

SAINTS NEWS & VIEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. STANISLAUS
COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION TORONTO



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MY JOB AS PRESIDENT AND WHY (AS I SEE IT) BY A. RUPERT DE CASTRO, CMA

First, if and when we as an Executive screw-up, I take responsibility. When we succeed, it's a collective effort. Of course, I will admit, I am made to "look good" by a great bunch of guys.

You would not believe how we operate. What we do is not life or death. We don't take ourselves too seriously. Sometimes we "fight like crazy" but most of all we have fun helping Saints. Our meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month, starting at 7.30 p.m. The location is 4544 Sheppard Avenue East (West of Mc Cowan). All are invited. Come on over and have some fun!

As President, my job is to keep this productive machine well oiled and moving smoothly along the path of PROFIT. Without profit we become "verbal do-gooders" which is not enough for Saints. When there is a disagreement between Executives, I must mediate. In doing this I am many times forced to remind the combatants, yes I mean the combatants (verbal), why we are all in this: to help Saints. I must appeal to the individuals' sense of fair play, instilled in us all at Saints, and to the interests of each party in helping Saints. We all have our individual reasons for doing what we do.

It's a challenging job. My wife Camille claims, I do more for Saints than for my job. This is not true! I won't have the \$\$\$ to put food on the table if I did (smile).

I always remember one of our formative meetings as President back in 1993. Eden Gajraj, then president of Queens College Alumni Association and its Executive had been generous in providing us a copy of their constitution. We were discussing how we would run the organization and what policies we would adopt to make it financially successful. On one side of the issue was Errol Campbell (Vice President) who believed (as I did and do) that "every dollar saved is a dollar earned". On the other side was Randy Bradford (Treasurer) who disagreed intensely with the direction we were about to take. After heated debate with everyone having "said his piece", Randy gathered all his material, stood up and said "if this is the way you guys are going to run this organization, I am out of here." Randy was (strategically) seated next to me at the table. I remembered getting up, putting my

arm around Randy and in my best Guyanese saying "Randy man, whey yu going? Ley we talk some more. We need you." Randy, I believed, recognized immediately the position he had put me in and the disruptive effect his leaving would have on the group, especially in its infancy. He graciously sat down after much protest and went on to become a great contributor to the success of the organization. Randy's position was eventually adopted by the group.

Errol, as we all know, became a stalwart of the organization and has been instrumental in initiating and helping immensely in carrying out some of the major projects we have completed over the years.

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MY JOB CONTINUED...

Errol was the guy that started “the ball rolling” with a letter from Bobby Fernandes, then President of the Guyana Saints Alumni Association, stating that wood ants were eating at the very foundation of the buildings and they (Saints) needed our help. Ah! We have come a long way since then. Thanks to each and every contributor over the years.

Now Noel Denny, I used to refer as the “old man” among us, until I learned he is actually younger than I! Noel, from day one has always been our “resource” person. When we did not know what we were doing, Noel would guide us. I believe in the first few years we never did anything unless Noel first sanctioned it. Even today, when I have a difficult issue, I would turn to him for sage advice.

Take Howard Bryce. Over the years Howard has fought relentlessly for the students at Saints and for keeping prices down for all of our functions. It’s probably fair to say, I have stood at the other end of the spectrum when it comes to pricing. We have indeed “locked horns” on the issue many times. Now that Howard is Chairman of many of our more successful functions, the man has become a “money machine”. He now advocates “more equitable pricing” However, he always insists that we provide excellent value for the \$\$ our contributors pay.

The bottom line result of the way we run the organization is that each new project requires a CHAMPION and a vociferous one at that. We all work hard to raise a dollar and we never knowingly spend it foolishly. We, of course make costly errors, but we move on. A CHAMPION stays the course and inevitably with many adjustments gets his project through.

Personally, I see myself in the THIRD trimester of my life (my Dad died at 90. At 88 my Mom is still the “firefly” she has always been) I do not take myself too seriously. Like everyone else, I have gone through some tough times and I have also seen “some castles in Spain” (I am not done yet). I have also been fortunate to be married to woman who understands me, my motives and my “boiling point” and who knows how to “sweet talk” me (I can’t help it; I am in love). They say men marry women with many traits their mothers possess. I sure married a “firefly”.

To those of you who have not yet sent in your \$25 membership fee for 2003, think of where your “road may

have turned” had you not had the good FORTUNE of a SAINTS Education. Those ferulas hurt and sometimes (Fr. Feeny/ Fr. Byrne/ Fr. Lynch) hurt like Hell but they sure “made a man out of you” (smile). For the younger generation who did not experience the ferules; you buggers where lucky, but I am sure you still got a lot out of Saints. You owe it to your alma mater. Send in the \$25.00. It’ll make you feel part of the bigger picture – HELPING SAINTS.

We all know money is not everything; but try living without it. (Smile)

I leave you with a quotation from Abraham Lincoln: “I do the very best I know how, the very best I can, and I mean to keep on doing so until the very end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me will not amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten legions of angels swearing I was right would make no difference.”

I ain’t perfect yet I try (smile).

CHINA : continued from Page 4

At a lower level, others are seen praying the rosary in front of a statue of the Blessed Virgin, and before a statue of the Sacred Heart. Generally, the faithful were older folk with just a sprinkling of young. After hearing of the suppression of religion in China, I was amazed at this public display of devotion, out in the open, unimpeded by any of the Chinese authorities. The faith in China has not been eliminated, despite the efforts of the Communist Party.

One very encouraging sign was the interest I discovered, of some young Chinese, in Christianity. The fact that they can openly enquire about Christianity, and will carry a bible in public, indicates a tolerance of the practice of religion outside of the Party. It is still not acceptable to have religious beliefs if one is a member of the Party. Still, to its credit, the Party has shown that it can change to meet changing conditions, and it is quite conceivable that it will one day accommodate the religious alongside the atheists.

China possesses an enormous depth of geography and history, plus a wide variety of cultures among the 50 plus minorities contained in the republic. There is some combination of these qualities that would appeal to you and make a visit entertaining and educational. I highly recommend it.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH ALUMNI BY L. A. (BUNTY) PHILLIPS, SECRETARY

We have already sent an e-mail note covering the items in this article to those whose e-mail addresses we have on file. If you have received it and replied, we thank you. If you have not done so yet, please reply at your earliest convenience. This article addresses those of you for whom we do not have e-mail addresses or who do not have internet access.

The Association maintains a distribution list of the names, home addresses, and home and business telephone numbers (plus some other data) of College alumni and friends of the College. In the main, the people whose names are on the list have supplied this information voluntarily, but some of the information was obtained second-hand (from "friends of friends"). The Association holds this list as a confidential document and does **NOT** share it with or sell it to any other persons or organizations for any purpose whatsoever. The Association respects your privacy and will continue to do so, and has no plans ever to do otherwise.

The Association uses this information to communicate to you on the following :

- its on-going activities of providing much-needed assistance (financial and otherwise) to the College and its students in Guyana,
- its fund-raising events to enable it to maintain this support, and
- its requests to you for your personal continued help in this most worthy endeavour.

Such communication is possible only if we have correct information on file, and this leads to the first reason for this article.

1. As part of our distribution list, we have tried also to record your e-mail address for later eventual use. For those of you whom we have not contacted by e-mail, either we do not have your e-mail address (if you do have one) or the e-mail address we have for you is incorrect. If you do have an e-mail address, please contact us through our web-site (www.torontosaints.com) with the relevant information.

As mentioned above, we do keep information on file other than just name, postal address, and e-mail address. One such bit of information is the year of graduation from the College. We would like to ensure the accuracy and

consistency of this and other information, leading to the next two reasons for this article.

2. We would like you to provide us with the following information. You can use the registration or contact process of our web-site if you have an e-mail address. Otherwise, you can either phone a member of the Executive (if you live in the area) or send us a note through the postal mail.

- If you did not attend St. Stanislaus College, please let us know so that we can designate you as an Associate Member of the Alumni Association if you have paid membership dues, or as a Friend of the College.

- If you did attend the College, we would like to know your year of graduation. This is NOT necessarily the last year you were at the College as you may have left prior to graduation, or stayed longer than normal to take further courses to enable you to gain entrance to a University. By our definition, the year of graduation is the year you finished Form 5 or would have finished Form 5 if you left before reaching that level.

3. If you have moved residence or changed jobs (including retiring) since the 1 Jan., 2003, please provide us with the most recent information about your changed status so that we can update (or confirm the accuracy of) our records.

If there are any other items you wish to bring to our attention on any matter regarding our Association or Alumni, please do not hesitate to add these to your reply.

IMPRESSIONS OF LIFE IN CHINA BY JOHN YIP

I returned to Toronto last September after a two-year work assignment in China. There I was a member of an international group building a nuclear power station in Zhejiang province, on the Bay of Hangzhou. This assignment gave me an opportunity to meet the people and know that country to an extent which I would otherwise never have been able to. China is changing fast. The landscape is changing with the erection of factories, many financed by foreign investment, the construction of modern high rise housing to meet the needs of an increasingly prosperous work force, and the construction of the infrastructure needed to service modern cities and towns which are replacing the old structures of long ago. Construction of roads, sewerage and water supplies is a common sight. This is a good time to be a civil engineer in China.

Its people are changing too. The stereotypes of the Mao era, who worked unselfishly for the Party and the betterment of the society have given way to the upwardly mobile young, longing for the lifestyle and goods they see on Western television. Emigration is now an option, and for many it has become a dream to be pursued.

I was located in the town of Haiyan, an hour and a half by bus from Shanghai, and an equal distance from the historical city of Hangzhou, capital of the Southern Song dynasty. My wife spent most of my assignment with me, and with the help of local staff, we were able to explore many of the ancient towns in the vicinity. In addition, I often rode among the outlying fields on my bicycle, Guyana style, exploring the numerous small villages that surrounded our town.

The local staff at the project came from many parts of China, and so each spoke the language local to his own hometown. Fortunately, they all spoke Mandarin also, and had no problem speaking with one another. This is one of the enduring benefits of the Communist Party. It established a common language among the Chinese, and today Mandarin is the common language of more than a billion people. It might be said that the Chinese speak Mandarin if necessary, but not necessarily Mandarin.

Much has been written about human rights in China, and the life of Chinese under a repressive regime. From what I observed, the Chinese go about their day-to-day lives as freely as we do in North America. The one exception I noticed is travel to Special Economic zones, e.g. Shenzhen and Zhuhai in Guangdong Province, where conditions for economic development have been made specially favourable,

and the cities are generally prosperous. Travel to these zones is restricted in an effort to keep them from becoming crowded with the unemployed, and to avoid the crime that often results from such conditions. Other than to these areas, travel is unrestricted, and several of the Chinese I met who lived in Haiyan, came from far-flung areas of the country.

On several occasions the subject of Taiwan has cropped up during conversations with Chinese, and I detected no hesitation on their part to discuss even this sensitive question. Political discussions can be held freely in contrast to the common perception in the West. Historically, the Kuomintang, defeated by the Communists, were seen to be evil. They fought for a capitalist form of government, compared to communism of the Communist Party. Today however, China prospers because communism has been largely shed for capitalism. Private enterprise and the pursuit of wealth by the individual has led to prosperity for many, including members of the Communist Party, and the gap between rich and poor, grows. I wondered how the Party reconciled this embrace of capitalism with its doctrine of communism. The official Party response, I am told, is that the embrace of capitalism is only temporary, necessary for rapid development of the country. After the country is developed, it will revert to the communism of Mao; that's the official story as I understand it.

There was a Protestant church in Haiyan, but no Catholic church., so we often travelled to Shanghai for Mass on Sunday. The Xujiahui Cathedral in Shanghai lies opposite one of the large shopping areas and provides a respite for spirit and feet during a long day of shopping. It is a stately building, with twin towers replaced to repair damage by the Red Guards. The service is in Chinese, and the attendance at the one Sunday Mass we attended, was sparse. Later, we were directed to Christ the King, a church that served the expatriate community. It held Mass in English, with readings sometimes in Korean and French also. This church was usually filled, and overflowed at Christmas and Easter – it looks like C & E Catholics abound the world over!

The Sheshan Catholic Church lies on the outskirts of Shanghai, at the top of Sheshan hill. The hill is small and the church is built on the very peak. This explains why pictures of this church always seem to be taken from below; it is an uphill climb right up to the base of the church. Stations of the Cross are erected along the hill path to the church, and people can be seen praying the stations on the way up to the church.

Continued on Page 2, China

THE SEAWALL

BY FRANCIS H. DE CAMBRA

Thank heavens for the Seawall. The first portion of this 5-feet-high sea defense, stretching from Georgetown to Kitty, was built in 1872. It started at Fort Groyne, at the mouth of the Demerara river, to hold back the onrushing, fast flowing waters. In the following years, it slowly wended its way eastward along the coastline. It was finally finished in 1882. Without it, we would have had a city like Venice; as if we needed more water in the 'Land of Many Waters'. Yes, I remember when the semi mud flat we called a beach, was a hotbed of cricket on Sunday mornings. Every self-acclaimed Worrell, Walcott, and Weekes, the 3 'W's' of international cricket fame, was involved in a pick-up game of 'bat and ball', showing off their cricketing skills or more likely lack of it.



Strutting their stuff at

The Seawall

With everyone returning home at game's end, a quietness replaced the throng of sweating bicyclists, except for a few bodybuilders and sun worshippers who sunned themselves, half asleep on the many benches along the wall facing the Atlantic ocean. There were quite a few 'Mr. Wannabe Somebody's' strutting their stuff like some John Grimek, Steve Reeves ('Hercules' in the movies) or Clancy Ross, Mr. America's of yesteryear. As I grew older, I became addicted to the sport myself, and joined the fraternity of musclemen who frequented the wall every week-end to sunbathe. On both Saturday and Sunday after lunch, unconcerned about the dangers of contracting skin cancer or getting a sunstroke, we lay around in the blazing, midday sun, in bathing trunks and drenched from head to toe in olive oil.

Between noon and 3:00 p.m. was the worst time for sunbathing, but it mattered little to the unsophisticated muscleman hungry for a sun tan.

Who ever knew or cared a hoot about RH factor, sunscreen, or UV rays, which were relatively unknown at the time? As far as we were concerned, the Egyptians used olive oil to get their rich bronze tan, that made anyone with half a physique look good. After these tanning sessions, I would ride my bike back home along Camp Street half-dazed, half-roasted like some piece of barbecued steak. But I felt so invigorated with energy for hours afterwards that I could have danced all night. We were all a bit fanatical about living a clean, healthy lifestyle, but were never really your stereotype 'party pooper'. We were a contradiction of our own health standards, enjoying a drink and partying like any other imbibitor. Having a Herculean physique was every bodybuilder's dream. It boosted one's self esteem and satisfied one's narcissism. Oh yes, bodybuilders love themselves to death. "No pain, no gain" was the bodybuilder's mantra. There was always a training partner or 'spotter', goading you on to do that extra rep. And we could never eat enough protein to satisfy hungry, developing muscles. The familiar clanging of the York barbell plates, in an unending repetition of adjusting the weight for the different lifters, was like music to the ear. I remember Mr. Kevin Daly, a Senior Mr. Guyana, and a Junior Mr. Guyana by the name of De Souza, who worked out at the Saxon gym in Howes Street, in Charlestown. I remember another gentleman named Ferreira, whose hobby was carving wooden figures of bodybuilders. I tried so hard to get him to carve one of his lacquered masterpieces for me, which I knew would be the closest I would ever get to owning a trophy. Sadly, fifty-odd years later, I'm still waiting. The Saxon Gym was my baptism into bodybuilding by the Mendonca brothers, Bernard and John, who owned the open-air gym (with a roof) in their backyard, next door to Charlestown convent. I was only 14 years old, and dreaming of becoming a Mr. Something or other. It felt good to be a young member of the bodybuilding fraternity in the 'good old days'. Strenuous exercise, healthy living, three fantastic home-cooked meals a day with lots of protein, fresh Atlantic sea breezes, and boundless energy from sunning on "The Wall" were all part of the bodybuilder's regimen at home. I like to think that it got me to where I am today, alive and well, and enjoying my 'golden years'.

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| Paid-up Members |
|-----------------|

Since our last issue, we are pleased to acknowledge the following who have joined the ranks of Paid-up members.

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Teddy Boyce | Peter De Freitas | Vernon R. Hazelwood | Herman Mc Cowan | Vibert Vieira |
| Ronald Chanderbhan | Andre De Peana | Godfrey Henson | Michael Mendes de Franca | Clement O. Weithers |
| John Choy | Roy Gonsalves | Christopher Lewis | Clarence Nichols | |
| Vincent Correia | Bernard Gouveia | Fr. Kenneth Macaulay | Joseph Alexander Reis | |
| Fred Ezechiels | J. Bernard Friemann | Dr. Coilin H. Nurse | Brian Sadler | |

Members who have previously paid are listed below. This list has been revised since our last issue to include one member we inadvertently missed, although he paid his dues long in advance. Our apologies Tony, for not acknowledging you in our last issue. We dropped the ball for sure. Now you understand why we could not make the First Eleven!

Small as it may be individually, your combined fees contribute to the successful running of the Association in its aims to improve the existing poor conditions of the College in Guyana. For those who do live in the Greater Toronto Area, we also ask for and welcome your active participation in the Association. Your small personal effort CAN make a big difference in the education of those less fortunate than you and your family in Canada.

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Paul Abdool | Ronald D'Ornellas | Trevor Gomes | Neville Jordan | Romeo Resaul |
| Bernard Austin | Frank De Abreu | Mark Gonsalves | Aubrey Kellawan | Desmond Rix |
| Michael Barrington | Michael De Abreu | Claude Gouveia | Gregory Kellawan | Brian Rodrigues |
| Arnold Bayley | Rupert De Castro | Alfred Goveia | William Lall | Dr. Cyril Rodrigues |
| Gary Blank | Stephen De Castro | Guy Goveia | Vibert Lampkin | Eric Rodrigues |
| Anthony Bollers | Tom De Castro | Francis Grenardo | Geoffrey Luck | Keith Rodrigues |
| Howard Bryce | Alvaro De Freitas | John Grenardo | Gerard Martins | Joseph Schuler |
| Ian Camacho | Brian Devers | Albert Hamilton | Carl Marx | Michael Seabra |
| Paul Camacho | Roger Devers | Ken Hahnfeld | Vincent Mendes de Franca | Maurice Serraõ |
| Joe Castanheiro | Terence Devers | Prea Hardeen | Douglas Menezes | Anthony Seth |
| Victor Charan | Victor Dinally | Arthur Hazlewood | Richard Miller | Robin Shaw |
| Bob Chee-a-tow | Neville Devonish | Hugh Hazlewood | Perry Mittelholzer | Desmond Singh |
| Paul Chester | Edward Driver | Paul Hazlewood | Harry Nastamagos | Stanley Tiam Fook |
| Sydney Chin | Paul Duarte | Desmond Hill | Malcolm Pequenezza | Arthur Veerasammy |
| Les Choo-Wing | Carlton Faria | Patrick Hill | Leslie A. Pereira | John Vincent |
| Noel Chung | David Faria | Richard James | Desmond Perreira | David Wong |
| Paul Crum-Ewing | Frankie Fernandes | John Jardim | Bunty Phillips | Jim Yhap |
| Ken Cumberbatch | Nigel Fisher | Raymond Jardim | Paul Reed | John Yip |
| Jerome D'Oliveira | Sonny Francis | Des Jardine | Ramon Rego | |
| Michael D'Ornellas | Gerard Gomes | Clayton Jeffrey | | |

WEBSITE SUBCOMMITTEE—JUNE 2003

Our web-site is back!

For those who are not already aware of this, it has been fully restored since the first week of April 2003.

This milestone was accomplished through the dedication of our volunteer webmaster,

Mark Gonsalves, a Saints alumnus. It would however be remiss if we did not acknowledge our gratitude to Olga Coken who sacrificed a lot of her time in resurrecting the obsolete site prior to Mark's involvement. Olga was a student at Seneca College studying web-site design who benevolently volunteered her time, although she is not a Saints alumnus.

Log on to www.torontosaints.com.

One feature that may be beneficial to you is the Member List. Your information will be added to the list when you register. Utilization of the list may assist in reuniting friends/class-mates.

You will be able to read the newsletter approximately two weeks (the time it takes to print, and volunteers meeting to package and mail) before a hard copy is received in the mail. In addition, you can print it in colour.

For those advertisers who have not yet renewed their subscriptions for 2003, we recommend that you do so at your earliest opportunity, before our President realizes that in addition to being in the newsletter, your advertisements will be in colour on our web-site at no additional cost.

The "Contact Us" section is an opportunity for you to expound your opinions and recommendations. Here are excerpts of some e-mails received:-

"Hi Les,

Thank you very much for the e-mail informing me about the creation of the Saints' web-site!

You and the immediate – past and current executive have done a great job in getting our site back up and running. Congratulations to you and all those who were involved in this task".

-Ken Cumberbatch

Hi Leslie,

I must say that I liked the Web-site with the pictures of the College. I am proud of what you guys are doing for our Alma Mater".

-Ramon Rego

"Art,

I visited your chapter's website yesterday, I am very happy to see the quality of activities you have planned. Good luck".

-Tanuja Ramchal (Secretary – New York Alumni Association)

"Great Website! I've passed the address on to the other directors. No need to resend the email addresses since they're all listed on the site".

-Bhakti Mohabir (New York Alumni Association) to Art Veerasammy

It is our intention to update the site on a weekly basis, more frequently if necessary. You will therefore be aware of any significant developments, such as updates regarding our social and sports events, which may arise between publications of the News & Views. Photographs of our recent spring dance are already published on the site.

The challenge that confronts us now is to maintain and improve the site in order to generate curiosity. We can only do so if we are constantly provided with new material and information.

Your contributions and participation would certainly enhance the success of this project.

For those of you who have said that you would like to help but the time and location of our meetings are inconvenient, here is your opportunity to become "an armchair volunteer". You can contribute by submitting articles for publication, and by sharing those treasured school photographs (with a brief description). You can either scan and e-mail the photographs, or mail them to us. We can scan them and return the originals within a few days.

Submit your material to admin@torontosaints.com.



Above—Dancing the night away



Sitting one out— Andrew and Monica De Abreu (left) with Julie and Trevor Gomes (SSC 1963)

At the Spring Dance

The Association would like to thank all of our sponsors whose contributions made this event possible.



Karen Fung receiving hamper donated by Irie Products



Kenneth Ramcharitar wins the 50-50 Draw

Publisher:

St. Stanislaus College Alumni Association Toronto
4544 Sheppard Avenue East, Toronto M1S 1V2
www.torontosaints.com

Editorial Committee:

Maurice Serrao, Paul Abdool, L. A. (Bunty) Phillips

Contributing Writers:

Rupert De Castro, L. A. (Bunty) Phillips
Hilary De Cambra, Les Choo-wing, John Yip

Advertising Sales:

Rupert De Castro: 416 298-2800
Paul Abdool: 416 297-7585

St. Stanislaus College Alumni Association Toronto, founded in 1993, is devoted to helping make St. Stanislaus College the best educational institution in Guyana. It provides financial aid and other aid to the college, which was founded by Fr. Langton S. J. in 1866. Formerly run by the Jesuit Order of Catholic Priests, the school was taken over by the Government in 1976, with Government-appointed teachers replacing the clergy in 1980.

Saints News & Views publishes four issues each year. The articles published represent the opinions of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

Saints News & Views welcomes contributing articles from its membership. The publisher reserves the right to edit or publish all submissions solely at its discretion.