

Thomson TRADEWINDS

DAVID & MARY THOMSON C.I. ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 1998

Celebrating Forty Years!

Were you there in 1959, when Thomson C. I. opened for business? Were you there for the 25th anniversary in 1984, or for the 35th ten years later? Even if your answer is no to all three questions, we hope you'll be there next May to celebrate the 40th.

Since the 35th anniversary, a loosely organized Alumni Association has been publishing this newsletter twice a year, and organizing a few get-togethers (see page four) for Alumni. We've already made arrangements for a dinner dance at the Embers Banquet Hall the evening of May 1 (Saturday) and a pub night at the same location on the previous evening (Friday, April 30). The Embers is on Warden Ave. just south of Eglinton, with lots of parking across the street at a new Wal-Mart.

Cost for the dinner-dance will be \$30.00 each. That will include a sit-down turkey dinner, a D.J., and all-night coffee/tea service. There will be a cash bar. Pub night tickets will be \$8.00 (for finger foods and a D.J. - cash bar again). A package covering both events will be available for

\$35.00. Set aside the date, budget for the funds, and watch the mail for your order form.

Of course, there will be an Open House at the school on



An alcohol- (and glass-) free toast from Barry Cornish, Lillian Desorcy (former Business teachers), Gord Joice (former V.P.), Ron Allen and Pam Lock (former English teachers). Taken by A.V. guy Tom Adams at the 35th.

Saturday afternoon, preceded by a Staff Luncheon. Arrangements there will be handled by Thomson's present staff and students.

As those living near Ontario will know, this has been a very disruptive year for our schools, and preparations for a reunion have had to take an understandable back seat to the labour and political difficulties. Hence the delay in making final arrangements and getting out the news. All the more reason, however, for a feel-good spring event.

You can help in ways beyond simply attending. If you have names and addresses of those who would like to receive further information, let us know. Or

check out the web site: <http://www.interlog.com/~scarboro/thomson/farhom.html.> or Bill Stratas' <http://www.planetcast.com/thomson/>.

Do you work for or own a business that could donate souvenirs or prizes for our events? Could you get us a good price on souvenirs to sell, such as t-shirts, mugs, pens,

ribbons, etc.? Could your business place an ad in a souvenir booklet? Do you have memorabilia we could borrow for the decade rooms? Could you help out with any tasks on the day itself? A questionnaire is included with this mailing. Please help us out by filling in as many sections as you can! Then spread the word, and plan to join the festivities in the spring!

P. S. We have also included an Alumni Membership form, in hopes that you would like to join up and keep in touch.

Class of '78

Bob Doi



On what started out as an overcast day with several bouts of thundershowers, the Class of '78 toughed it out and held their 20-year reunion as planned last July 4. Though the weather did account for several no-shows, thanks to the efforts of Michelle, Dorothy, Linda, Karen, Bev and Joanne, everything ran very smoothly. A large canopy was erected for shelter from the rain, a tent was set up to house the food, and a soccer field was laid out to help entertain the children.

The food was delicious, the beer and wine were cold, and the music played over the huge speakers was reminiscent. A total of 20 classmates (appropriate!) were in attendance, many with their spouses and children. In fact, the children, ranging in ages from infant to early teens, may well have outnumbered the adults.

We all had a wonderful time catching up on the events of the

past twenty years: careers, children, who's married, who's still unattached, who's in contact with whom...many, many questions. For some, it seemed as if no time had passed at all, as conversations flowed with ease. It's amazing how little has changed for many of us. This writer would have to say that Father Time has been kind to the Class of '78.



Table talk after 20 years: Dorothy (Giouridis) McDaid, Mary-Anne Draffin, Vicki Cousins, and Sandra (Feeney) Murphy.

Special thanks to Michelle and Keith for volunteering their home and property for this special event. Now we are looking forward to Thomson's 40th anniversary in 1999, and to our 25-year Class Reunion in the year 2003!

Staff Updates

Our last newsletter was already out of date when you received it, as far as staff retirements were concerned, since two more long-serving teachers decided to join the growing list of former Thomsonites last June: **Jeff Horton**, who arrived from Woburn C.I. in 1987 to join our Phys Ed staff as Assistant Head, and whose enthusiastic leadership will be remembered by those he taught and coached; and **Rawle Ramasra**, a veteran of the Mathematics Department since 1969, and our pioneering and imaginative Computer Science expert for close to thirty years. Best wishes to both of you...and a fair bit of envy from those who have not reached the magic age yet!

Susan Rowan, Thomson's energetic principal since 1993, and our "hostess" for the 35th anniversary celebrations in 1994, received the inevitable transfer last June, to Bethune C.I. We thank her for her visionary leadership in difficult times. Luckily, the Board chose **Donna Benson**, who was already one of our vice-principals, to move into the principal's office...just in time to celebrate our fortieth! Congratulations, Donna!

On a sadder note, we received news, just before press time, that **Marie Cadeau**, a popular and often mischievous member of the office staff from 1970 to 1988, had died earlier this fall. This past summer, Thomson's first English Department Head, **Marshall Bruce Evoy**, who was profiled on these pages in 1997, succumbed to a long illness. (See the tribute to Bruce on page 3.)

Marshall Bruce Evoy - A Remarkable Individual

(Duncan Miller, now a successful Toronto lawyer, played Romeo in Thomson's memorable production of "Romeo and Juliet" in 1965, directed by Bruce Evoy. He and "Juliet", Trudy Cameron, were reunited as part of the care-giving team organized for Bruce during the last months of his life. Duncan responded eagerly to our request for a tribute.)

As a former student of Bruce Evoy's, I was honoured to participate in the home-care team during his final illness. I was thus able to reacquaint myself with this remarkable man.

In January, 1998, Bruce suffered a severe setback in his struggle with hepatitis. Visiting him in hospital, I heard the story of his childhood - a tumultuous string of experiences worthy of a Dickens novel. He had been shuffled between his natural parents and foster families, raised alternately in strict Catholic and Protestant faiths, and subjected to horrible physical and verbal abuse at the hands of his natural mother. In school, nuns had forcibly "corrected" his left-handedness. As he struggled to free himself from what he perceived as cruel, arbitrary, and dogmatic authority, he came to recognize that this freedom would necessitate earning his own keep and pursuing his own education.

He went to work hauling sacks of produce for his truck-driving step-father. Then came a stint with the RCAF in World War II. His military service not only gave him access to a university education following the war but also provided him with a new name. He rejected his birth name and persuaded the military authorities to let him become Marshall Bruce Evoy!

The Evoys were his last, and best, foster family. With a foster sister he discovered the cinema and live theatre. He also became consumed by a love of literature following his first visit to a library. By the time he reached

Thomson, Bruce had become a consummate actor and director, founding the Straw Hat Players in Port Carling and playing roles with the likes of William Shatner. To hear him read a play was like going to the finest theatre of the mind, all the characters played by Bruce with appropriate voices and nuances of expression.

He was extremely proud of his production of "Romeo and Juliet" at Thomson. For those of us in the cast and crew it was a source of many friendships and memories. For Bruce it was another in a stunning line of successes, including several awards at the Simpson's Drama Festival (for Collegiate drama). Bruce was both writer and director for one of these prize-winning plays.

In the 1960s Bruce had become a staunch and unrelenting advocate of Ayn Rand's philosophy of self reliance, minimal state intervention and the power of the individual human spirit. He often expressed to me a concern that he might have forced her ideas on his students, a captive audience. Such coercion was entirely contrary to the spirit of Rand's works. I tried to allay these worries by reminding him of the way his classroom discussions had driven us to think more than ever before about the meaning of life itself and the position each of us held or would strive for in society. Even though few of us adopted "Randite" philosophy, the impassioned debate in his classes helped winnow the ideas with

which we were struggling at that stage of our lives.

On that note, it is important to remember that Bruce was a true champion of the correct and precise use of English. He felt that one of the great abuses of our state-controlled education system and the current media was the "dumbing down" of language. Society, he believed, is dependent on the exchange of ideas precisely expressed.

Bruce blamed government and teachers' unions equally for the damage being done to education. Such frank talk won him few friends among the profession, but was typical of his uncompromising idealism. In 1972, he had had enough, and resigned.

He became active politically, founding the Canadian Libertarian Party in his Church St. apartment in 1973, and later helping to inaugurate the International Society for Individual Liberty. From its inception in 1980, he remained a tireless organizer until his last days. His performance of Patrick Henry's famous "Give me liberty" speech became the highlight of many gatherings of both organizations. I was spell-bound by this oration at his 75th birthday party last August, a brilliant finale (despite weakened health) to his acting and political career.

It was typical of Bruce, who always put forth enormous personal energy to the causes and people in which he believed and about whom he cared. Mr. Evoy - Bruce - you will not soon be forgotten.

