



# ALUMNI NEWS

DAVID AND MARY THOMSON C. I. ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1995

## TAKE NOTE

1993-94

### Valedictorian

In June 1994 Fareca Mohammed was selected by her peers to be the graduating class's valedictorian and in October at commencement she accepted this honour.

### Thomson Retirees

June, 1994 saw the retirement of a number of long serving Thomson teachers, including Stan Farrow (Classics/English), Ed Butkovich (Physical Education), Eileen Goudie (Family Studies), Ron Allen (English), and Iris Brown (Math).

### Dedication of Auditorium

In May, 1994 at the 35th anniversary principal Sue Rowan announced the dedication of the Thomson auditorium in honour of Stan Farrow, who had been involved in countless musical productions during his years at the school.

## Why an Alumni Association?

This Newsletter is the first of what we hope will be an informative series, but that depends on your response. At the 35th Anniversary Reunion, there was some discussion about forming an Alumni Association for Thomson students and staff. After a preliminary meeting of interested grads and teachers, a decision was made to send this initial mailing to everyone on our anniversary list.

Why do we need an Alumni Association? The number of people who missed the 35th because they were not informed in time could serve as Exhibit A. We would hope that mailings perhaps twice a year would help keep address lists up to date, and would allow new names to be added as you talk to old friends. The newsletter would also keep you informed of special events like year reunions. Of course, if you simply enjoy reading about the old place, and about some of our illustrious personages, that's reason enough to keep in touch.

What else do you envision from an Alumni association? Social events such as sports, theatre, or dining? Notice of special events at the school? Scholarships or other financial support? Employment connections? We can be as ambitious or as low-key as you wish, but would welcome your suggestions.

Would you like to serve on the Alumni? We will need a volunteer chair, to preside over the one or two meetings each year; a secretary to keep track of those meetings and to handle any correspondence; a treasurer to keep the books; an editor and writers for future issues of this newsletter; a social convenor and committee to propose and organize social events, if that is your wish; a staff rep; and possibly "year reps" to be responsible for locating and communicating with grads from specified years, such as 1960-1964, 1965-1969, etc.

We do need to know the years when you attended Thomson as a student and/or staff member. As classes try to organize events

for their years, it certainly helps if we can call on the computer to produce appropriate lists. Most of those who attended the reunion did not fill in that column on our update lists. Does that mean you can't remember, or don't want to admit it was that long ago?

Attached to this Newsletter is a form which we would ask you to fill out if:

- i) your address has changed or is about to change
- ii) we don't have your address and you got this copy passed along to you
- iii) we don't have the dates when you were at Thomson
- iv) you have suggestions to make about our future direction
- v) you have news to pass along or names to suggest for profiles
- vi) you wish to volunteer for Alumni work in any capacity
- vii) you wish to join up officially with a membership fee!

This first issue is being mailed out thanks to the generous support of Thomson C.I. and the Scarborough Board of Education. In the future, we wish to be self-supporting. Hence our request for a \$5.00 membership fee, a small amount to keep informed and to keep us informed. After our first year, we will have to limit mailings to those on our membership lists. We hope that will include all of you.

So fill in the information sheet and return it with your fee; then Thomson's Alumni Association can truly come to life!

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### NAME THE NEWSLETTER

You will notice that this first newsletter has a very unimaginative masthead - although it is certainly informative. We challenge you to invent a more memorable name (and even design, if you're so inclined) for the future. Just include your suggestion with your Membership Form, or, if you feel inspired later, you can fax your suggestion to Thomson Alumni, (416) 396-5524. Full credit will be given if we use your idea(s).

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# 35th Anniversary Reunion

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When I first started mentioning a 35th Anniversary Reunion to Thomson staff members, and to any graduates I happened to meet, I envisioned a rather low-key occasion, compared to the 25th. That could be explained partly by the fact that a 35th isn't quite as "special" as a 25th, and partly by the fact that the 25th had been so much work I wasn't sure we could survive a repeat! Well, the final result on May 7, 1994 was lower-keyed than in 1984, but considerably more ambitious than originally intended.

Events on the day included an Open House at the school and a gala dinner-dance at the Ellas Banquet Hall on Danforth Rd. at Danforth Ave. The Open House was preceded by a luncheon for present and former staff members in the magically transformed cafeteria, with well over 100 in attendance. Particularly welcome were our first principal, J. Ross Stevenson and his wife, Edith. After some brief entertainment by Thomson's choir, the staff were ready for the invasion of probably close to 2,000 grads, with the emphasis, not surprisingly, on the 60s and 70s. Absence does make the heart grow fonder, as reunions tend to prove!

The grads were able to search out rooms set aside for their particular eras, as well as specialty areas for athletics, SAC, and showbiz. There were computer displays, roving video reporters, refreshment stands, and even a 25th Anniversary display of memorabilia. One disappointment stated often was the fact that staff and students both circulated to all areas and sometimes the twain did not meet up with those they had hoped to see. There was also a special program in the auditorium, with greetings from former staff/students now involved with Board administration, special appearances by most of Thomson's former principals and vice-principals, and a brief bow by Dick Jolliffe, first Head of Music, and author/composer of the Thomson School Song. The climax was the surprise (to me, at least!) dedication of the hall as the Stan Farrow Auditorium.

Tickets for the dance were sold out about a week before the event, as we tried to squeeze in a few more tables to accommodate last-minute orders - a total of about 450! As expected, reunion conversations seemed to monopolize the early minutes, but some energetic grads did manage to make it onto the dance floor before the delicious buffet was served about 11:00. There was an anniversary cake-cutting ceremony in which Linda Offenburger, from Thomson's first grade nine class (now an English teacher in Germany) joined me in the official duties.

One event even those who attended the day may not know of is the creation of a Time Capsule, now in the Thomson office, filled with anniversary memorabilia and other items such as 1994 newspaper clippings. The intention is to open this in another 35 years - so, reserve the date now! The capsule was the brainchild of present student, Stephen Selby, and was one of the many anniversary tasks enthusiastically adopted by 1994 Thomson undergraduates. Virtually every staff member had a hand in the success of the day as well. And, of course, there were all the reminiscences of grads collected in our anniversary booklet, plus the items of memorabilia brought in to the various rooms to start afternoon and evening conversations.

Indeed, trying to sum up the atmosphere in a brief report on paper cannot do justice to everyone and everything that made the day so memorable. Thank you all. I hope to join you as a participant only at the 50th!!!

Stan Farrow

Chairperson, 1994 Reunion

Grads Elaine Selby, Joanne McGlynn, and Sandra Train with former staff member, Gord Treleavan by the new front hall mural.



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# Thomson Alumni Profiles

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## Paul McCrossan



In September, 1995, Paul will become the first Chairman of the newly-formed International Federation of Actuarial Associations. He believes his profession will be the first to forge such a global link, to set world-wide educational and professional standards, a

necessity with world economies now so inter-dependent. Not surprisingly, Paul has been the moving force behind the creation of the IFAA, chairing meetings around the world - his annual air-miles have often totalled over 100,000! This year alone he will chair sessions in Oxford (March), Vancouver (June) and Brussels (September), followed by an appearance as a keynote speaker in Tokyo.

Paul's classmates in our first graduating class (1961) will not be surprised at Paul's achievements, nor will John Anderson, Thomson's first Head of Mathematics, whom Paul credits with making him aware of the actuarial field, and encouraging him to pursue a career in it. A B.Sc. in Maths and Physics at U. of T. in 1965, an FCIA in 1969, and a tour of duty in London, England heading a new actuarial department for Canada Life were followed by service as an examiner with the Society of Actuaries (1970-1977) and chairmanship of the committee examining social programs and taxation development.

A letter to Joe Clark suggesting changes in Canada's social programs and taxation led to Paul's nomination as P.C. candidate in York Scarborough (he had been actively involved in Conservative work, even canvassing during elections in his Thomson days), and election in 1978, 1979, and 1984 as M.P. of the largest and fastest-growing riding in Canada. His terms at Ottawa found him very involved in reforming social and economic programs (one example he gives is working to ensure that both banks and insurers paid income taxes) and winning a reputation as a hard-working, valued member of caucus.

Since his defeat in the 1988 election, he has been a partner with Eckler Partners Ltd., the actuarial firm with the largest practice consulting to financial institutions (those same banks and insurers!). Using computer simulation models, he advises on many of to-day's mergers and take-overs in that field. You will also see him quoted on the future of the Canadian pension and health care systems.

Paul's wife, Sandra (Strong), an elementary school teacher in Scarborough, and his three daughters, Megan (a Governor General Scholar grad, now in Actuarial Sci-

ence at Waterloo), Bryn (a sophomore in Business Administration at the University of Neuchatel, Switzerland), and Margot (in Grade 11 at Agincourt C.I.) do manage to see him more often than this summary suggests, and get to join him on many of his travels. They also have a Florida condominium where they can unwind. If their actuarial projections are accurate, Paul and Sandra hope to retire together in 2000!

## Carol Ann (Balmer) Page

When Carol Ann played the lead in Thomson's production of *The Boyfriend* in her graduating year (1963),



we blatantly publicized the fact that she was Miss Toronto. She went on to become Miss Canada the following year, crediting Harvey Bride, Thomson's first Head of Modern Languages, and a musician of note, with coaching her French and her singing in "Le Fiacre", the song that

won her the talent portion of the contest.

Following graduation from the Physical and Health Education program at U. of T. (she refused to delay her first year studies and combined them with her duties as Miss Canada), Carol taught near Montreal, then in 1972 moved with her first husband to California, where he was to pursue a career in television. She has a son (24) and a daughter (17) who are very active in sports and performing arts (no surprise!). Her second husband, Bob, is a master carpenter who co-ordinates set construction at the Disney Studios.

Carol herself is a very successful business woman, heading Yellowbird Inc., a firm which markets her own nail products to beauty suppliers in California, Arizona, and Michigan. She has a special liquid and tissue product for strengthening nails, but is particularly proud of her formula for the material which removes the tissue, invented with geometrical calculations she learned from John Anderson, Thomson's first Mathematics Head. In fact, Carol is a walking testimonial to the daily value of her mathematics and business background, and a great role model for girls.

Carol still gets back to Canada most summers to visit the family cottage in Muskoka, but loves California, and, with Bob, is presently planning to buy vacation property of their own near Lake Havasu in Arizona.

# Thomson Alumni Profiles

## Craig Pryce



Craig graduated in 1981, a year made very special by his contributions to a Senior Championship football team (happy recompense for a heart-breaking last-second trick-play loss to Agincourt the previous year, and for enduring a replay of the only high school game called for

darkness - a double overtime tie in the semi-finals) and his role as Harry Macafee, the frazzled father, in a hit stage production of *Bye Bye Birdie*. Both athletics and performing arts played a major role in his days at Thomson, extra-curricular activities which made high school a great place to be!

A chance glimpse at a brochure in Thomson's Guidance Office led Craig to the Film Production program at York University, where only 1/12 of applicants were successful, and only 1/4 graduated! During his days there, he was contracted by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism for some film work, and when it came time to bill them, Craig's warped sense of humour invented the company name "Pryceless Productions".

The name has stuck, through three short films and two documentaries for the C.B.C. after graduation, and, more recently, Craig's production and direction of feature films such as *Revenge of the Radioactive Reporter*, picked up by Universal Studios, and *The Dark*, due out in early 1995 on HBO and the Movie Network (and available from some video stores for a scary evening's viewing). Work underway at present includes some T.V. directing for series shows and development of two films: a comedy and a Sci-Fi action flick.

Craig and his wife Denese (ironically an Agincourt grad) are the proud new parents of a daughter, Madeleine Eve, born, as her second name suggests, on Christmas Eve, 1994! Truly a priceless production!

## Brenda Newell



Two weeks after Brenda's retirement in January, 1993, she left for a ten-week "trip of a lifetime" to Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Malta, Sicily, and Italy. Joining her on the voyage was Pam Lock, another former Thomsonite. This year she is off again to Egypt plus Tunisia to see "Hannibal's Carthage - it has always fascinated me".

Brenda's former students and colleagues will not be surprised at this historical slant to her travels, since History was her major, both in her B.A. from Victoria College, U. of T., and in her teaching career, starting at Prince Edward County District H.S. in Picton, moving to Churchill C.I. in Scarborough, and then joining Thomson's original staff in 1959, taking a leave from 1963 to 1969 to start up a family, and then returning until her retirement. A witty but caring teacher, she has happy memories of staff groups such as the "Accentuate the Positive" and "Recognition" committees and their efforts to promote a good feeling within the school. She even has happy memories (as do many teachers) of the camaraderie during the 1975 Strike.

Since retirement, in between travels, Brenda volunteers two days a week in the Emergency Department at Centenary Hospital. She is also co-chair this year of the Worship Committee at her church, and a Member-at-Large of the Scarborough District of the S.T.O. (Superannuated Teachers of Ontario). This past fall she began playing duplicate bridge once a week and "kitchen bridge" a couple of times a month.

Her family from the '60s now includes two grandsons who live in Orillia but whose pictures she will be glad to foist upon you! Visiting with them is just one of the many pleasures retirement has brought: "These really are Golden Years."

## Thanks

We would like to thank the team of graduates and staff members who have made this first Alumni effort possible. Fenno van Zwanenburg ('63), Pam Bennett ('68), Richard Fujimoto ('71), Dave Fujimoto ('75), Tim Luet ('80) Robin McComb ('83), Fareeaa Mohammed ('94), Paul Duggan, Stan Farrow, Andrea Harrison,

Mark Kaminski, and Bryan Lake ('62, and now a staff member) attended one or both of the two planning sessions. It is their ideas and suggestions you will see reflected on these pages. We would also like to thank Stan, Andrea, and Mark for writing, editing, and publishing this first Thomson Alumni newsletter.