



NEWSLETTER

DEC 2014

The Queen's College of Guyana Association (UK)

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No. 49



Season's Greetings



SUBSCRIPTIONS REMINDER

Members are reminded that subscriptions (£12; £5 for full-time students) fell due on 1st October last.



UK taxpayers are kindly requested to pay their subscriptions by Gift Aid as this increases the payment to the Association by just over 28%. The method is simple – contact Ian Wishart (see last page)

QC TOPS REGION AT CSEC YET AGAIN

WINS CARIBBEAN SCHOOL OF THE YEAR AWARD

Heartiest congratulations to **Elisa Hamilton**, who leads a trio of QC top performers at CSEC (Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate, GCSE equivalent), for winning the award for the most outstanding candidate in the region. Elisa gained 19 Grade I and one Grade II passes. Congratulations too to most outstanding candidates **Aliyyah Abdul Kadir** in Humanities (15 Grade Is) and **Ryhan Chand** in Business Studies (13 Grade Is and two Grade IIs). Another Guyanese student, Kishan Crichlow of New Amsterdam Multilateral School, topped the region in Technical Vocational subjects.

But 20 subjects at CSEC! One wonders whether the candidate found time for extra-curricular activities (*mens sana in corpore sano* and all that). Here in the UK there is an on-going argument about grade inflation. At QC there seems to be 'subject' inflation as the number of subjects taken by QC regional winners has progressively increased, being respectively 10, 11, 14, 13, 14, 14, 14 and 15 in 1997, 1999, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2011. Does QC, with its teacher shortage, really teach 20 subjects at CSEC level? And despite our successes at CSEC, we have never yet topped the region at CAPE (Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination – A-levels).

UWI Vice-Chancellor and Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Chair (alumnus) Professor Nigel Harris comments: "I agree that some of these students seem to be doing (too) large numbers of courses, but I meet the regional winners every year, and the winners of these awards, both at CSEC and CAPE, seem in the main to be well adjusted." When they spend a few days together in the country where the awards ceremony is being held "...I can attest with some assurance that they are 'normal' young people who seem to enjoy the time to get together and bond with each other."

The awardees all receive an offer of a full scholarship to UWI provided their performance at CAPE is sufficient to meet matriculation requirements for the Faculty to which they are applying.

QC will receive the **CSEC School of the Year Award** for 2014.

NIGEL TO RETIRE

Professor Harris resigned from the chairmanship of CXC in December as he will retire as UWI Vice-Chancellor in April. He and his wife plan to retire in St Lucia. Nigel's successor will be Professor Hilary Beckles, great-nephew of our own Hilary A M Beckles who taught at Queen's from 1924 to 1958, being Deputy Principal from 1946 until his retirement.

AGM HIGHLIGHTS

Eighteen members and three guests attended the meeting (17 members and four guests last year) held at the Guyana High Commission on Saturday 22 November. The meeting was followed by the customary Social. (The unadopted minutes, External Examiner's and Trustees' Reports and Accounts, and Chairman's Report are available at our website www.qcoga.org.uk)

NON-EXECUTIVE OFFICERS FOR 2014–15

Due to his failing eyesight, **Neville Linton**, our longest serving President – twelve years in the post – declined to stand for re-election. The Management Committee had proposed **Derek Hugh** for the post, and he was duly returned unopposed. Derek was our first Life Member. Vice-Presidents **John Rafferty**, **David Man**, Sir **Shridath ('Sonny') Ramphal**, **Trevor Phillips**, **Henry Edwards**, **Ivor Ying**, **Gary Ramprashad** and **Ian Wishart** were re-appointed, and **Neville Linton** and **Mark Adamson** appointed. Neville was proposed by the Committee, and Mark was proposed by Ivor Ying and seconded by Mark Dalgety.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The seven members of the Management Committee (all returned unopposed) are: **Mark Dalgety**, **Khatijah Shakur**, **Ian Wishart**, **Nigel Caleb**, **Claire Carballo**, **John Jones-Alleyne** and **David Blackman**. Khatijah (QC 77–82) is a Life Member of long standing, while Nigel (QC 69–75) and John (QC 75–82) are in the process of becoming Life Members by the 'alternative route'. At the first meeting of the Committee, on 12 December, Mark, Ian and Khatijah were respectively returned unopposed as Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, whilst **Praveen Hanoman**, **Christopher Chunnillall**, **Peter Fraser** and **Bruce Nóbrega** were co-opted, Praveen as Assistant Treasurer (see last page for contact details). Chris and Peter were appointed ICQC representatives.

FUND-RAISING EVENTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Although attendance at the annual **Brunch**, held at The Bedford public house on 27 April was much the same as last year, the profit was well down – £259 compared with £438 last year. This was due to increased catering costs. On the other hand the profits on the **Family Barbecue** (aka the Summer Reunion) and the **Carnival Fête** were significantly in excess of last year's. The Barbecue, held at the usual venue on 20 July made £497 (a measly £70 last year) mainly due to lower costs for catering and music. A thunderstorm – fortunately after the barbecue had been served – failed to dampen spirits, and we all repaired to the church hall to dance. The Carnival Fête, at Jasmins in Tooting on 24 August, the weekend of the Notting Hill Carnival, did even better: £521 profit compared with last year's loss of £20. The improvement was mainly due to better publicity. However there is some doubt regarding the availability of the venue next year.

The turnout for the **Annual Dinner**, held at the Bunga Raya on 30 November was, however, disappointing, with only 36 attendees compared with 56 in January. The previous event would normally have been held in November last year, but was put back to January because of the proximity of the October dinner-dance (see last issue). A profit of £272 was realised, compared with £427 in January. The Committee has accordingly decided to hold the dinner in January, the next one being on Sunday 31 January **2016**.

It seems that we are becoming a purveyor of neckties. Our donation to QCOSA during the 2113–14 year was £795 worth of ‘Association’ silk ties. These will be sold by QCOSA to raise funds for the benefit of the school.

Some years ago, during the Sanger-Davies regime, ties were introduced for those awarded school colours. These reversed the pattern of the normal school tie, with yellow stripes on a black background. The Board of Governors has decided to re-introduce ties for school colours, and we have recently supplied them with 100 polyester ties (estimated cost £300 – invoice awaited).

SALVETE

We welcome **Nigel B A Caleb** (QC 69–75) as a new member.

VALETE

We regret to announce the deaths of: former member **Courtenay Drysdale Coltress** (QC 48–53), *b.* 1.9.36, *d.* 6.7.14; the church was packed for Courtenay’s funeral on 24 July, and *Carmen Collegii Reginae* was sung at the end of the service; **Michael Elliott McLean Davis** (QC 52–63), *b.* Feb 44, *d.* 15.7.14 in Guyana; **Arthur Henery** (QC 47–52) *b.* Oct 35, *d.* 21.12.14 in Toronto; **S M K Z (‘Kam’) Insanally** (QC 42–49), *b.* 1931, *d.* 12.5.14 in Toronto; **Trevor Jackman** (QC 69–?), *d.* 6.12.14 in Atlanta; **Bibi Khan** (QC 53–?), a former Chairman of Guyana Geology & Mines Commission; **John Vibart Wellesley Luard** (QC late 50s), *d.* 4.6.14 in the US; **Roger Moore** (QC 71-76); **Wilfred Rodrigues** (QC 1930s), *d.* October in St Lucia age 92; **Ronald D Webster** (QC mid 50s–60s), a former Managing Director of Guyana Distillers Ltd, *d.* 27.4.14 in Guyana.

To the bereaved relatives the Association extends its sincerest condolences.

THANKS / CONGRATULATIONS TO:

(Member) **John Dodshon**, (alumnus) **Conrad Franklin**, (Life Members) **Jillian Lilico** and **Kenneth McLean**, and **Betty Why** for their donations to the Association;

Robert France (QC 76–78) on winning the AITO Dahl-Nygaard first senior prize (AITO is an international computer programming organisation, the prize is one of the most prestigious for software engineering);

Dr **Ingram Hazlewood** and Sir **Ronald Sanders** on their respective awards – see below.

LIFE MEMBER INGRAM HAZLEWOOD WINS TOP DENTAL AWARD

Dr **Arthur Ingram Hazlewood** was the recent recipient of the highest honour that the American College of Dentists can bestow upon a Fellow: the William John Gies Award. His citation describes him as being “recognized for his truly exceptional leadership and accomplishments in dentistry, dental public health, education, humanitarianism, care to the underserved, dental advocacy, and global outreach, among others. He has worked tirelessly to address health care needs and care for the less fortunate. His record is extremely impressive and he is held in the highest regard by his peers, nationally and internationally.” The citation then goes on to list his academic awards and achievements – too numerous to mention here – the latter including providing consulting and advisory services to Guyana, Hamilton Ontario, Ghana, Barbados, Peru, China and the UN Development Programme.

Ingram – ‘Ben’ to his contemporaries – attended QC from 1946 to 1953. Although residing in New York, he is a Life Member of this Association.

LIFE MEMBER SIR RONALD SANDERS AWARDED HONORARY DLITT

A recent addition to Sir Ronald Sanders' imposing list of honours and distinction was the degree of *Doctor Litterarum, honoris causa* (honorary Doctor of Letters) conferred by the University of the West Indies at the St Augustine Campus, Trinidad. Sir Ronald is a Knight Commander both of the Order of St Michael and St George (KCMG) and of the Antiguan Order of the Nation (KCN), Commandeur dans l'Ordre des Palmes Academiques (France) and the Order of Australia (for services to the Commonwealth and advancing the interests of small states).

The citation accompanying the formal request to the Chancellor ends: "Whether as journalist, journalistic director, International Consultant or Research Fellow, Sir Ronald has consistently sought to advance the cause of Caribbean integration while working tirelessly for the independence of the Caribbean from external forces. By personal example, he urges us to be not just hard working, not just to excel in our chosen fields but to be courageous and forthright, 'bold' even, in asserting our rights as citizens of the world, every bit as capable as a people as any other."

170th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Alumni gathered in Georgetown in the last week of October to celebrate the 170th Anniversary of the founding of the school. This was co-ordinated with the Annual Business Meeting of the International Committee of the Queen's College of Guyana Alumni Associations (ICQC), which is reported on in the next article.

On Sunday 26th there was registration, and a BBQ hosted by the local alumni association (QCOSA). This was held under the new administrative block which was built following the fire in 1997. The diagonal alignment of the new block led to some amusing arguments, as some of the older alumni struggled to orient themselves with respect to Camp Road, Thomas Road, and the sports ground.

The anniversary was formally commemorated on the Monday morning, when a special assembly was held at the school, and graced by the attendance of the President, Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Chief Education Officer, and other dignitaries. The event was 'compered' by Ron Robinson, and included a feature address by Prof. John Rickford, and an address by the President. Mark Dalgety, in his role as President of ICQC (see item below on page 6), presented a short item summarising the aims and achievement of the alumni associations. Following the assembly, snacks and beverages (including tea sponsored by Dalgety Corporation Ltds) were to be had, and some alumni took the opportunity to carry out impromptu visits to the school.

A series of workshops were held at the School on Tuesday after lunch. Titled "Bridging the Past and Present, Looking to the Future", this initiative was conceived and organised by the Women of Queen's College (WoQC) (2015 will mark 40 years of co-education at the school). The workshops covered many themes, ranging from entrepreneurship and business to sport. Workshops were held on topics that would not normally be addressed in scheduled classes, and alumni of both sexes who had made their mark in various professions shared their knowledge and experience with current students. As a result of the positive feedback from students, the WoQC plan to continue this initiative.

A cocktail social was held at the Georgetown Cricket Club, Bourda, on Tuesday evening, and on Wednesday there was a day-trip to Adel's Rainforest Resort and Rod Westmaas's coconut farm on the Pomeroon River. (Rod is a previous committee member of the Association).

On Friday lunchtime, representatives of the alumni associations made a pilgrimage to the grave-side of Bishop Austin (founder of Queen's College - see article on page 7) in the Churchyard of St James-the-Less in Kitty. A brief service was performed by Father Elias which included the school dismissal hymn 'Lord dismiss us with thy blessing' and the School Song (see photo below).

The cultural highlight of the week was "GRATEMUR SCHOLAE", which was held at the Theatre Guild on Friday evening. The idea of holding a concert was conceived by Eden Gajraj during discussions with Vibert Cambridge on Vibert's brainchild of creating of a website to celebrate the musical achievements of

QC. The first inter-chapter fundraiser co-ordinated by ICQC, the concert was planned by Vibert, Eden, and Alfred Granger, directed by Dr. Paloma Mohamed, and was an evening of music and poetry which showcased items composed by QC alumni and performed by QC students, alumni, and friends of QC. The event was streamed live on the web, and a souvenir programme “Laude” was published. The funds raised are to go towards establishing a Centre of Excellence for the Creative Arts at Queen’s College.

The week closed with a dinner-dance on Saturday at Parc Rayne, Rahaman’s Park.

The school, the local alumni association, WoQC, and the organisers of the concert are to be congratulated for their efforts in organising a truly memorable week, which also initiated activities that promise to enhance the education and welfare of current and future generations of QC students.

A more detailed description of some of the week’s activities can be found in the Guyana Cultural Association of New York Inc. on-line Magazine – Guyana Folk - Nov. 30 2014, Vol 4, Issue 11, which can be downloaded from <http://qcoga.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=Newsletters>



Mark Dalgety (L) and Bruce Nóbrega (R) at the grave of Bishop Austin. The grave (and that of his wife, which is to the left of the photo) was refurbished by Dalgety Corporation Ltd. on behalf of the UK Association. *Photo courtesy Victor Moses*

ICQC - the International Committee of the Queen's College of Guyana Alumni Associations

ICQC participated in a brunch with the Minister of Education, the Chief Education Officer, QC staff, the Board of Governors, and the PTA, on Tuesday 28 October. The Annual Business Meeting of the International Committee of the Queen's College of Guyana Alumni Associations (ICQC) took place on Thursday 30 October 2014, at the Georgetown Cricket Club, Bourda. A business brunch was held between the Minister, the Chief Education Officer, ICQC, the Chairman of the Board of Governors, other Board members, and the Headmistress, on Friday 31 October. Our Association was represented by Mark Dalgety (the outgoing President of ICQC) and Christopher Chunnillall.

Brunch – 28 October

Issues relating to students, teachers, and the school in general were discussed, including the programme the WoQC had initiated to analyse the needs of the students.

ABM – 30 October

The Chairman of the Board of Governors, Mr Conrad Plummer, and the Headmistress, Ms Jackie Benn, were in attendance (Ms Benn arrived at lunchtime, due to other commitments).

The Presidency of ICQC was passed over from Mark Dalgety to Brian Woodroffe, chairman of the hosting Guyana chapter, as prescribed by the constitution of ICQC. All other office-holders were elected to their two-year term of office in 2013, and are therefore unchanged.

The various associations/chapters reported on their activities since the 2013 ABM.

It was agreed that the 2019 ABM would be held in Georgetown, to coincide with the 175 anniversary of the founding of the school. It was agreed to continue with holding ABM's every year, and the 2015 ABM is scheduled to be hosted by the Florida chapters.

The headmistress gave a status report on the school.

Agreement was reached on next steps for progressing the following initiatives: the sports ground / pavilion development plan, the teaching initiative on physics, renaming the library, the establishment and naming of a Centre of Excellence for the Creative Arts, funding of a social worker. The UK Association fund-raising website was also discussed, as was the issue of salary advances for newly-recruited teachers (it takes 3-4 months to process new teachers and the QC Board was required to provide salary advances from its budget during that period), and the structural integrity of the Camp Road bridge.

A list of items to be raised with the Minister on 31 October was drawn up.

Minutes of the 2013 ABM can be found at <http://qcoga.org.uk/tiki-index.php?page=icqc>

Business brunch – 31 October

The following items raised by ICQC were discussed, and actions agreed - sports ground / pavilion development plan, a comprehensive needs list and plan for upgrading and using the science labs, the teaching initiative on physics, funding of a social worker, salary advances for newly-recruited teachers, the Camp Road bridge.

The Minister raised the issue of mentorship for QC students. Other items discussed were incentives for teachers, the 'extra lessons' culture, use of retired teachers from the diaspora, placing community volunteer work into the curriculum. In addition there was the agreement to move forward towards the creation of the Centre of Excellence in the Arts.

The meeting with the Minister and the Chief Education Officer should lead to better co-ordination between the various stakeholders in developing the school.

Current ICQC office-holders

Executive Secretary – Alfred Granger; Deputy Executive Secretary – Gordon Wilson; Recording Secretary – Victor Moses; Fund-raising Co-ordinator – Eden Gajraj.

THE MOST REVEREND WILLIAM PIERCY AUSTIN, DD
FOUNDER OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE

by Tim Smellie

“Here comes my youngest and most handsome bishop!” So said Queen Victoria, age 28, when William Piercy Austin, age 35, went to kiss her hand after being consecrated Lord Bishop of Guiana in Westminster Abbey on 24th August 1842, following the creation of the See of Guiana that year.

William was born in 1807 at The Crown Inn in Stone, Staffordshire, while his parents were staying there on their return to Bath after a visit to relations in Scotland [see *Newsletter* 44, December 2011]. That he was born in an inn seemed to cause him special delight in later life, a little point of union with his master.

Earliest records of William's family go back to the 1700s in Barbados, but they also owned plantations in Demerara and Essequibo, and at one of these, Pln Land of Plenty, he spent a few early years before being sent to school in England. Later at Exeter College, Oxford, he earned a special name in rowing, being a fine oar, and it was due to his efforts that the first University Boat Race was rowed in 1829.

Ordination had been his purpose for some time but urgent family business called him back to Demerara. Stopping off in Barbados, he was persuaded by Bishop Coleridge, the first Bishop of Barbados whose diocese included Guiana, to accept a curacy at St George's, Georgetown. So in St Michael's Cathedral, Bridgetown, then being used as a hospital for victims of a devastating hurricane ten days previously, William Piercy Austin was ordained Deacon in August 1831.

Although he went at once to Georgetown, he then had to return to England for family reasons. There he settled for a while as Curate of Ston Easton and Emborough in Somerset, and was ordained Priest by Bishop Law of Bath and Wells in 1834.

Soon after, he was appointed Rural Dean of Essequibo, and was back in Guiana. It was reported that on Emancipation Day in 1834 he mixed with the free men and women as they thanked God for His mercies. Some time later he was appointed Archdeacon of Guiana at St George's.

Back in Georgetown, the Bishop founded Queen's College (originally Queen's College Grammar School, a church school) which opened on 5th August 1844, and was its first principal. Initially there were two departments: classical and commercial, which remained the case until the College was taken over by the Government in 1876. The College is, and has been for decades, the premier school in the country.

To ensure that the Church should minister to the whole population, the Bishop travelled indefatigably, even to hitherto unknown parts of the Interior, and is credited to have personally established at least 45 new missions. Wherever he went, whether on the Coast or in the Interior, the venerable figure was faultlessly attired in frock-coat, breeches and gaiters. His Lordship always took with him on his long journeys six large air-tight trunks, each containing a complete canonical outfit, so that wherever he went he could always appear in a manner befitting the Bishop of Guiana. There was one notable occasion when, in his eighties, he arrived wet through at a house in Berbice. As his luggage had not yet caught up with him, Bishop Austin was, not without difficulty, persuaded to change into a suit offered by his host. His diary duly recorded the incident with the following comment: *It was embarrassing to appear so clad in the presence of my host and hostess. I am only thankful that the members of the Church in the Parish did not see their Bishop in trousers.*

When journeying through the network of rivers covering the country, the Bishop travelled in full canonicals in corials paddled by Amerindians. He must also have been an accomplished horseman, as doubtless he used this form of transport when travelling on land. Once he was seen some way out of Georgetown riding to a plantation with a servant in livery riding behind.

In old age, the Bishop was described by a contemporary as an Epoch-making man of his period, to which a liberal education, exceptional social advantages, the athletic training in his College Eight, the special training made necessary by his early appointment to high office, and his virtues of tact and moderation all contributed. ...[H]e stood 6 ft 2 inches in his stockings...with shoulders proportionately broad; a face full

of benevolence and eyes both gentle and firm, deep-set in a large head with its broad forehead;...moreover a voice...almost as strong to-day as it was twenty years ago.

William had married a Scottish cousin Eliza Henderson in 1831, and they had nine children, three of whom died in infancy. The family lived in Kingston House, High Street. Originally the house stood close to the road, but because his little children persisted in throwing objects down at passers-by, the Bishop had the house moved well back from the road. The house was eventually re-named Austin House in his memory and remains the official residence of the Anglican Bishop of Guyana.

In 1883 William became Primate of the West Indies, and in 1891 Queen Victoria appointed him Prelate of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George.

During the time he was bishop, services were held at the temporary Pro-cathedral of St George, the original stone building having become unsafe due to subsidence. His last public function as bishop was the opening and blessing of the new Cathedral in August 1892 (the present building – designed by Sir Arthur Blomfield, coincidentally son of Bishop Blomfield who was one of the five bishops who had consecrated William in 1842).

A few weeks later he died in harness, age 85. After his body rested briefly in the new Cathedral, the funeral service was held at the Pro-cathedral, and he was laid to rest alongside his wife, who had pre-deceased him, in the churchyard of St James-the-Less, Kitty.

The above article is largely based on that written by Member Tim Smellie (QC 1942–44) for his church's Newsletter. Tim, who was christened at the Cathedral, is the Bishop's half first cousin four times removed.

On Friday 31st October 2014, a short ceremony of remembrance was held at the Bishop's graveside (see 170th ANNIVERSARY REPORT on p4 and photo on p5).

BOOK REVIEWS

The two reviews that follow are by Peter D Fraser

TEST CRICKETERS AND THE QUEST FOR IDENTITY

By Frank Birbalsingh

(Hansib, Hertford, 2014, £11.99)

This well written and generously illustrated book continues Frank Birbalsingh's long and productive engagement with cricket (his engagement with literature, his day job at York University, is also worth reading). It traverses some of the same ground as Clem Seecharan's *From Ranji to Rohan* (Hansib, 2009) and its conclusions are not very different.

An introduction explains the wider social, cultural and historical issues to do with the selection and careers of West Indian Test cricketers of Indian heritage. Those readers more interested in these issues might turn immediately to the appendices which are reviews of histories of West Indian cricket and deepen the analysis of the introduction. Those more interested in the cricketers and the retelling of their part in many test matches will find the appendices useful for catching up with books on West Indian cricket.

Six cricketers receive individual attention: Sonny Ramadhin, Rohan Kanhai, Joe Solomon, Alvin Kallicharan, Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Ramnaresh Sarwan. Five of those careers at test level have ended (Sarwan seems unlikely to play test cricket again), and one continues, Chanderpaul's. Each of these chapters narrates their test career and tries to explain their wider significance. The first of the remaining two chapters deals with the numerous spin bowlers, chiefly Trinidadian, who tried to follow in Ramadhin's footsteps and failed. The jury is still out on one, Sunil Narine: literally in the case of the investigation of his bowling action and due to the problem of whether test cricket will survive. What is currently so-described

hardly ever merits the name. The second deals with the test cricketers selected between 1994 and 2013 (after Kallicharan's departure, the 1980s and early 1990s had been years when no Indian-Caribbean test cricketer had appeared).

It is a book that raises many issues about a wider West Indian identity and the more specific national ones. Perhaps the region and its individual components would be in better shape if its elites possessed some of Chanderpaul's character and lived up to Sarwan's desire to represent everyone and be supported by everyone (p.173). We can continue to dream impossible dreams.

GLIMPSES OF A GLOBAL LIFE

By Shridath Ramphal

(Hansib, Hertford, 2014)

At the mini-launch of this book its author stressed that it was a memoir, not an autobiography. It is a long memoir (624 pages) with illustrations (one wishes they were on the whole a little larger but the book is a credit to its publisher, Arif Ali's Hansib – which other publisher would price such a long well-produced hardback at £17.99?)

Its early chapters do appear to belong to an autobiography, describing the author's family background and his education and early career. From that point onwards its focus shifts to the international events that Sir Shridath was involved in: the foreign policy of Guyana and the border disputes with Venezuela and Suriname, the Non-Aligned Movement, his time as Commonwealth Secretary-General, the Brandt Commission and the West Indian Commission.

One of the great themes of his book is Caribbean Unity. He had been involved first with the negotiations for West Indian federation as British Guiana's legal Adviser in its role as an Observer, not participant, in those negotiations. A believer in Federation he played a much larger part than that of a mere observer; consequently he became the senior legal draftsman and then Assistant Attorney-General in the Federation. It did not last, but when he later became responsible for Guyana's foreign affairs he worked for Caribbean unity. His last great service to that ideal was chairing the West Indian Commission intended to prepare West Indians for the 21st century. Its report, ironically entitled *Time for Action*, was not acted on and was soon to be joined by other people's reports, likewise ignored, on that once successful, now failing, regional success West Indian Cricket. His pages on the Grenadian Revolution and its end provide a salutary example of the failure of Caribbean Unity

If that aspect of his life ended in failure, his time as Commonwealth Secretary-General from 1975 to 1990 was marked by the great successes of the end of white supremacist rule and independence in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia before independence) and the freedom of Nelson Mandela in 1990, the crucial part of the process that ended apartheid in South Africa. In both cases his diplomatic skills were deployed to their full: at the launch he quoted the Italian diplomat Daniele Vare (or Varè), "Diplomacy is the art of letting someone have your way." Wrestling with the British and American governments is the major theme of these pages.

The chief problem of foreign policy for Guyana was the territorial dispute with Venezuela which, as he writes, "drove Guyana's resolve to be activist in all fora where our cause could be advanced" (p.112). Hence the importance of the Non-Aligned Movement to Guyana. He once stressed to me the importance of settling the borderlands with Venezuela, citing Jonestown. That dubious enterprise which ended so murderously tells a great deal of the inner workings of government in Guyana after independence—national elites that believe themselves unassailable confuse their own interests with that of their nation's people and harm the people. The history of Guyana since independence bears this out. The silence of the author on these issues brings to mind another quotation about diplomacy: the early seventeenth century English diplomat Sir Henry Wotton's punning remark, "An ambassador is an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country." On the whole, however, Sir Sonny has been on the side of the angels and in the absence of a fuller account it is better to have a memoir than nothing.

SECURITY ACROSS THE POND

From alumnus Allan Lee (who actually lives in Toronto)

I've torn out my alarm system and de-registered from the Neighbourhood Watch. I've got two Pakistani flags in my front garden, one at each corner, and the black flag of ISIS at the centre. The local police, FBI, CIA and other intelligence services are all watching my house 24/7. **I've never felt safer!**

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

(The Editor does not vouch for the accuracy of the quotations below.)

The bomb will never go off – I speak as an expert on explosives. – Admiral William Leahy, US Atomic Bomb Project.

There is no likelihood man can ever tap the power of the atom. – Robert Millikan, Nobel Prizewinner for Physics, 1923.

Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons. – *Popular Mechanics* magazine forecasting the relentless march of science, 1949.

I think there is a world market for maybe five computers. – Thomas Watson, IBM chairman, 1943.

I have travelled the length and breadth of this country, and talked with the best people, and I can assure you that data processing is a fad that won't last out the year. – The editor in charge of business books for Prentice Hall publishers, 1957.

60k ought to be enough for everybody. – Bill Gates, 1981.

This 'telephone' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us. – Western Union internal memo, 1876.

I'm just glad it'll be Clark Gable who's falling on his face and not Gary Cooper. – Gary Cooper on his decision not to take the lead in *Gone With the Wind*.

Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible. – Lord Kelvin, Royal Society president, 1895.

Aeroplanes are interesting toys, but of no military value. – Marechal Ferdinand Foch, when he was Professor of Strategy at the Ecole Supérieure de Guerre, prior to WW1.

The super-computer is technologically impossible. It would take all of the water that flows over Niagara Falls to cool the heat generated by the number of vacuum tubes required. – A Professor of Electrical Engineering at New York University.

I don't know what use anyone could find for a machine that would make copies of documents. It certainly couldn't be a business by itself. – The head of IBM refusing to back the idea, leading the inventor to found Xerox.

The abdomen, the chest and the brain will forever be shut from the intrusion of the wise and humane surgeon. – Sir John Ericksen, Surgeon-Extraordinary to Queen Victoria.

And last but not least:

There is no reason why anyone would want a computer in their home. – Founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977.

Thanks again to Allan Lee for this.

DIARY DATES

<i>SUN 26 APR</i>	<i>BRUNCH</i>	The Bedford pub, Balham
<i>SUN 19 JULY</i>	<i>FAMILY BARBECUE</i>	St John's Nature Garden, Clapham
<i>SUN 30 AUG</i>	<i>CARNIVAL FETE</i>	Club Jasmins, Tooting (tbc)
<i>FRI 20 or SAT 21 NOV</i>	<i>AGM</i>	High Commission
<i>SUN 31 JAN 2016</i>	<i>ANNUAL DINNER</i>	Bunga Raya restaurant, Thornton Heath

WEBSITES

UK Association:	www.qcoga.org.uk and www.qcsponsorshipprogramme.com
High Commission:	www.guyanahclondon.co.uk
Guyana Association:	https://www.facebook.com/pages/Queens-College-Old-Students-Association/107462024045?ref=ts
New York Chapter:	www.qcguyanaalumny.org
South Florida Chapter:	www.qcalumnifl.org
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Happy New Year!