

# Thomson TRADEWINDS

DAVID & MARY THOMSON C.I. ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2005

## Our Man in Bangkok

*Doug Anderson (class of 1964) reports on an adventurous life after Thomson*

When I graduated from Thomson in 1964, I had two scholarships: one for Waterloo Lutheran University, which I had not applied to, and knew nothing about, and one for University of Waterloo, to which I had applied for general engineering, with the idea of taking electronics engineering in subsequent years. However, I was tired of school, and to the dismay of some of my teachers, planned on going to Europe with a backpack and three other guys, two from Thomson, and one, Randy Consell, from King Collegiate. The two Thomson guys chickened out, but December 1, 1964 saw Randy and me on a plane to Glasgow.

I spent seven months bumming around Europe, having a grand time. I lived for three months in Marbella, southern Spain, for peanuts, and bought an old Lambretta scooter for \$50; then I set about trying to get a licence, as I didn't have an Ontario driver's licence. I failed to obtain a Spanish one, since I wasn't fluent enough in Spanish to pass the written test, and so drove without a licence, travelling around the Mediterranean through France (Carcassonne, Avignon, Nice, Monte Carlo) to Italy (Milan, Rome, Florence, Venice), Switzerland (Zurich), Liechtenstein, and into Austria, where the scooter collapsed in the middle of the Alps near Innsbruck in a snowstorm. From there I hitchhiked to Innsbruck, Vienna, Munich, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Copenhagen, back to London and Scotland, then down to Le Havre, where I took a boat



Thailand taxi

to New York City and visited the World's Fair. On the bus ride back to Toronto from New York City, I was amazed at all the Canadian flags once I crossed back into Canada. 1965 was the first year that the now familiar red maple leaf flag was used, and it was everywhere.

When I was living in Marbella, I wrote to the University of Waterloo, and asked if I could have my scholarship back. I also wrote to IBM in Toronto and asked for a job as a programmer. U of W wrote back, and said, "Sure". IBM wrote back and said, "Come see us when you return." So a week after I returned in July 1965, I had a job as a programmer and a scholarship to U of W.

Unfortunately, I loathed U of W; their teachers were nowhere near as good as the teachers we had at Thomson; in fact, they were downright dreadful. I quit school after the first year, and went full time into programming. Forty years later, I am still at it; I love the mental challenge. Not having a degree has never hurt me, and I have worked on a NASA research satellite, as well as at the OECD in Paris. I have owned two contract consulting companies in Ottawa, and a computer store in Ottawa, and another contract consulting company in Australia.

In 1969, I was 23 years old, and that was a significant year for me. I moved to Ottawa, became a Canadian citizen

*cont. on page 4*

**Have you renewed for 2004-2005? Check your label.**

# THOMSON CELEBRATES



Group photo



Registration table



Signing in

Photos by Bob Doi, Bob McBride  
and Lynn McNeely



Group photo of staff members:  
Back row: Mr. Tucker, Miss Lock, Mr. Farrow,  
Miss Iannacci, Mr. Williams  
Front Row: Mr. Joblin, Miss Waiser, Miss Ludvigsen,  
Mrs. I Brown



After-party party at the Old Scott House:  
Standing: Lynn Lawrie, Sandra McDermott,  
Susan Rade, Tom Rade  
Seated: Shawn McNeely, Michelle Leslie, Craig  
Pryce, Don Karch, Glenda Sharples

# FORTY-FIVE YEARS



Memorabilia table



Cutting the cake.



Mike and Colleen (Woodall) Gambier

On November 6, 2004, Thomson Alumni celebrated our school's 45th Anniversary with a social evening at the Agincourt Legion. About a hundred Thomson types gathered to renew old acquaintances, to reminisce about the "good old days" and to party! The Legion supplied beverages and light refreshments, and the Alumni brought along the decorations and some nibblies. The old hall looked pretty good in scarlet, black and white, and the Alumni didn't look too bad, either!

A table display of photos and other memorabilia attracted quite a bit of attention. The display included a couple of anniversary cakes. To honour the Classes of 1964 and 1974, who had made this party part of their own anniversary celebrations, we asked **Noel Simpson** (1964) and **Dawna Kobayashi** (1974) to handle the official cake-cutting ceremony.

Noel and Dawna were part of the Alumni team which handled planning for the event. Other members

included **Bob Doi, Janet Evans, Karen and Bob Forrest, Tim Luet, Bob McBride, and Mr. Farrow**. Thanks also to **Sue Pearen** and **Mr. Williams** who helped out at the registration table, and to **Braden Houston** who donated a couple of golf umbrellas as door prizes.

If you missed seeing your favourite teacher or fellow-student, start planning now to get the word out for our 50th in 2009. Volunteer assistance always welcome!

## Pub Night April 30

Missed the 45th? Or just wondering when our next get-together is? Spring Pub Night will be Saturday, April 30 at Foti's Place, where we have celebrated in the past. It's part of the plaza on the east side of Brimley, just south of Lawrence. If you look closely, you can see Thomson in the distance! Arrive any time after 8:00 p.m. and stay as long as you wish or as long as they'll let you. Nothing fancy, but a chance to keep in touch, without a lot of pre-planning or financial outlay. Hope to see you there.

Doug Anderson - from page 1



Doug in 1964

(I was, and still am, a Brit), and got married. Joanie and I are still married 36 years later, and have one daughter, who is now 34 and works for the

Alzheimer Society as a spokesperson and project planner.

In 1993, our daughter was at University of Guelph, and at age 22, big enough and ugly enough to take care of herself. Although we had done some travelling over the years, it was always short-term trips, a month or less. By '93, we were getting restless, so we sold our house, put backpacks on, and flew to Thailand. We spent three months there, then a couple of months in Malaysia and Singapore; then I got a contract in Paris. So I spent the next two years living and working in Paris. When the contracts finished, we decided to go to Australia, mostly because it was British, and we were tired of the xenophobic Parisians, but also because we knew very little about Australia. We got a visa for a year's visit, then flew to Brisbane, which is a sub-tropical city of over a million people half way up the east coast of the country.

We liked Brisbane very much: hot weather, lots of sun, palm trees everywhere, and very friendly people. We discovered we could work there legally on our tourist visas if we started our own company, so we did that. Six months after our arrival, we were doing contract consulting to the banks and large companies, mostly in Sydney. We stayed in Australia nine years, leaving three times to get new visas, and we bought some land and built a very nice house in 2000. Houses in Australia are unlike Canadian houses: because of the warm climate in Brisbane (there's no snow!), houses have a lot of glass.

Unfortunately, however, there was a world-wide recession in the computer

industry, beginning in 2001. This was the worst recession in 40 years, and we were badly affected. We had many expenses with the new house, and very little income. We used up a lot of our Canadian RRSPs over the next three years. Finally, in July 2004, we decided to sell the house and travel again.

We're too old now for backpacks: heck, we're pushing 60. And Australia is surrounded by a whole lot of water. So we decided to tour some of the Pacific Islands, travelling between islands by air. We spent two months visiting some places nobody goes to (Wallis Island, Samoa, Tonga, Hiva Oa), some places a few people go to (New Caledonia, Fiji, Cook Islands), and a place lots of people go to (Tahiti). Then we went to Bali in Indonesia for a month, then Brunei (a sultanate on the island of Borneo), then Malaysia, visiting the cities of Kuching and Kuala Lumpur. Now we are in Bangkok, Thailand. You can see pictures of all these places on our web site at [<http://www.thai-software.com>]. My wife is a pretty good photographer, and has taken more than 6000 pictures in our seven months of travel. Fortunately, only a few are on the web site.

Back in 1988, I had a four-month contract in Bangkok, sponsored by CIDA. I was intimidated by the Thai writing, as they don't use English characters. Worse, I couldn't make any headway with the language, even though I had purchased several phrase books. After three and a half months, I suddenly realized why I was having such difficulty. The phrase books were written for British speakers, not North Americans. British and Australian people pronounce many words differently from Canadians: the word "mark", for example, is pronounced "mahk", "swimmer" is "swimmah" and "Canada" is "Canader". "Draw" and "drawer" are both pronounced "drome". When I purchased a phrase book written for Americans, I suddenly started

making some progress with the language. Unfortunately, I only had two more weeks in Thailand before I had to leave.

When I got back to Canada, I explored the idea of creating some software to help me learn Thai. This was in the days of DOS and 8088 processors. But within a few months, I had a working Thai editor, and the beginnings of a dictionary.

Now, 17 years later, almost everyone has a powerful computer and the Internet has transformed our lives. Windows XP supports Thai, as it does many other languages. My simple software has grown into a powerful suite. I have been working on it part-time all these years. Now that we are in Thailand, I have hired a Thai assistant to check my work and to help me complete it. My goal is to work full time on this project, and get it completed and on the market to generate some income. I am paying my assistant, who is a recent university graduate, \$15 a day, and she is excited about the job. Most of her friends are unemployed.

In the middle of April, my wife will be returning to Canada, because her father is now in his mid-nineties and has Alzheimer's. However, I will be staying in Thailand to finish this project.



Doug at a 2001 birthday party poses with his first home form teacher, Mr. Bride, and Mrs. Bride.

When we left Canada in 1993, we had no idea that we would be living in Paris, Brisbane, or Bangkok. But we don't regret one minute of it.

Please take a look at our web site, and enjoy the pictures.

# Thomson Team Logo Contest Update

by Bob Doi and Stan Farrow

Well, it's official. The Thomson Redmen are officially extinct. In 2004, the Toronto District School Board bowed to political correctness and made a decision that all school team names and logos should adhere to an equity policy that would not be offensive to individuals or groups in our society. Of particular concern were the many nicknames pertaining to our native communities. As you can guess, the Thomson Redmen and our Indian-head logo failed to pass the equity test. While many Thomson Alumni, especially those who played on teams sporting that name and crest, will not be in agreement with the decision, it has been made. If your email address is on our list, you received word of this in January. However, if you were once a Redman (or, in the really old days, a Pioneer) you will remain so. And, of course, historical photos of our teams and fans in action will not be banned. They will remain part of a proud tradition at the old school.

The January email also announced a contest to select a new name and logo. Entry was open to past and present staff and students. Our own **Mr. Farrow** was one of two Alumni representatives on the steering committee. The second was **Anne-Mette (Nielsen) Burden**. From the original list of names submitted, the ten most popular were reduced to three finalists by the steering com-

mittee. Those three names were: Hawks, Titans, and Trailblazers. The final entry deadline was the end of February and several criteria had to be met. Key to any entry was to incorporate one of the three names into a strong graphic suitable for a girls' or boys' team shirt or sweater utilizing our school red, black and white colours.

A number of our Alumni members felt inspired to comment on the situation when replying to our January email. As expected, most of you were less than thrilled with what you considered bureaucratic meddling. We did have one realist, however, who was surprised that this hadn't happened sooner. All of your comments were passed along to the steering committee.

We also did have alumni representation amongst the over-30 contest submissions. And alumni will now have a chance to be included in the vote to select the winner.

On April 4, the steering committee narrowed down the choice to the two designs you can see on the reverse side of this page. If we have your email address you may already have seen these in full colour. Sadly, the Trailblazers name, while very appropriate to the spirit of David and Mary Thomson, proved very difficult to match with an effective logo. Sadly also, when we decided to go with just one finalist logo per name, we had to choose between

two excellent Hawks submissions, and the one designed by an alumnus lost out. So we made the final three!

Now we vote for a Hawk or a Titan logo. The present-day students and staff will be voting on Friday, April 15. Mr. Farrow will be accepting email votes up until 9:00 a.m. that morning (EDT) and he will then take the alumni running total up to the school to be included in the over-all votes. Send your email decision (Hawks or Titans) to: Stan.Farrow@tel.tdsb.on.ca

Apologies to those with no email address who may receive this newsletter too late for the deadline.

The winner is to be announced at a special Launch Ceremony on Thursday, May 19 at the school. Present plans are for an assembly about 2:00 p.m. to celebrate Thomson's history, with representatives of the Thomson family among the dignitaries present, followed by an unveiling outdoors (or in one of the gyms, if the weather is poor) around 3:00 p.m. Alumni are certainly welcome to attend, if you are able. We will probably send further details of the ceremony to those on our email list when those arrangements have been finalized.

And we will let you know via email, and, much later, the fall newsletter, of the winning design. Thanks for your participation to date, and send in those votes.

Thomson for evermore!

## Alumni Fees to Rise

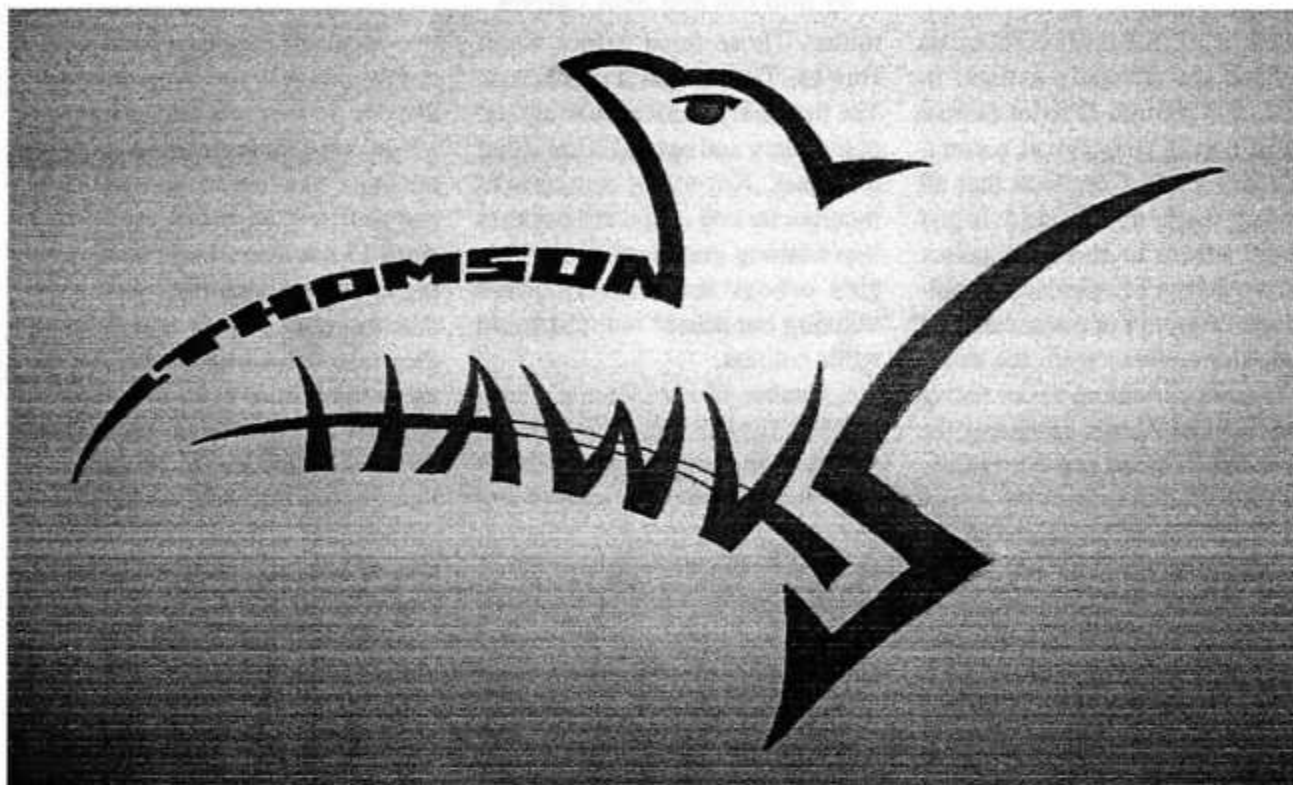
We're going to take advantage of this special insert to send an advance notice that, because of ever-increasing postage and printing costs, Alumni fees will be going up in the fall to \$10.00 per year. It

seems that anxiously checking our bank balance has become an annual ritual in September, to see if there are sufficient funds to send out the next newsletter.

If you haven't renewed for 2004-

2005, you'll find a renewal form enclosed (at the old rate). Others who have already paid for future years, needn't pay again. Our apologies for this first change in 10 years, but please keep in touch.

LOGO # 1



LOGO # 2

