

Thomson Tradewinds

DAVID & MARY THOMSON C.I. ALUMNI NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN 2001

Embers in the Rain

Pub Night remembered by reporter Bob Doi and photographer Karen Forrest



May 25th marked the fourth year that the Thomson Alumni Committee has organized a Pub Night for Thomson Alumni. Despite a heavy downpour of spring rain, approximately 50 - 60 alumni braved the elements for an entertaining evening at the Embers Prince George Pub. Although the crowd was understandably not as large as at the 40th Anniversary Pub Night held in the same location, a good time was had by all who attended. The celebrants included a group of '70s grads who were not even aware of the Pub Night, but just happened to be at the Pub at the same time.

People dropped in and out, with most staying for a couple of drinks to talk about the old times and discuss what's currently going on in their lives. One person even brought in several yearbooks, which turned out to be a big hit as people perused them and shared some laughs over fond memories.

Entertainment was provided by the duo known as Black-Eyed Susan. Their combination of contemporary, folk and blues music ensured that nary a quiet moment was experienced

throughout the pleasant evening.

Special thanks to Karen and Bob Forrest for handling the evening's arrangements. We look forward to seeing you all at our next Pub Night in the Spring of 2002. Look for details in the Spring 2002 issue of the Thomson Tradewinds or via our email notification.

Please remember, if you haven't submitted your Alumni annual dues, please do so, in order to continue receiving the newsletter and notification of upcoming events. Check the insert in this newsletter.

In Memoriam

This past summer our Alumni Planning Committee lost one of its most conscientious and enthusiastic members with the death of **Fenno van Zwanenburg**. Returning to work at Canada Customs after a lunch break, he collapsed on the street from a heart attack. He had been battling leukemia successfully, he thought, but the chemotherapy may have taken its toll.

Fenno was a student at Thomson from 1959 to 1963. A rather scholarly-looking and quiet individual then, he had developed quite a devastating wit in the intervening years. He provided our committee with often sage advice from the "real" world, and attended all the events we helped to plan, to lend his support. We will miss him!

Business travels as an SAP Consultant across the U.S. and frequent Florida visits where he could indulge his fondness for all things Disney prevented **Don Yates** from actually serving on our committee, but he never failed to renew his membership and interest in our Alumni since its inception. Don succumbed to kidney cancer in October, 2000, at the age of 38.

His generosity and love to family, friends, and co-workers knew no bounds. He loved to laugh and sing, and he made others laugh, as well, enriching the lives of all he met. With his boundless energy, he lived his own brief life to the full - Mr. Don's Wild Ride! His sister, **Louise Parker**, who includes these memories in a personal reminiscence, concludes her tribute with these thoughts: Work like you don't need the money. Love like you've never been hurt. Dance like nobody's watching. Sing like nobody's listening. Live like it's heaven on earth.

And Remember the Magic.

Principal's Report

an update from Donna Benson

We were all looking forward to the beginning of an "ordinary" school year with eager anticipation, but it was not to be. In mid-August, I was informed that the teachers' timetables would have to be adjusted from 6.5 teaching periods to 6 (out of 8) and this had to be accomplished in time for classes to begin September 4. Well, we managed to meet the deadline. Teachers and most students had timetables on the first day of school. For the next three weeks we worked to ensure that students were in their chosen classes with full timetables. We also managed to register an additional two hundred students who had moved into our area, bringing our student population to 1300, 200 over projection, and significantly higher than it has been for the past 10 years. We are now at approximately 75% capacity and have almost 100 teaching and support staff.

Sadly, during that first frantic week, we were to mourn the passing of **Lou Schnalzer**, our Technical Director for many years, who had retired only in June. This cast a significant pall on our school opening, for both staff and students. Immediately after, we were stunned by the events which occurred on September 11. Our students and staff responded to this terrible tragedy

with compassion and dignity. There was a new understanding of the need to recognize and respect individual differences and that there was no better place to begin than at Thomson.

Our results in the Grade 10 test of reading and writing indicated that although we were close to the Provincial and Board averages there was still work to do. Led by the Literacy Committee, we embraced the concept of literacy across the curriculum. Through the staff's hard work and dedication, our students were as prepared as they could be to write the TEST. The announcement that the test was to be postponed was certainly met with dismay. This does, however, give us time for additional preparation.

Commencement was held on the Thursday before the Thanksgiving holiday and the Awards Ceremony a few weeks ago. These are always happy occasions when we have the opportunity to recognize our students for their accomplishments.

The return of extra-curricular activities and programs has had a very positive effect on the school. Athletics (including football), music, drama, Peace Club, Library Club and many others are in full swing and students and staff are certainly enjoying this return to normalcy!



Hello, Birdie! A group photo from the "Bye Bye Birdie" reunion in May. Thanks to everyone who helped make this 20th anniversary event a rousing success.

