



“BROADCAST”
 Newsletter of the Toronto Unit

Naparima Alumni Association of Canada

*Naparima Teachers' Training
 St. Andrew's Theological
 St. Augustine Girls'
 Naparima Girls'
 Naparima
 Hillview
 Iere*

Vol. XXXX No. 1

Fall 2016

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The Naparima Alumni Association of Canada (NAAC) was founded in Toronto in 1978 and includes graduates of Naparima College, Naparima Girls' High School, St. Augustine Girls' High School, Hillview College, Iere High School, Naparima Teachers' Training College and St. Andrew's Theological College. Among other things, it supports programmes at alma mater schools as well as a steelband programme in schools in the Toronto area. All graduates coming to Ontario are invited to join the Association.

2016 – 2017 NAAC Executive

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CONTENTS

President's Message	2	Iere Alumni of The Americas.....	9
From the Editor's Desk... ..	2	Photos - NAAC Activities	10
Finance Report	3	Photos - NAAC Day at the Races.....	11
Notice of NAAC General Meeting.....	3	Photos - NAAC Picnic	12
Social Report.....	4	My High School Scare at Naps.....	13-15
Steelband Report	5	Rahatan's Necklace	16-17
Communications Report.....	6	Condolences.....	17
Membership Report	6	Garth Chatoor Presents Credentials.....	18
Update from Joe Cullen.....	7	Bursary Guidelines & Application	19-20
Mini-reunion of the 56-ers.....	8	Photos - NAAC Picnic	Back Cover

CREDITS

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President's Message

Yes, it is the other Ramdial now in this spot. Welcome to NAAC's new Executive for 2016-2017. We offer a special welcome to Ia Sirju, who is new to the Association and has joined as an Executive Member. Ia attended Iere High School, so we now have two representatives from the far south, Ia and Richard Jaikaran. I wish to thank the other members of the Executive, who have all volunteered to continue in their positions from the previous years.

My summer was spent in disbelief at the shenanigans of Trump and his tribe. I think that his plan to be outrageous in order to get coverage worked with me, because I felt compelled to find out first thing in the morning, what he said and how he said it and who he offended. I am lucky that I had the Olympics to shout about, otherwise I would have been too stressed to function properly.

NAAC's plans for this year started with a picnic at the end of June and just recently we

had a luncheon at Woodbine racetrack. Neither of these was intended to be money-making, just a fun time for our members at no cost to the Association. We can look forward to our annual fundraiser, the Christmas Dinner & Dance which will be on November 26, 2016.

I am keeping tabs on the proposed changes that the new Government of T & T has put forward re cutbacks in funding for tertiary education. Many of the graduates from our schools back home may be adversely affected. There is talk of large numbers of drop-outs from UWI because students who did not have to pay fees previously, may now have to do so. Be assured, that NAAC will continue our support of the five schools, Hillview College, Iere High School, Naparima College, Naparima Girls' High School and St. Augustine Girls' High School through bursaries and awards for as long as possible.

Merle Ramdial

From the Editor's Desk...

One of the captions on the front cover does not paint a true picture. No one at the NAAC Picnic ventured into the lake, so there was no surfing going on. However, there was a lot of activity on the "turf". Thanks Timothy Rostant and Brian Teelucksingh for taking on the task of picture-taking.

The true story on page 13 "My High School Scare" was sent in by Clarence Madhosingh. Those were stressful times for all families who had to pay for their children to stay in dormitory so they could attend high school. Dare I say that the children of today don't know how good they have it? This is definitely a comment from an old fogey.

This is the first time that Rubyha McKenzie has submitted a short story to Broadcast. The

story on page 16 was written a few years ago. I know that not many of us had the good fortune to inherit one of these necklaces that Rubyha describes in "Rahatan's Necklace". I inherited just one of the coins from such a necklace. It has an American eagle on one side and resides in a safety deposit box.

I included two very short articles, one written by Ian Ramdial and the other by Richard Jaikaran on pages 8 & 9 that bear witness to the fact that the friendships made in one's early teenage years last longer than many marriages!

I wish to thank our advertisers for their support and to the NAAC members who send in donations that help to defray some of the cost of publishing *Broadcast*.

Merle Ramdial

Finance Report

This report reflects the Association's financial information as at August 2016. Annual Financial Statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017 will be presented at the Annual General Meeting scheduled for May 27, 2017.

GENERAL ACCOUNT

Bank of Nova Scotia **\$23,582.00**

NAAC INVESTMENTS

Bank of Nova Scotia – Term Deposit \$ 1,215.00

IPC portfolio:

* Inter Pipeline Fund

*1600 Units – B.V. per unit \$10.00 \$16,000.00

(M.V. \$43,840.00)

*Dividends earned – Apr/16 to Aug/16 \$ 1,040.00

**Riocan Real Estate Inv T/U

(M.V. \$21,935.00) \$21,785.00

820 units - B.V. per unit \$26.56

Dividends earned - Apr/16 to Aug/16 \$ 484.00

TOTAL INVESTMENTS \$40,524.00

*Market value of the Inter Pipeline Fund as at August 2016 was \$27.40 per unit. This reflects an increase of 174 % over book value. The fund continues to earn dividends at the rate of \$208 per month which translates to a return of 15.6% per annum on that investment.

**Market value of Riocan REIT as at August 2016 was \$26.75 per unit, an increase of 0.7% over book value. Dividends from Riocan REIT are approx. \$96.00 per month or 5.25% per annum.

The Association met its financial commitments to the schools in Trinidad in the amount of \$3,760 which was remitted in September, 2016. This is the sum of the following amounts to each of the five schools : NGHS, Iere, & SAGHS in the amount of \$820 each, Naparima College in the amount of \$620 and Hillview College in the amount of \$680.

We held a couple events for this fiscal year to date. A picnic was held in June and was not a fundraiser but an occasion to show our appreciation to our members. We received donations of \$335.50 in cash plus other donations in kind which helped to offset our costs and we ended with a net loss of \$36.23. Another event was a Lunch & Play at the Woodbine Racetrack on Sept 11/16. This also was not a fundraiser but a fun event to socialize with friends and members. This event netted approximately \$275 to our coffers. We look forward to our Annual Christmas Dinner & Dance which is a fundraiser and helps us to meet our commitments to the schools in Trinidad and to fund our programs here.

Respectfully submitted

Norma Ramsahai

Treasurer



NOTICE OF NAAC GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, November 12, 2016 • 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Knox Presbyterian Church

4156 Sheppard Avenue East, Scarborough, ON

Refreshments will be served at Noon

Social Report

Picnic In The Park

With an early 2016 summer, our social committee roared into action in anticipation of our first picnic in many, many years. The date for our "Picnic in the Park" was June 26, 2016.

Lakefront Promenade Park (AE Crookes) in Mississauga provided a picturesque backdrop for our kick-off event of the summer. With many of our snowbird members now back in town we were looking for a good turnout, and they did not disappoint. We ended the day with 55 members and guests, many arriving later, in true trini style. We must confess that the directions may have been a bit confusing, and we have taken notes to better facilitate guests with more prominent signage for next year.

Our food table was composed of chicken and chicken/pig tail pelau, hamburgers, hot dogs, jerk pork, pasta salad, green salads, oil down, corn on the cob, mango chow, watermelon, oranges and snacks. There were games for all ages. However, the young people celebrated many quick victories over the more mature participants.

From the feedback we received, the word "good" seemed to stand out. Next time we will try for excellent. Thanks again to all who attended and for your donations and support.

Day at The Races – Woodbine

On September 11th, our sold-out event to 75

members who gathered to remember not only that day of infamy just 15 short years ago in New York City, but to meet our friends at the Post-Parade Dining Room. First-timers got quick hints as to how to place bets and their enthusiasm could be heard throughout the room.

The buffet that was presented had a variety of salads and pickles as sides to the prime rib and the dollhouse type grilled salmon and baked chicken. Desserts included numerous chilled Italian-style pastries and sweets along with a hot fudge chocolate cake. The meal was enjoyed by all, with the one modest complaint, that maybe we can arrange for a few additional hot dishes in the future.

Some attendees took advantage of the free one-hour bus tour of the stables that was offered by Woodbine Entertainment returning in time to place their bets on the remaining five races of the day.

We were all treated to a \$10.00 voucher for the slots on the lower floor. Most people made use of these on their way out. Almost everyone came away with a few more cents in their pockets.

Just to remind you that our Annual Christmas Dinner and Dance is on November 26th at Elite Banquet Hall and we already have tickets. Get yours early to ensure your preferred seating.

Submitted by

Richard C. Jaikaran

Chair, Social Committee

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Steelband Report

After-School Steelband Program

Since the last report which appeared in the Spring issue of Broadcast, NAAC has had to discontinue the after-school pan classes in the East end at Cedarbrae Collegiate Institute. This decision followed an announcement from Randolph Karamath informing us of his retirement at the end of June. Randolph taught the after-school classes from the program's inception 20 years ago. We've already sent our good wishes to Randolph wishing him a happy and healthy retirement.

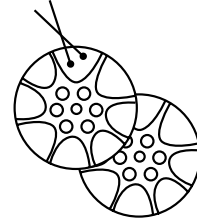
NAAC will continue the after-school pan classes in the West end at West Humber Collegiate Institute. Al Foster will be our arranger and tutor for the advanced student class, which includes Panache players. Winston Poon will tutor the beginners with help from some Panache players.

As usual, classes will be held on Wednesdays starting on September 14th. Those who have already signed up will receive an email message confirming the start date. If you know of anyone who is interested in joining the class, please call Winston at 905-824-3589 or wpoon354@rogers.com

Panache

Panache was asked to, and performed at six venues, starting with a guest appearance at West Humber Collegiate's Arts Night followed soon after by a full afternoon performance at the Peel Police Open House. This is the third year in a row for

NOTICE: Steelband Classes 2016/2017 Season



West Humber Collegiate Institute

• **Time: 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

Contact: Winston Poon

• Tel: 905-824-3589

email: wpoon354@rogers.com

the Peel Police gig. The same is true for Rivercrest Junior School and Mount Sinai NICU Picnic which took place at High Park. Later on in June, the band played at St. Clement's Church and in mid-July at the Albion/Islington Fusion of Taste. This was an all-day affair and part of a big street party.

At the start of August we got news that Joe Cullen was badly injured in a motorcycle accident. Joe is the Head of Arts at WHCI and NAAC's main contact for our reciprocal program with the school. We all wish Joe a full recovery!

Submitted by

Merle Ramdial

Steelband Liaison

Congratulations to...

Congrats to Al "Allos" Foster, arranger and conductor for Pan Fantasy Steelband on his fifth consecutive win at the Pan Alive Competition.

Al also arranges for NAAC's Panache Steelband and leads their practice sessions on Wednesday evenings.

Communications Report

Broadcast

Members who chose to receive an e-copy of Broadcast would have received an e-mail message with an attachment that contained this Fall issue of Broadcast along with a link to previous issues on our NAAC website at www.naactoronto.ca

The other members (130), who opted for print copies should have received theirs delivered by Canada Post. If there are some amongst you who read and discard this newsletter, would you please consider a switch to getting an e-mail message and reading it online in full-colour? All it takes is a quick phone call to me at 905-844-1254.

NAAC Website

Our website continues to be updated as needed. The membership lists seem to get more attention. It is now September 2016 and twenty of our annual members still have not sent in their dues.

If anyone has a smidgen of experience with HTML and would like to volunteer to assist with our website, please contact me at merle.ramdial@gmail.com

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Submitted by

Merle Ramdial, Chair, Communications Committee

Membership Report

As of September 15, 2016

Total Membership	238
Honorary	17
Life	195
Regular /Associates /Students	26

As Convenor of the Membership Committee, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members who have joined our Association in 2016.

- Hasmat P. Razack - Hillview College
- Pamela Soodeen - NGHS
- Burke Lai Hing - NC
- Lyris Patterson - Iere High School
- Curtis Granger - Iere High School

Richard Jaikaran, one of our very dedicated members of the Executive Committee, who is a graduate of Iere H.S. must be commended for his determination to find new members of his alma mater.

Curtis Granger is inspired by the fact that NAAC is keeping the names of the Presbyterian Colleges alive. He plans to meet us at the Dinner and Dance in November.

Burke Lai Hing was so happy to have a long conversation with Ian Ramdial and also received a note about NAAC from one of his friends. The conversations inspired him to become a member. He regrets that he would not be able to attend the Christmas Dinner and Dance but promises to come in the future to meet other Naps Old Boys.

Hasmat Razack was motivated by the anniversary

celebrations of Hillview College last year which prompted him to become a Life member.

Pamela Soodeen was thrilled when she read the Broadcast and decided that she should support us in some way. Pamela's mobility is limited, but she will continue to follow us by reading the Broadcast.

We are always blessed with a good response at our events. The fellowship is always so spontaneous. The camaraderie shared is what we look forward to in the NAAC. Knowing that we have the continuing support of our friends compels us to work hard at planning our annual events.

While the membership seems to be boosted by 5 new members, we are sad to lose some of our dearly loved ones who have passed on this year.

Interestingly, in the year 2010 there was a total of 328 members. 2012 there was a total of 295 members. 2016 the total is now 238 members

While we hope that membership could increase, we also wish that some of our present members will take up the challenge to help us plan other events and keep NAAC alive. The NAAC Executive will only be a phone call away or an email away and for those who prefer to go back to good old letter writing, we welcome your sentiments.

We look forward to another successful year as the Association reaches its 39th-year and forge forward to its 40th year in 2018.

Cynthia Ramdeen

Chair, Membership Committee

Update from Joe Cullen

West Humber Collegiate Institute, Music and Arts Program

Hello everyone,

On August second, I was on a motorcycle trip with a riding group and had a serious accident. It was a beautiful day, I was calmly cruising near Bancroft when I hit some gravel and couldn't recover. I went into a ditch and my beautiful motorcycle followed me very closely. We were both very damaged, but luckily, no one else was hurt. I sustained a punctured lung, six broken ribs, two damaged neck vertebrae, a dislocated shoulder, and a triple break in my lower left leg and ankle. I now have three titanium plates in my leg and about 15-20 permanent screws in my leg and back.

That being said, I can't and will not focus on the sad/life-changing/painful/scary outcomes of all of this. I am focusing on the miracle of being alive, and improving each day at a time. I received a ton of wonderful messages from staff, family and friends from all over. These make every day better for me. I love reading them all and they keep my spirits up. Cindy Mashinter figured a way for students to send messages through her to me, since I don't FB with students. Those notes were equally wonderful and made the first few weeks much more bearable while I was in ICU.

My days are filled with amazing care by all the nurses and surgical teams, my wife Lisa by my side,

positive people, physiotherapist teams, interesting pain tolerance experimentation and more.

I was recently transferred to Orangeville hospital and can finally see my kids again after almost four weeks in Kingston.

So far I have had visits from family, my band, and some fellow riders. I would prefer that if anyone wants to visit please call/email/text a few days ahead as my days are already filled with double physio sessions and I can only handle a few visitors each day before I'm exhausted.

Everyday, in every way, things are getting better

I'll get through this. I don't know what is ahead for me or how long this will take before I'm back at dear old WHCI, but I know I've been blessed to still be alive in body and coherent and cognitive in mind. I am really going to miss my students and our wonderful staff this fall, and really want to be there. I really do.

I should find out in the next week or two how long it will be until I'm healed up, walking again, and eventually back in my classroom. Keep the prayers and messages coming. Thanks everyone. I hope your year is smooth, and filled with laughter, excellent health and true joy. See you soon!

Cheers!

Joe

***REMINDER TO
RENEW YOUR NAAC
MEMBERSHIP***

*Please remember to renew
your NAAC Membership.
The membership year runs from
January to December.*

To: Larry Jeffers

From: Panache and fellow members of NAAC

We heard that you are out of the hospital and we know that Shirley is very happy that you are home. We have been thinking of you.

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Mini-reunion of the 56-ers

by Ian Ramdial

The invitation arrived in the mail months ago, but as the date approached for this luncheon, I was becoming a bit anxious. You see, these guys that I was to meet with were past students of mine from my earliest teaching years of 1955 to 1958 at Naparima College. Would I recognize them? Or worst yet, would they recognize me!

To back up a bit, this was not the first invitation that I had received in the last three years for such a meeting, but this one was to take place right here in Pickering instead of in Gasparillo, Trinidad.

The day arrived and just two days prior, I started taking a new medication that I was told had side effects and I should be vigilant about my balance, etc. On the morning of the luncheon I felt a bit unsure about driving from Oakville to Pickering, but I just had to get there, so I asked my wife to accompany me.

My concerns melted away as we were warmly welcomed by the host and his daughter plus nine grown-up versions of the little boys from my Mathematics classes of those early days on the hill.



*Front L to R: Kelvin Harrysingh, Wahid Rajack, Ramdeo Sookoo
2nd Row: Nizam Saladin, Mahadeo Bissoon (former teacher),
Mohamed Abdool, Donald Sammy
3rd Row: Ian Ramdial (former teacher), Zaid Mohammed Ali,
Neil Maharaj, Burke Lai Haing*

Thanks to Kelvin Harrysingh for arranging and hosting this mini-reunion of the “56-ers” who started in Forms 1B and 1A. Kelvin has arranged and hosted two such luncheons in Trinidad and has already planned one for around Carnival time 2017. The word has spread and alumni and former teachers from other years are volunteering to attend the big potluck next year in Gasparillo.

Iere Alumni of The Americas

by Richard Jaikaran

Inaugural Meeting at Brooklyn City Center,
New York, June 10th-12th 2016

Seeing many of my very own classmates after 30 odd years apart was like brushing the cobwebs from my mind, like opening a closet long shut, only to see that a light was forgotten on and still shines today. It was a very moving experience for many. It felt like it was yesterday that we saw each other and we picked up where we left off, like the conversation never really ended.

In total there were 27 alumni. Different people attended over the two days. Some came for the weekend and some for just one day, or in one case just a phone call from the hospital where not even cancer could stand in the way.

The phrase “Have faith in fate” has new meaning for me.

The group met informally at the local karaoke bar Queen Bee, and then for a formal dinner on the second night in downtown Brooklyn at Lantern Restaurant, which by the way, served fantastic food. I think the highlight of the

weekend was when the group was treated to a very large pot of homemade fish broth which was brought to the hotel lounge by Anson Bissessar.

This gathering was the brain child of Lorraine Gervais-Wilson from Washington State on the west coast and Claudia (Liz) Fraser-Breedy New York State on the east coast. My involvement was by accident and circumstance, when Lorraine could not travel for medical reasons. I stepped in to assist as I could not see the birth of an alumni be aborted so soon after conception.

This new group has already brought two additional members to the Toronto alumni, one from Ontario and the other from NYC, and from the conversations I see on-line, the future looks bright.

To my fellow Iere High School alumni, I say welcome and best of luck in the future.

*Richard C. Jaikaran,
Alumnus residing in Ontario*



NAAC Activities



Photos by: Timothy Rostant & Brian Teelucksingh

NAAC Day at the Races





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The Naparima Alumni Association of Canada



*Christmas
Dinner & Dance*

*Saturday
November 26th, 2016*

**at Elite Banquet Hall
1850 Albion Road, Rexdale**

Time: 6:00 p.m. • Dinner: 7:00 p.m.

Dress: Formal • Cash Bar

Music by: DJ InVINCEable International

Tickets: \$55 • Members / \$60 • Non Members



My High School Scare at Naps

by Dr. Clarence Madhosingh

Excerpt from his recent book, Naparima Memoirs.

It was very unusual for parents to visit the residents in dormitory especially during the school week. This was due primarily because of the distances from homes and the inconveniences of travel. It did happen occasionally usually when there was a family emergency. One evening my Father came to visit me at the dormitory after school hours. My first remark to him was “*Is everything all right at home?*”. Sensing that I was concerned about a family tragedy of some kind, he replied promptly and simply “*Yes, yes.*” He suggested that we go for a walk to the bluffs behind the College overlooking the Gulf.

I remained apprehensive and concerned, my mind churning with anxiety as this was all quite unusual. He said calmly and firmly “*You know that your sister started high school this year. Well, I cannot afford to keep both of you in high school..... I sold the lot of land I was planning to build on but we still cannot make ends meet.....This means that you will have to leave school this year at the end of Form 5.*” This was the form that preceded the Cambridge School Certificate graduation class, Form 6. All this was so unexpected. I was dumbfounded momentarily and it really shook me. My Father kept on talking but I only heard his voice distantly. Then I listened again. “*If your sister does not get her School Certificate, she will have no future as a girl. I know that you will be able to make something of yourself somehow. Being a man it would be easier for you. This is not what your Mother and I had hoped for but this is the best that we could do. So study hard this year and make the best of it.*”

We walked back to the dormitory somberly. He handed me a package of food which my Mother had prepared and sent. He explained that my Mother was quite upset and unhappy about this turn in

events. They had discussed it and examined every avenue but could not find alternatives. I knew my Father well. I knew his dedication to the welfare of his children and particularly his values for their education. This was not easy for him, sacrificing one child’s education for another. But he was also always pragmatic. He had to be. He was among the new progressive generation of parents who would recognise the equality of their daughters for opportunities in education. The previous generation in the Indian community traditionally favoured their sons. As he left and was walking down the hill returning home, I was sure that the turmoil in his mind then was just as great as mine. But they were in many ways quite different.

The bell for supper had rung and I barely heard it as confused thoughts ran through my mind. I wasn’t hungry anyway. So, I walked back to the bluffs with the wide expanses of the quiet Gulf below. The serene evening and placid waters contrasted with the chaotic thoughts running through my mind. I had not known of any students having to leave high school in Form 5. The dream and expectations of Form 6 and writing the Cambridge School Certificate the next year, so close only moments ago but, like all dreams, vanished in a flash. Which was the dream, which the nightmare? Suddenly, I felt separated from my classmates. From this day on, our goals and expectations in life would be different. The next day, I will be back in class feeling isolated and very uncomfortable.

In the study class that evening, I finished my homework with minimal input; found it difficult to concentrate and often wondered what was all this for? In a couple of months I would be looking for a job without any qualifications and the future

(Continued on next page)

My High School Scare at Naps

(Continued from previous page)

did not look bright. I spent a restless night tossing around on the flimsy dormitory canvas cot, as much as I was tossing ideas and events in my mind. I must start thinking of securing a job before the end of the school year so that I will start work immediately at the end of the term. What were the opportunities out there? Well, there were all those jobs which I never thought I would have to take and jobs are so much related to one's standard of living and social status in life. I had seen my father struggle to make ends meet in providing for his family. This experience motivated me to strive for a better standard of living for myself.

By the weekend, I had come to some definite conclusions and firm plans. I will have to change the path that Fate appeared to have paved for me. This was not going to be easy. I decided to gamble and to take the SC examination from Form 5, one year ahead, at the end of the current school year. At Naparima College in the 1940s, the Cambridge School Certificate Examination was taken after completion of Form 6. Most students skipped Form 4. This would require doing both the Form 5 and Form 6 studies simultaneously and I would be doing the Form 6 curriculum without tutoring or assistance. The principal, Rev. Walls, did not support my taking the SC exam with the current Form 6 class. He was concerned that I would contribute to the failure percentages and the school's reputation. He strongly discouraged my "*premature attempt at the SC exams*". So, I paid my way as a private candidate for the examination in December 1948.

Was I being foolhardy? The real chance of passing this examination, in my circumstances, was less than 10%. Should I risk losing my Father's hard-earned \$15.00 for the examination fee? Indeed, a number of Form 6 students normally failed the SC exams annually. Many others passed with only Grade 3 certificates. The prospects and fears of

the alternatives for my future were my compelling motivations. My classmates thought that it was just a personal challenge, and supported my taking the SC exam a year early. My friend Ismet also decided to take the SC examinations prematurely for his own reasons and we often studied together during the weekends, usually at his home on Sutton Street.

This was the most demanding year in my life so far. Every moment of time was focused on studies. Sometimes the Form 5 work was confused with the Form 6 work. When the lights were turned off at 10:00 pm in the dormitory, I studied under my sleeping cot with a sheet over it to hide the candle light until the wee morning hours. Candle light was prohibited in dormitory and, in retrospect, the practice was quite dangerous. The dormitory, like all the other buildings on the campus, were wooden structures.

Immediately after the SC exams and the Christmas holidays in December, I started my job search. I obtained a job as a technician's assistant in the distillation laboratory at the Oilfields. The SC examination answer sheets were sent to Cambridge for marking and the results usually appeared a couple of months later in the local newspaper the *Trinidad Guardian*. I remember well the day the results appeared. My heart was pounding away as I searched for the results pages with my family hovering over me. My chances of passing were small but I had prayed and hoped. The results were presented under the names of the secondary schools on the island. I found Naparima College and ran through the list of names with my finger once, twice, then a third time. I muttered quietly "*No! My name is not here*". I felt a loud thump in my chest and a cold flash of despair ran through my body at the same time.

Then my Father said calmly "*Here it is Clar. Under Private Candidates at the bottom of the page. You got a Grade 2. That's very good*". I could hardly believe my eyes. "*I knew you would do it.*" my Father said relieved and smiling. Everyone

(Continued on next page)

My High School Scare at Naps

(Continued from previous page)

became so happy. My Mother was the emotional one of my parents. With tears in her eyes and a proud smile, she hugged and kissed me. She said that she will make me a cake that day. In the midst of this family celebration, I quietly left and went to the washroom, the only private room in our house. There I broke down completely and hopelessly. I felt everything and I felt nothing. The tensions of the past year erupted massively. Suddenly, I felt weak and exhausted. But I recovered.

Circumstances changed after I obtained the SC in 1948. My grandparents offered to keep my sister and me at their home in Claxton Bay from where we could travel by bus to school in San Fernando. I did not have to take the laboratory assistant's job after all and I was able to continue my education. I returned to my class and colleagues with a new feeling of confidence. Here I was, the only student in the class that had already obtained a Grade 2 Cambridge School Certificate (SC). I obtained the SC Grade 1 (1949) and HC (1950). Based on the HC results, I received a three-year scholarship to attend the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, a British Colonial institution, that later became a part of the University of the West Indies.

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Rahatan's Necklace

by Rubyha McKenzie

It was given to me by my father's sister, my Aunt Sarephan. She inherited it from her mother, Rahatan, my Dardee.

As far as I know, and this is not certain, my Dardee was given a heavy thick gold necklace along which was suspended several gold coins, maybe seven or eight. She was given this by my grandfather. She had been a child bride from Lengua village married to an imam who was many years her senior. After endowing him with three children, he departed this life leaving the young widow available for marriage. As was the custom in those days, her family arranged for her to marry Rajali, my grandfather.

Rajali was the seventh of eight children whose parents arrived by **The Howrah** from Calcutta, India, to Trinidad on March 3rd 1873. After a five year period of indentureship, his parents earned their freedom and were granted a plot of land to farm. This was a family of entrepreneurs, and two sons, sometimes three, teamed up to buy land together on which they planted coffee, cocoa, and on one parcel, rice. It was at this time that Rajali married Rahatan. She brought her three children with her, and together with Rajali's parents, two of his brothers and a cousin, they all shared one dwelling, living off the land, and commuting to Biche by foot and donkey cart to tend the cocoa and coffee estate.

Cocoa was king in those days. We had the best variety, later destroyed by 'witch broom' disease. All workers and family were on board for the harvesting of the mature cocoa pods. Palls were spread under the trees. Dardee and Darda and the men lopped off the pods. These were piled into a heap and then every adult who manned a machete neatly cracked every pod asunder. The aroma was indescribable: pungently sweetish sour with a dash of ferment. You could get drunk

on it! Women and children scooped out the soft white fuzzy sweet seeds and sucked them before spitting them out into the heap. Later when all the pods were emptied, the seeds were then sifted through for stems and knots and spread out in the tray of the cocoa house. The roof of this house looked like a perfectly normal roof for most of the time...until the cocoa seeds arrived from Biche.

They say, 'When yuh have cocoa in de sun look out for rain!' Well, this about sums up all activity at this time. Hot sun, open up tray under roof.....all hands slide the lower roof under the higher roof. Spread cocoa seeds out on the tray in the full sun. Hot sun brown seeds. Walk the cocoa, walk the cocoa...shuffle with your feet through the cocoa turning them over and over, once, twice, thrice a day.....rain coming! Run! Run! Run! Close the cocoa house! 'All man jack' running up the steps to push the lower roof back into place. The shower done. Start over. Open the house. Walk the cocoa. Close the house when the sun gone down. The seeds brown and crisp. Time to dance the cocoa. All the workers and their wives on board now. Oil. Dance. One foot in front of the next. Knees bent. Hips loose. Laughter and fun. Brisk rhythm. Turn and go around again. One man with shovel heaping back seeds to center. All feet plough the seeds until they are sleek and shiny brown.

It was there in Poole, Riverside road that my father Saphralli, and Sarephan were born.

Rajali moved his family to San Fernando in 1936. The brothers still continued to plant coffee and cocoa, run a sweet drink factory, manage a transport company, and now in San Fernando went into the charcoal business wholesale and retail. For this experience my father carried the nickname 'moro' in school, a sobriquet that

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scarred him forever. In all of this, Rahatan earned her keep working alongside the men in the estate, taking care of the children, cooking meals for the entire clan and the workmen, doing laundry, and walking more than five miles each way in Biche every week to buy groceries.

Through hard work, thrift, and entrepreneurship the family thrived. More lands and properties were bought and the children were educated up to high school level in Trinidad. Little by little the lands and properties were separated and the children of the brothers were sent away to become professionals in their fields. It was during this time that Rajali bought his wife the necklace. As a child, I would accompany her to many a wedding. Preparations and rituals usually lasted for up to one week before the ceremony and so I had the wonderful opportunity to see my Dardee all decked out in various outfits of celebration. She finally had the space in her life to dance, to dress-up, and to celebrate. I looked at her with wonder.

She invariably wore the necklace. I remember the many gold coins that hung from it. She looked like a beautiful gypsy dancer, copper skin glistening in the evening air, black curly hair coiled low behind the nape of her neck, feet bare, ankles encircled by silver 'bayra', as she tripped and danced around the seated pair.

I never knew then that one day I would inherit

one of those gold coins. Today I look at it with a magnifying glass, and can distinguish on the tail side the image of an eagle, the inscription of The United States of America, 'fived'; and on the head side, the image of a queen, or Greek goddess whose head gear looks suspiciously like a "Liberty Head" gold piece. But how mundane! I prefer to hold it lovingly and remember my Dardee, working all her life by the sweat of her brow...and then finally having the time to dance, chant, and celebrate with all the women of the family.

Rahatan, my Dardee.

Rubyha was a student at NGHS from 1960 to 1966, started her teaching career at ASJA, and NGHS, joined the Foreign Service of T&T with (now deceased) spouse George Winston McKenzie and later, settled in Canada. She completed her M.Ed. and both primary and elementary Montessori teacher training and was privileged to teach in Maryland, New York, Toronto, Hamilton, and Grenada. She now spends her time volunteering, supporting Montessori education, spending quality time with grandson Fionn, and writing: essays, poems, and short stories: both fictional and creative non-fiction.

rmleo55@gmail.com

Condolences to...

*Florence Mahabir and to Alicia McKenzie-Barrow
on the passing of **Joseph McKenzie**
on June 3, 2016 in Mississauga, ON*

*The relatives and friends of **Ainsley Sankeralli**, who passed away
on September 12, 2016 in Edmonton, AB*



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND CARICOM AFFAIRS

Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MEDIA RELEASE

HIS EXCELLENCY GARTH CHATOOR PRESENTS CREDENTIALS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE DAVID JOHNSTON

Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs – 30th June, 2016

On Wednesday June 15, 2016, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada received the Letters of Credence of His Excellency Garth Chatoor, accrediting him as High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to Canada.

The High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago based in Ottawa, the Federal Capital of Canada, is responsible for the conduct of relations between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Canada.

The High Commissioner is the official representative of the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in Canada and is appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister and Head of Government.

High Commissioner Garth Chatoor has established an expansive career in the manufacturing/production and marketing sectors in Trinidad and Tobago since the mid- 1990's. An experienced energy businessman, in latter years he also served extensively in the financial services sector. He possesses a wealth of knowledge and experience in the fields of business, management, and energy affairs, holding degrees in Production Engineering and Management as well as Chemical Engineering. He also completed Post Graduate Programs in the fields of Management Studies and Systems Analysis and Design.

During his brief exchange with the Governor General of Canada following the Ceremony of the Presentation of Credentials, High Commissioner Chatoor reaffirmed Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to its long-standing harmonious relations with Canada. He noted that such engagement could only strengthen and deepen with time, especially in areas such as trade, investment, tourism, security, education, culture and financial services.

Trinidad and Tobago's High Commissioner to Canada resides at the Official Residence of the High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago to Canada located in Rockcliffe Park, Ottawa with his wife, Carol Diane Chatoor. They have two children, Nigel Chatoor and Kimberly Indar and they are the proud grandparents of five.

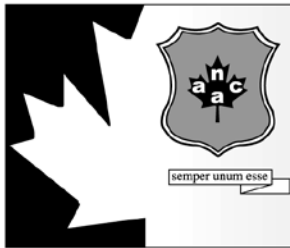


His Excellency Garth Chatoor, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to Canada presents credentials to His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada.



His Excellency Garth Chatoor, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to Canada greets His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada.

*Photo credit:
MCpl Vincent Carbonneau,
Rideau Hall*



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Naparima Alumni Association of Canada

NAAC Canadian Bursary Guidelines 2016

The Naparima Alumni Association of Canada (Toronto) is pleased to announce its 25th annual Canadian Bursary Program. A minimum of two bursaries, each valued at \$500 will be offered to successful applicants.

The following are the guidelines under which the program is administered:

1. Each applicant must be a Canadian citizen or a Permanent Resident and must be enrolled as a full-time student at an accredited Canadian post-secondary educational institution.
2. Each applicant must be sponsored by a member of NAAC.
3. Each application submitted must include:
 - a. A completed NAAC Bursary Application form. (See next page)
 - b. Proof of Canadian citizenship or Permanent Residency.
 - c. An official transcript of the applicant's academic record for at least the prior year of studies at high school or post-secondary educational institution, whichever applies. The transcript must indicate **final marks**, not interim marks.
 - d. Proof of full-time enrolment in an undergraduate year of studies at an accredited Canadian **University, College or Vocational institution**. Obtain a confirmation letter from the Registrar's Office.
 - e. A covering letter, outlining the applicant's relevant interests and accomplishments. Because credit is given for the applicant's participation in school or community activities, documentation to support such involvement should be included. Documentation may take the form of letters from teachers, articles, copies of awards etc.
4. All applicants will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - Academic performance (grades)
 - Participation in school activities
 - Participation in community from a leadership perspective.

Financial need will be considered as a further criterion if a statement of need is included in the applicant's documentation. Consideration in this category will be over and above that given for academic performance and participation in school, community and NAAC activities.

Any information submitted regarding financial need will be kept strictly confidential.

5. All requests for information about eligibility, criteria and other related matters should be directed to the Secretary, Vilma Ramcharan at 416 284 5198 or viram@rogers.com

2016 NAAC CANADIAN BURSARY APPLICATION

SURNAME: _____ GIVEN NAME(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ Tel: _____ Cell: _____ Email: _____

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION LAST ATTENDED: _____

CURRENT POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION: _____

PLEASE CHECK THE ATTACHED GUIDELINES TO CONFIRM DOCUMENTATION THAT SHOULD ACCOMPANY THIS APPLICATION.

DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

- Covering Letter
- Copy of Transcript of previous undergraduate year's record
OR for first-year applicant, include official transcript of final Grade 12 marks
- Proof of full-time enrolment for this year in university, college or vocational institution
- Proof of Canadian status i.e. Citizenship or Permanent Residency
- Name of NAAC member sponsoring the applicant
- Documentation (letters, clippings etc.) supporting involvement in
 - (a) School or post-secondary activities
 - (b) Community and volunteer work

THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS IS NOVEMBER 11th, 2016.

Only successful applicants will be notified.

APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE MAILED TO:
SECRETARY, NAAC EXECUTIVE
BRIDLEWOOD MALL POSTAL OUTLET
P. O. BOX 92175, 2900 WARDEN AVENUE
SCARBOROUGH, ON M1W 3Y9



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