

# The Communicator

## Newsletter Volume III Edition III Fall 2003

*In this issue:*

- ❖ CM Reunion 2003
- ❖ Identify this machine
- ❖ Mystery Photo
- ❖ Team Work
- ❖ Memories
- ❖ In Memoriam
- ❖ Next Issue

### Editors Ramble

*By David Smith*

Alas, the summer of '03 is nothing but a memory now.

The big event of the summer for many was of course the CM reunion 2003 held in Parksville, V.I. Barrie has submitted his experiences and you will find many familiar names amongst the group.

I found this summer just whizzed by and here we are into October already. Like my Beemer bike which now sits in storage, I wait anxiously for spring to once again give us the opportunity to spend more time outdoors. In the meantime, I will read and re-read these stories from our colleagues and enjoy the memories. I continue to seek your life's experiences so how about getting creative over the winter and compose that story you have always wanted to write.

Happy reading.



**What's this – see page four**

Association Newsletter published by and for members of the Association of Former Foreign Service Communicators. Check us out at: [www.affsc.ca](http://www.affsc.ca)

### CM Reunion 2003

*By Barrie Thomas*

The Reunion took place from Friday, August 29<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, August 30<sup>th</sup>. Those were the official dates. However, when Marty Byzewski (BY) got into town on Thursday evening, a little pre-Reunion socializing took place and we ended up at the local Sandbar Pub along with Dan and Deirdre Savage. Marty had traveled from Warren, Wisconsin with his girlfriend Sherlyn, a very nice young lady. Dan and Deirdre had come over from White Rock on the mainland. White Rock is a satellite community for Vancouver and is about 40 minutes from the big town and 5 minutes from the US border.

Dan and Marty had not recognized each other so that when I arrived with my wife Valerie, they were both sitting at separate tables. I had never met Dan but as soon as I walked into the Pub, Marty waved at me and that indicated to Dan that this was Barrie Thomas. The four of us joined Dan and Deirdre at their table since they were having dinner. A few beers were had that evening, along with many reminiscences of times past.

Friday loomed and Roger and Isabel arrived at my house just after lunch, after dropping Lou and Marg Berube off at their motel in town. Roger had picked Lou and Marg up at Vancouver airport and they had traveled over on the ferry together. Roger and Isabel were going to stay with us.

The time came for evening drinks at the Best Western Bayside in Parksville. I had arranged for the drinks to be held on the patio overlooking Parksville bay. Bob and Hazel Chilton had volunteered to work the registration table that night which left me free to take photos of everyone who registered. I thought this would be a good idea as in the previous reunion back in Ottawa; we had lots of photos of people, but not many individual shots where you could get a really good look at how people had aged! Or not aged! I knew everyone would not be turning up for drinks that night; but we managed to get those who arrived, registered and then photographed with my digital camera.

Most of those who were attending the Reunion had not been to the Ottawa Reunion in 2000; so I and many others hadn't seen each other for years. Among those who were there that night were Lou & Marg Berube, Vince Hunter, Terry & Suzanne Hayes, Tom O'Quinn, Marty (BY) & Sherlyn, Rex & Margaret Coffin, Pete & Jeanine Hurst, Ken & Diane McNames, Jon Livingston, Gerry & Terri Spenard, Frank Arsenaault, Dave & Nancy Duke, Dan & Deirdre Savage, and of course my wife Valerie and myself.

I've never seen people talk so much! It went on the whole night. Pete Hurst and Dan Savage hadn't seen each other since Africa back in the sixties. I don't quite remember which posts, but I think Lagos and Accra were involved. There is a neat story about these two guys. Apparently, Deirdre Savage bought a dress from Jeanine Hurst for the price of \$20.00 Canadian. Remember, we're talking about the sixties here. Dan gave Pete a cheque for the \$20.00 and that was that. Three years later, Pete was going through his things and found this cheque for \$20.00. He thought, "Well, it's too late now, but I'll hang on to it in case I run into Dan again." Well, the rest is history. Dan was amazed to see the cheque and the story was told to others and me. But I don't remember if Pete gave the cheque to Dan. I ended up taking a picture of the cheque for the record! The evening broke up around 10:30 pm and everyone went back to their respective motels.

On Saturday, while we looked after the last minute details for the evening's banquet, Roger and Isobel did a little sight seeing. We had just arrived back at my house when Bob Alexander phoned announcing his arrival in town with Meann, his girlfriend. An invitation to come on over and have a beer was readily accepted, and they arrived almost the same time as Roger and Isabel returned to the house. No sooner had the first beers been poured than Pete Hurst called to say he'd arrived from Peachland. Guessing that he would be thirsty after breathing all that smoke from the forest fires in the Okanagan, I invited them over for a beer; so we ended up having our own mini Reunion in my backyard.

Pete and I had been in Paris together in the early seventies and Roger and I had been together in Ottawa, London, Ottawa, Ottawa, Washington and finally Ottawa. I think Roger is the CM I spent most time with! Since none of us had eaten, we went down to the Boar's Head Pub at our local marina about two minutes from my place. We had lunch and a few beers, and had our photo taken by a waitress, then headed back to get ready for the evening's events.

The evening started with drinks on the patio and the guests that had not come on the Friday night appeared and were registered. Those guests were Steve Mathews, Bob Alexander and his girlfriend Meann Woolls, Bruce and Judi Davison, Terry Satchell and Christine Devlin, Dan and Pirjo Barnes, Leigh and Marlene Shankland, Bob and Polly Beaton and Ray Palmer. Once again it was yak yak yak until we were called into the banquet room in preparation for the dinner buffet.

Once everyone was seated, I acted as MC and organized the line up at the buffet table by having people go up table by table. The Entrée comprised of a Roast Baron of Beef Au Jus, Pork Medallions in a Peppercorn Sauce, Char-grilled Chicken Breast with Roasted Garlic and Sun dried Tomato Cream Sauce, Pacific Salmon with Coriander Pesto. This was all laid out with Oven Roasted Potatoes, Rice Pilaf and a medley of Fresh Steamed Market Vegetables. At the beginning of the table there were fresh vegetables with dip, Herb Pate, Cappicoli Ham, Smoked Turkey and Black Forest Ham. There was also a salad selection along with a cheese platter, Fresh Seasonal Fruit and a Specialty Dessert Buffet along with Coffee or Tea served at the table. Judging by the comments after the meal, the food was a big hit.

Once the meal was at the Dessert and Coffee stage, I got up and mentioned the death of Tommy Ito in April, and more recently Gord Hildebrand. I then proposed a toast to absent friends. MC'ing is not as easy as it looks and after telling a joke that went over quite well, I gained confidence and launched into my favourite "blonde" jokes, which went over like a lead balloon. Quickly moving on, I turned it over to Leigh Shankland to say a few words.

Leigh kept us entertained with a story about the time when he was doing a courier trip and had to go through San Antonio in Texas. Apparently the security people, two enormous Texans, would not allow him to get under the plane to get his bags and took him, with his bags, to a secure area where for a couple of hours where he was interrogated. He was told that this is Texas and no one stands under

the plane! It was an interesting story and had repercussions right up to the State Department in Washington. Needless to say the two "Texan" security people heard from State about this incident. Future couriers going through San Antonio had absolutely no trouble whatsoever and the security people were falling over themselves trying to be cooperative. Leigh was followed by Lou Berube who reminisced about some of his postings and the unforgettable CM's and EL's he'd worked with over the years.

After Lou was finished I got up and was ready to wrap things up until my wife Valerie shouted at me "what about the door prizes?" How could I have forgotten the door prizes after all the time we'd spent scouring the craft shows and markets here on the Island looking for items that would be a memento of Vancouver Island. We ended up with three prints by local artists, two glass beer mugs decorated with pewter animal engravings, and the last one was a carved wooden native Thunderbird spirit box which was won by Bob Alexander; but I have a feeling that Meann will be keeping it!

## Team work

*By Jon Livingston*

Can any of you recall the odds on finding more than two communicators at a post abroad, working in the same office for an extended period of time, in near perfect harmony?

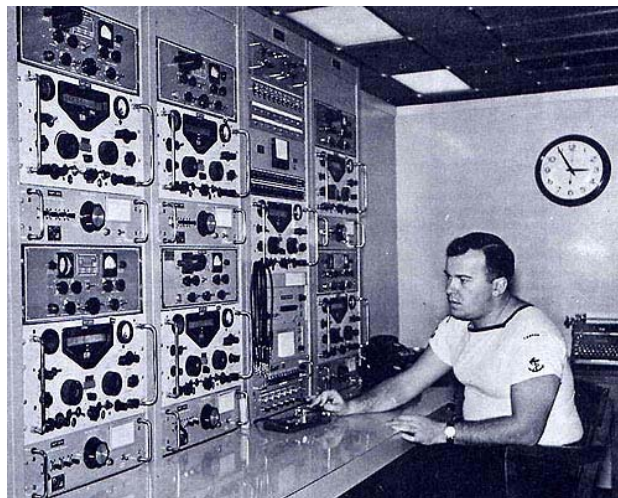
Well it happened in Rome about eleven or twelve years ago with Gerry Eastlake, John Scott and myself. Not only did we work well together as a team, but we were good friends too.

After the draw we all posed for a group photo that was taken by Frank Arsenault on a timer. Getting all the people figured out was quite an effort and the Bayside staff in properly placed, suitably quiet, and the camera timer the back of the room were totally amused at our antics. In fact it was such good entertainment that they went to get other staff from the kitchen to come and watch the performance. But the picture was taken and will be sent by Frank once he gets the film developed. I took a couple of quick shots of the group with my digital camera minus Frank, Bob Alexander and myself just to make sure we got a shot.

Once the photo shoot was over, the evening broke up and everyone said their goodbyes. Some people mentioned how they were looking forward to the next Reunion. To which I replied that the next one is tentatively schedule for 2005 in Ottawa and that I would certainly see them there.

So that was CM Reunion 2003 and I'm confident everyone enjoyed themselves as much as I did.

\* \* \*



Who is this former colleague of ours?

*Answer on page four*

At one point we realized that collectively the three of us had over a hundred years of communications experience.

Modesty not being our strong suit, it wasn't long before we began to share this information with other colleagues around the Embassy. Clearly they'd heard enough of that crap when one day a large banner mysteriously appeared over the comcentre door reading:

**"THE GERRY-ATRIC WARD".**

## Memories

By George Levasseur

I was cross-posted to Cairo and would be working with Roger Bergeron. The fact that my posting wasn't too long, I stayed the whole time at the Nile Hilton hotel. As Roger at the time was not batching too much I kept telling him that he should. I used to say to him how nice it would be to eat some good old Canadian junk once in a while. Roger, of course being a very accommodating guy, said to me, "Hey ! You're welcome to come over anytime and cook. I accepted his hospitality and once in a while I would cook. This of course meant that I would go often to his apartment. At this apartment, like all apartments in Cairo, especially where Europeans and/or Americans lived, the place had a Concierge hanging about in the lobby of the building checking everyone going in and out of the place. One day I decided to go out and shop with Roger. I wanted to buy souvenirs from Egypt to bring back with me. Around the city we went and suddenly we came across a store selling Arabic clothing (the type you see Saudis wear). I decided that is what I wanted so I bought a whole outfit. I also bought a "Hubbly Bubbly" pipe; the opium type with four hoses for four smokers. I also got a fake beard and mustache and to the apartment we went. Roger suggested I dress up in this outfit and we would show his concierge which I did. The whole outfit is perfect except that my eyes give it all away as I had gotten to know the concierge pretty well. To deal with that problem, Roger loaned me a pair of sun glasses, the pilot type which were perfect for the occasion. I then sit in the middle of the living room (legs crossed over) smoking the pipe. Roger of course calls down for his concierge to come up to the apartment. Now, these concierges are very aggressive to people (especially to their own) when it comes to putting people out of the building. A knock on the door, Roger opens the door and before he could "introduce" the "visitor" this guy launches at me (while I'm minding my own business) and was going to kick me out in a no uncertain fashion. Of course at this stage Roger is screaming at the guy "It's George, it's George, it's George". The poor guy thought it was someone who had come in Rogers place and Roger could not get rid of him. We of course then had a good laugh. They were without doubt good old times.

## Answers to mystery photos

1. The Crypto machine on page one is called "Race", a Nato crypto unit produced in Norway. In DFAIT, it wasn't really put into operation but there were working units in Rod Villeneuve's University of higher learning. Crypto tapes from the Race would work Aroflex, another Nato machine (made by the Dutch) and vice versa. They also interfaced with the Pace if anyone remembers that.
2. Our young leading Seaman is none other than James D. Fanning!

## Final Comp "In Memoriam"

Members/friends of the CM/EL community to whom we have said goodbye.

Art Burton October 2002,

Tom Ito April 2003,

Norm Blenkarn May 2003 (Although neither a CM nor EL, Norm was a very good friend of many CM's)

Tom Nickerson June 2003,

Rena Whipple (Graham) June 2003 (Secretary to the Head of Comcentre),

Gord Hildebrand August 2003

Austin Clarke, 2003

Albert Sauve 2003

## Next Issue:

Watch for a serialized story by Merv McBride – Rio Huallaga