, where she was a member and he was attending a Rotary Club meeting. Both widowed, they began dating and married on January 29, 2001. Even when hospitalized in his last months, he would telephone Anne every morning and sing, "You Are My Sunshine."

On October 25, Anson Taylor will be among those inducted into Scarborough's Walk of Fame at the Scarborough Town Centre. Anne will officially unveil his "star." A well-deserved award for a great leader - and a loving husband!

Art Milnes cont.

Milnes was a university student at Ryerson. That day, his first freelance piece, on Sir John A. Macdonald, had been published in the *Globe and Mail*. Milnes had heard that Mulroney would be speaking at the graveside ceremony. When it was over, he approached his future boss and asked him to sign a clipping of the story.

Mulroney, Milnes recalled, motioned to an aide, who left and returned with a binder. Mulroney opened it. Milnes' story was inside, on the top.

"He said, 'Your first story, eh? Well, son, you made the prime minister's briefing book,'" Milnes said.

When he got the job as Mulroney's research assistant - and access to his personal files - Milnes just had to look.

"It was the first file I opened," he said. "I was starting to think I imagined it. There it was."

Mulroney didn't have that day in mind when he began to think of people who could help him write *Memoirs*, a 1,100-page work that is scheduled for release Sept. 10. He did, however, remember Milnes.

"I believe it came about when he was in Pembroke," Mulroney said yesterday. "He was doing a piece on the local mayor, a fellow by the name of Ace McCann. Ace was a classmate of mine in college.

"He suggested to Arthur to try to get a hold of me. Because he was doing a large story I was happy to participate. We chatted about McCann and the valley and so on. Every once in a while thereafter he would call me for a comment on something or to get an introduction to someone."

When Milnes was working in the Arctic, U.S. president George Bush came north for a fishing vacation. Milnes put the touch on Mulroney to see if he could arrange an interview.

He did. Milnes actually convinced the president to write a fishing column for his newspaper.

"When I finally decided it was time to write the memoirs," Mulroney said, "I was looking around for a research assistant and an assistant to me on the project. I considered a lot of people. I was looking for someone with discretion, professionalism and skill, and integrity."

Arthur turned out to have all of that in abundance.

"He turned out to be terrific, a pleasure to work with. He has really an impressive knowledge of Canadian history and Canadian prime ministers and American presidents in particular, and a natural instinct for historical detail."

Among the four years the work has been in progress was a year in which Mulroney was gravely ill.

"Arthur made the assumption that I might pull through," Mulroney said. "By the time I got out of hospital and recovered I had a ton of material staring me in the face from him.

"His wife, Alison, was very helpful as well. It was a great pleasure for Mila and I to work with them on what is for me,

anyway, quite an important thing."

Mulroney was asked if there were examples of times that Milnes uncovered a particularly obscure fact, or caught an embarrassing mistake.

"I could give you a hundred," he said. "There's no doubt that Arthur's contribution to this book was vital and his work on the project turned out to be indispensable.

"The only two people who worked on the book were Arthur and me. As you'll see, this is a major work here, I think an important piece of work, and much of the scholarship in it is due fundamentally to Arthur's hard work."

Mulroney said historians should be pleased with the result. "Whether they agree with it is irrelevant. They will recognize that this took a lot of hard work and I certainly couldn't have done this without him. He has a great work ethic. It's not easy to work on your own all the time and deliver the bacon, but he did. He had great enthusiasm for the project. As I say in the acknowledgements, all of the mistakes are mine. Much of the enthusiasm is his."

Milnes comes by his appreciation of history naturally. His father, William, who died last year, was a high school history teacher in Scarborough.

"His father would be bursting with pride when he saw Arthur's contribution to this work, there's no doubt about that," Mulroney said.

(Ed note: William (Bill) Milnes was Thomson's principal from 1972-1975. In last fall's newsletter, we reprinted Art's tribute to his dad.)

The Book of Duff



BUY THE BOOK: Scarborough educator Steven Duff launches his book *The Colouring Weekend: A Musical Misadventure* this Sunday during a concert by the Scarborough Concert Band and the Scarborough Pipes and Drums.

Concert, book launch, set for Sunday

Thomson's former Head of Music, **Steven Duff**, is also a recently published author. His novel *The Osterling Weekend: A Musical Misadventure* was unveiled this past spring (when the *Scarborough Mirror* article to the left was printed).

The book recounts the often chaotic activities at a summer music camp on Georgian Bay - bearing no similarity, we are assured, to the much-beloved Scarborough Music Camps with which Steve was closely involved. Full of his notorious puns and dark humour, the novel is a change of pace from Steve's earlier history-based journal-narratives.

Readers who fondly remember Steve's preaching from the "Book of Duff" to advertise Music Nights will be pleased that in retirement he has managed to combine three of his loves (music, writing and sailing) in this work. If the book is not available at your favourite shop, google Steven Duff on the internet.