



QCOSA NEWS

The Queen's College Old Students' Association Newsletter

~The Guyana Chapter~

March 2004

Dear Old Student,

Life in Guyana was quite hectic during the first quarter of this New Year. After the traditional New Year's celebrations, we moved in to Mashramani festivities and Guyana also hosted State visits by President Chavez of Venezuela and by the Prince of York.

The Muslim community celebrated Eid-ul-Azha on **? And this weekend, the Hindu community will celebrate Phagwah which is a National Holiday.

The next quarter promises to be equally exciting with the Easter and May Day celebrations and with the English cricket team's tour to the Caribbean.

Our Annual General Meeting is also fast approaching. I urge all local old students to attend this meeting! Read this edition for more details and once again, we have our Dear, local Dentist, Dr. Richmond, and his reflections on his days at Queen's.



The Editor

- **INTERNATIONAL QCOSA**

The 2003 ICQC Reunion hosted by the Queen's College of Guyana Alumni, newly-formed Florida Chapter last October was a well-planned reunion, with Alumni from all six Chapters in attendance, as well as from other parts of North America and the Caribbean.

The official delegates of the Guyana Chapter were the President-Laurie Lewis, Secretary-Sharon Singh and Treasurer-Raymond Khalil. Other alumni attending from Guyana were David Hales, Colin Forsythe, Hugh Cholmondeley and Stanley Ming.

The next meeting of the International Committee of the QC Alumni Associations (ICQC) and the International Reunion is scheduled for October 15 and 16, 2004 in London, England. Further details to be announced but what we do know is that there will be a Dinner & Dance, in conjunction with Bishops' High School Alumni Association. We will keep you posted as further details come to hand.

- **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

Please be reminded that the statutory meetings of the Guyana Chapter are held on the first Thursday of every month at 5:00 p.m. at Queen's College.

Remember also that old students who plan visits home during this particular period will be especially welcome to attend.... we will be delighted to meet with all old students!

- **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

All Old Students, please take note! The Annual General Meeting of the Guyana Chapter of QCOSA will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 13, 2004 in the Music Room at Queen's College. The following is the Agenda for the Meeting:-

1. Adoption of Agenda
2. Adoption of the Minutes of the 2003 Annual General Meeting.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. President's Report
5. Adoption of the Statement of Accounts of the Association and the report thereon submitted by the Association's Auditors
6. Election of Office Bearers
7. Appointment of the Auditors
8. Consideration of Notices of Motion

Every old student should make a special effort to attend this AGM and to be more actively involved in the Association for 2004-2005. New members will be welcome and will be eligible for full participation of the nominal membership dues in the sum of \$1500.

- **SOCIAL EVENTS**

- ✓ *Games Night*

The Editor is pleased to report that QCOSA's Friday Games Night will resume on Friday 12th March, 2004 at the Police Officers Mess, Eve Leary. There is a modest cover charge of \$500. As usual, there will be drinks and snacks available. So, come prepared for a night of games, from badminton, table tennis, cards, dominoes to Scrabble, Risk, and other board games. Feel free to bring along any other board games which you may wish to introduce to others. We are also hoping to invite some Bishops' old students for some friendly competition.

- **GENERAL NEWS**

- Mr. Frank Maloney, outstanding French Teacher for years at Queen's College, has recently resigned due to old age and increasing ill-health. We thank him for his years of dedicated service and wish him all the best for the future.
- On Sunday 15th February, 2003, the Guyana Chapter hosted a Farewell Lunch and get-together at Kirkpatrick's Catering for the Headmistress, Mrs. Wendell Roberts.

- **BULLETIN – Dr. Makepeace Richmond**

Since I had always enjoyed the "matters arising" from lessons, I have wondered how the masters of yesteryear compare with those of today. For instance, there was Mr. J.C. la T. Potter emphasizing the border changes in Europe at the time of World War 1 by telling of the girl in Alsace-Lorraine who would not do her lessons. She said, "J'ai bien de temps, j'apprendrai demain". But tomorrow the Germans came. Or of Robert Clive sent to India by the East India Company to increase their profits and instead got into a fight and captured the Province of Sind. Nervous of the reaction of his employers he began his dispatch, "Peccavi, I have Sind"

The champion of this was undoubtedly Mr. H. A. M. Beckles (Becks) the unflappable, the perfect gentleman. Wandering from the French text into France, he mentioned a district in which it was illegal to make loud noises after a certain hour. A voice from the back of the class: "How do you prevent dogs from barking"? With a lifting of eyebrows came: "You put muzzles on them" The voice then moved in for the kill: "And cocks from crowing? Scarcely a heartbeat later: "You've seen how cocks stretch their necks as they crow? They put them into coops where they can't stretch their necks."

And wandering to Nice: "You can get a lovely nut-brown tan like this (pointing to the palm of his hand).

The Principal had lived in the top floor, now the domain of the Ministry of Health. When he moved out our Fourth Form became sole tenant of the floor. The room had a door and various comics would go out and walk back

heavily. We would all stand up as the door opened. One day Evan Drayton went out. "Fat" Lowe, the largest boy in our class, took up position just inside the door and we all turned expectantly to it. The heavy footsteps came, the door opened, "Fatty" punched to the midsection. There was a collective gasp. Two seconds Beck's had got his wind again. "Gentlemen, is this a riot?" Only "Fatty" didn't laugh.

From Lloyd Luckhoo in the Classical Sixth we heard of the day when the Latin text referred to a Roman feast and none of the boys had looked it up; Mr. Beckles orated at length on the details of it.....only they later found it wasn't that one.

Mr. Norman E. Cameron (Neboo), mathematician and, after a trip abroad, the pioneer of the pen-holder grip in table tennis in the country, was in sharp contrast. In algebraic geometry we had failed to solve a problem that had been part of our homework. He went to the board, started on it, and when he got stuck, turned to us and said ruefully, "I didn't do my homework". There is a certain magic to mathematics and I still remember the joy I felt on discovering that the square root of minus one, an imaginary quantity, could be used as a tool to solve problems.

Chemistry was fun. With no LPG, we still had Bunsen burners. You had to go outside and wind up a heavy weight which was, I suppose, part of a device for reducing the pressure on a cylinder of aviation spirit. Most boys have some time or other made gunpowder. My favourite was nitrogen iodide, a highly temperamental substance. TNT was easy enough to make but it seemed better not to. I remember Capt. Nobbs telling the story of Kekule, dozing and musing about the structure of benzene molecule. In his mind's eye there were six snakes in a ring, each with its mouth with the tail of another. A little different from today's electronic concept, but it was where benzene ring got started.

It was in Botany that we encountered the holy grail of rationality, the scientific method. All else is anecdote. This indelible marker on my life came from a simple experiment to show that light was necessary for the production of starch in the leaf of a plant. Some of us continued in Botany into the Sixth. Harry Annamunthodo and I were assigned to do research on water plants and spent many a pleasant afternoon in the Botanic Gardens. To flesh out our work we decided to check-over Mr. Bevis's private library. We encountered a small publication entitled "*Lucinda sine Concubitu*". It was the description of an experiment carried out by a clergyman in a windy and remote region. He excluded all males, even cats and dogs, from his house then secured the premises. He next removed the nether garments of his maid, spread and exposed her to the west wind. After several exposures she became pregnant. Therefore, concluded the paper, it is possible to have *Lucinda sine Concubitu*.

It was in the very next year that Harry won the British Guiana Scholarship. At that time only one was awarded a year and it was the first time that it had gone to someone on the science side.

(The winds in Guyana are North East Trades. I thought I should mention this since I am being nice to you for Christmas).

- **WEBSITES**

We are pleased to report that whilst our QCOSA (Guyana) website is still under construction, some links are up and QC Old Students can now sign up using the members' link on the Navigation Bar. So, I urge you to visit our site at www.qcosa.org and register on our database so as to expand membership and provide information flow amongst old students.

- **School receives Text-books from the London Chapter**

The School on Friday 23rd January, 2004 received a quantity of textbooks (European history, International Relations and general History books) as a result of a very generous donation made possible by the London Chapter. The handing over was done at the General Assembly on Friday morning in the new Auditorium. The President of the Guyana Chapter, Laurie Lewis addressed the school and also took the opportunity to bid farewell to Mrs. Roberts, the Headmistress at that time. Greetings were also given on behalf of all the Chapters by Mr. Lewis. The handing over was done by Ms. Vidushi Persaud, the Public Relations Officer of the Guyana Chapter. Also present at the handing over were Jim Holder, QC Old Boy & School Administrator, and past-Secretary of the Guyana Chapter, Andrew Arjoon. If we had to acquire them locally, it would have put us back at least \$1/2M G. This was indeed a 'sterling' contribution from the London Chapter!

- **Ms. RHODES SCHOLAR – AMLATA PERSAUD**

It is with great pride that we announce the award of the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship to an outstanding young lady and QC Old-Girl and Past Head-Prefect, Ms. Amlata Persaud.

This comes as no surprise since we can all recall she received the CXC Award in 1999 for being the best student in the Caribbean for that year and also received the Award for being the Best Performer in the Humanities. She went on to emerge as our top achiever at the GCE Advanced Level in 2001 with straight 'A' distinctions in four subjects.

On the basis of her performance, she gained admission to Oxford University to read for the PPE (Philosophy, Politics and Economics) Degree.

Criteria for the Rhodes Scholarship include proven intellectual and academic achievements, caring for the weak, leadership skills and a desire to contribute to the development of society.

Recently, Amlata was awarded the Oxford Prize for Best Political Essay.

Our sincere congratulations to Amlata Persaud and our best wishes to her for her future. The Guyana Chapter of QCOSA is extremely proud of her!

- **CONDOLENCES**

Our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Allan Prowell "Bosie" Abrams who passed away on November 14, 2003 after a nine-year struggle against prostate cancer. He attended Queen's College from 1946 to 1954 and was Head of Pilgrim House in his final year at QC.

It is with sadness that we announce the death of Allan's classmate, Gerald Wong, who passed away on November 22, 2003. After leaving Queen's College in 1953, he became a civil engineer. Our condolences to his family.

It is with further sadness that we report the passing of 19 year old Kimberly Wilson, the daughter of Gordon Wilson, President of the New York Chapter and ICQC Communications Coordinator. Kimberly died on January 11, 2004, after a brief illness, while visiting her mother in Jamaica. The funeral was held at the Trinity Methodist Church in Guyana on January 21, 2004. Our sincere condolences to the Wilson family.

- **VALEDICTIONS**

We extend heartiest congratulations to QC Old Boy, Professor Eon Nigel Harris on being appointed the new Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies. Prof. Harris is currently Dean and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Morehouse School of Medicine, in Atlanta, USA. He is internationally known for his work as a Rheumatologist and leads worldwide efforts to standardise the anticardiolipin test, which he helped to devise, for a disorder he, along with two colleagues had identified, called the Antiphospholipid Syndrome.

He did his medical degree at the University of Pennsylvania after graduating magna cum laude from Howard University with a degree in Chemistry and from Yale University, also with honours, with a Master of Philosophy degree in Biochemistry. Professor Harris is also a graduate of the University of the West Indies, having completed his residency in internal medicine at Mona and earning a UWI postgraduate degree, Doctor of Medicine.

He has received many Honours and Awards, including the Ceiba-Geigy Prize for his discovery of the Antiphospholipid Syndrome and the Centennial Award for Contributions to Medicine by the National Medical Association (of America).

Good Luck to our young executive member, Anil Narain, who has recently left Guyana to pursue further studies in business administration at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York. We wish him all the best and thank him for initiating the website, and for organising Games Night during his short time with us at QCOSA.

We repeat our request for submission from readers of items of interest, comments on our newsletter and names and e-mail addresses of old students for inclusion in our circulation database.

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