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Dr. Thomas Massiah, Canadian-born scientist, educator, author and poet, delivering the keynote address at the 2009 Awards Event.

QCAA President Kemahl Khan (right) presenting the Appreciation Award to Mr. Pierre Santoni, Senior Director of National Sales for VIA Rail Canada.
Outgoing President’s Address and Report

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2009

Distinguished guests, fellow alumni, and friends of Queen’s College – it is a distinct pleasure, once again, to be able to stand before you at another Annual General Meeting and wish you all a warm welcome on behalf of your Executive. It is extremely gratifying to see that so many alumni and friends of Queen’s College have made the decision to commit some time to the business of our Association and turn out for this most important annual event.

Our Annual General Meeting is extremely important because, unlike our social events, it is a sober occasion dedicated to reaffirming in public our goals and accomplishments and to publishing a scorecard as it were. I will, in a short while, present my report on your Association’s activities during the past year. It is my sincere hope that those present today who may not have had the opportunity to attend any of our recent functions will get a sense of the road that we have travelled and the pride we all feel today.

I want to take this opportunity to thank publicly the members of our dedicated Executive Committee for all of the support they have given me over the past two years. My success and the unquestionable success of all our endeavours over the past two years were due in no small way to the selfless dedication and hard work of our Executive Committee.

At this point, I would like to, once again, encourage all members, friends and supporters to visit our website: http://www.qcalummitoronto.com It is indeed a well maintained and an excellent source for up-to-date information on our activities (past, present and future). I would like to thank our webmaster, and all of our members who have contributed their time and expertise, for ensuring that our website remains on the cutting edge of technology.

It would be remiss of me not to specifically mention the continued publication of our newsletter, The Scribbler. It has certainly grown in strength and is indeed a great source of pride. I hope that you will all concur that it is quite informative and well laid out.

The financial report tabled by the Treasurer clearly indicates that your Association is in excellent fiscal health, more so in this period of economic uncertainty. At this time, I must express our sincere appreciation to all our alumni and friends for their generous support over the past year, and urge you to continue to come out and participate in all of our fund-raising, cultural and social events. This is how we ensure financial stability and growth, which, in turn, enables us to undertake the projects that benefit the present and future students of our beloved alma mater.

As you all know, this is my last official duty as President. I pass the torch on today to another whom we must all support. When I started on this journey I knew that it would not be easy but I always knew that it would be worthwhile and, as I urge all of you to become more involved, this is the one guarantee that I can give – working for our alma mater through our Association is very satisfying.

2008/2009 ACTIVITIES

Highlights:
In June, we hosted our annual Father’s Day Brunch, which, as usual, was a resounding success.

Our annual Last Lap Lime (the 2008 version), the partnership event with four other school associations, was held on August 4, 2008. Once again an exciting, safe and fun-filled day was had by all. Last Lap Lime transcends school affiliation or even national boundaries. We benefit from the huge influx of visitors who are attracted to Toronto by the long weekend and the celebration of Caribana. This is a boon to all the participating schools.

On August 24, 2008, we staged our annual Appreciation Awards. This is an event where we acknowledge the significant contribution and selfless support of a number of individuals and organizations. As we have grown year over year, it becomes more obvious with the passing of time that the willingness of members and friends to donate unselfishly of their time, talent and other resources is the cornerstone of our success. Mr. Clarence Trotz, former student, teacher, and Head Master of Queen’s College and the then President of QC-OSA, delivered the keynote address, in which he urged us to remember and recognize the important role our teachers played in our development.

It gives me great pleasure to be able to report that, after a brief hiatus, the Lynette Dolphin Memorial Scholarship Awards program was resumed. In September, the 2008 scholarship was awarded to Ms. Danielle Singh, the daughter of our treasurer David Singh. Danielle is currently enrolled in the “Law Clerk” program at Centennial College.

A two-member delegation represented the Chapter at the international reunion and ICQC business meeting which was held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, during the period Friday, October 10, 2008 to Sunday, October 12, 2008.

On November 15, 2008, we hosted a bus trip to Casino Rama. This event was over-subscribed and, judging from the feedback we received, I can safely say that all of the attendees had a most enjoyable time while contributing to the general economy because not everyone wins.

On January 10, 2009, we held our annual Twelfth Night Dance, a collaborative affair between Bishops AA and ourselves. Once again, the event was well attended – another success.

On March 1, 2009, our 2009 annual Appreciation Awards was held. This is an event where we acknowledge the significant contribution and selfless support of a number of individuals and organizations. Dr. Thomas Massiah, pioneering Canadian-born black scientist, educator and author, delivered the keynote address.

OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

As I step down, permit me to muse a while as it is truly a time for reflection. I try to evaluate myself and my team to assess the things we did well and those we could have done better. I wish to repeat something that I have said before and it is this. I firmly believe that service to others is the rent you pay for the space you occupy on earth. I have been privileged, over the past two years, to work alongside and to be supported by a number of hard-working alumni who share my view that we cannot turn our backs on the well because we have satisfied our thirst. Fellow alumni, friends and supporters, please remember that we are who we are today because we were well served by our alma mater in the past. We are a true force to be reckoned with and we have to take responsibility for the generation emerging.

As indicated in my report above, I am indeed proud of the results of all of our activities – fund raising, cultural and social. We can all take pride in the knowledge that we have been able to provide much-needed assistance to our School. Although I have seen our organization make significant strides over the past two years, regretfully, my inability to achieve my stated goal of increasing the active membership, particularly from among our younger alumni, hangs over my term like a dark cloud. Once again, as I indicated in my report last year, I must say that I am very concerned that our profile seems to be that of a bunch of seniors. We have not been able to attract younger alumni nor the female alumnae. I pass this challenge on to my successor and I pray that the new president has much better luck in this regard.

I am using this opportunity, therefore, to appeal to all of our alumni, alumnae and friends who have not yet had the courage to come into the trenches and work with us. I am well aware that there are numerous competing demands on our time. However, my challenge to you is to somehow make the time. We certainly need you, the current students of Queen’s College need you – so please do not let us down. This clarion call to arms has been made by me, and a great many others, on several occasions in the past.

Enough said. Words cannot express my gratitude to our Executive and to all the active members and friends who have made my term exciting and productive. I step down with a deep sense of humility as I reflect on our achievements. Once again, I thank you all for the confidence you reposed in me over the last two years. I do hope that you will be charitable when you write my report card.

Gerald Alleyne
President
QCAA (Toronto Chapter), 2008/2009

Attended QC 1963-1971
Raleigh “B” House
AKAI, Terrence J. – on February 28, 2009 in Indiana, U.S.A. at age 59. Attended QC from 1959-1967. He had a distinguished career at the University of Notre Dame where he held the position of Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School at the time of his passing.

ALLSOPP, Dr. Stanley Reginald Richard – on June 3, 2009 in Barbados at age 86. A distinguished alumnus, he was a QC staff member in 1944 and again from 1948-1963; Acting Principal in 1962; and Housemaster of Durban “D” House from 1954-56 and 1958-1960. A press release and tribute can be found on page 6 of this newsletter.

BACCHUS, Dr. Mohamed Youssouf – on April 9, 2009 in Guyana at age 68. He transferred from Central High in Georgetown to QC in the late ‘50’s, entering in the Fifth Remove and graduating in 1960. His profile can be found on page 12 of this newsletter.

BENJAMIN, Dr. Colin O. – on January 3, 2009 in Tallahassee, Florida at age 59. Attended QC from 1960 –1967, was a member of Pilgrim “E” House, and a Prefect 1966/1967. He was a member of the school’s table –tennis team of 1965/1966, and a contributing writer to the “QC Lictor” and the “QC Magazine”. A tribute to Dr. Benjamin is on page 13 of this newsletter.

DENBOW, Dr. Charles Egerton – on February 10, 2009 in Jamaica at age 63. Attended QC from 1955-1964 and was Deputy Head of Nobbs “L” House and captain of QC’s Northcote Cup cricket team in 1963. He was awarded the Guyana Scholarship in 1964. His profile can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.

DUMMETT, Anthony (Tony) – on March 17, 2009 in Toronto at age 79. Attended QC from 1939-1946. He is survived by his wife, Mary and his three children, Ben, Greg, and Naomi.


IBBOTT, Dr. Roy – on March 6, 2009 in Corriverton, Berbice, Guyana. He was noted for his pioneering work in the local television sector in Guyana and was the owner of Channel 19 T.V. station in Corriverton.

MAHARAJ, Bibi (Zena) – on June 8, 2009 in St. Augustine, Trinidad at age 81. She was the eldest sister of Kemahl Khan, President of the QCAA Toronto Chapter. She is survived by two other brothers and a sister.

MCWATT, Leslie Cendrecourt – on February 24, 2009 in England at age 91. Attended QC from 1929-1935. He is survived by his wife Margaret (née Shariples) and his three children, Wayne, Glenn, and Carolyn.

MERRIMAN, Prince Albert – on March 20, 2009 in Montreal at age 87. Attended QC circa 1932-1940. He was a former captain in the Guyana Defence Force and a member of the Seafarers International Union. He is survived by his wife Beulah (née Joachim), with whom he celebrated sixty-six wonderful years and his children Joy, Bernice, Paula, Marlene, Aubrey (Tomoko) and Audrey.

PEROUNE, Christopher Michael – on June 5, 2009 at the Hamilton General Hospital, Ontario at age 19. He was the son of Michael, QC alumnus and member of the QCAA Toronto Chapter. He is survived by his father, mother Debra and his brother Bryan Matthew.

RAMSAMMY, Dr. Joshua Reuben – on February 11, 2009 in Guyana at age 80. Attended QC from 1943-1948. He taught at the School from 1955-1961. In 1964 he joined the staff of the University of Guyana’s Biology Department and, after retiring, held the position of Pro-Chancellor of the university. A tribute by his close friend and professional associate, Dr. Harold Drayton, can be found on page 8 of this newsletter.

Editor’s Note:
Please let us know if we have omitted any names from our list and we will certainly remember them in our next issue of the “Scribbler”.

ARK
Professor Charles Egerton Denbow, FRCP - Sept 30, 1945 – Feb 10, 2009

Dr. Denbow has been described by his peers as “one of the greatest Caribbean cardiologists of our time” and has been credited with having “raised the standard of cardiovascular care to new heights by his devotion to his patients and the training of young West Indian doctors.” In particular, he concentrated on cardiovascular diseases that are important in the Caribbean and much of his research work centred on patient-focused clinical cardiology, emphasizing therapeutic and diagnostic advances that affect the care of patients with cardiovascular diseases. His outstanding achievement was in pioneering Echocardiography, Ambulatory Electrocardiography, Coronary Angiography, and Interventional Cardiology.

He made significant contributions to knowledge in his field through his publications which appeared in regional and highly-regarded, peer-reviewed international medical journals. He was in Georgetown on January 2, 2006 to launch one such publication - his technical medical manual, “The Clinician’s Guide to the Cardiovascular Examination.”

Appointed to the post of Professor in the Faculty of Medical Sciences at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica with effect from October 11, 2000, Dr Denbow for many years had played a significant role as a clinician-teacher and administrator at the university. He was appointed Head of the Department of Medicine in 1998 and also held the position of Vice-Dean (Clinical Medicine), Chairman of the Faculty Sub-Committee on Graduate Studies and Chairman of the Admission Committee, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Mona.

Charles Denbow received his early education at the Comenius Moravian primary school in Queenstown, Georgetown, and entered what was then called the preparatory form in Queen’s College in 1955, a classmate of Professor Nigel Harris, the current UWI Vice-Chancellor. A member of Nobbs House, he won a string of prizes throughout his school days finally taking the Guyana Scholarship in 1964 with distinctions in Physics, Chemistry and Zoology at the GCE Advanced Level. An ardent college cricketer, described as “an opening bat of the slow order” because of his defensive style and disdain for high scores, he was appointed captain of the Northcote Cup eleven in 1963, nevertheless.

After teaching at Queen’s as a temporary junior science master for a year, he entered the Faculty of Medicine of the University of the West Indies, Mona, in 1965 as a pre-clinical student. On the basis of his performance at his pre-clinical examinations, he was selected to pursue an intercalated BSc course in Anatomy at St Thomas Hospital Medical School, University of London. He went on to obtain the Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery with honours, winning the Clinical Medal for the Best Student. His entire undergraduate career was decorated with medals and prizes.

Professor Denbow was a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London (FRCP); Fellow of the American College of Physicians (FACP); Fellow of the American College of Cardiology (FACC) and a Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Board of Cardiovascular Disease.

He spent a large part of his professional life in Jamaica where in April 2008 he received that country’s second highest national award, Commander of the Order of Distinction (CD), for his outstanding contribution to Jamaica in the field of Medicine.

Charles Denbow was born on September 30, 1945 in Georgetown, Guyana. His wife, Marjorie (nee Thompson), also a medical doctor, passed away in 2006. He is survived by his three children.

Editor’s Note: Adapted from an article that appeared in the Stabroek news of February 2009
Obituaries

DR. RICHARD ALLSOPP | January 23, 1923 – June 3, 2009

Dr. Richard Allsopp, retired Reader and Honorary Professor of Caribbean Lexicography, died Wednesday June 3rd, after a long illness.

Born in Guyana in 1923, he was the eldest son of Stanley and Eloise Allsopp. He attended the prestigious boys school Queen’s College and studied for his PhD at the University of London. On his return to Guyana he taught at Queen’s College and in 1962 became the first Guyanese to be the School’s acting principal. In 1958 he was awarded the Crane Gold medal for the most outstanding contribution to education in British Guiana.

In 1963 he joined the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill as a lecturer in English. He is noted for designing and teaching the Use of English programme which was taught at all three campuses. He was also Chairman of the division of survey courses of Social Sciences and in 1964 was the first person to be the Cave Hill Campus Dean. In 1971, he launched the Caribbean Lexicography Project and became its first Director and Coordinator. He is the author of several research publications on linguistics and lexicography in both journals and books. He is the first and only West Indian invited to serve on the editorial board of the Oxford English Dictionary and the American Heritage Dictionary. He also served as the English language consultant to the Church of the Province of the West Indies for the Book of Common Prayer.

His most accomplished contributions to Caribbean education and cultural understanding are his production of the Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage which was first published in 1996 and A Book of Afric Caribbean Proverbs published in 2005.

In 2004, he was awarded the second highest national honour in Barbados, The Companion of Honour- CHB, for his distinguished career in education.

He leaves to mourn his younger brothers Philip and Bertie Allsopp, wife Jeannette, children, Disa Allsopp, Sophia Cambridge, John and Marie Allsopp along with five grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Press Release issued by the Allsopp Family

TRIBUTE BY DR. PEDRO WELCH

The Faculty of Arts and General Studies (later to become the Faculty of Humanities and Education) is indebted to Richard Allsopp who, almost single-handedly built the discipline of Linguistics from the ground up. His dedication to the development of the lexicography project in the Faculty, which eventually bore fruit to his magnum opus Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage, clearly established the Faculty and the Cave Hill campus on the cutting age of research into the creole languages of the Caribbean. In my personal contact with him, the lasting image that I have is that of an individual who was meticulous to a fault. His elevation as Reader, in those days when that intermediate step between the posts of Senior Lecturer and Professor existed, was a clear recognition of the importance of his research. Indeed, our recognition of him as Humanities Scholar added further evidence of the esteem in which we held him. It is perhaps unfortunate that we did not ensure that the elevation to the Professorship followed in quick succession before his retirement. In any case, his work stands as a testimony to an intellectual whose insistence on high standards helped to ensure that the self-image of the Faculty as the “artbeat” of the Campus became a reality.

Pedro L. V. Welch
Dean
Faculty of Humanities and Education
U.W.I., Cave Hill
Barbados
Mr Kenneth Evan Duke Potter, Director of the Guyana Hydrometeorological Service from 1965 to 1975 and Permanent Representative of Guyana with WMO from 1967 to 1979 died at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney, Australia on 10 June 2008, a few days before his 73rd birthday.

Kenneth Potter (Ken to his friends) was born in Georgetown, Guyana (then British Guiana until 1966) on 14 June 1935. He received his secondary school education at Queen’s College, the prestigious boys’ school in Georgetown then obtained a Guyana scholarship to study civil engineering. He obtained a BSc degree at Aberdeen University in Scotland in 1958 and a postgraduate Diploma in Engineering Hydrology from the Imperial College, London University, 1963.

Ken began his professional career in the Drainage and Irrigation Department and held various engineering posts between 1958 and 1965. When the Guyana Hydrometeorological Service was created in 1965 as a centralized Division of the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics, Ken was appointed Chief Hydrometeorological Officer; a position he held for nine years. Under his direction the Hydromet Service developed rapidly into a well-coordinated and dynamic entity with a solid core of professional personnel.

Early in his Hydromet mandate, Ken Potter recognized that an important limitation to water resources assessment and development in Guyana and throughout the English-speaking Caribbean was the inadequacy of trained hydrological technicians. He accordingly sought the establishment of institutionalized training similar to that being done for meteorological technicians in the region. He became the driving force behind the creation of the Caribbean Operational Hydrology Institute (COHI) set up in 1980 with WMO sponsorship alongside the Caribbean Meteorological Institute (CMI) in Barbados.

In 1968 Ken met Lesley, a young Australian graduate student in geography, who was undertaking fieldwork in Guyana as part of her PhD programme at McGill University in Montreal. In 1971 Lesley returned to take up a position at the University of Guyana. She and Ken were married in Georgetown in 1973.

In 1975 Ken was appointed Chief Works Officer in the Ministry of Works and Transport with the responsibility for coordinating and overseeing the work of the eight Technical Divisions.

In 1980 Ken resigned his post in Guyana and settled with Lesley in Adelaide, Australia. From 1981 to 1992 he worked with a consulting firm on a broad range of hydrology and hydraulic engineering projects for a number of district councils in both the Adelaide metropolitan area and nearby rural districts in South Australia. In 1993 he opened his own consultancy specializing in flood and drainage problems.

In 1980 Ken resigned his post in Guyana and settled with Lesley in Adelaide, Australia. From 1981 to 1992 he worked with a consulting firm on a broad range of hydrology and hydraulic engineering projects for a number of district councils in both the Adelaide metropolitan area and nearby rural districts in South Australia. In 1993 he opened his own consultancy specializing in flood and drainage problems.

After twenty-three years in Adelaide, Ken and Lesley both retired and moved to Canberra where they spent the last four and a half years.

Ken was highly respected for his work both in the Caribbean and in his new homeland of South Australia. His family and many friends describe him as a gentleman, quiet and kind. It was a pleasure to have known him and worked with him and a privilege to have been his friend.

Our thoughts are with his wife Lesley and his sister Ann.

John Bassier

Editor’s Note: John Bassier, Guyanese now living in Geneva, was a close friend and professional colleague of Ken Potter, having worked under him from 1971 in Guyana in the Hydromet Division of the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics. He replaced Ken as Chief Hydromet Officer in 1975 and left Guyana in 1979 to join the WMO. John retired in 2002 as WMO’S Chief Hydrologist in the Hydrology and Water Resources Department in Geneva.
This very personal tribute is to honour my lifelong friend, colleague, and comrade Joshua Reuben Ramsammy (Josh); and in concert with all whose lives he touched, especially alumni of Queen’s College and the University of Guyana, to celebrate Josh’s achievements and contributions throughout a long and useful life.

Josh was born on 5th April 1928 in Hampshire Village on the Corentyne Coast of British Guiana during the decade in which less than 50% of East Indian children of school age were receiving any instruction whatever. At this distance in time, we can only dimly imagine the enormous sacrifice, energy and continuous hard work that must have taken for his parents—Sago Dasree and Katie Alberta Ramsammy, to rear Josh and his eleven siblings, and to ensure that they reached adulthood. But that they did, and the marvel is that, prior to Josh’s demise on 11th February 2009, only two of them, his sister Hilda and his brother Herman, had predeceased him.

Growing up in Hampshire Village, Josh imbibed, through his closely knit family and his parents’ friends and co-workers, all the cultural elements, patterns and rhythms of his village community, and in later life he always seemed most relaxed on those occasions when he ‘revisited’ any village situation, ate, drank, played games, laughed and chatted with ordinary working people. That said, from the time that Josh started his primary schooling he was a consistently high all-round achiever, and continued to perform brilliantly when he moved on to Corentyne High School in Rose Hall. His outstanding performance in the Cambridge Junior School Certificate Examination won him one of the coveted Government scholarships that ensured admission to the premier elite secondary school - Queen’s College (QC) in our capital city Georgetown.

I first met Josh on that very first day of our admission to QC in January 1943. That was the defining moment of our close friendship for over six decades during which our two lives have been very intimately intertwined, first as students at Queen’s College; as Science teachers in Grenada; as University students in Edinburgh; and once more in our homeland, as teachers at the University of Guyana.

My transition to QC was merely a few streets away from where I had always lived and gone to school in Georgetown. But for Josh, getting from the Corentyne to Queen’s involved much more than a long distance journey of over 100 miles, by buses, boat and train. His transition had demanded a radical shift to an urban setting, from a rural environment with which for fifteen years he had been so thoroughly familiar; complete separation from his parents, family and friends, and especially from that Corentyne community in which he had always been so firmly and deeply rooted.

Over the next three and one-half years, as we progressed through the middle and upper forms, Josh and I helped each other to adjust to the new social reality and culture of Queen’s College, some elements of which we found were quite trivial, but very strange: like having to learn the Lord’s Prayer in English, French and Latin; and our School Song in Latin as well as English. And there were those ever-present prefects, who dispensed summary justice: detentions after school, and sometimes on Saturdays, for the most venial of plebeian sins. Nevertheless, by the time Josh and I advanced to the Science Sixth, we had acquired, “as QC lads” (in Capt. Nobbs’ phrasing), that heavy moral burden of civic responsibility which, for good or ill, we would carry for the rest of our lives.

Josh was always so generous in sharing his knowledge, understandings and ‘hunches’, and in exchange I brought information, mnemonics and short-cuts from my private lessons with my dear cousin Clarence (Puck) Drayton. Indeed, it was our collaborative friendship that facilitated our speedy initiation into the language, method and mysteries of Science; and our success in both the School and Higher School Certificate Exams.

What I remember most about Josh is his happy, smiling countenance, and how he responded to my occasional dark moods by bursting into his favorite song: “When you walk through a storm, keep your head up high and don’t be afraid of the dark...”

In Fifth Form our adolescent lives became increasingly but pleasantly complicated by the new category of “girl friends”, and the weekly high point in our lives was the pilgrimage to our Biology Lab of the entire Fifth Form of our “sister” school - Bishop’s High School. And just sometimes, our frantic waving and later cajoling earned an agreement that, after classes he or I might escort just one of them, at least a corner from her home.

In the Sixth, Josh and I became even closer. Nearly every week day we rode together on our newly acquired “war grade” (all black) Raleigh bicycles to and from QC,
chatting intensely all the way both about plans for the school day and for early evening activities. Sometimes our talk focused on how we might eventually be able to secure access to professional studies at University. Josh’s ambition, unlike a number of us who aspired to medicine, was always to be a Science teacher, with a University education that would equip him to teach at Queen’s.

Eventually, the London Higher School Certificate Examinations were upon us, with all the concomitant panic and last minute efforts. And almost as soon as we had written the last paper, Josh came around to the house to say goodbye, packed up and left for the Corentyne. At that time in BG, jobs were not easy to come by, even for us Sixth Form graduates of QC, so my family and I were delighted when Josh was appointed as a Science teacher at the Grenada Boys’ Secondary School (GBSS). He was the first of our Sixth Form to have that opportunity. I followed him the very next year, and quite a few others in subsequent years, but it was Josh who laid a sound foundation for Science Education at the GBSS. In just one year he planned a graded Science curriculum for the School; organized the design, refurbishment and equipment of the building allocated as the Science Laboratory, and had in addition taught Science in the Middle School forms; Biology and Chemistry to Sixth Form candidates for the Higher School Certificate; and yet found time to organize a Science Club, open to interested citizens of St. Georges. His hard work won him a stellar reputation among his colleagues, and the admiration and friendship also of scores of people across the island.

I said goodbye to Grenada in September 1949 for yet another adventure in Jamaica, and when I returned home on holiday in August 1950, I had hoped to meet with Josh. Only then did I learn that he had been awarded a Government scholarship to study for an Honours Degree in Zoology at the University of Edinburgh. It was to Edinburgh also that my own fortunes eventually took me in September 1954, with Zoology Honours as my objective also. I had been married to Kathleen one month earlier, and once again in this new phase of our lives, Josh’s generosity was boundless. He invited us to stay in his flat, in the large room with the double bed at that, until we could find accommodation of our own. And on one occasion some months later, when my allowance had been delayed, Josh lent me his watch to pawn for five Pounds to tide us over for a couple of days. Josh briefed me on the Zoology program which he had just completed, and told me also that he would spend the one-year postgraduate study program approved by the BG Government, preparing himself to teach both Botany and Zoology to the Higher School Certificate Level at Queen’s, starting in September 1955. He had registered for a Diploma in Botany, the equivalent at that time of an Honours Degree: “Double Honours” in the Biological Sciences would be infinitely superior to the dry-as-dust Diploma in Education at Moray House, in preparation for his teaching career at Queen’s.

Unfortunately our respective academic commitments over the next year were at opposite ends of the City, so we had to be content with periodic meetings in the Old Quad Common Room for a coffee, or for lunch at the Indian Restaurant not far away. At weekends we all luxuriated in the hot showers at the British Council Residence, before attending meetings of our West Indian Students’ Association. And sometimes Josh would visit Kathleen and me in our first ‘digs’ on Mayfield Terrace and serenade us, all the lodgers, and our attractive landlady, with catchy little calypso tunes or love ballads. The last we saw of Josh in Edinburgh was when he said goodbye to us all at a meeting of the West Indian Students’ Association in July 1955.

By the time that I returned to BG on Old Year’s Day 1962, at Cheddi Jagan’s request, to help establish the University of Guyana, Josh had already served as Senior Biology Master at Queen’s College from 1955 to 1961, had married Ruby Newport in 1957, and had been Principal of Tagore Memorial High School in Rose Hall during 1961-62. After his stint at Tagore, Josh was invited to join the staff of the Ministry of Education as Education Officer responsible for Science.

No sooner had I settled in to my desk in Minister Nunes’ outer office on Wednesday, 2nd January 1963, than Josh came running up the stairs to welcome me. It was good to see him again, and just as it had been in Grenada and Edinburgh, a happy smiling Josh was welcomed by everyone in the office, and for each he had a special greeting. But he was careful not to speak about any controversial issues until we were having a drink in his home, and only after he had introduced me to Ruby and his children. He then shared with me a few of the concerns that had been expressed to him about the idea of establishing a local University, despite the firm support of both Premier Jagan and Minister Nunes. Chief among them were the lack of adequate financial resources for such a project; the opinion that whatever funds were available could be much better spent improving the quality of secondary education and/or teacher training; and, as importantly, skepticism that high standards could be established and maintained.

As the first few months went by, Josh and I met frequently in his Almond Street home and at ours. During the turbulent eight-month period between March and October 1963, Josh lent us strong moral support and saw us through all the critical
stages of development of the University of Guyana: publication of the Minister’s White Paper on Higher Education; passage of the University Bill through all its stages in Parliament; Vice-Chancellor Lancelot Hogben’s preview visit; the first meeting of UG’s Board of Governors; and the climactic Inaugural Meeting of the UG in the Queen’s College auditorium on 1st October, 1963. On that date Josh and all of us who were associated with the University project could congratulate ourselves that we had “pulled it off.” Happily, Josh agreed to come over to the University but the essential paperwork took rather longer than expected, and Josh’s appointment to the staff of the UG’s Department of Biology could not be formalized until 1964. Despite that, he was involved in all the 1963 discussions about the entire four-year Biology curriculum, out of which we eventually decided that Applied Biology should be the organizing principle for our curriculum development.

Josh was among the first of our UG academic staff to be awarded a grant in 1965 for graduate study at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada. In May 1969, he was awarded a Ph.D. for his Thesis “Energy Flux and Biosynthesis in a plankton community”. As soon as he returned to Guyana the very next month, he threw himself wholeheartedly into all our Departmental planning for the next academic year which was especially important because of my projected departure in mid-September on a year’s sabbatical leave. And, as always, he was more than generous to his colleagues by cheerfully accepting a very heavy “teaching load” in addition to administrative duties.

Not content with meeting his academic responsibilities, Josh was deeply interested in learning about the objectives, structure and functioning of our University of Guyana Staff Association (UGSA), and participated in planning the first and only Public Meeting ever convened by UGSA on 22nd August, 1969 at Independence Park. We met to protest the most recent exclusion orders imposed by the Government of Jamaica, banning Clive Thomas and Joey Jagan from visiting that Island.

Josh worked tirelessly with Departmental colleagues to effect the transfer of furniture, books, equipment and all other teaching supplies from UG’s early Queen’s College site to our new purpose-built home at Turkeyen. And, in addition, he collaborated with leading UGSA members, in detailed planning of a new monthly publication “Ratoon”, the first issue of which was published on October 14, 1969. In the very next issue, Josh’s essay “Exploiting Societies: A Critique” was announced.

By the time that I returned from leave, I was able to slip comfortably and quickly back into teaching, administrative, and research functions of the Department and also to participate in UGSA activities and the publication of “Ratoon.” Like the rest of us, Josh spoke and wrote strongly in condemnation of rigged elections and authoritarian rule, and it was not long before he and others initiated an entirely new activity. The Movement Against Oppression (MAO) was established in the working class area of Tiger Bay to offer medical clinic and other social services to people of that area.

In retaliation, from early 1971, the PNC administration sought, through the UG Board of Governors and Appointments Committees, to control admission of students to the University, extension of academic Staff contracts and new appointments; and halved its financial subvention to the institution. This political struggle was brought to a hideous climax by the attempted assassination of Josh on the morning of 4th October, 1971, just as he was about to exit his car to transact some business at the Coop Bank. During the subsequent twelve-day period of his surgical care at the Mercy Hospital, we organized a 24-hour security watch around his hospital room in the light of telephone threats to his wife Ruby that “(we) will finish him off, you’re wasting your time”.

The attempted assassination of Josh provoked an outburst of national revulsion and widespread national and regional protests. However, despite intensive efforts, no person or Organization has ever been identified as the planner/perpetrator of that dastardly act. My Brother Josh very nearly paid the supreme sacrifice, and in the nearly forty years that followed only he had to endure the physical and emotional sequelae of any such criminal assault. Most of us left the scene just as fast as opportunities came our way: only Josh refused to emigrate, and continued over the next two decades to be the insightful and earnest researcher and teacher that he always was. And continued as well to speak out on a variety of social and political issues. With Walter Rodney, Rupert Roopnaraine and others Josh was instrumental in the creation of the Working People’s Alliance (WPA). He retired from the UG in 1990.

We spoke intermittently on the telephone over the years and whenever I visited Guyana, and I was delighted when in May 1996 he was awarded Guyana’s third highest national honour- the Cacique Crown of Honour (CCH). When he was appointed Pro-Chancellor of the University of Guyana in 1999, I telephoned to congratulate him and sent him a lot of material relevant to what he identified as the top UG priority problem: how to ensure the highest performance standards in graduates of the Medical Program in particular. Josh worked hard to achieve that goal, just as he did to streamline what he regarded as problematic administrative mechanisms. When his contract as Pro-Chancellor was not renewed in 2002,
Obituaries

Josh was not unduly surprised, took the decision quite philosophically “as a sign of the times”, and, as he put it to me, “some things never really change”.

I cherish the memory of a gentle and happy human being, a dear and loyal friend over so many years, an excellent and caring teacher, and a meticulous researcher. And I ask you, Dear Reader, to join me in this my celebration of a Life well-lived, with Love and generosity for All, and with rancour and ill-will towards none.

My Brother and our Teacher has left us, but the global struggle for human betterment and social justice, to which he was so devoted, lives on.

Harold A. Drayton
West Grove, PA 19390,
U.S.A
23 March 2009

Editor’s Note: Dr. Drayton attended QC from 1943 to 1948. He was a member of Weston “F” House, a Prefect, and Recording Secretary of the Literary and Debating Society. He served as “scribe” during the QC Team’s 1946 Tour of Barbados.

The Josh I Remember

I remember the arresting sight of this tall, slim, bearded man coming into class to teach us high school biology in a khaki bush jacket. Later, when I learned that he had gone to university in Scotland, I was puzzled trying to figure out how he acquired his elegant BBC English accent. For this and other reasons many of us teenagers found Josh Ramsammy to be a combination of enigma and inspiration at the same time. After the dark days of Guyana’s 1953 oppression, this young man represented a welcome challenge to the establishment, particularly as represented by our English headmaster and some of his less qualified foreign staff at Queen’s College. Josh wore a white version of his bush jacket for dress-up occasions such as Speech Day. I recall one less conscious teacher referring to it derisively as “formal jungle dress”.

Josh’s dress preference, his bearded face, different accent and imposing height might have given some students the impression of an aloof teacher who was to be feared. In reality Josh was not only an excellent teacher but a kind and considerate person who was a mentor in the class room and on the cricket field. I am eternally grateful for Josh’s nurturing that brought me success in “A-level Botany” after only three years as a science student. He was one who contributed significantly to the ethos of Queen’s College. Our alma mater seems to have lost this ethos along the way as Guyana’s wider society was taken to the depths of incivility.

After leaving Guyana for university I lost touch with Josh, but was happy to “catch up” with him again in 1968 when Harry Drayton recruited us to teach in the University of Guyana’s biology department which he headed. Upon arriving at UG, I linked up with radical colleagues such as Harry Drayton, Maurice Odle, an old school friend, and Bill Carr a radical Englishman. We enlarged the staff association to include the so-called junior (non-academic) staff and had it registered as a trade union. Josh was a natural fit to join the leadership of this movement. Because of my esteem for Josh, I also invited him to join a small discussion that later morphed into the Ratoon Group. Earlier I had convened a meeting with two close friends, Maurice Odle and Andaiye, to discuss forming an activist movement along the lines of Jamaica’s Abeng. At the second meeting we reached consensus on three important issues. First, because we three Afro-Guyanese were conscious of the racial divisiveness tearing at the fabric of our society, we felt our meetings should deliberately embrace progressives of other ethnicities. Second, we decided to expand our activities beyond the university. And third, we agreed that, before engaging in the normal intellectual pursuit of publication, we would engage in community work out of which the strategies and tools of the movement should emerge. So we invited Josh to our third meeting.

Soon after, Clive Thomas was banned from Jamaica. He returned home, joined our group and persuaded us that we needed to publish a paper to advance the movement. He became the leader and suggested we call it “Ratoon” to symbolize the way in which the movement, like the sugar cane plant, would survive by spontaneously sprouting new shoots with every attempt to cut it down.

When the UG Staff Association, of which I became President, joined with the Ratoon Group, ASCRIA and IPRA to form the precursor of the Working People’s Alliance, Josh was
MOHAMED BACCHUS | October 3, 1940 - April 9, 2009

Dr. Mohamed Youssef Bacchus, a prominent obstetrician and gynecologist and an advocate for reproductive health, family planning and responsible parenthood. Bacchus achieved renown in his field and came to be regarded as one of the best educated obstetricians and gynecologists remaining in this country over the past forty years. Starting his secondary schooling at the Central High School, he transferred to Queen’s College where he wrote his Oxford and Cambridge ‘O’ levels in 1958 and London University ‘A’ levels, gaining four passes in 1960.

He went on to the University of the West Indies Mona campus in Jamaica in 1961 where he took the Bachelor of Science (MBBS) degree in 1965. He was appointed Member of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecology in 1970; Fellow of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecology in 1989; Member of the American Association of Planned Parenthood Physicians, now known as the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals, in 1977; and Fellow of the International College of Obstetrics and Gynecology in 2002.

In addition, he participated in advanced training courses in the Management of Fertility in India, and in Population, Family Planning, and Responsible Parenthood in the U.S.A. in the ‘70’s and ‘80’s.

Dr. Bacchus started his professional career at the Public Hospital Georgetown before establishing his private clinic. At the time of his death, he was attached to the staff at the Woodlands Hospital. He was also an associate lecturer in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Guyana and contributed to the training of nurses in midwifery.

He devoted much effort, time and resources to helping the poor and needy and, for several years, ran an outpatient clinic at which he offered free medical care and distributed medication at the Peter’s Hall Masjid on the East Bank.

A conscientious, industrious and charitable person, he had a strong sense of duty to community and country. He never lost touch with the common people and earned an enviable reputation for never turning away impecunious patients.

In the words of one interlocutor, “Even if they came to his private clinic and did not have sufficient money, he always tried to work out something for them.”

Mohamed Bacchus was born on October 3, 1940 at Bagotstown Village, East Bank Demerara. A staunch Muslim, he worshipped at the Queenstown Jama Masjid and later at the CIOG Masjid in Woolford Avenue. He was married and had five children.

Editor’s Note: Adapted from an article that appeared in the Stabroek News of Guyana.
IN REMEMBRANCE:

Professor Colin O. Benjamin

The St. Augustine Campus of The University of the West Indies learnt with shock and sadness of the untimely death of a former colleague from the Faculty of Engineering - Professor Colin Benjamin. Professor Benjamin died on Saturday, 3rd January in Tallahassee, Florida.

Professor Benjamin was an alumnus of The University of the West Indies, obtaining a BSc in Mechanical Engineering in 1971 and a PhD in Industrial Engineering from the St. Augustine Campus in 1986. He was the Anheuser-Busch Professor of Engineering Management at the School of Business and Industry of Florida A&M University. Prior to this, he was an Associate Professor in Engineering Management at the University of Missouri-Rolla.

Over the period 1981 to 1987, Professor Benjamin was a Lecturer in Industrial Engineering at the Faculty of Engineering, UWI. This was a formative period for the BSc Industrial Engineering Programme and Professor Benjamin developed and taught a number of courses for example, Engineering Economics and Accounting, Engineering Management and Industrial Case Studies. Professor Benjamin was well liked by staff and students and was a great member of the team in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, UWI, of which I was a part. Through the efforts of colleagues like Professor Benjamin, our BSc Industrial Engineering Programme has been accepted by stakeholders across the Caribbean as an important Engineering discipline and is now a well established programme at the UWl, St. Augustine.

From 1997 to the date of his passing, he had been an External Examiner for UWl’s Industrial Engineering and Production Management Programmes, and his Examiner’s reports have always been instructive and timely. Professor Benjamin was a scholar of considerable international repute in Industrial Engineering, one who published extensively, supervised and trained a number of graduate students including West Indians, contributed to the development of Industrial Engineering in a number of universities including his own UWI, and also provided expert advice to business and industry and to a number of professional journals in Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management. His recent areas of interest, before his death, included supply chain management, applications software, and new technology commercialization and innovation.

My recollection of Colin began at Queen’s College in Georgetown, Guyana, in the late sixties, continued through the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine Campus) as a student in Mechanical Engineering (1968-1971), as a fellow resident of the “Hall of Halls” at St. Augustine – Canada Hall, as the “Workshop Engineer in Charge”, Ministry of Works in Guyana, (1972-1974), and as a Member of Staff of the Department of Mechanical Engineering, UWI (1981-1987).

At Queen’s he was remembered as a lanky, relatively shy individual, a very talented pianist and fast bowler. He loved music and cricket!

As a student and throughout his life, he was the ultimate professional – competent and thorough, extremely productive, a team player, paid attention to details and a very strong communicator especially through his written work. But what struck me most of Colin was his endearing smile, warmth, easy mannerism and humility and most of all a very positive outlook to life – even in those tough, earlier days in Guyana of the seventies. We stayed in touch and he did good work at GPC in Georgetown. He remained in Guyana when many of us left, but I was pleased that he joined us at St. Augustine in 1981 as the University – teaching, interacting with staff and students, and the application of new knowledge - was his true calling.

I tried to woo him back to the Caribbean when he left St. Augustine in 1987 on at least a couple of occasions up to very recently before he died, but family commitments prevented this. I do know that his heart was always with us, as he kept supporting us from afar.

The University of the West Indies and Queen’s College have lost an outstanding graduate, a colleague who made a significant contribution to UWl’s Industrial Engineering Programme in its developmental years and a loyal supporter.

The St. Augustine Campus of The University of the West Indies extends its sympathies to his wife Claire, his sons and other members of his family. We have lost a great friend and colleague. Continue to smile upon us Colin and I know you are encouraging us to look on the bright side of “all of this”. Colin would have said to me very directly “Clement, forget all of this and get on with the people’s business.” And then he would have smiled.

Clement K. Sankat
Pro Vice Chancellor & Principal
The University of the West Indies
Attended QC 1962-1969
Nobbs “L” House
Abdullah Hassan and I entered Queen’s College in September 1942 in Form 2A – he, as a scholarship winner from the County of Essequibo and I, as a scholarship winner from the County of Demerara. For both of us it was a much valued opportunity to get a free secondary education at one of the most prestigious Boys’ School in the then British Guiana.

Entrance to Queen’s afforded one a chance to pursue at the least a 5-year course of study culminating in an Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board School Certificate. Success at the Joint Board examination was a requirement for eligibility for employment within the ranks of the then British Guiana Civil Service and, hopefully, a future as a career civil servant.

Abdullah left Queen’s in 1947 after obtaining his Certificate and returned to the Essequibo Coast. He subsequently joined the Civil Service as a Class 2 Clerk in the Magistrate’s Court at Suddie. He made steady progress during his Civil Service career, and retired in 1973 to emigrate to Canada. While in Toronto he was employed at Birks Jewelers for nearly 23 years until his retirement in 1976.

Throughout his adult years he was always involved with religious work for and with the Muslim community, and made his first Hajj in 1972 while still living in Guyana. He would later make the Hajj two more times while resident in Toronto.

Abdullah and I became close friends during the five years that he spent at Queen’s, and remained so, long after he left. From 1949 to 1973 though we were both still living in Guyana, our meetings were few and far between, but were always happy and enjoyable occasions. Our long friendship was renewed when I settled in Toronto in 1976.

Abdullah suffered a stroke in March of 2008 and was confined firstly at at the Scarborough Centenary Hospital and later at his home. Unfortunately, he never recovered and passed away on Christmas Day of that year.

The Abdullah I knew was a loyal friend, devout Muslim, loving husband, father and family person who practised a life of selfless service to his community.

To his wife, Khalda (Ali) to whom he was married in Guyana in 1953 and their two children, Khalid and Areefa, I offer my most sincere condolences. Rest in peace, my friend.

Inshallah

Vivian Wong
Attended QC 1942-1949
Percival “A” House & Weston “F”

OCTOBER 2009 REUNION AND ANNUAL ICQC BUSINESS MEETING

In our “Scribbler” of December 2008 our grapevine reported plans for holding a reunion of QC alumni and teachers in October 2009 in Guyana, and to use the occasion to mark the 165th anniversary of the founding of the School and the 100th year of the QC Scout Troop.

Since then the planning has forged ahead and those at the helm have drawn up a programme of events, commencing October 27th through to November 1st, that includes a reception hosted by Guyana’s PM Samuel Hinds, himself a QC alumnus; a special General Assembly; a tour of the School; a formal dinner and dance to be held at the School; exhibitions and games in the School compound; a variety fun show at the New Theatre Guild; several social events and day-trips to various parts of Guyana.

The opportunity is being taken during the October week to hold also the Annual Business Meeting of ICQC, to be hosted by the QC-OSA (Guyana Chapter). This meeting was originally scheduled to be held by the U.K. Chapter in August, but was rescheduled for Guyana after mutual agreement.

The programme of events and the Reunion overseas registration form have been posted on the Toronto Chapter’s website www.qcalumnitoronto.com.

ARK
ICQC is thankful to the Toronto Chapter for inviting it to contribute to the Chapter's newsletter “The Scribbler”.

New QCAA Chapter

I am happy to report that on May 02, 2009 I was present at the formation meeting of the newest Alumni Chapter, The Queen’s College of Guyana Alumni Association of Central Florida Inc. This was made possible by the efforts of its first elected President Paul Daly and Omawale, who, I am aware, has been campaigning for a Chapter in that area for some time. The Florida Chapter should be congratulated for assisting tangibly in the formation of the new chapter through the efforts of their Treasurer John LaRose. One of the issues that has surfaced is - will it be necessary for the Florida Chapter to have a name change to possibly The South Florida Chapter? The new Chapter held their first fundraising event - a Brunch - during the month of July 2009 with assistance from the Florida Chapter.

“Overseas” Membership of Chapters

During the month of April 2009, I appealed to alumni, who were not members of Chapters, to join an existing chapter of their preference as overseas members. I have received favourable replies to this suggestion from quite a number of old students. Also it is hoped that the Chapter in Jamaica could be resuscitated, and Raymond Eytle and Professor Nigel Harris have been asked to take the lead on this.

IQQC website - update

During our Annual Business Meeting in 2007 that was held in Guyana, an offer was made to ICQC by one of the delegates for the establishment of an ICQC web site. A contract was signed to develop this site. The contractor failed and a new contract was signed. It was hoped that the site would be ready by the end of April 2009. The donor of the site is not satisfied with the work done to date, and, to put it mildly, he is frustrated. It is envisaged that, when the site is up, one would be able to visit all the QC Alumni sites, post messages, and be fully informed of current events at the School. It is hoped that the site would be ready before our Annual Business Meeting in Guyana in October 2009.

Conference Calls

During our last ABM meeting there was a request for the ICQC Executive to hold more meetings. Communication, however, has been difficult due to the high cost of phone calls to and from Guyana. It was suggested that we consider using SKYPE, a computer-based communication system. Chapters’ executive members and delegates were written to, asking them to sign up and send me their user names so that the ICQC President can call a meeting. To date only the President of the New York Chapter has complied.

October 2009 Reunion

Interest has been growing regarding the REUNION to be held in Guyana from October 27 to November 01, 2009. The local planning committee has already issued the programme of events and activities for the week and the overseas registration form which have been circulated to alumni of the various QCAA chapters.

John C.Yates
Executive Secretary, ICQC
Attended QC 1950-1958
Durban “D” House

The International Committee of the Queen’s College of Guyana Alumni Association (ICQC) hopes to publish its inaugural newsletter in time for its Annual Business Meeting to be held in Guyana in October 2009 during the October reunion week. John Yates, ICQC’s Executive Secretary, is soliciting QC-related articles, anecdotes about students and teachers, On Dit, sports events, reminiscences, etc from the constituent Chapters of ICQC and the alumni community in general to make this first issue a reality.

Articles, etc., accompanied by any available photos, can be sent as early as possible but no later than mid-August to John and to Sharon Singh-Kreuter, Assistant Executive Secretary of ICQC. Their e-mail addresses are: jcyates11@aol.com and sharind@yahoo.com

ARK
ICQC’S Proposal:
The Establishment of an Alumni Room at Queen’s College.

A
pproval has been given by the Board of Governors of Queen’s College for the use of the room, located on the ground floor of the Administration Section of the School building (just in front of the Auditorium), by the International Committee of Queen’s College (ICQC) in conjunction with the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) of Queen’s College for the purpose of establishing an Alumni Room.

The space that the Alumni Room will occupy is approximately thirty-two and a half (32.5) by sixteen and four-tenths (16.4) feet.

It is proposed to air-condition the room, equip it with one (1) desk, two (2) filing cabinets, one (1) large storage cabinet - placed adjacent to the southern wall, one (1) telephone, one (1) internet-connected computer system, one (1) three-in-one printer (with ability to print, photocopy and scan documents), one (1) long table and roughly twenty (20) stacking chairs.

The cost of the items would be borne by ICQC, the PTA, and any donations from supportive persons.

The Queen’s College Old Students’ Association (QC-OSA) and the PTA would make use of the proposed room to hold all their meetings; hence the inclusion of the long table and stacking chairs. The filing cabinets would be used to store the records of the ICQC, QC-OSA, and the PTA. It is also proposed that any books, documents, etc. on the history of Queen’s College (QC) will be stored in this location and made available for current students of QC to review. Pictures of the school buildings, going back to 1844, would be sought to chronicle the progress to the current structure; pictures of staff members of QC over the years would be sought as well. The computer would provide a link to the ICQC site and the web pages of all QCAA chapters, enabling current students and alumni to communicate with them. Additionally, the computer will contain an electronic copy of the history and achievements of QC alumni, allowing current students to access this information.

It is also proposed that the maintenance of the room be borne by funds acquired through the sale of school ties (the London Chapter will be asked to acquire this item) as well as from the re-introduction of house jerseys. The house jerseys could be acquired in Guyana, with the crest embroidered for a cost of two thousand ($2,000) Guinean dollars, allowing the house jerseys to be purchased for three thousand ($3,000 Guinean) dollars. Both of these items will be available for purchase at the Alumni Room.

Consideration should be given to the possibility that other school supplies might be made available for purchase, such as paper, pens, pencils, etc or perhaps souvenirs, such as QC caps or hats. Also, it may be possible to provide photocopying services to current students, for a fee. All of these purchases would help to generate funds for the maintenance of the proposed room, such as telephone and internet expenses and the wages of a part-time assistant to manage and run the room on a daily basis. QC-OSA, along with the PTA, would have to agree to assume the role of supervisor of the operations, ICQC to be kept fully informed of how the Alumni Room is being managed and operated.

Editor’s Note: The above proposal was drawn up by John Yates, Executive Secretary, ICQC and submitted through QC–OSA (Guyana Chapter) to the Board of Governors of QC at the Board’s meeting in May of this year.

Let Go Of The Past:

by Tom Massiah

As I went for a stroll the other day—
A voice deep within me seemed to say,
‘Let go of the past, my oft-wounded son!
Your past hurts are over—
they’re done, they’re done!
You never can re-visit oppressors of old,
For many are enfeebled, and some are stone cold!’

You may have believed that revenge satisfies,
But that view is true only for misguided eyes.
The wisest course is to discard the load—
Get rid of all things that disturb your abode!

Instead of remorse — think how blessed you are,
To still be aware of each heavenly star.
So count not what you’ve lost through the years,
But give thanks you can smile—through all of your tears.
Be thankful as well that you still can show,
That your blessings exceed all your sorrows and woe.

TFM: 2004-07-3

Editors Note: Dr. Thomas F. Massiah is a pioneering Canadian-born black scientist, educator and author. He was the Guest Speaker at our Chapter’s Appreciation Awards event that was held on March 1st of this year.
At the Chapter’s Annual General Meeting held on April 19 last, the following alumni were elected to serve on its Executive Committee for 2009/2010:

Kemahl Khan – President
Audrick Chung – Vice President (Programmes)
Ronald Wharton – Vice President (Fund-raising)
Melissa Enmore – Vice President (Membership)
Haroon Gafur – Treasurer
Victor Moses – Secretary
Peter Bhola – Asst. Secty/Treasurer
Vivian Wong – Director
Stan Chan Choong – Director
Harry Singh – Director
Patrick Chan – Director
Gerald Alleyne – Immediate Past President

Guest speaker at the AGM was alumnus Dr. Mohan Ragbeer who gave members a very interesting historical and analytical account of the development and changes in higher education in Guyana and the Caribbean, citing the roles played by QC, the University of the West Indies and the University of Guyana. Dr. Ragbeer’s discourse was titled: “QC, U.C.W.I., U.G: Charting the course of higher education in the anglophone Caribbean”, a summary of which will be carried in our next Scribbler.

QC Pips St. Rose’s At GBTI Impromptu Speech Competition

“Every year we keep getting better”, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, Dr Frank Anthony said as Queen’s College scored 696 points and St. Rose’s 670 last Tuesday, in the final match of the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry Limited (GBTI) 3rd Annual Inter-Secondary School Impromptu Speech Competition.

The competition was held at the GBTI Recreation Centre on Kaieteur Road, Bel Air Park.

Continuing, Anthony stated that if students are to be “holistic and developed”, then it is necessary to expose them to events such as impromptu speech.

“Parental support is vital” he stressed, “A little parental support can go a long way in building confidence”.

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi he said: “Every good deed is its own advertisement”.

The St. Rose’s team comprised Aaron Homer, Rehanna Wilson and Saed Hamid, who spoke on the topics “The person who has molded me”, “Public shame should be added to the punishment of convicted criminals”, and “Should young offenders be thrown into jail?”.

Richard Rambarran and Keisha Campbell, part of the winning team, spoke on the topics “Working mothers good or bad?” and “Should religious education be taught to all students?” Saed Khalil, who won the prize for best speaker of the competition, had the audience in fits of laughter with his speech on the topic “Can music change a person’s life?”

The annual competition commenced on May 7, 2009. Tuesday’s event followed 14 rounds that involved Fourth Form students from 16 secondary schools drawn from Georgetown, East Bank and East Coast Demerara.

Bibi Wharton-Branch, Manager of the Regent Street Branch of GBTI, said, “The Bank [GBTI] has placed emphasis on the development of youths; and as such impromptu speaking was chosen with the intention of promoting the development of communication, leadership and teaching skills. It also allows the youths to gain self confidence, harness their thoughts quickly and improve their oral expressions.”

The final leg of the competition was judged by Dr Joyce Jonas, Reader at the Department of Language & Culture Studies at the University of Guyana; Ms. Bonita Hunter, Senior Education Officer-Arts; and Ms. Joan Kendall, former Headmistress of St. Joseph’s High School.
The Toronto Chapter congratulates and welcomes to the fold of QCAA the recently formed Central Florida Chapter. The Chapter was launched on May 2nd of this year in the home of alumnus Omawale, after extensive campaigning by Omawale and fellow alumnus, Paul Daly.

At its inaugural meeting the following alumni were elected to serve on the first Executive Committee:

Paul Daly – President
Omawale - Vice President
Roger Zitman – Secretary
Rene Sumner – Treasurer
Tomas Smith - Committee Member
Andre Pestano – Committee Member.

Present at the launching were John LaRose of the “South” Florida Chapter and John Yates, Executive Secretary of ICQC. Mr. LaRose donated to the new Chapter 17 polo shirts, with the QC crest, which will be sold to kick-start the Chapter’s bank account. Mr. Yates presented the Executive with a copy of the ICQC Constitution which has since been adopted, making the new Chapter a member of ICQC.

The new Chapter held its first fundraiser- a brunch - on July 19 at 1044 Plaza Drive, Kissimmee, Florida.

We wish the fledgling Chapter all success with this venture and look forward to their growth and positive contribution to QCAA and the alumni community in the years to come.

Kemahl Khan
President
QCAA (Toronto)
Despite the prevalence of poverty in third world countries such as Guyana, education should be a human right, not a privilege. This is the vision of the Backpack Project, an educational initiative aimed at encouraging the pursuit of formal education among Guyanese youth through the shipment of stationery and personal supplies to deserving students.

The Backpack project idea surfaced, upon my learning about a similar project currently being implemented for students in Grenada. When the idea was discussed with a friend and former classmate, Michelle Kandasammy, we decided to implement a similar project for students in Guyana, both of us having had the privilege of receiving and being the products of a formal Guyanese education. Subsequently, in December 2008, we began to draft documents such as the eligibility criteria which include 5- to 18-year-old students who are currently enrolled at a preparatory, primary or secondary school in Guyana, and for whom it was demonstrated that financial assistance (i.e. backpacks with school supplies such as books, pens, etc.) would be beneficial for their academic success.

However, in addition to academic success, the backpack project also seeks to emphasize and improve students’ health by providing personal supplies, such as deodorants, soaps, etc., to encourage proper personal hygiene. The Backpack project will also encourage student participation in extra-curricular activities such as sports and the arts which help students develop into socially and academically rounded people.

Following an approach to the Toronto Chapter of Queen’s College of Guyana Alumni Association (QCAA) to be involved as a partner in a pilot project, the overall Backpack project proposal was presented to the Chapter at their Executive Committee meeting on March 18, 2009. The members were immediately interested and enthusiastically agreed to offer their support and contribution. Consequently, the Chapter agreed to donate the first 5 backpacks for the pilot project which will target current deserving Queen’s College students. As such, in July 2009, the first batch of 5 backpacks will be shipped to Guyana for distribution to eligible Queen’s College students enrolling in the September 2009/2010 academic school year.

The first fundraiser for the Backpack project was held on May 17, 2009. As the project is a Guyanese initiative, it was only fitting that the fundraising event was held at the Scarlet Ibis Restaurant, a Guyanese restaurant in Scarborough. The event was successful in creating awareness about the project as well as in receiving financial contributions. Future fundraisers will include barbecues, talent shows and arts galas to create awareness and to encourage financial contributions towards the project.

Some of the short-term goals of the Backpack project include registering the project as a non-profit organization; shipping the first batch of backpacks to Guyana for the September school year; regular correspondence with student recipients to assess the effectiveness of the project; and the continued shipment of backpacks to Guyana on a quarterly basis. Some of the long-term goals include shipping backpacks to students in other parts of the Caribbean; producing a quarterly newsletter; and introducing a scholarship fund to be awarded to students who achieve academic excellence.

The Backpack project team realizes that today’s youth are tomorrow’s leaders, and as such, believes that each child should be entitled to a formal education regardless of his/her family’s financial situation. Consequently, our goal is to encourage Guyanese youth to pursue a formal education by assisting students, one backpack at a time.

Melissa Enmore
Coordinator
Guyana-Canada Backpack Project

Editor’s Note: Ms. Enmore attended QC from 1995-1997 and was a member of Percival “A” House. She joined the Toronto Chapter in February of this year and was elected to its Executive Committee as Vice President for Membership and Communications at the Chapter’s annual general meeting held on April 19, 2009.
On Sunday June 14, 2009 the Toronto Chapter of the Queen’s College of Guyana Alumni Association held its annual Father’s Day Brunch. The event was held at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall (100 Salome Drive, Scarborough) and was attended by 200+ alumni, other Guyanese, and supporters.

The guests were treated to a sumptuous Guyanese cuisine that was provided by the caterer Headley. The event, which was efficiently emceed by QC alumnus, Syed Rayman, started about 1.00 p.m. and was concluded close to 5.30 p.m., with guests dancing to the soca sounds of the “Small Man – One Man Band”. Earlier, the crowd waltzed to the musical entertainment and singing that was provided by Toronto-based QC alumnus Martin James-Grimmond. Kemahl Khan, the current President, indicated that it was the first time that there was dancing at the Brunch; it was all spontaneous. Guests were also treated to several door and raffle prizes which were provided by many donors including Via Rail Canada, Bridge Physiotherapy, Children’s Fashion Show, Roland’s Restaurant, Swiss Chalet, Nu Horizon Electronics, Hemdat Sawh (former Chapter treasurer), and other alumni of the school.

Queen’s College is one of the leading high schools in Guyana and has produced many leaders and luminaries from that republic. The college was founded in 1844 as a Boys Grammar School by Anglican Bishop William Piercy Austin and became co-ed in 1975. The Toronto Alumni Association was formed in 1991 with the explicit objectives of holding fund-raising events to assist their alma mater in such ways to ameliorate the lives of its student population for the purpose of maintaining the standards of excellence for which the School is renowned. In addition, the pursuit of these and other activities is seen as helping to foster a sense of meaningful participation and a spirit of camaraderie among alumni residing in Ontario.

The Brunch also coincided with the 165th anniversary of the School and the hall was appropriately decorated to reflect the occasion: balloons with school colors; each table displayed the names of some of the past principals; and a poster with the school crest and the house color was wall-mounted for each of the ten (10) school houses.

The Chapter also used the occasion to present its first honorary life-membership award to past Vice President and former Secretary *Arthur Henery, who graduated from QC in 1952, for his dedicated long-term service and continuous efforts to promote the Chapter. In his response, Arthur indicated that while the award was unexpected, he was touched by the gesture and recognition.

The vote of thanks was given by the Vice President of Membership & Communications, Melissa Enmore, who also provided an overview of a recently launched backpack project. In the pilot phase of this project, the Chapter will send backpacks full of school and personal supplies to five (5) deserving students of Queen’s College in July 2009.

The Chapter thanks the guests, the donors and the public for their continued support. The Chapter wishes to use this opportunity to remind the public of its forthcoming events – Last Lap Lime (Aug 3), Bus Trip to Casino Rama (October), Literary Event (November), and the annual Twelfth Night Dance (Jan 2010).

Of more immediate note - the Chapter will be offering three (3) awards for the Lynette Dolphin Memorial Scholarship for the coming school year. This scholarship is open to the children and grandchildren of alumni who are members (in good standing) of the Chapter or any alumnus of Queen’s College. Candidates can reside anywhere but must have gained acceptance to an accredited college or university.

Further information on the Chapter, its events and the scholarship program can be obtained by visiting the Chapter’s web site at http://www.qcalumnitoronto.com, or by contacting the President (Kemahl Khan) at arkan2001@yahoo.ca or the Secretary (Victor Moses) at victor.moses@rogers.com.

*Arthur Henery attended QC from 1945-1952 and was a member of Raleigh “B” House.
Five Recognized at Toronto Chapter’s Annual Appreciation Awards Event

by Adit Kumar

Five awards were given out on Sunday, March 1, 2009 as the Toronto Chapter of the Queen’s College of Guyana Alumni Association held its Annual Appreciation Awards event at the Tall Pines Community Centre, Scarborough.

The Lynette Dolphin Bursary Award went to youthful Danielle Singh. This award is given to youths in recognition of their social work, volunteerism and academic achievements. Three such awards worth $500 each are given out every year but last year only one student applied. Danielle Singh is currently enrolled at Centennial College in the Law Clerk program. She volunteers as a confirmation coordinator for three schools and also works with youths helping them to grow in spirituality. Danielle has plans of completing her studies in Law at York University where she wants to specialize in Wills, Estate and Family Law. She is very grateful for the award and for the encouragement that QCAA (Toronto) is giving to youths to assist them in their academic development.

The Service Award which is given to long-standing proactive members went to Syed Rayman who has been a member of the Association since its inception in 1991. He has earned the reputation for selling substantial numbers of tickets for fund-raising events. He was also one of the representatives of the Association who participated in the launching of the Guyana-Canada Business and Professional Association in 2004.

The Leadership Award which is reserved for past presidents was given to Lionel Mann who has also served as Treasurer in addition to President of QCAA. He was a key member of the Newsletter Editorial Committee.

Alumnus Lester Fernandes was accorded a Certificate of Life Membership, having served the Association in various capacities since its inception and having met the criteria for such membership.

VIA Rail Canada Inc. was given the Appreciation Award for its continuous support of the Association over the past years. VIA has been recognized for its consistent donation of valuable prizes to the Chapter’s fundraising activities over the years.

The Keynote speaker at the function was Dr. Thomas Massiah, a Canadian-born black scientist, educator and author. He touched on his life experiences in Canada.

Dr Wilton Nedd of the Washington Chapter of QCAA spoke of the 2010 Fund-Raising Gala which is slated to take place at the Astoria Manor in Queens, New York on July 4, 2010. This event is targeting about 800 attendees and hoping to raise about $50K for a down payment on an Endowment Fund to be used for a future development project at Queens College in Guyana.

For further information visit our website: www.qcalumnitoronto.com.

Editor’s Note: Adit Kumar is a freelance journalist and his coverage of the Appreciation Awards event first appeared in the March 4th issue of Indo Caribbean World, a local community newspaper. His article has been reproduced with minor modifications and with his kind consent.
Queen's College of Guyana Alumni Association (Toronto) Inc.
The Lynette Dolphin Memorial Scholarship Fund

| Purpose | To encourage QC Alumni or children or grand-children of members of the QCAA-Toronto to pursue post-secondary studies at university and college/CGEP with the ultimate objective of obtaining a first degree/diploma/certificate |
| Field of Study | All disciplines are eligible |
| Value | $1000.00 |
| Number Available | Three (3) |
| Conditions | 1. Candidates must be QC alumni or children or grand-children of members in good standing with the Association.  
2. Candidates may be residing in or outside of Canada.  
3. Candidates must be graduating or must have graduated from their high school (and/or CEGEP in Quebec) with an overall average of 75% in each of their final two (2) years.  
4. Candidates must be accepted to an accredited university or college.  
5. Candidates must be participating in a full – time degree/certificate/diploma program for a minimum of one-year duration.  
6. Candidates must have demonstrated some involvement in any of the following areas: community leadership, extra-curricular activities, special projects, volunteer service, outside interests or hobbies, career and educational objectives. |
| Program Administration | The Scholarship Fund is administered by the Queen’s College of Guyana Alumni Association (Toronto) Inc. A selection is made by a committee appointed by the Executive of the Association, who base their decision on the academic excellence of the student, the level of motivation and maturity, community involvement and extra curricular activities. The Executive of the Association does not participate in the candidate selection process. |
| Eligible Institutions | Any accredited degree or diploma-granting institution as well as Community Colleges |
| Payment Award | Upon receipt of proof of registration at the qualifying institution, the QCAA will forward the cheque directly to the recipients |
| Application | Application forms may be obtained from the Association’s web site: |
Queen's College of Guyana Alumni Association (Toronto) Inc.
The Lynette Dolphin Memorial Scholarship Fund

Process
http://www.qcalumnitoronto.com/ or from:
The Secretary
Queen’s College of Guyana Alumni Association (Toronto) Inc.
27 Jill Crescent, Brampton, ON L6S 3H9
Tel : 905-791-3412; email: victor.moses@rogers.com

Applications consist of:
- An application form
- Two letters of reference, one from a past teacher and one from a person other than a relative who has known the applicant for a minimum of one year.
- Official and up-to-date transcripts covering the final and next-to-final years of study. Facsimiles or photocopies are not acceptable.
- Proof of admission (or conditional acceptance) at educational institution.

The application, reference letters, transcripts and proof of admission must be sent to:
The Selection Committee
The Lynette Dolphin Memorial Scholarship Fund
Queen's College of Guyana Alumni Association (Toronto) Inc.
27 Jill Crescent, Brampton, Canada ON L6S 3H9

Application Deadline
Completed applications as well as all supporting documents mentioned above must be sent to the above address postmarked no later than August 1st.

Selection Process
Applications will be reviewed by the selection committee appointed by the Executive of the QCAA and operating at arm’s length. The selection committee will determine from the Secretary of the QCAA if the applicant’s parent or grand-parent is in good standing with the Association. Decisions of the Committee are final and may not be appealed.

Obligation of Winner
The recipient must enter or must be already attending the educational institution, on a full-time basis (as defined by the educational institution), in the year of application. If entering the institution for the first time, request for deferment will be considered only in unusual circumstances and the Selection Committee will make the decision.
Q.C. Hosts Open/Career Day

“The theme ‘Becoming Independent is a Process’ is most applicable to facing challenges in a dynamic environment”, said guest speaker Mr. Frederick Cox, Director of the Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association, at Queen’s College Open/Career Day hosted at the institution yesterday.

He advised students that it is important to identify what one wants out of life and to establish a vision which will guide them. The process of learning starts at home, he reminded them, adding that parents must be the key facilitators.

The programme featured prayers from various religions, the singing of a national song, a musical rendition by steel band, a cultural dance and other patriotic elements. After the programme, visitors and students looked at the exhibition in various form rooms.

The Last Lap Lime

The Last Lap Lime is an annual event held jointly by five non-profit Guyanese Alumni Associations resident in Toronto, Ontario. It is the largest conglomeration of Guyanese outside Guyana.

This social event ensures that Guyanese culture remains vibrant in the diaspora by celebrating what it means to be Guyanese through entertainment, food, drink and ‘liming’. The event provides a taste of Guyanese culture to the children, grandchildren and friends of Guyanese living in the diaspora.

Join us for a fun filled day of entertainment, laughter, and good cheer.

Date: Monday August 3rd, 2009

Location: Woodbridge Fairgrounds
100 Porter Avenue
Woodbridge, Ontario.
Kipling Avenue & Highway 7
Toonie Parking !!
Large Parking area !!

Tickets: Early-bird purchase - $15.00
At the event - $25.00
President Gerald Alleyne delivering his welcome address at this year’s Appreciation Awards Event.

President Alleyne thanking Dr. Massiah for his inspiring speech on challenges faced as a young man in Quebec.

Proud Dad, David Singh with daughter Danielle who was recipient of the Lynette Dolphin Bursary Award.

Association events are a great time for Alumni to renew acquaintances and get caught up on all the latest news.

The afternoon’s intermission allowed guests an opportunity to enjoy a wide range of Guyanese baking and other treats.

Mr. Syed Rayman (right), recipient of the Service Award.

Mr. Lionel Mann, recipient of the Leadership Award.

Dr. Wilton Nedd, Washington QCAA, outlined plans for 2010 Fundraiser.
Master of Ceremonies Mr. Syed Rayman taking charge of the opening proceedings.

Vice-President Audrick Chung and wife Myrna, dancing to the sounds of “Small Man - One-Man Band”.

This guest could not escape our roving cameraman, her husband Roland Carryl.

Jennifer St. Aubyn (Central High Alumna), chose the Brunch to celebrate her birthday.

President Kemahl Khan presenting Honourary Life Membership Award to Arthur Henery.

The Brunch was a family affair for President Kemahl, daughter and grand-kids.

David Singh and wife Diane tripping the light fantastic on the dance floor.

Loyal supporter, Pat Moore (BHS), appears relaxed and having a great time.
Finally a lucky father claims the VIA Rail raffle prize.

QCAA members Angela Thomas (left) and Melissa Enmore caught in a light-hearted moment.

Alumnus, Brian Moses, enjoying the Brunch with lovely company at this annual outing.

Alumnus Reggie Thompson whose winning smile says it all.

Secretary Victor Moses and friend.

Alumnus Martin James-Grimmond serenading the guests.

Dr. Thomas Massiah, out for the Brunch and showing his appreciation for things Guyanese.

Past President Gerald Alleyne (left) and Executive Member Harry Singh making a point.