



A GATHERING OF GUINEA PIGS... THE "9C" REUNION

THEN... 1954

In September 1954 a group of about two dozen timid ninth graders, entering London South Collegiate Institute (as it was then), found themselves assigned to Class 9C. It seemed like the usual random selection: some from South London schools, some from towns and townships south of the city - a pretty even mix of boys and girls, tall, short, the athletic and the sports challenged. But within a few days of the opening of the school year, the students of 9C were informed that they were going to have a rather 'special' curriculum that was primarily based on accelerated math and science courses. The words "experiment" and "fast track" and "choice" were never

mentioned, and it is probably an interesting illustration of the mind-set of life in the mid-50s that no one ever asked what the goal might be.

For five years of high school that same group of students stayed together. The kids of 9C became 10B, 11B, 12A and 13B. They wrote Grade 13 Biology departmentals in Grade 11, Grade 13 Algebra and Geometry in Grade 12, and typically had a portfolio crammed with Grade 13 subjects when they graduated.

NOW...

Fast forward (amazingly fast) to the summer of 2004. Three of those 9C students who had maintained their close high school friendship through the years were visiting. Jim Collins remarked to his wife Mary Jayne (Blakeley) and their friend Rosalyn (Murray) Graham, that in September it would be 50 years since they began high school. Expressions of shock, amazement and dismay... followed by speculation on where the rest of the class was now... and a question: Do you think there would be any interest in

getting together for a reunion?

It took many months of phone calls, Google searches and painstaking examinations of old school photos to finally track down everyone who had been in the class. It became a detective game with a gratifying prize at the end: the surprised and delighted response of the person who had been found, be it in far off California, Cyprus or in East London.

The next step was to gather all the found 9C alumni together for a reunion. Detective Jim Collins was transformed into "Event Planner" and his tenacity paid off as virtually the entire class met in mid-September at the Stoneridge Conference Center south of Lambeth for two days of catching up on the news of old classmates, swapping stories, reminiscing, and looking at photographs from "way back when." There was also a memory-stretching bus tour of south London hosted by Don Crawford aboard one of his converted motorcoaches and a visit to the old school. And there was a special take-home treasure for everyone: a collection of the biographies and memories from high

school days of the entire class gathered into a book called "Garnet and Grayer."

One of the highlights of the weekend was dinner Saturday evening, at which four of our former teachers joined in the reminiscing.



Shown above: At the social time before dinner on Saturday evening, left to right, John Fanning, Jim Collins, Marion Boa Woodman and Marg Lewis-MacDonald.

Marion Boa Woodman, Wilf Friday, Ilka Oksanen and Dorothy Hollingsworth shared their memories of students, pranks, challenges and satisfaction. It was interesting, and perhaps frustrating, to find that even after everyone had contributed to the speculation about what the administration had in mind when they set up that September 1954 class, no one had a definitive answer. "What were they thinking?" was a frequent refrain, but then so was, "We have to do this again." The reunion of the 9C class of 1954 was indeed a very special weekend.

"Event Planner", Jim Collins (who also happens to be the '59 class rep) reflected on the success of the reunion in an e-mail to SCAA president, Pete Telford: "That was one of the most satisfying things I have ever done... My ego doesn't need many accolades, so I figure I now have enough to last me a lifetime. And it was fun! Thanks for inviting me to be the class rep, and being the catalyst for getting this thing started."

By Rosalyn (Murray) Graham ('59)

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Following a bus tour of south London, some of the 9C reunion group visited the high school they attended 50 years ago. Left to right, Judy Ginsberg Somer, Rosalyn Graham, Ted Syrett, Wayne Wilson, Marg Lewis-MacDonald, Don Crawford, Sandra Robinson Colbert, John Fanning, Peter Venton and Don Graham.



SCHOOL NEWS... *Here and Now*

COMMENCEMENT:

These ceremonies are a highlight every year. Graduates were welcomed back on the Thursday before the Thanksgiving weekend to receive their diplomas. The most notable "graduate" was **Mr. Ray Getliffe** (See photo), considerably older than the others, but renowned as a professional athlete. Ray left South before graduation, but jokingly said on a number of occasions, that he kept returning to South, supporting athletic and alumni events, in the hope that he would be granted his diploma. He finally was!

A number of Alumni Association funded awards were presented by **SCAA Vice-President, Shaughn Russell**, ('81), who reports as follows on the evening:

If this year's Commencement is any indication, the future looks bright. Many of our newest alumni received, along with their high school diplomas, multiple awards for outstanding achievement. With over \$1000 in Alumni Association money to be awarded, the night proved to be profitable for our departing grads. Students Virginia Kane, Billy Giannoulis and Priscilla Leung all accepted numerous honours for their hard work. Katharine Harper was presented with the South Anniversary Award, and Ranita Manocha, the recipient of the Scholar of the Year Award, won a total of thirteen different awards! Talk about Lion's Pride!

The biggest winners of the night, however, are you, our alumni. Knowing your donations and sponsorships are helping students continue their studies is a great feeling of satisfaction. With everyone's support, we can help maintain this level of excellence.

OTHER NEWS ITEMS...

AWARDS NIGHT was held a few weeks after Commencement. 232 undergraduates were recognized for receiving the top marks in a course and/or achieving an average of at least 80%.

IMPROVED STUDENT SUCCESS: Over the past few years, the failure rate at South has been decreased by 50%. South has also been accepted into a program that guides it towards becoming a **Professional Learning Community**. Numerous strategies have been put into place with the goal of further improving student success.

At a recent **"ROAR FOR THE FLOOR"** event, students collected pledges and walked or ran a 5K route. The run was followed by a barbecue, with burgers donated by the family of a student, owners of *The Green Lantern Restaurant*. \$6000 was raised. A similar event was held last spring. (Note: For more details on this campaign see the special "Roar for the Floor" article.)

Andrea (Fewster) Manias (Class of '70) SCAA director & current South teacher

Mentors, Anyone?

As a result of the initiative taken by the *Alumni Association* to develop a "mentorship program" linking alumni to current *South* students, a **Speakers List** has been taking form. This list will consist of the names of South alumni (involved in as wide a variety of careers as possible), who are willing to "donate" an hour or two of their time to talk to a class about their chosen career. Such "guest speakers" could make a valuable curriculum contribution, not only to grade 10 Careers Course, but also to a number of other courses.

If you are willing to become a member of our *Speakers List* and volunteer even an hour of your time to talk to students about your chosen career, then please e-mail us at contact@southalumni.ca.

Ray Getliffe

Ray Getliffe left, *South Collegiate* after grade 11, in 1933, to pursue a professional hockey career, first with the Boston Bruins and later with the Montreal Canadiens. Since retiring, Ray has returned on several occasions to address student groups and share his experiences of an active life. At the 2005 Fall Commencement, Ray was presented with an Honorary High School Diploma by Athletic Director Scott Bamford (l) and Principal Barb Sonier (r).





“ R O A R F O R T H E F L O O R ”

South Collegiate, when it was built in 1928, had a gym with a proper hardwood floor – but it was only half the size of the current “regulation” floors. An expanded wood floor was added in the 1960’s, but the footings for this “2-part” floor deteriorated and by 1993 a whole new concrete base was poured, and a rubberized-composite floor placed on top of this base. This floor has not only deteriorated on the surface, but has proven to be hazardous – perhaps even dangerous – to athletes who play on it regularly.

A properly installed, regulation hardwood floor is the ideal way to carry on a full indoor athletic program for *South* students.

Meanwhile, the electronic scoreboard – installed in the *South* gym in the 1980’s – has been outmoded by rule and scoring changes in major gym sports like basketball and volleyball. A new scoreboard is also needed!

School Board budgets and Provincial Government regulations in the 21st century have become tied up in curricular change, salaries, computerization and transportation. Installing “new” gym floors and scoreboards is not in the cards for the foreseeable future (although provincial and school board grants may provide some partial funding).

A Committee of *South* Staff, Students, Parents, and interested community residents of Old South London has undertaken the task of raising \$200,000 – so that future athletes of this school can play in an excellent facility, in keeping with the level of excellence that has been a long tradition for this fine old school. This campaign has been nicknamed “**Roar for the Floor**”

On October 21/05 the *Alumni Association* hosted an “Evening of Champions”. Players and coaches from over 100 *South* sports teams that have won Championships (since 1928) were invited back to the school for a night of reminiscing, socializing, and story telling. (For some interesting sidelights on this event, read “What’s in a Name: The Three Don’s” and “A Letter Worth Sharing”) During the evening, a number of these former players made **team donations** to the Roar for the Floor campaign. Their contributions will be recognized on a brick tableau, on the wall leading to the gym gallery.

The association is making an appeal to all *South* grads who have an interest in giving future *South* athletes a first-class facility for their gym sports: help put this campaign over the top by sending in a personal donation.

Tax receipts will be issued for donations given; a form is provided below to facilitate your participation.

“ R O A R F O R T H E F L O O R ”

Full Name

Grad Year



Street Name

Unit #

Province/State

Postal/Zip Code

Amount of donation

\$ _____

***make cheques payable to “South Secondary School” and mark “Gym Floor” in the memo section of your cheque. Mail to South



The following letter was received in response to the invitation sent to Dr. William Pace (Class of 1934) to attend the recent Evening of Champions. Although he was unable to attend, his daughter wrote to express his "deep gratitude to South Collegiate for the years that he attended and played football."

I am writing this letter on behalf of Dr. William (Bill) E. Pace, a member of the 1932 Jr. Football team at South Collegiate. This summer I spoke with my father, who recently entered Grandwood Retirement Facility, about some of his accomplishments that he cherishes when he looks back over his life of 89 years. His face brightened and he said, "One thing was learning to play football." I shouldn't have been surprised. My father's years spent at South Collegiate paved the way, not only for an illustrious medical career, but also for an opportunity to pursue his love of football.

Upon graduating from South, my father was awarded a football scholarship to UWO. As a quarterback, I'm sure that my father was used to the pressure to achieve and perform. In fact, from the stories he tells, he put all his attention into football and had to change the whole course of his studies. Ironically, this shift in studies led him to become internationally renowned in the field of Dermatology for discovering Benzoyl Peroxide as an active ingredient in acne treatment medication. All of this came from playing football at South Collegiate!

I know that my father would love to have attended the Evening of Champions on October 21 / 2005. In fact, he is just around the corner from South at Grandwood. However, as my father has Parkinson's, he is now somewhat limited in his activities. I don't think much more would have prevented him from coming, as I genuinely know that South Collegiate helped to forge an accomplished life, both academically and athletically, for my father.

Sincerely,

Carla Pace

What's in a name: The Three "Dons"

In the early 1940's there were three students attending South with the same name: Donald Robinson. This often led to confusion, reported one of those "Don's" in an e-mail sent to the SCAA this summer. After receiving an invitation to the "Evening of Champions", Dr. D. J. Robinson, now an optometrist living in Aylmer, shared some of his experiences:

Once I answered the door to welcome a classmate who had invited me to a Sadie Hawkins Dance, only to realize by the expression on her face that she had telephoned the wrong Don Robinson. We were both embarrassed, however, she found the "right" Don Robinson at the dance and we parted ways, both of us relieved with how it worked out.

Occasionally I had another Don Robinson's test paper or essay given to me, but I was never able to keep one of them, as the other Don Robinson seemed to prefer his mark to mine.

I have to tell you, it hasn't been easy...

While this Don Robinson may have expected such confusions to be a thing of the past, he learned this summer that they are not, when he mistakenly received an invitation to the Evening of Champions, intended for one of the other "Don's."

And now I have been named to the 1948 Sr. Boys Basketball team. This really hurts, as anyone who knows me will vouch, although I try, there is no sport where I qualify to be a member of a championship team... I dare not show up to "live my moment of glory," for sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, THE OTHER DON ROBINSON would appear and once more I would be embarrassed.

I would like to congratulate you on the "Champion's Reunion" and wish you success as you pull South Alumni together. They are a great bunch.

Sincerely,

One of the Donald Robinsons

(The SCAA regrets its error, of course, but appreciates Don being such a good-natured "sport" about it. It also made a great story!)

A BASKETBALL TRADITION...



On Saturday, December 3, for the 22nd year in a row, The **Alumini Basketball Tournament** will be played in the *South Gym*. Teams made up of former *South Lions*—some from as far back as the 1960's— will suit up to compete for “bragging rights” as the best basketball team in our history (the last two years have seen the 1998-2003 Grads as tournament winners). Games commence at 9:30 am; the championship game is set for 3:30 pm. Spectators can cheer on their favorites, (or heckle as they see fit). Admission for the day is only \$2. Players are asked to pay a \$15 entry fee, to cover refereeing for the day. Players should e-mail contact@southalumini.ca, to confirm their participation in this years tournament.

75TH ANNIVERSARY AWARD WINNER

Chris Marcus, a 16-year Business teacher and long-time coach, has been honoured as the 2005 recipient of the *75th Anniversary Award*. The award, which annually recognizes a staff member who “has contributed significantly to making *South* a quality school”, was presented to Mr. Marcus at the October 6 *Commencement* by Alumni Association Vice-President, Shaughn Russell.

A graduate of the Ivey Business School, a financial analyst for *Chrysler Canada*, and former *Ottawa Roughriders* football player, Chris brought a considerable breadth of talent and experience when he joined the *South* staff in 1989.

A curriculum innovator, he expanded an Accounting program, which previously ended at grade 10, by developing both grade 11 and OAC advanced Accounting courses. He has also been instrumental in bringing the Organizational Behavior/Management course to *South*, which has proven very popular in the four years it has been offered.

In 1989, Chris revived *South's* Rowing Team, and over an 11-year period coached the school's female rowers to six Canadian High School Rowing Championships. In 1992, he took over as Senior Boys Head Football Coach,

and in his tenth season (2001) coached the Lions to their first City Championship in seventeen years, and an appearance in the Provincial Championship at the Sky-dome.

Vocal in his promotion of the value of hard work, and a passionate supporter of the school (“He bleeds garnet and gray”, said one of his nominators), Chris Marcus believes *South* is one of the best secondary schools in the province. The standing ovation he received at commencement was clearly well deserved.



Shown above is Chris Marcus, the 75th anniversary award winner!

GRAD OF DISTINCTION

Diane Beattie (Scarffe) – (69')

Recipient of a **London Y Women of Excellence** award, 2005

Diane is the CIO Vice-President of health information management and health care alliances for London Health Sciences Centre and St Joseph's Health Care. A leader in her field, she has been involved in a number of major innovations in the health care field: regional video-conferencing for patient consultation, an electronic patient records project and a diagnostic imaging project. She is also a former chairperson of LHSC and former board member of the Robarts Research Institute.

In her years at *South*, Diane distinguished herself as an

athlete as well as a student, playing both volleyball and basketball, and competing in track and field.

When asked to describe the impact her years at *South* have had on her life, Diane offered the following insights:

Attending South set the stage for many things: my love of learning music and theatre, my love of competition and sports, and most importantly, the development of many friendships.

The love of learning came from such great teachers as Miss McRoberts, Marion Woodman, Tom Crerar, Joanne Mayhew, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Edward and so many others. The

school trips to Stratford and school plays helped ingrain the importance of higher education and life-long learning.

The love of competition and sports came from the chance to play on a number of different teams and be mentored by some great teacher/coaches: Fran Wigston, Will Rice, Libby Fowler, Terry Roberts and Signe Milne. They instilled the values of teamwork that have been critical in my career.

The sense of belonging and friendship came from the long walks home after practice, along the same route with the same friends. It is amazing today

that even though we have gone in different directions, whenever we meet, the conversation just picks up where it was left... as if no time has passed.

My most proud moment at South was the GAA Banquet in grade 13. My mom was there helping with the dinner (parents didn't attend at that time) and when they announced I was the recipient of the Jessie MacFarlane Award, the initial expression on her face and the smile that developed were very special...something I will remember and treasure forever.

If you would like to see a fellow *South* alumnus/a, recognized as a “Grad of Distinction”, please e-mail a short profile to contact@southalumini.ca

"Oh What a Lovely War"

A cherished memory from 1970



One of my most cherished memories of being in school shows at South has to do with a particular performance of "Oh, What a Lovely War",

the bittersweet musical about World War One, developed by Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop in England. The decision to do this piece as a high school production was, in my opinion, one of Fraser Boa's more inspired ideas.

The music is a blend of new pieces written for the production, and old standards from the time. I was fortunate enough to get to sing "Roses of Picardy" with Janet Koral, who was also known as "la voix d'or", and was certainly my Rose of Picardy for the show. With Fraser's insistence, we pushed the piece almost to a mock operatic parody, and it worked because audiences responded with much laughter and applause.

That is except for the special performance that we did for a group of mainly senior citizens who had come to see the production. As per the stage directions, we finished the piece by forming a "...static tableau, as for a period photograph." There we stood, waiting for the laughter, but were instead greeted with an eerie silence. We caught each other's eyes in a moment of uneasiness, and then looked to the audience. With the lights in our eyes, we could only make out the first two rows, but were able to see a number of sad wistful smiles and a lot of tears... tears that were a reaction not to the performance, but to the song... a song that brought back intense personal memories to many of these seniors – the ones who had experienced the tragedy of the war firsthand.

"...And the roses will die with the summertime/ And our roads may be far, far apart, But there's one rose

that shines not in Picardy/ It's the rose that I keep in my heart..."

Alumni Newsletter



It is a moment that I will never forget.

Michael D. Woods (Class of '72)

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Do you have a favourite memory from your time at South? Send us your story. E-mail: contact@southalumni.ca, or mail to SCAA, 371 Tecumseh Ave. E. London ON N6C 1T4.

Who's Where

Let us know where you are and what you are doing. Send your update by e-mail to contact@southalumni.ca, or mail to SCAA, 371 Tecumseh Ave. E. London, ON, N6C 1T4

CONGRATULATIONS ...

Fran (Wigston) Eberhard (staff) was recently inducted into London's Sports Hall Of Fame. A volleyball and basketball star, Fran represented Canada as both a player and a coach. In her years of teaching and coaching at South, she touched the lives of hundreds of students. If you are one of those students, send us a memory of Fran for the next newsletter.

Dr. Michelle Tome ('98) received her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree, with distinction, from the Ontario Veterinary College in Guelph, on June 16, 2005. Now married to a classmate and fellow veterinarian, Michelle currently lives in London.

Beula (Coulter) ('36) & Lorne Ray celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on March 30/05.

Morgan Fairweather ('00), a Brock university student and varsity basketball player became just the 31st player in Brock history, to realize 1000 career points. This milestone was achieved when Morgan scored 31 points in a game against the Laurier Golden Hawks, January 27/05.

INTERESTING CAREERS...

Nico Moretti ('81) says he was inspired by a geography teacher to travel to Australia after graduation. After working as a chemical engineer in Perth for over ten years, Nico decided to develop a business of his own. He now operates a cooking school and catering business (www.urbanprovider.com.au), pursuing a passion for food that goes back to his roots in London and working for his father at Vito's Cave, a popular Italian restaurant.

Lion's Pride is issued twice annually by the South Collegiate Alumni Association. Content copyright © 2005.

SCAA President: Pete Telford

Editor: Connie (Woods) Weir

Graphic Design courtesy of:

Meaghan De Jager

SCAA c/o South Secondary School

371 Tecumseh Avenue East

London, Ontario N6C 1T4

Tel. (519) 452-2860

Fax. (519) 452-2879

Contact @ south alumini.ca

www.southalumini.ca



Jason Menard ('92) describes himself on his website

(www.menardcommunications.com) as "a freelance copywriter, editor and opinion columnist with over a decade of experience." In that decade, he has served as editor-in-chief of the UWO Gazette, medical writer for *The Doctor's Guide to the Internet*, a beat reporter covering the Montreal Alouettes, and corporate communications specialist. Jason's freelance opinion columns have been published in *The National Post* and *Toronto Star*. He is

IN MEMORIAM...

Norma (Rafuse) Brown ('44) passed away Sept. 15/05. Beloved wife of Bishop Arthur Brown, loving mother and grandmother, Norma was an active church member and worked on the Social Assistance Review Board of the Ontario Government for sixteen years. In her younger years, Norma was an honours student at South, UWO grad and athlete, who excelled at tennis, basketball and baseball.