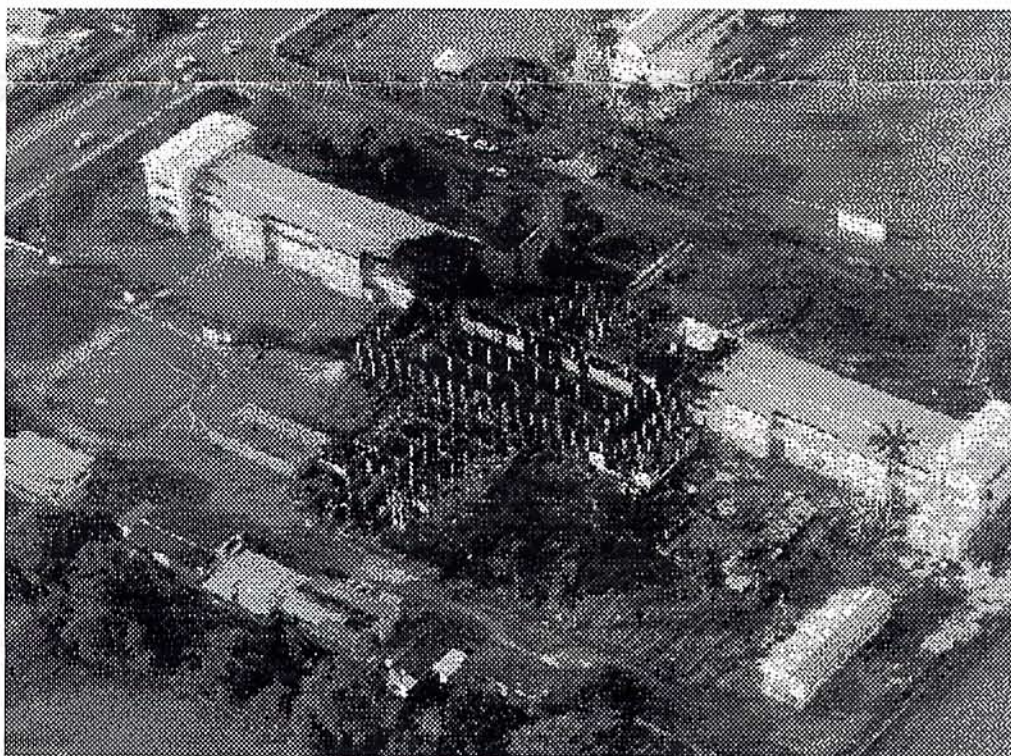




Q.C. NEWS!

Queen's College of Guyana
Alumni Association (Toronto) Inc.

December 1997



QUEEN'S COLLEGE SEVERELY DAMAGED BY FIRE!

Queen's College was extensively damaged by fire on Sunday 16th November 1997. It is alleged that a disgruntled student set fire to the building in the vicinity of the Principal's office. The entire middle section of the building including the staff room, principal's office, assembly hall, tuck-shop and the brand-new computer room were

destroyed in the blaze. Although the Guyana Government has pledged to rebuild the school in the shortest possible time, there will be a severe disruption of the school year as a result of the fire. Needless to say, the renovation and upgrading efforts of the various alumni associations will

have to be redoubled if the school is to regain its competitive position in Guyana and the world. A special committee has been struck to coordinate our Toronto fund-raising program. Headed by Eden Gajraj, the committee has already drawn up plans for a fund-raising dance to be held on 26th December 1997.

President's message

As old students we all share the sadness experienced by the students, parents, teachers and the entire Guyanese society on the devastation of our alma mater, Queen's College by fire.

We support fully the international appeal initiated by the Queen's College Old Students Association (QCOSA) in Guyana. Our Toronto Chapter met on November 23, 1997 and approved a remittance of CAN\$3,000 to supplement the CAN\$2,000 already sent for 1997. The meeting also set up a Secretariat to coordinate the Canadian appeal with a target of CAN\$50,000. The Secretariat is headed by Mr. Eden Gajraj, Chair of the Queen's College Fire Fund Appeal Committee and it has already started to plan the appeal and to collect donations. I urge you to contact Eden at Tel # 416-609-9727 to volunteer for this fund raising effort.

The first phase of our appeal will be to you our fellow alumni and we hope that within your circle of influence we might raise a significant portion of our CAN\$50,000 target. We need your help to rebuild this institution, this national asset that has been a source of pride and symbol of excellence to all.

Already, we have planned a Boxing Nite Dance for 26th December 1997 at the Roof Garden Caribbean Restaurant at 3601 Lawrence Avenue East. All the proceeds will go to the "Fire Fund". Please come out to support this worthwhile cause.

Krish Mahesh. President, QCAA

Editor's Letter

Fire! Fire! Fire!

The great old school is down! The Principal's office where I met my friends at 8:30am every couple of days. We belonged to a fraternity known fondly as the "late parade" we stood in line and rehearsed our excuses expectantly, though not optimistically: the performances usually ended with each one of us being sentenced to detention or if we had been late too often for that month, headmaster Sanger-Davies would administer 'six of the best', after telling us in his most regretful tones, "this will hurt me more than it hurts you". Well that Principal's office is no more. Totally incinerated!

The assembly hall where we congregated every morning to be addressed by our headmaster, to listen to Aubrey Joseph singing baritone in the QC quire, where I gazed in awe at the plaques commemorating the Guyana Scholars and wondering if I would some day have my name up there with the exalted ones. Gone.

Every remembrance day the headmaster would read out all the names of those alumni who died in the great world wars, then a soldier would appear on the balcony overlooking the assembly-hall and play the "Last Post" on the trumpet, accompanied by the howling of Headmaster Sanger-Davies' mongrel dog. That assembly hall is now ashes. The Tuck-shop where I enjoyed so many meat rolls (known in Canada as 'Sloppy Joes') and where those of us who took our lunch to school in brown paper bags would sit together and eat in solemn communion. And listen with a mixture of shock and pleasure as

the seniors in the group told dirty jokes or spoke in explicit detail of their encounters with the opposite sex. Gone! The spanking new computer lab which was the pride and joy of Queens College, along with twenty five state-of-the-art computers donated last Summer by the London England QC Alumni chapter was also burned to oblivion. The fire was a tragedy in so many ways. Classrooms, students' records, heirlooms and nostalgia, all gone.

Surely this occasion requires heroic efforts on the part of Guyana Government as well as from all of the Alumni Association members and well-wishers to contribute as generously as possible toward the rebuilding effort.

Andy 'Prof' Knight

QC Alumni Executive

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Articles Welcomed!

Kindly submit articles, opinions, suggestions, photographs (black & white on matt finish) to:

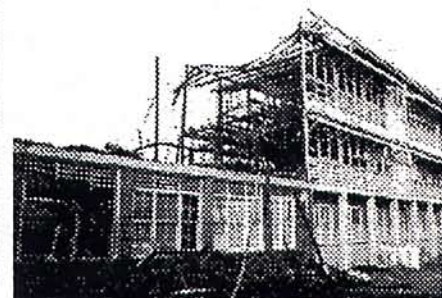
**Editor, QC NEWS,
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Mississauga L5C 2T7
Tel: (905) 276-8808**

Articles on 3.5" DOS format diskettes in WordPerfect, Word, Pagemaker & TIF scan images would be most welcome

Chain of events and updates on restoration arrangements



The aftermath



Displaced students keep a cheerful outlook in their temporary quarters.

- ◇ Fire alarm sounded, 10:19pm Sunday 16th November
- ◇ Fire brought under control by 4:00am Monday 17th.
- ◇ 54,000 square feet (60%) of building burnt, including: Staff room, Principal's room, Administrative office, Computer Lab, Tuck shop, Assembly hall, Woodworkshop, Bicycle shed.
- ◇ Fourth form QC student arrested and charged with arson.
- ◇ Cost of rebuilding estimated at up to GUY\$500Million.
- ◇ Guyana government pledges to rebuild by January 1998.
- ◇ Students housed temporarily at the newly built but not yet occupied South Ruimveldt Primary school building, as of Wednesday 19th November.

DONATIONS TO DATE

- ◇ Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry donated GUY\$1,000,000
- ◇ Guyana QCOSA donated GUY\$2,000,000.
- ◇ Various Guyana-based alumni including Bryan James, Peter Willems, Dr. Rohan Jabour and Geoffrey Murray responded immediately with substantial donations.
- ◇ Derek Hugh pledged 10,000 pounds sterling on behalf of the London Chapter.
- ◇ Toronto QCAA donated CDN\$5,000 and has set a goal of CDN\$50,000.
- ◇ Technical team established.. Headed by Dr. David Klautky, this team includes David Spence, Electrical Engineer, Colin Forsythe, Civil Engineer, Marcel Gaskin, Structural Engineer, Donald Rodney, Quantity Surveyor and William Harris, Architect. The team's mandate is to assess the damage and to prepare drawings and specifications for the restoration of the structure in the shortest time possible.

Have you renewed your membership?

The Queen's College Alumni Association (Toronto) Inc. is a non-profit organization, founded for the purpose of bring together alumni, staff, non-staff and friends of Queen's College, organizing activities for raising funds to be used towards the restoration and expansion of Queen's College and any charitable purposes connected to QC. Originally conceived by Val Smith, Leyland Muss and David Rohee, the QCAA Toronto chapter was founded in 1990 with David Rohee as its first President. To date, the QCAA Toronto chapter has donated several thousands of dollars to the QC restoration project. Membership fees are \$25 per year. Membership in this Association offers immense opportunities for socialising and networking. The pride and satisfaction of to be gotten from knowing that we are helping the next generation is something that surely no money can buy!.

If you have not already done so, join the QCAA today and tell a friend!
(see enclosed membership form)

Requiem to Sheik David Insanally

by Dr. Robert Moore

Sheik David Insanally lived his life colourfully, vigorously, generously and fruitfully. His motto, to which he was ever faithful, was: I work therefore I celebrate and I celebrate therefore I work. And that motto showed its remarkable power when He was an undergraduate at the University College of the west Indies in the first half of the '50s. In those halcyon days the UCWI pulsed with characters irreverent but not revolutionary, equally at home in saturnalia and scholarship, convinced they could ancestor a New World in the Caribbean - a world of creative thinking, sensible living and spirited rejoicing. "Bandit" as he was popularly known, because of his haphazard flamboyance, fitted effortlessly into this Mona campus mould. He came, he saw, he concurred. He concurred with passion and it showed in his sensuous delight in languages Latin, Spanish and French and the way he gave his soul to their literatures. He concurred with a compulsion which expressed itself in an untiring conviviality - wherever two or three were gathered together to celebrate the joys of campus life Sheik led them in the pouring of libations. He concurred with a vocation for the teacher in him was always available to help fellow students achieve a facility with the languages he loved.

Over the years of his UCWI sojourn he had one great ambition: to teach at Queen's College. He fulfilled it when he joined the staff in 1957, bringing with him the distinctive style of the early UCWI graduate: a genial indifference to Establishment norms. He appeared before his classes with his jacket on but with his tie rakishly notched a few buttons below the neck.

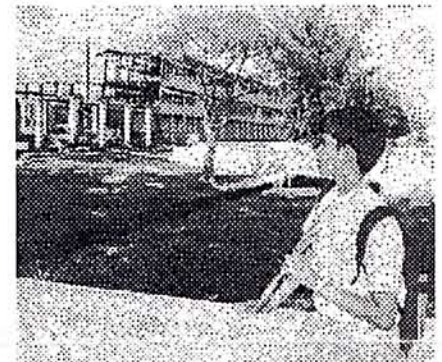
With the boys his relationship was avuncular and informal. His teaching style was a fusion of Creole humour, unorthodox techniques and scholarly precision. He was a popular master not only because of these traits but because of his gift for making his students feel the magic of words in three languages. Conveying to them the enchantment and challenge of entering the alternative worlds of the novels and poetry he taught was his special mission and his lasting achievement.

He knew his students well - their strengths, weaknesses, idiosyncrasies - because he delighted in entertaining them at home. There, without their quite knowing it he led them through the rituals of good, bantering conversation and the proprieties of humorous deference to adults. He entertained their parents, too, charmingly and generously and thus established a wide network of friends, connections and contacts, many of them proving of distinct benefit to the school.

Queen's missed him when he went off to the fledgling University of Guyana in the second half of the sixties to teach Spanish. A different kind of student greeted him there: people of maturity, experience, sometimes of high responsibility, all hungry for higher education and specifically hard working. Besides teaching them with his usual flair, he became their friend and counsellor, coached many of them past their academic hurdles and of course, entertained them at his home.

But the call of teaching youths remained too strong to resist. While still at the University he created, in the late seventies, his own school to take up the slack left by the floundering education system hit by hard times. There the school master in him ran full rein once more, complete with all the pedagogic quirks and colourful eccentricities which made Bandit a legend in his own life time.

No question about: Sheik imbued many not only with a distinctive facility in Spanish and French but also with a sense of the wonder and the power of language to help us see ourselves more clearly and understand ourselves more deeply. Queen's in particular owes him much just as he always felt he owed much to the school. We all owe Fauzia, his wife, and his sons a great debt too. For they sustained sheik in his ever fresh drive to help Guyanese fulfil the tremendous potential they possess.



A Young student contemplates the ruins

Fund-raising Dance

26th December 1997, 7:00p.m. to 1:00a.m.

Roof Garden Caribbean Restaurant

3601 Lawrence Avenue E. at Markham.

Cover charge \$10.00

Cash Bar. Refreshments on sale.

Proceeds go to QC Fire Fund. Tell a friend !