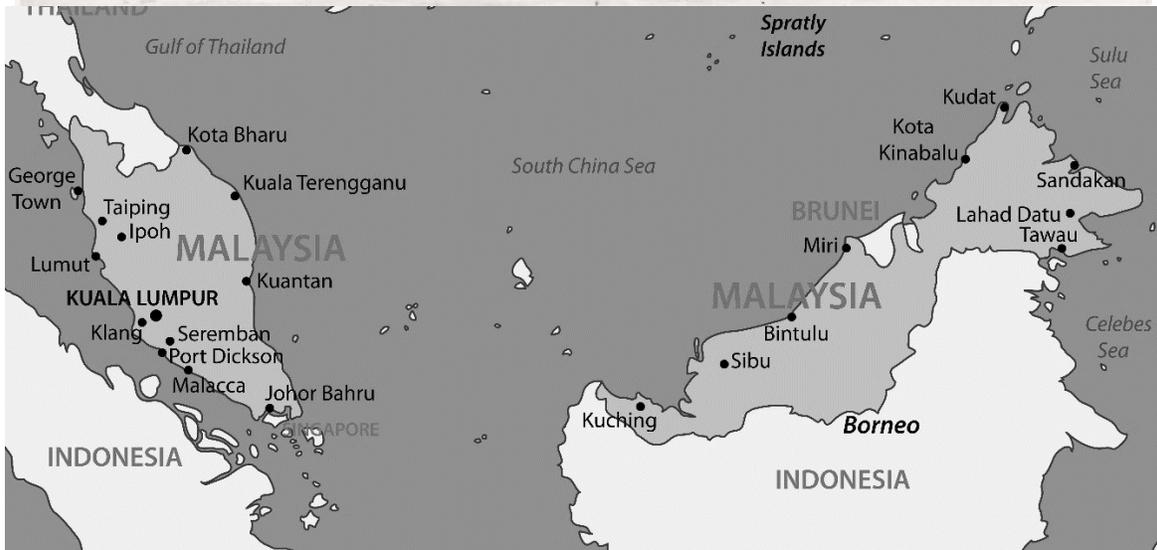


CUSO Malaysia Alumni

1961 to 1990

Memories and Updates

As of May 9, 2022



In 2019, I started an email network of ex-CUSO Malaysia volunteers.* It had only grown to about 35 members by 2021. In November 2021, Howard Brydle (former CUSO volunteer in Sabah, Malaysia, 1971-74) joined me in using his computer skills, and telephone calls, to track down more CUSO Malaysia alumni. So far, his efforts have tripled the email membership and he also opened a private alumni Facebook page which about half our membership has joined, to date: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cusomsia>.

This is a compilation of some of the experiences of CUSO volunteers in Malaysia who we have reached, to date: interesting personal updates, photos, and other memories that I have sent out to the whole network on email. It informally documents some of the collaboration between Canadians and Malaysians in the building of their now middle-income nation over almost 30 years, as well as the influence the volunteers' Malaysian experiences had on them.

I will continue to update it periodically as new stories come to me. My own story is on the websites below and Post 3.

Neill McKee, M.S.

Email: nmckee20@gmail.com

CUSO Malaysia volunteer, Sabah, Malaysia, 1968-70,

CUSO filmmaker in Asia and Africa, 1971-72

CUSO Malaysia Deputy FSO, 1973-74

International Filmmaker and Multimedia Producer, 1975-2012: www.neillmckeevideos.com

Creative Nonfiction Writer, Albuquerque, New Mexico, since 2015

Author's website: www.neillmckeeauthor.com

*Note: I used the term "volunteer," although for some time CUSO began to use a more professional-sounding term "cooperant." However, Cuso International has begun to use "volunteer" again on its website and publicity.

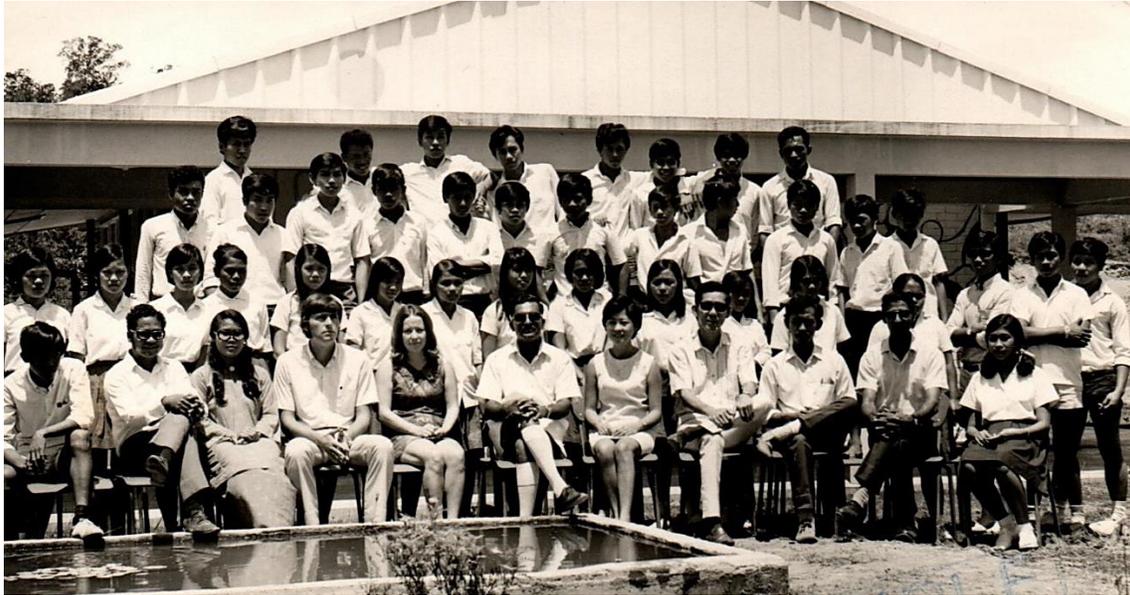
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Post 1 – Update on Paul and Evelyn Gervan, Sabah 1970-73

Neill McKee wrote: Paul and Evelyn Gervan replaced me in Kota Belud, Sabah in 1970 and stayed for 3 years. (Actually, only Evelyn replaced me. Paul taught maths and science.) They took over my bungalow overlooking the town and even bought my old Norton 500 motorcycle.



Paul and Evelyn front row L 4 and 5 with some staff and students
Kota Belud Secondary School, 1971

Then they traveled the world, including Bali, and became inspired to set up the Third World Bazaar, now called the **One World Bazaar**, at Manotick Station, Ontario. It has been running since 1981, first taken over by Paul's sister and now his niece. A portion of the proceeds goes to international medical relief.

Shopping online: www.oneworldbazaar.ca/

See the video here: <https://youtu.be/8W0I0wSvWXA>



ONE WORLD BAZAAR

Post 2 – Update on Mary Corkery, Sabah 1968-70

Mary Corkery was in the Sabah group, 1968-70 and was posted on the Island of Labuan. Here's a brief bio which is on LinkedIn: More than 40 years of experience in working for social justice, including CUSO Co-operant Sabah, East Malaysia; as Oxfam Canada staff, English sector director at Development and Peace, and Executive Director of Kairos Canada. Mary was, for many years, on the board of the Catherine Donnelly Foundation which funds social and climate justice programs. LinkedIn contact here:

<https://ca.linkedin.com/in/mary-corkery-03b0351b>

Mary Corkery's first poetry collection, *Simultaneous Windows*, published by Inanna Press, Toronto (2017) is available on their site:

<https://www.inanna.ca/product/simultaneous-windows/>

and on Amazon: <https://www.amazon.ca/Simultaneous-Windows-Mary-Corkery/dp/1771333898>.

Her poems have appeared in Canadian literary journals. Recently, I listened to her read on Facebook for the Art Poetry Bar Series, Toronto, mainly from her upcoming book, tentatively titled *The Wrong Paradise*. Those with a Facebook account can listen here:

<https://www.facebook.com/501700945/videos/pcb.10165903330905503/1176800299516159>

Mary lives in Toronto with her husband, Ted Hyland, a lawyer in a firm focused on social justice. Her son Luke Dufoe lives and works nearby (most recently for housing projects.)



Post 3 – Neill McKee's memoir, *Finding Myself in Borneo*

Finding Myself in Borneo: Sojourns in Sabah is about my two years as a CUSO teacher in Kota Belud, Sabah (1968-70) when I made a film on the East Malaysia program for CUSO Ottawa (leading me to make 6 more recruitment films during 1971-72). It also includes my return with my new wife Beth during 1973-74, when I became CUSO Deputy FSO. We were mainly based in Kota Kinabalu but also spent time in Sarawak and West Malaysia, working with Peter Hoffman (and Barbara) on orientations, job scouting, and volunteer support. See more background on my Malaysia memoir on this link, including awards, reviews, interviews, and places to buy: www.neillmckeeauthor.com/finding-myself-in-borneo

It has been reviewed as an "honest" memoir. It does contain some of the good we did, in my opinion. (For those who joined or have heard about the North Borneo Frodo Society [NBFS], or who are Tolkien fans, the Society's history is in my Borneo memoir and briefly covered on this website: www.northborneofrodotolkien.org.)

In 1975, I returned to international filmmaking and multimedia production, working around the world for IDRC Canada, UNICEF in Bangladesh and Africa, John Hopkins University in Baltimore and Moscow, and finally for AED cum FHI360, Washington, DC, as director of a large development communication project with 150 staff during 2008-2012. My digital library website is about my career, which I am writing a memoir on now: www.neillmckeevideos.com
My author's website has more about the other books I have published since retiring at the end of 2012, and moving to New Mexico in 2015: www.neillmckeeauthor.com/

As mentioned yesterday in my message about Mary Corkery, please send me updates on yourselves and how your Malaysia experiences influenced your lives. No need to be a writer or a poet! I believe many of you have had interesting careers in Canada or elsewhere. Volunteers from other countries on this email list are also welcome to send their stories. *Jangan malu!*



Neill McKee, M.S.
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Post 4 – Update on Ken and Teresa Mellish, West Malaysia 1971-73

Ken and Teresa Mellish here. We were in West Malaysia during 1971 to 1973 at Serdang. Teresa lectured farm economics at the Ag school there, and I did livestock research with MARDI. We did not really have the experience for those positions, but we did what we could. Our posting provided meaningful work. We did language training with the Peace Corps in Penang. We were a half hour from KL in good accommodation, so not exactly roughing it. We traveled to Java, Bali, North Sumatra and Thailand when we were there, as well as Singapore and Port Dickson for short trips, and other Malaysian sites. On the way home we stopped in Burma, India, Nepal, Afghanistan and Iran.

Our CUSO travels influenced us to continue exploring the world. We live in PEI and both of us are active in Farmers Helping Farmers: www.farmershelfingfarmers.ca which assists farm families in Kenya. Teresa is a founding member and coordinator. Pre-COVID, we traveled to Kenya annually to work with our partners. We live on a farm, currently a horse farm www.newperthfarms.ca but previously milked cows for some time. We have two children and four grandchildren who live within 20 minutes of us. We see Rob and Mar Thomson occasionally. They were posted to West Malaysia the 1972-74 group, and live in Charlottetown.



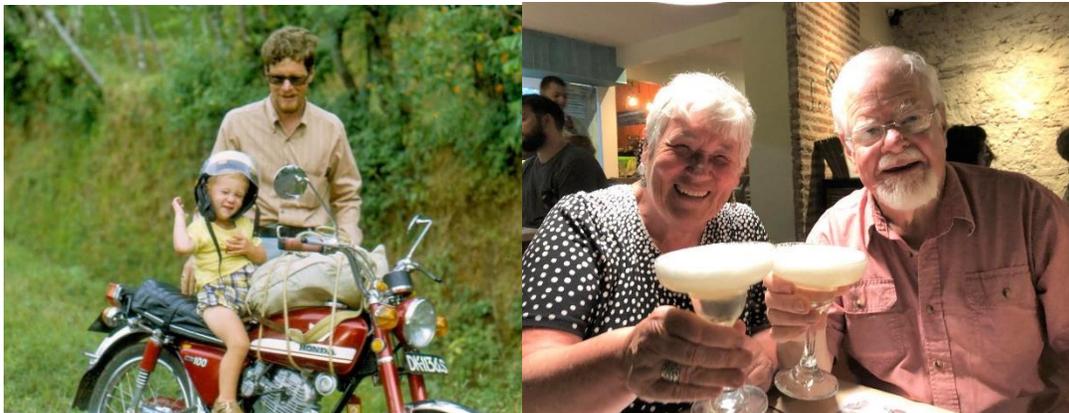
Rob and Mar Thomson (L)
with Ken and Teresa Mellish (R)

Post 5 – Update of Rob and Mar Thomson, West Malaysia, 1972-74

Malaysia was our second of four CUSO postings. The saga began with our marriage and our immediate two-year “honeymoon” in Malawi (1968-70), teaching at a secondary boarding school near Limbe. After a couple of years at Trinity College School in Port Hope, Ontario, we realized we weren't ready to settle down....So we, with our one-year-old son, set off for Malaysia. At first, we were teaching at two schools in Kota Bharu, in the northeast corner of the country on the Thai border. It wasn't very satisfactory, so we were transferred to the Universiti Pertanian Malaysia at Serdang, between KL and Kajang. Mar ran the science labs and Rob developed an English curriculum. It had just become a university—previously an agricultural college -- and things were rather disorganized, such that teaching shut down for a number of months. We went home a few months early.

Back in Canada, we joined ex-CUSO friends (Mait and Elaine McNeil) from Malawi days in La Ronge, Saskatchewan. What an experience in development: the Department of Northern Saskatchewan was created to bring self-government and services, adapted to local conditions, to the mainly Indigenous small communities in the northern half of the province. Over four years, Rob helped create a health system, while Mar was devoting her energies to our (by then) three youngsters. We felt that a bush town was not the best place to raise them, and so we looked around for a more permanent home ... and decided to go visit Ken and Teresa Mellish, our good friends from Malaysia, in Prince Edward Island. We realized what a wonderful place it would be, and so here we came -- Rob getting a job in policy and planning with the provincial Health (later Health & Social Services) Department. We had a fourth child, and then Mar went back to work in the Province's specialized pharmacy operation.

After 27 years, we retired early—partly because the Province offered incentives to retire, but also because at the very same time the CUSO coordinator here asked if we wanted to go to the South Pacific. Off we went to the Solomon Islands for two years -- where we essentially rebuilt a national literacy organization which had fallen apart during a civil war. A few years later Rob did one more CUSO assignment—a program evaluation of CUSO/VSO in Tanzania. Since then, we've been doing quite a bit of community volunteering here in Charlottetown, and also travelling to off-the-beaten-track places like Syria, Iran, the Stans, Mongolia and Bhutan. CUSO got us into both cross-cultural travel and the commitment to service, and certainly helped shape our lives.



Motorcycle holiday in Malaysia, 1973

A toast from Colombia (just as COVID was starting)

Post 6 – CUSO Malaysia Orientation in KL, 1972 Group

This photo was posted by Mar & Rob Thomson on FB. They could remember all the names except the tall guy in the mid-right of the back row. Oscar Regier identified him as Clarence Segboer (W. Malaysia 1970 group helping out with orientation). We have not found Rita Shaw noted **in red**.

Back row: Arish (instructor), John Soehner, Norm Price (deceased), Oscar Regier, Davis Myers, Clarence Segboer (deceased), Mike McNally, Peter Hoffman, Rob Thomson, Othman (instructor).

Front row: Lynn Myers, Kim Price, Sue McNally, Lisa Lau (instructor), Barb Hoffman, **Rita Shaw**, Cik Yun (instructor), Mar Thomson holding Kenneth Thomson.



Post 7 – From John Soehner, CUSO Malaysia, 1972 group

John Soehner wrote: Not sure of the date, not sure of the photographer (might have been Sue McNally) but it could have been late '72 or early '73 for a CUSO conference that would get the CUSOs from West Malaysia together for “further indoctrination”! Below is a shot at the Fairwinds Hotel in Port Dixon on the west coast. A photo of the Avant Guard that normally tried to get an extra day off from their posting to set parameters for the conference. I think BRIDGE was a major topic of discussion for those that got there early, enjoyed some refreshments and dealing with about 50 hands of “Two No Trump, .. pass, .. Four Clubs, and was that Stayman with your bid?!?!?” before being called to the conference table. “After the next hand!” Peter! Peter and Barb Hoffman were the Field Protectorate for us!

I loved my old '52 or was it '53 AJS “350”—a real banger with plates BD 6171! Got all over Malaysia and into Thailand and Singapore with the black beast!

Left to right, “hmm”?, Mike McNally*?, Paul Sears, John Soehner, Andy Broughton and Colin ?! *Shyte* memory loss! Not sure whose photo this is, but thanks for the memory!
John



Post 8 – Fall 1972 Orientation Group at the YMCA in KL

From Neill McKee: These posts of photos are useful. We found Helen Vanwel (correct spelling) in Vancouver, thanks to Heinz Unger, and Colin Reed in Winnipeg, thanks to Hennie Velema. Colin is in the back row 5th from the left, and I had omitted John MacDonald, 4th from the left beside Colin. Barbara Hoffman has identified him as a computer programmer who was posted to the Mara Institute of Technology. I should also add that Helen Vanwel was in the 1970-72 group and was acting as an orientation resource person in this photo.

See names below. We have not been able to find those **in red**. If you can identify the unidentified woman middle row, 3rd from right, or have contacts or know the whereabouts of any of them, please let us know.



Back Row L to R – Heinz and Marilyn Unger, Robin Fenwick (deceased), **John MacDonald**, Colin Reed, Mano (instructor), Jim Johnston (now Jim Kuzych), Peter Walls, **Gloria Gray**, unidentified instructor

Middle Row L to R – **Paul Sears**, Dean Tweedle, George Velema (deceased), **David Holmes**, **Ron Shabley**, Helen Vanwel (leaning on David's and Ron's shoulders), **Frank Lee**, unidentified woman, Lisa Lau (instructor), unidentified instructor

Front Row L to R – Peter and Barbara Hoffman, Glennie Tweedle, Hennie Velema, unidentified instructor, **Edwina Syta**, unidentified instructor

Middle Front – **Thomas Yeung**

Post 9 – The Motorcycle Gang and the Fairwinds Hotel, Port Dickson, 1973, continued.

We have not yet found **Andy Broughton, Paul Sears, Herb Wright, or Colin Smith**. If you know of their last known locations or have contact info, let us know.



The Motorcycle "Bridge" Gang taking off from Petaling Jaya:

L to R: John Soehner, Raj (Malaysian friend behind on his own motorcycle), Colin Smith with Herb Wright behind, Mike McNally with Sue behind, Andy Broughton, Paul Sears



John Soehner on his A.J.S. "Dirty Gertie, the Pig"



Dining at the Fairwinds Hotel, Port Dickson:
L to R: Andy Broughton, Sue McNally John Soehner, Paul Sears,
Mike McNally with panhandle, and Colin Smith in front



Lounging over at the Fairwinds:
L to R: John Soehner, Paul Sears, Herb Wright (probably), Andy Broughton, Mike and Sue McNally

Post 10 – Nostalgic Visit to the Abandoned Fairwinds Hotel, January 1991

From Neill McKee: When I was stationed in Bangladesh as Chief of Communication for UNICEF (1990-93), my family and I visited West Malaysia and drove to the famous Fairwinds Hotel. The Motorcycle Gang in 1973 probably laughed a lot, played bridge, and drank Guinness Stout because it “is Good for You.” After all, the place was haunted. There’s a story on this in my memoir, *Finding Myself in Borneo*. [Click here for that excerpt.](#)



Post 11 – CUSO Orientation Group (1970) in Malaysia

This photo at Maktab Kerjasama, Petaling Jaya, W. Malaysia was posted by Michael Steven on FB, Dec 3rd using first names only. With Michael's help, I matched them with last names on our master list. Are we correct? We have not been able to contact those former volunteers **highlighted in red**. Please let us know if you have contacts or last known location.

Back row L to R: Osman (instructor), Peter Royle (FSO Sabah), Bakar (instructor), Brian Pollard, Randy Broemling, Paul Gervan, **Ron Harder**, Megat (instructor), Gordon Thompson (deceased), Rudy Dyck, **Brian Lund**, Michael Steven, Sayeed (instructor), **David Omand**, Gerry Torvi, unidentified instructor, Mokhtar (instructor).

Front row L to R: Marg Rosso (deceased), **Elizabeth (Betty) Gordon**, Hafsa (instructor), **Robert Pearson**, Evelyn Gervan, **Nancy Gyrylyk**, **Elizabeth Pearson**, Helen Vanwel, Anita Dyck, Beverly Mantha (deceased), Yolanda Stepien, Rilla Edwards, Lee (Worthington) Torvi, Harlan Weidenhammer, unknown instructor.



Missing from the photo is Ada Marie (Lane) Dhillon, now living in Calgary, who arrived in KL in mid-December 1970 and received individual language instructions. She was posted to Kota Belud, Sabah the day before school started. Also on our master list but not in the photo are Kay Baker (deceased), **Zinat Lalani**, **Ellie Lau**, Dr. Casey Cornelius Schipper (deceased), **Dewey Chaisson**, Clarence Segboer (deceased), **Berute Spirk**, **Roger Spirk**. They probably also arrived at different times like Ada. Suggestions?

Note: **Archie Gaber** was FSO at the time and Howie traced him to the Yukon Territory in the mid-1970s working in education and playing hockey. Anyone have a lead?

Post 12 – Orientation-language training group, November 1973

From Neill McKee: This photo was sent to us by Sheila Casselton in Port Moody, BC, after Howie touched base with her. They were both teaching on Labuan Island, Sabah (now a Federal Territory) long after Mary Corkery (1968-70) left that tough posting! The photo helped lead us to the discovery of Rob Wellwood in Edmonton, Alberta. When I called the number I found online and asked him what he was doing these days, he said "shoveling snow!" Also, it led us to finding Michael Primiani in Montreal. Anyone know the whereabouts of those highlighted in red, below?



Back row from L to R: Michael Primiani, Neill McKee, **Alan Stewart**, teacher Ibrahim,

Front row L to R: teacher Zainal, teacher Lisa Lau, Beth McKee, Rob Wellwood, Sheila Casselton and **Betty Betlen**. *Alan is probably freaked out by the unidentified policeman above him.*

Post 13 – Russell Johnson, the Oldest Malaysia CUSO Volunteer, 1974

From Neill McKee: Russell was a short-term forestry volunteer who was asked to go into the highlands of West Malaysia to help the *Orang Asli* (Proto Malay) set up a sawmill donated to CIDA. The entertaining story of his stay is provided [here in an excerpt from Chapter 13](#) of my memoir, *Finding Myself in Borneo*.

Foresters and natural resources/environmental experts working in national parks, became an important part of our work in Malaysia, starting around 1970. [Click this link to watch a rather faded copy of a film I shot in 1971](#) of **Bill Dumont**, **Michael Clark** and the late **Ron Burrell**, attempting to establish a sustainable forest industry in West Malaysia for future generations. CUSO continued to work in natural resources/national parks in Sarawak until 1990.



Russell Johnson

Beth McKee, Russell, and Rob Wellwood, also a forester in W. Malaysia

Post 14 – Update on Mary J. Breen, Sarawak 1966-68

Mary J. Breen was posted to Binatang, Sarawak (now called Bintangor) during 1966-68. Mary has been a writer and editor for the last 25 years. Her fiction and nonfiction have appeared in national newspapers, essay collections, travel magazines, health journals, and literary magazines including The Toast, Brick, The Christian Science Monitor, and The Windsor Review. She has been an ESL and literacy teacher in Canada and overseas, a health worker, and a writer and editor of easy-to-read health information.

She lives in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada where, among other things, she teaches creative nonfiction and memoir classes while seeking a publisher for her memoir. Read some of her work below, the first three based on her days in Sarawak.



The Far Country: <https://www.asiancha.com/content/view/1674/434/>

Finding Our Way: <http://thefontjournal.com/finding-our-way/>

History, Served Up On Two Plates: <http://www.csmonitor.com/The-Culture/The-Home-Forum/2014/1001/History-served-up-on-two-plates>

And some other memoir pieces:

Lest We Forget: <https://writinginawomansvoice.blogspot.com/search?q=lest+we+forget+breen>

The Legion of Decency: <http://the-toast.net/2015/11/10/the-legion-of-decency-running-a-movie-theater-in-the-1950s/>

More Than The Mail: <https://the-toast.net/2016/04/04/1950s-post-office/>

Post 15 – History of Volunteering in Sarawak

Howie Brydle posted on CUSO Malaysia FB recently: “Bob Basiuk (Sarawak 1983), aka Borneo Bob, points out that CUSO began and ended with placements in Sarawak in 1961 and 1988.” Jeff Stone also wrote to us on email that “CUSO worked in natural resources/national parks until 1990, assuming that my wife and I were the last CUSO volunteers that worked for the Sarawak Department of Forestry. I was in the Research Branch working as a forest biometrician whereas my wife Mari Smaby-Stone was with National Parks as a wildlife biologist.”

This makes CUSO one of the first and last agencies in Sarawak. Well, not really CUSO, but one of its founding organizations, Canadian Overseas Volunteers (COV), organized at the U of T, which sent the first volunteers to Sarawak in February 1961, according Bill McWhinney and Dave Godfrey (eds.) in *Man Deserves Man: CUSO in Developing Countries (1968)*. This detailed, 461-page book, which shows up on Amazon.com but not on Amazon.ca (check your library!) mentions that in February 1961, 15 volunteers were selected to go to India, Ceylon, and Sarawak for a one-year period. It doesn't specify how many went to Sarawak.

On our master list we have **Clen Woodridge and Helena Wooldridge (now Zukowski)** as the only 1961 Sarawak volunteers and Howie has reached them, and they confirm this fact, and we hope to get their stories. The first three volunteer stories in the above book are by **Joan Barrett (Sarawak, 1965-67)** from Port Credit, Ontario, **Cathy Duffy (Sarawak, 1965-67)** from Prince Edward Is., and **Michael Barza (Sarawak, 1966-68)** recruited at McGill.

Howie Brydle posted on FB that the early history of volunteering and community development work in Sarawak is recounted in a 2017 article in the Borneo Research Bulletin by David Philips: *60 Years of Overseas Volunteering in the Borneo States*. It was published in the Borneo Research Bulletin, Vol., 2017, where Mary J. Breen's article, *The Far Country: Memories of a CUSO Volunteer in Sarawak, 1966-1968*, already sent to you, was also published.

David Philips' article can be read here for free:

https://www.thefreelibrary.com/FROM+SARAWAK+TO+THE+WORLD%3a+SIXTY+YEARS+OF+OVERSEAS+VOLUNTEER+RING+IN...-a0545085220?fbclid=IwAR0OIsaB8U_XIS09hdF9o3KtrosYWe0Jf1Fmb_mzcQIG5-RUNfkfoht6cQ.

Also, keen Borneo researchers can go here to see the Borneo Research Council and access past issues of their Bulletin for a fee: <https://borneoresearchcouncil.org/>

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The Borneo Research Bulletin is published by the Borneo Research Council, Inc.

Please address all inquiries and contributions for publication to:

*Dr. Clifford Sather, Editor, Borneo Research Bulletin, 10048 SW Balmer Circle,
Portland, OR 97219-7363, U.S.A. Single issues are available at \$30.00.*

Post 16 – Update Helen Vanwel, Binatang (Bintangor), Sarawak 1970-72

From the moment we arrived in KL for orientation in 1970 I felt at home in Malaysia. My CUSO posting was at the Government Secondary School just outside Binatang (now Bintangor), a small town with two blocks of shop houses. Shortly after I arrived, Binatang was named one of three so called “Communist hotspots” in Sarawak. We were always under curfew from dusk to dawn, sometimes 24 hours a day and often from 2pm.

I spent a bit more than two amazing years in Binatang and was then fortunate to have the opportunity to run the KL orientation for the 1972 -74 group. Following that I studied Mandarin in Taiwan, and when I returned to Vancouver, worked as the PR point person for the federally-funded Pacific Region student summer job program. It is there that I met my husband to be, Ken Pattern, who was the program graphic artist and had travelled 4 years around the world between high school and university which ensured an immediate bond between us.

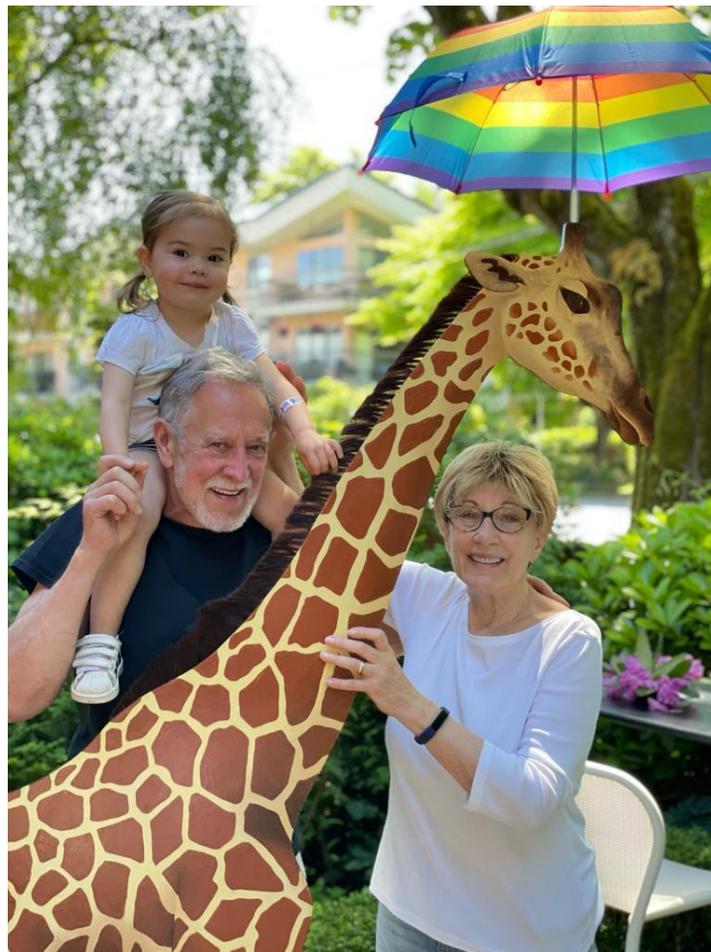


L-R Anita Dyck, Helen Vanwel,
Nancy Gyrylyk, Yolanda Stepien

My next adventure took me to Guatemala where I taught English for a year. On return to Canada, I completed a Master’s degree and landed at the UBC Language Institute where I taught ESL and managed programs, eventually becoming the manager of UBC’s newly-established Pacific Region Orientation Centre (PAROC). PAROC was one of five such CIDA funded centres at universities across Canada which were managed by St Mary’s University in Halifax. A couple of years at PAROC were followed by managing the five centres from an

office at St Mary's. A year later, I went to China as the Director of the China half of St Mary's project, the Canada China Language Training Centre at a university in Beijing. By this time Ken was making his living as a fine artist, and we had married in Hong Kong, where, to my chagrin, he was referred to as bachelor and I as spinster. Following the work in China, in 1988 I took a CIDA funded position in Jakarta which was to be a one-year assignment. Fortunately, I had a partner with a portable career because one year led to the next and before we knew it, more than 30 years had passed. My work included managing a couple of CIDA projects, work with WUSC, the World Bank, the Danish government and lastly, Country Director, Indonesia, for CARE. The jobs in Indonesia centred around social justice, human rights and humanitarian aid.

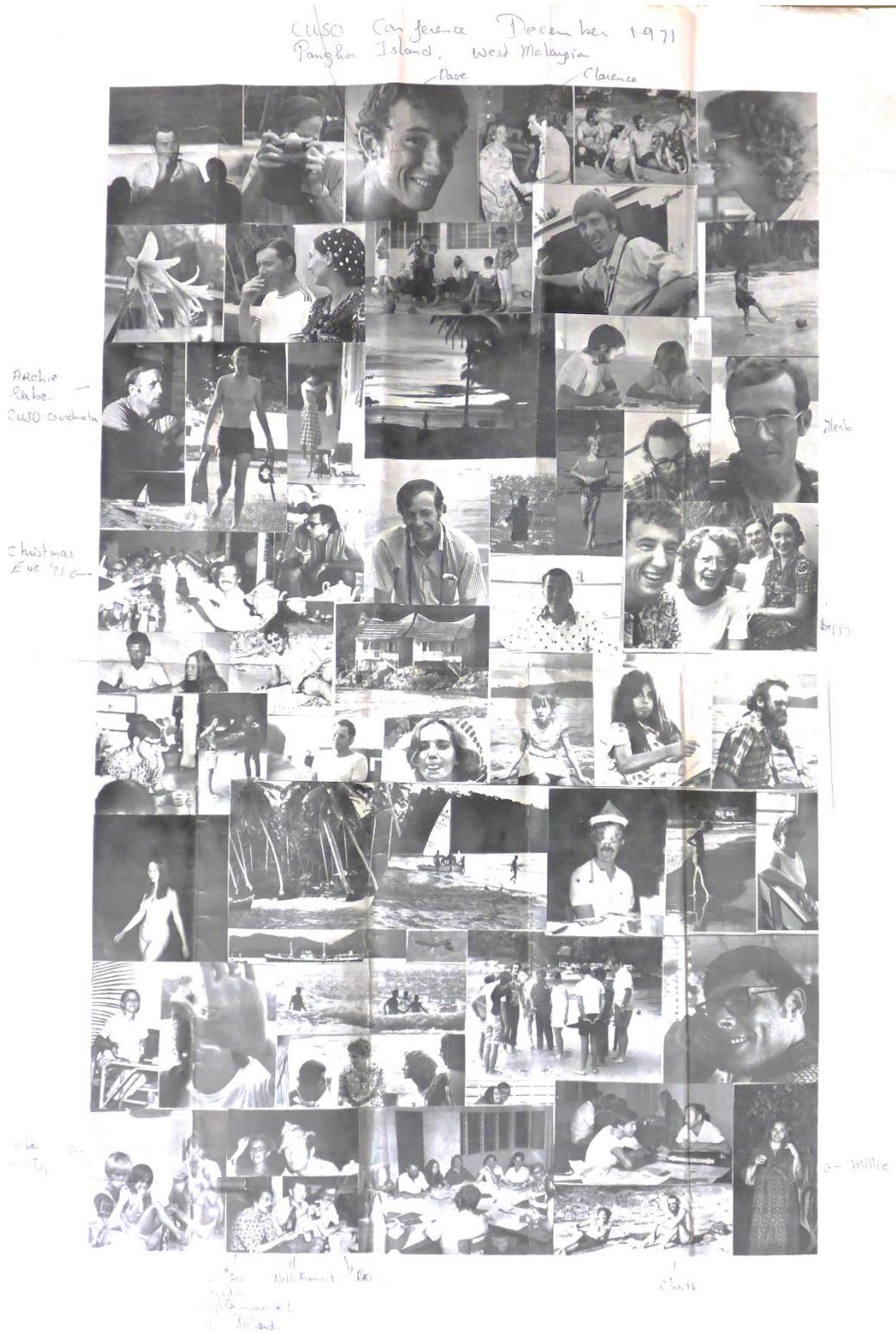
Ken and I returned to Vancouver in the summer of 2019 and we were fortunate to be able to resettle here. I keep busy with a variety of activities including pickle ball (do try if you haven't), a couples nonfiction book group, a member of the Board of the Vancouver Historical Society, and protesting various human rights aggressions by China, every week in front of the Chinese consulate.



Nyla (grandniece), Ken and Helen, recently

Post 17 – Poster from CUSO Conference, Pangkor Island, W. Malaysia, Dec. 1971

Note: Poster supplied by Helen Vanwel



Post 18 – The Malay Mail, Nov. 11, 1972

Correction: Only Helen Vanwel was single at the time. The article should have read **Mrs.** Hennie Velema and **Mrs.** Glennie Tweedle.



Miss Hennie Velema (left) and Miss Glennie Tweedle (right) with Orientation Director Helen Vanwel at their tea break during the orientation programme at the YMCA in Jalan Brickfields yesterday. — Malay Mail picture.

MALAYSIAN HOSPITALITY OVERWHELMS 19 CANADIAN VOLUNTEERS

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — The hospitality of Malaysians makes Malaysia one of the best countries to work in, 19 volunteers of the Canadian University Service Overseas said yesterday.

The volunteers, who arrived here last Saturday, were split into groups and were taken to homes of Muslims for the Hari Raya.

"The reception given us was overwhelming and we flipped over," said Miss Glennie Tweedle, one of the volunteers.

"We were strangers but the hospitality is something we will remember for a long, long time."

Another volunteer, Miss Hennie Velema, said she hoped to absorb some Malaysian culture during her stay.

The volunteers, who in-

clude computer programmers, geologists, foresters, an architect, an environmental chemist and teachers, will mostly be posted to Sabah and Sarawak. The others will work in Kuala Lumpur and Kuala Kangsar.

They are now undergoing a seven-week orientation programme to help them adapt to the Malaysian way of life.

Lessons in Bahasa Malaysia started early this week.

The Orientation Director, Miss Helen Vanwel, said: "Though the volunteers are encountering initial problems with Bahasa Malaysia, particularly pronunciations, they are confident of mastering the language."

The programme includes visits to temples, mosques, rubber estates, forest stations and other places of interest.

THE MALAY MAIL
Sat. Nov. 11, 1972

Post 19 – Gerry and Lee (Worthington) Torvi – A marriage in Kota Kinabalu

Lee's reflections: Gerry and I met at orientation. Then he replaced Mary Corkery in Labuan in August 1970, an engineer teaching English classes! My first posting was in Bintulu, Sarawak, teaching English. However, Gerry and I married in KK in December. It was a fun wedding attended by many of our CUSO friends. I moved to Labuan and took over teaching English while Gerry taught maths and science. (Maybe he had an ulterior motive.) We recently celebrated our 51st wedding anniversary.

Here are photos from our wedding.



L to R: Minister, Joslyn Grassby (FSO Sarawak), Lee, Gerry, Peter Royle (FSO Sabah)

Below see me with our dear friend, the late Gordy Thompson; then Gerry and me leaving the church in the pouring rain.





Above, from far left of the group photo is Pardhan Singh (a friend of CUSOs), Joslyn, Lee, Peter, Gerry, Gord, Evelyn Gervan (we owe thanks to Paul Gervan for taking the photos), Sherry, a Peace Corp volunteer who taught with me in Bintulu. I forget the man behind her but beside him is Michael Steven, then Anita Dyck and Rudy Dyck (I think). (I'm not sure who the other woman is behind them.)

We extended our contracts in Labuan and stayed until November 1973, then spent 7 months slowly making our way home.

We have lived in the Ottawa Valley, near Pembroke, since returning from Malaysia. In 2009 we returned to Sabah for a grand reunion organized by our former students. The teachers and a large proportion of the graduating class of 1971 returned from all over the world for a fabulous weekend. What a wonderful experience that was! It's a story for another time...



On the Ottawa River, October 2021

Post 20 – 50 year catch-up from Mike Steven



After finishing at Sabah College at the end of 1972, I travelled through Indonesia and West Malaysia, meeting up with my mother who flew out to meet me in Bangkok. We travelled around Thailand and India, trekked in Nepal, flew to Iran (it was still the time of the Shah) visited some amazing places and met interesting people. Finally, we returned to England, which was always the place Mum considered home and where she had lived since separating from my Dad. My own experience of schooling in England had been rather unhappy and I was not looking forward to living here, but I agreed to stay for a year as she was in a bit of a fragile state after my father left. I enrolled for the year on a Masters course in Meteorology at the University of Reading (yes, they also do writing and arithmetic.) Meanwhile, my father died and I found that having jumped straight from childhood in Jamaica to school in England to University in Canada to CUSO in Malaysia, I actually had no roots in Canada, or anywhere else for that matter. One thing led to another. I went on to do a PhD in Environmental Physics at Nottingham University, finishing in 1977 and 45 years later, I'm still here. In the end, England turned out to be not too bad after all (well, apart from cold houses, stupid politics and a dozen other mad things, but you can find things to complain about anywhere.) I think I have found my roots.

At the end of my PhD, I went to Kathmandu as a United Nations Volunteer, working in the Nepal Meteorological Service. It was exciting, rewarding and deeply frustrating, all at the same time. Towards the end of my two-year contract, I was offered a research job in remote sensing back at Nottingham University, which then set the pattern of my subsequent career. After a few years as a researcher, I transferred to Geography as a lecturer, eventually ending up as Professor of environmental remote sensing. I am perversely proud of being the least qualified geographer ever, not having studied the subject beyond the age of 12.



Along the way I married Patricia, who was an administrator at the university. We have been married for 42 years and have two daughters, both recently married themselves. One lives in Berlin, the other in Loughborough, quite nearby.

About 20 years ago, the University of Nottingham established a campus in Malaysia, at Semenyih a few miles south of Kuala Lumpur (now almost a suburb). I went there in 2011 to establish a new department; again, it was both exciting and frustrating, but on balance very positive. Of course, I took the opportunity to revisit Sabah, although I had lost contact with people there. On the first occasion, we booked a hotel in a new complex in Sembulan, where 40 years earlier I had lived for a while in the Kampong Ayer. Looking out of the hotel bedroom window I was thinking "Gaya island looks a lot closer than I remember" when I realised that was perfectly true. The hotel was built on landfill in what had been a wide stretch of sea between the island and the mainland.

The next day we went across to Sabah College and I introduced myself as their former teacher to great excitement all round. The school has changed a bit. A new main road cuts right through my old classroom and the school occupies only half its original site. The hostels were still there though, with photos of former wardens on the wall, including my old friend and housemate Cikgu Ariffin who we met up with a day or so later. Rudy and Anita's old house is now I think some kind of training room. On later trips we

had a reunion with my class of 1971 who are mostly retired; a lot of them are now Datuks. We also managed to meet up with Gord and Lilian who were in Sabah on one of our visits and later came to stay with us in Kajang. We made a nostalgic visit to Malacca, the scene of the trip Gord and I made when we were released from language training in 1970. Malacca is still one of my favourite places, although the old Portuguese fort is now a mile inland due to a rash of landfill activity.



A lot has happened in Malaysia since the 1970s – development of course was to be expected: that’s what we were supposed to be there for. And other things have made way, but Paul and Evvie’s house in Kota Belud was still there when we visited, although derelict, as was Gord and Lilian’s former house in Papar. The old government houses in Tanjong Aru have been pulled down.

Some things were more surprising. One that struck me was that Malay had acquired a new pronoun for “you”. You may remember that addressing people in Malay was rather fraught as you needed to know the age and status of the person you were addressing and calibrate your approach with respect to your relationship to them. The new word is “*anda*” (see below) which is a kind of anonymous you, suitable for government pronouncements and the purposes of advertising, although it seems to be used quite generally. I can’t find any trace of it in my 1970 Malay dictionary. In European languages pronouns tend to disappear rather than appear (thee and thou for instance, except when speaking to God), but if we could invent a gender-neutral third person for he/ she it would save an awful lot of trouble.

Another thing I remember is that we were always trying to persuade people not to address us as Tuan. I am pleased to report that I didn’t get called Tuan 40 years later, but our local Malay shopkeeper (that’s a development in itself) would call me Boss. I’m not sure that’s necessarily an improvement, but there was no sense of deference in it, so perhaps he was being ironic.



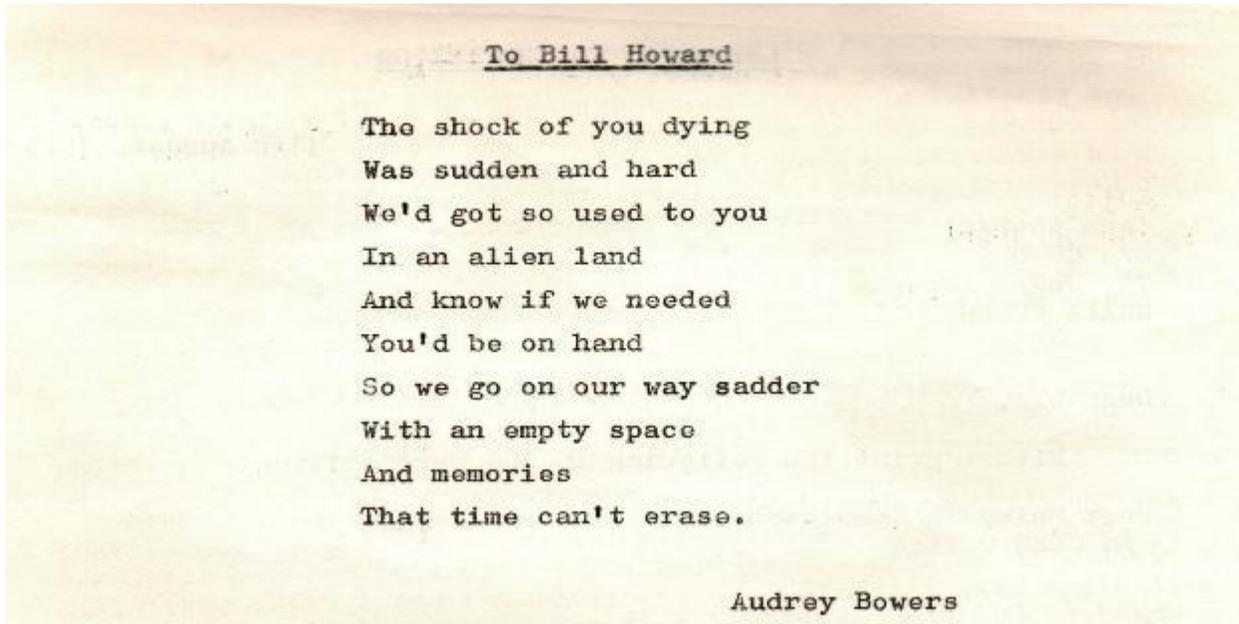
All good things come to an end. We returned to the UK in 2013 where I discovered that my university had found ways of working without me. I eventually retired and spend my time supporting Pat’s hobby (keeping horses – actually more an obsession) as well as my own



hobbies, which are singing in the local choir and pottery. I don’t claim to be very good at either, but I have my own potting studio and after a lifetime of academic work it’s good to get my hands dirty.

From Neill McKee: I ran into *anda* while travelling in Indonesia in 1969. I asked Bruce Williamson who was in Kudat during 1968-71 and has returned for long periods many times. He is pretty fluent in Bahasa Malayu now. Howie also asked a Malaysian native speaker. The conclusion is that *anda* is used in formal written work or official speeches. *Awak* (silent or almost silent k) is still commonly used in Sabah. *Kamu* is reserved for close friends and the people in the extended family. “I love you” is *Saya cinta mu*. *Mu* is a short for *kamu*. Then there is *kau* which is really informal and sometimes impolite, depending on context. Children can’t use it to address adults.

Post 21 – The tragic death of Bill Howard, August 19, 1975



Not all CUSO volunteers survived their stay in Malaysia. Bill Howard from Calgary, was a warm and friendly young man who was loved by everyone. He was full of fun but worked hard and was well-regarded by his Malaysian colleagues at the Drainage and Irrigation Department in Alor Setar, West Malaysia. He was just out of university and loved to experience all aspects of his new surroundings - "the world was his oyster." Beth and I visited him in 1974 in Alor Setar during the last few months of my second stint in Malaysia, when I was acting as FSO for the whole program, after Peter and Barbara Hoffman had left. Here is an excerpt from my memoir, *Finding Myself in Borneo*, on that visit and my learning about his death the following year: <https://www.neillmckeeauthor.com/post/tragic-death-of-a-great-volunteer>

Below, please see more on the circumstances of his death and another poem, published in the CUSO Malaysia newsletter, *Apa Khabar*, in August 1975. His father was a prominent Calgary lawyer. A scholarship was set up in his name at the University of Calgary: <https://ucalgary.ca/registrar/awards/wg-bill-howard-memorial-foundation-scholarship>.

Also see more memories by Heinz Unger and a photo from Allen MacLure, on the third page.

Bill Howard Bill died August 19th of injuries received in a motorcycle accident in Alor Setar. He and a new Japanese volunteer were returning to Bill's house late in the evening of 18th when they ran into the back of a bicycle (who had no lights), lost control of the motorbike and fell on to the road. Both Bill (who was riding pillion - he'd been on sick leave with conjunctivitis) and Matsazumo cracked their heads on the tarmac road. Bill died about an hour later after just being admitted to hospital, without regaining consciousness. The Japanese boy was admitted in serious condition and while will recover, he has since been flown to Japan for further checking - suspected brain damage and loss of hearing. Neither were wearing their safety helmets.

Bill's friends in Alor Setar held a memorial service on the 19th, attended by about 60 people from the area and we also had a funeral service here in KL with about 40 people including some of his friends from Alor Setar. His ashes were sent home to Calgary where his parents and friends (some 300 people) held a memorial service. His colleagues in Alor Setar are talking about setting up some sort of trust fund, perhaps for an engineering scholarship for local people or some other sort of schooling support. In Calgary his engineering faculty will establish a scholarship fund and his friends there are also talking about setting up some sort of memorial. I've told both the Alor Setar and his parents that CUSO and some of the individuals would be interested in supporting and/or working with whatever scheme develops. It is early for anything definite but I'll let you know what develops. Please let me know if you are interested and if you have any suggestions as to the most appropriate form of support.

In Memory of Bill Howard

PRELUDE

(to 'Departmental Ditties')

1885

I have eaten your bread and salt.
I have drunk your water and wine
The deaths ye died I have watched beside,
And the lives ye led were mine.

Was there aught that I did not share
In vigil or toil or ease, --
One joy or woe that I did not know,
Dear hearts across the seas?

I have written the tale of our life
For a sheltered people's mirth,
In jesting guise -- but ye are wise,
And you know what the jest is worth.

Rudyard Kipling

From Heinz Unger: Marilyn and I remember Bill well and very fondly - he was just such a great guy. We first met him while I was still with DID in Kuala Kangsar and I supported Bill a bit during his work orientation as he also went to work for the DID. Subsequently, he visited us on his motorbike in Grik (now spelled Gerik) where we were stationed when working at the Temenggor Hydroelectric Dam Project. Although we had met a couple of times only, we really were impressed with Bill and got to like him a lot. And there was also the Calgary connection where Marilyn was from. We were so saddened and shocked by his death.

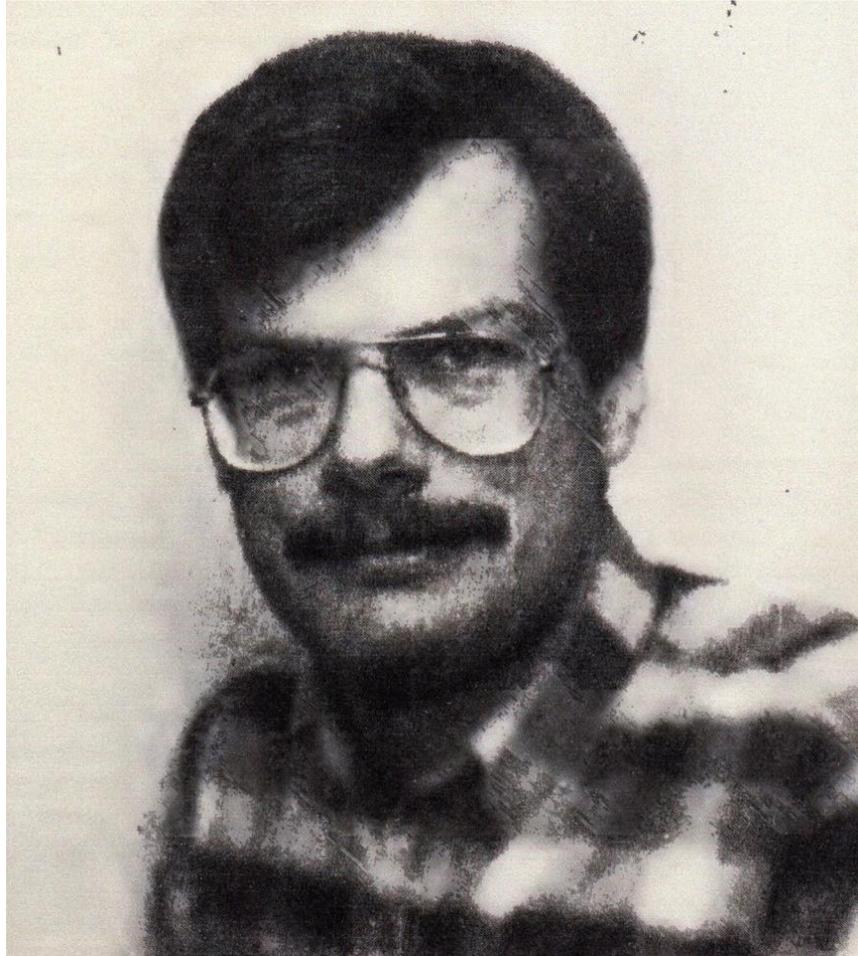
Photo supplied by Allen MacLure: Orientation in at the YMCA in KL, August 1973. The *tiga suku* (the “three quarter” guys or “not all there” was a name given by language teacher Ibrahim or Mustafa).



L to R: Bill Younger, Allen MacLure, Maureen Dennehy, Doug McArthur and **Bill Howard**

Post 22 – The sudden death of Moray Lewis in Sarawak, May 14, 1968

Moray was a CUSO cooperant working for Sarawak National Parks Service, starting in February 1986. He was struck by lightning while on duty, on May 14, 1987. Moray was a dedicated environmentalist in Saskatchewan before he came to Malaysia, and Howie found a great dedication to his short life, which is **pasted below**.



That's all we have found, so far, on CUSO volunteers who died while in Malaysia.

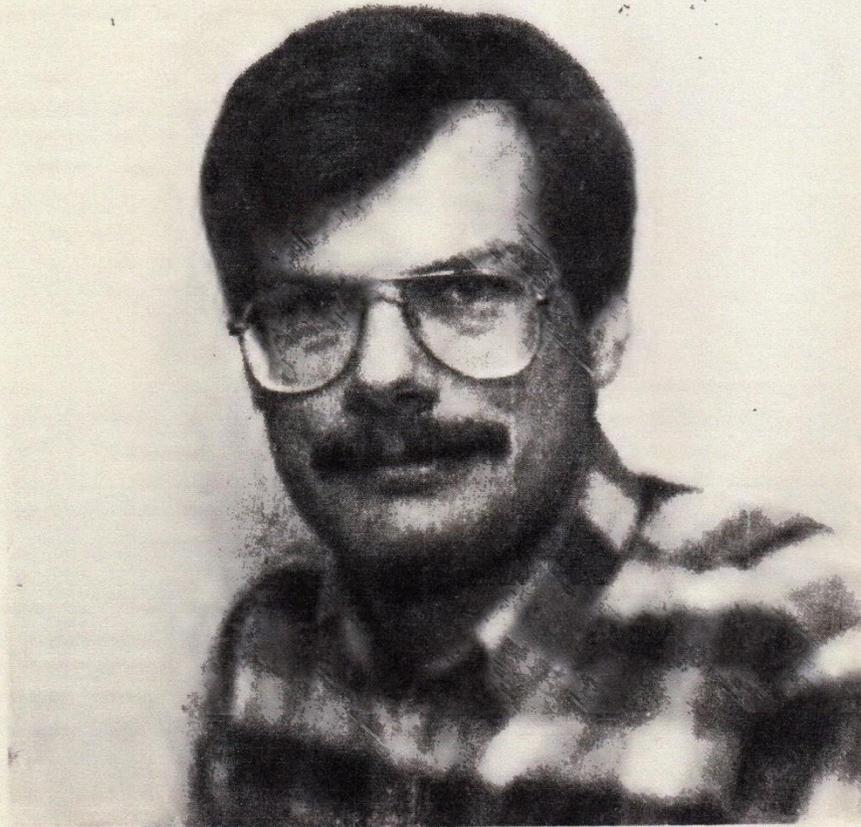
Neill McKee

MORAY JAMES LEWIS, 1956-1987

On 14 May 1987 Moray Lewis and four members of the Sarawak National Parks Service were about to depart by boat to the island of Pulau Tukung Ara (a wildlife sanctuary) to survey a Bridled Tern colony. With their boat anchored near the mouth of the Sibu River, 25 km northwest of Kuching, the five were eating lunch in the cabin when lightning struck the mast. The lightning passed amongst the five, killing Moray instantly. The others were unharmed.

At the time of his death, Moray was serving as a Wildlife Research Officer with Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO). He was posted to Malaysia (Sarawak) in February 1986 by CUSO to

provide technical assistance in the operation of the Semengoh Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre near Kuching. This centre houses a variety of protected animals (orangutans, gibbons, etc.) confiscated from people who had illegally taken them as young from the wild. When Moray first arrived, a new rehabilitation centre was under construction and, unable to participate in his assignment, he became involved in other environmental concerns. He discovered that certain tern colonies were threatened because villagers were robbing most of the eggs. Information materials, displays and pamphlets were assembled and tours to kampongs (settlements) were arranged where discussions with villagers were held on the



"Terns of Tukung Ara." The emphasis was on the need to preserve a number of nests in order that the tern colonies survive. Apparently his efforts were well received.

Moray was born in Moose Jaw on 4 November 1956. After attending King George Public School and Central Collegiate in Moose Jaw, he enrolled in a science program at the University of Saskatchewan from which he graduated with distinction. While in Saskatoon, Moray worked for the Department of Biology as a laboratory assistant, and as a research assistant for the Canada Department of Agriculture and the Canadian Wildlife Service. His spare time was spent birdwatching, biking, swimming and photographing (especially wild flowers). One of the more interesting bird records from the Saskatoon area belongs to Moray. This was the observation of all three rails (Yellow, Virginia and Sora) on a cattail-ringed pond near St. Denis. Moray completed a Master's Degree at the University of Calgary on the feeding ecology of shorebirds migrating through south-central Saskatchewan.

Moray was an active member of the Moose Jaw Natural History Society, participating in spring and fall bird counts. In fact, he was a valued addition to any birding party, according to long-time family friend, Leith Knight, who suggested that whatever party Moray accompanied was assured the best count of the day. Moray learned about birds and their habits and gained an appreciation of small mammals, insects and plants along Spring Creek near the family home, along the Moose Jaw River and around the family cottage at Buffalo Pound Lake. A brief note in the *Blue Jay* (June 1971:102) describes his enthusiasm and joy for nature. Prior to joining CUSO Moray spent almost half a year at home during which he and Leith Knight assembled a checklist of birds for Wakamow Valley Authority. He also conducted a small mammal survey in the

Valley, using ingeniously designed homemade live traps for the capture and release of voles and mice.

Other interests of Moray's included classical music, the plight of the underprivileged, and travel. Like some classical music *aficionados*, Moray felt that baroque composers such as Corelli, Bach, and Scarlatti, were the only ones who produced enjoyable music. With my interest in the romantic period, we had many discussions on the best of classical music. He had a playful scorn for me - and since then I have listened to a lot of baroque music. My dominating memory of Moray was of his immense interest in and concern for the poor and under-privileged of the Third World. I was fascinated by discussions in the summer of 1978 with this young man who could eloquently deal with the problem of apartheid. He was cognizant of the issues enunciated by the African National Congress and the narrow outlook of the South African government. His concern for black South Africans and others was heightened by a trip into Mexico, where the appalling conditions of the majority could not escape notice even in the major centres. In contrast with the dominating "me-ism" of our modern youth, he had a very strong desire to help and this led him to apply both to CUSO and World University Service Overseas.

People who came in contact with this quiet, somewhat shy, youth seldom got to know him well. Most of his friends and acquaintances in Canada appear not to have gone beyond discussing birds with him. I miss his friendship and company and our lengthy discussions, the joy of comparing photographs of plants and of travel, and the infrequent, yet enjoyable and educational, trips to study shorebirds. — E.A. Driver, Canadian Wildlife Service, 115 Perimeter Road, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7N 0X4.

Post 23 - Bruce Williamsons is helping with drug education in Sabah

Since 2011, I have lived in Sabah for part of the year. Not hard to guess which part of the year. The first two years I was *ulu-ulu* in Sapulut, which is 125 km past Keningau. The rest of the time I have lived in Kudat, the town of my posting from 1968-71. In 2019, I worked on a drug education project for Year 6 (12-year-olds).

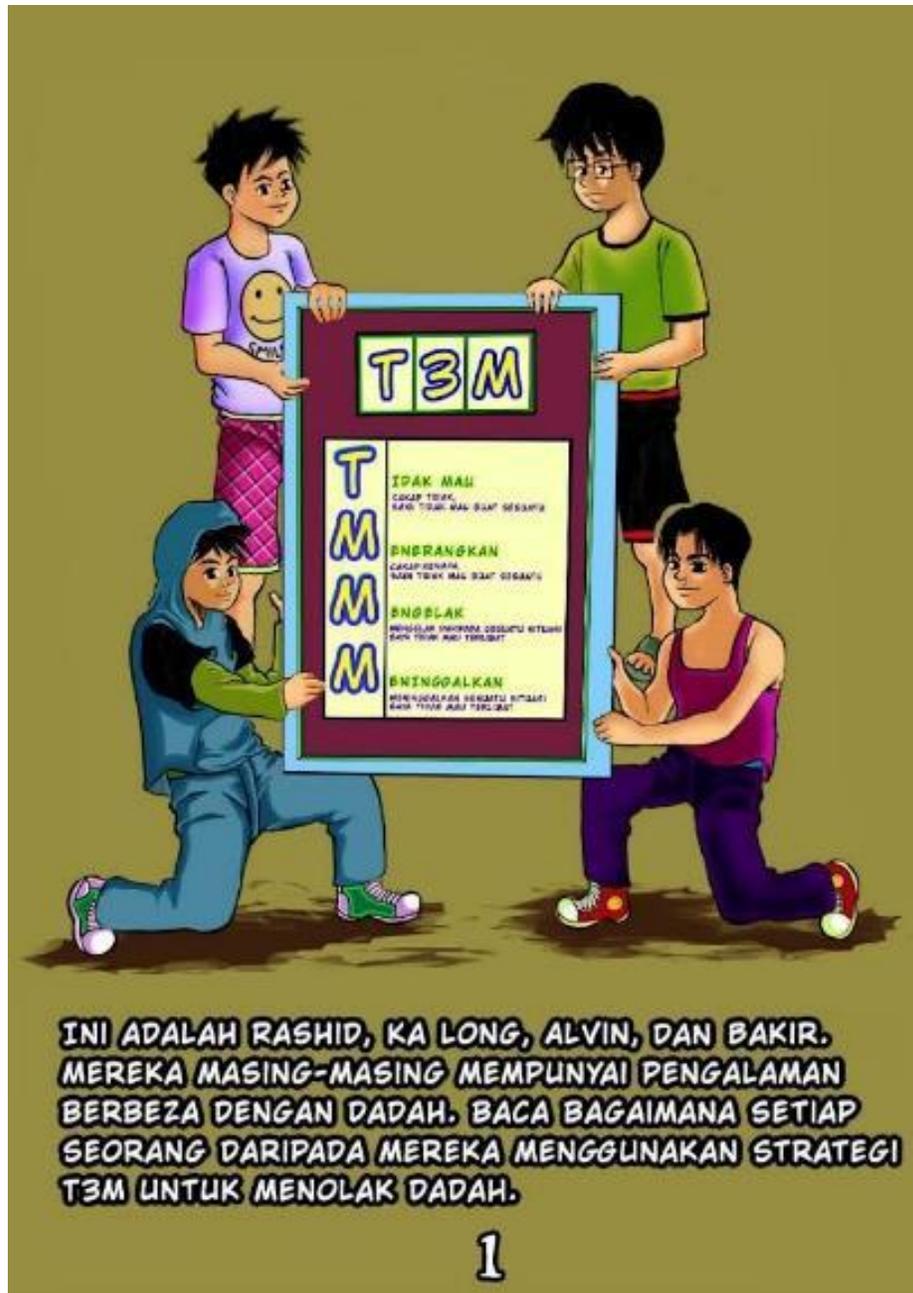


As elsewhere, drug use is a huge problem in Sabah yet there is nothing in the curriculum to help teachers talk with their students. Kudat is a conduit for drugs from the Philippines. I wrote a six-lesson curriculum which uses role play and simple cooperative learning techniques. Each lesson is supported by posters, activity cards, information sheets. The lessons are designed so that the students are engaged with each other and their teacher. Still today in Sabah classrooms, the teacher standing at the front lecturing is the preferred method of instruction. Each lesson is also supported with a short story from a comic book that my graphic artist friend Didi and I created. See below, the attachment of the introductory page.

As you see, the unit and comic book are in Malay. My Malay is not good enough to write academic Malay; all those prefixes and suffixes defeat me. I had three translators. However, I did some of the research in Malay and when I proofread I was able to discover whether I had been translated correctly.

When I returned in 2020, I scheduled a meeting with the State Director of Education for April hoping that they would adopt it for use statewide in the schools. However, we know what happened mid-March worldwide and the meeting never occurred. If I get back this year, and there is only a slim hope that will happen, I will try to schedule another meeting. The border is still closed for international tourists.

Next post I will tell you about the project Didi and I have worked on, a COVID project. The **Quest for the Black Pearl** is a graphic children's story based on Sabah folk tales, but with a heavy dose of fantasy. Currently Didi is working on the drawings for Part 3. We are in daily contact through the social app Telegram.



Post 24 - Update on Bruce Bailey, Sarawak 1964-67

Donna and I were part of the 1964-66 CUSO Sarawak group (Chung Cheng Middle School near Sibul). After CUSO in Sarawak we went to Ottawa (me to CUSO HQ and Donna to teaching primary school). Then, next to Pittsburgh for my graduate studies followed by work with CIDA until the late 1980s.

Donna died from the consequences of a long struggle with MS in 1985. Somewhat later I set up a consulting practice, a combination of short term and long term work with a wide variety of organizations ranging from NGOs to development banks, to the UN - mostly in Indonesia, Timor Leste as well as other parts of S-E Asia. The focus of later work in Asia shifted to governance and anti-corruption as I became increasingly aware that corruption was not just a source of interesting dinner table stories but a force that was seriously eroding the institutions of countries like Indonesia.

In the early 2000s, I came back to Canada to put down some roots – and also continue with international consulting work. I settled on a rural property near Perth, Ontario across the road from my son Kris who builds timber frame as well as eco-friendly homes. Together we (Kris, definitely mostly and me a little) built a post and beam, straw bale, off-grid home where I still live. The international consulting work was eventually downscaled and I concentrated on things I could do from Canada. This consisted mainly of work with the Bruno Manser Fund doing property searches related to the origins of Sakto Corporation in Ottawa. Sakto was started by Jamilah Taib (Taib Mahmud's daughter) and her uncle Onn Mahmud (Taib's brother) by buying and flipping multi-million dollar properties in Ottawa. An important source of the funds used came from what the BMF strongly suspects were laundered money accumulated by Taib Mahmud (currently the Governor of Sarawak and a billionaire) during his life as a politician in Sarawak. Sakto now has the Bruno Manser Fund and its director tied up in a Swiss court on defamation charges. If you want to know more, check out "Money Logging – On the Trail of the Asian Timber Mafia" by Lukas Straumann the Exec. Director of the BMF. You can also find out more about the creation and financing of the Sakto (Jamilah Taib) Corporation in Ottawa in a report on the BMF website (<https://www.bmf.ch/en/home>) called "Safe Haven". Money laundering in Canada, particularly in the real estate sector, is a major problem – but not well recognized as such by most Canadians – or apparently, by the government.

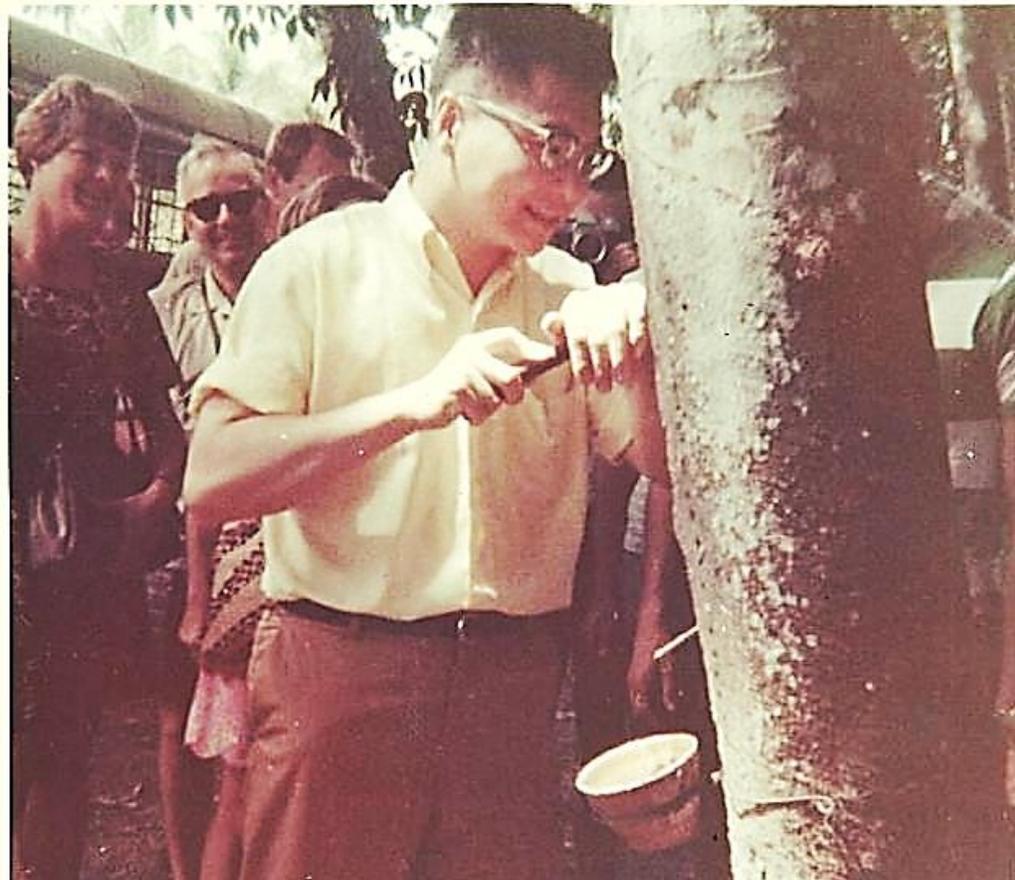
Slowing down..... I continue to do community work as a Restorative Justice facilitator. Restorative justice is essentially a diversion program - an alternative to the court system. It gives people who have been affected by the actions of another person the chance to meet and communicate with the offender to explain the impact of their actions. It holds offenders to account for what they have done and helps them to take responsibility and make amends. The traditional court system rarely offers this opportunity. And last but definitely not least, my partner in life, Charlee and I pursue our love of textiles, in part, with a little batik business we call **Fine Batiks**. You can find out more about us and the biz at finebatiks.ca

Post 25 – Dr. Hung Bun Ip, Sarawak, 1969-71

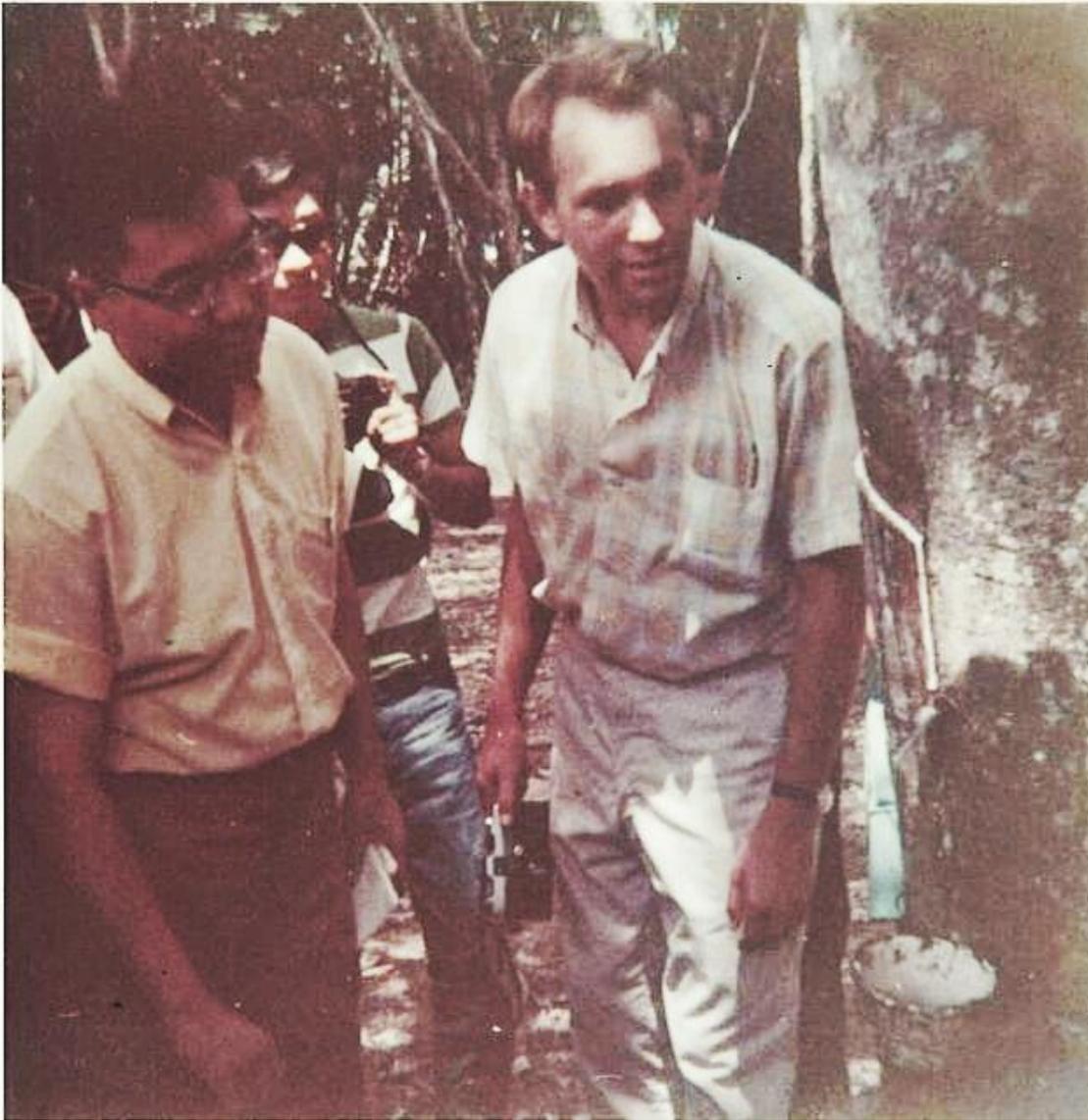
Neill McKee wrote: Dr. Hung Bun Ip was posted at the Government hospital in Simanggang, Sarawak. I remember filming him there in December 1969, when making my first (awful) film on the CUSO program in East Malaysia. He was posted with his former wife, Grace, a teacher, and their daughter Daisy was born in Sarawak.

When he heard from me, asking for stories and photos, he wrote, “It was a pleasant surprise to hear from anyone among CUSO volunteers from our era. You look familiar, although I did not even own a camera until I returned to Canada via the shopping haven in Hong Kong. I used to believe deeds are to be done and no need to boast about it. Now I know differently. Photos are the only link to our past experience. --- I closed my Family Practice in Toronto 20 years ago and had been doing part time Surgical Assisting until the Pandemic hit, when all non-essential surgeries stopped. Then I volunteered to be a vaccinator until I broke my upper arm (left humerus) last week while re-learning basic figure skating during these boring times.”

Hung Bun has sent photos of orientation at Fort Camp, and few people he recalls (I can send these to you on demand), as well as doing surgery on a rubber tree with others watching. He was practicing for his posting! 😊



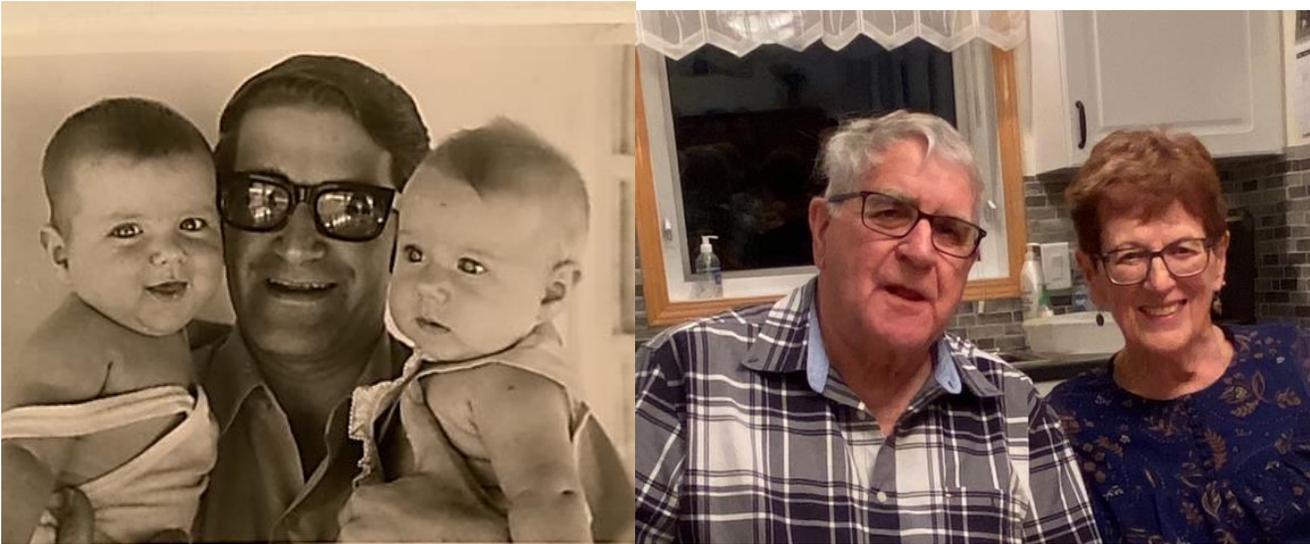
Dr. H.B. Ip tapping rubber with Carol Baerg & Terry Savoy, KL, Aug 1969



Dr. H.B. Ip, Peeter Altosaar, and Gary Kinoshita examine the cut, KL Aug 1969

Post 26 – Update from Rudy & Anita Dyck and their Malaysian connections through the years

To think that it will be 50 years this July since we completed our contract with CUSO in Sabah. You will likely remember us - Rudy & Anita Dyck (1970 - 1972) mostly for our twins, Curtis and Coralie, who were born in Kota Kinabalu in Nov 1971. We both taught at Sabah College, and shortly after we started, we moved into the house (on stilts) on the school property.



In 1984, we went back to K.K. with our two children to show them where they were born. We checked out that house and to our amazement it was still standing with the termites and all after 13 years. The house was being used as a daycare. After explaining who we were, they allowed us to come in and see the children and how the building had been changed. That trip brought back many memories. We met our principal, Vincent Shia, Wilfred Wong (co-teacher) and Ariffin (friend), as well as some other locals. (Some of you may remember excursions that we took to Inanam and a walk through the jungle to a waterfall. Ariffin would often come with us, as well as some Australian volunteers. One of them was a volunteer by the name of Pam.) One of the highlights on our visit in 1984 happened one morning when Anita and I were walking down a city street in Kota Kinabalu. We passed two people on the sidewalk and they turned around and called out "Mister Rudy!" Here it was Anita's former student, Florence. We had lunch together later that day. We sure did not expect someone to recognize us. Mount Kinabalu was another experience on that trip for us. Anita and I stayed at the quarters (half way up) and not having enough warm clothes, we allowed our guide to lead our children to the summit.

Peter Royle, we would be interested to hear from you. I (Rudy) did some office work for you and you allowed us to use the CUSO Land Rover on occasion. Thank you! Then there was the day you tried to teach me (Rudy) how to drive your 250 Honda. You got me started in front of your house. Remember the "V" shaped ditches? Suffice it to say I made it across the bridge and drove across the road and landed square in the ditch. You re-enacted how I got off the bike many times and we all had a good laugh. It would be harder to re-enact at our age now. If you can still do it, send us a video! The motorbike didn't always start and Anita got tired of helping me push it up a hill, so we could get it started going downhill.

We are both retired for some years—Anita from teaching and Rudy from accounting for two trucking firms. We lived in Calgary from 1972 to 81. Anita taught in Airdrie and I worked in the office of Canadian Freightways. We still keep in touch with Ada and Dhillon in Calgary. (Ada was a CUSO volunteer in Kota Belud and met and married Dhillon in Sabah.) In 1981, we moved to Saskatoon to be closer to family. Anita got back into teaching in Martensville, a community north of Saskatoon. Rudy worked in accounting for 32 years at Kindersley Transport in their head office in Saskatoon. During the last 15 to 20 years, we have enjoyed travelling to the west coast of Mexico during three weeks or so in winter. Puerto Vallarta and Mazatlan are our favourites.

Coralie married Del and they have three children, the oldest, Jady, is in 1st year of Medicine, and Teah is in 2nd year of Education. Dawson is in Grade 12 and is currently beginning his football career for the University of Saskatchewan Huskies. We expect to watch a lot of football, which we enjoy. Anita loves to yell out, “Don’t sit on my grandson!”



Back row, L to R: Our son in-law, Del, Coralie (Coralie born in K.K)
Front row, L to R: Our Grandchildren Teah, Dawson and Jady

Curtis married Helen and they have two girls, ages 5 and 4. We enjoy looking after them two days a week.



L to R: Our daughter-in-law, Helen, Eilish, Anouk and Curtis
(Curtis was born in K.K.)

In December of 2005, we received a Christmas card from Wilfred Wong (co-teacher in Sabah College), mentioning that he had been sick, but now was feeling better, so Anita and I decided to visit him and his wife. We had gotten to know Wilfred and his wife through the local church, Grace Chapel, which we had attended in K.K. On this visit, they toured us through Sabah College, Kinabalu National Park, Tanjung Aru Beach, Grace Chapel and many other sites. That was a delightful experience.

When we lived in K.K., through Grace Chapel, we also got to know Jonathan and Siewlin Lee. The month or so before Anita's due date they offered us the use of their second vehicle while Jonathan was in Canada on a business trip. That was so gracious of them. They immigrated to Canada near the end of our term in Sabah and we have had the privilege to visit them in Vancouver on several occasions.

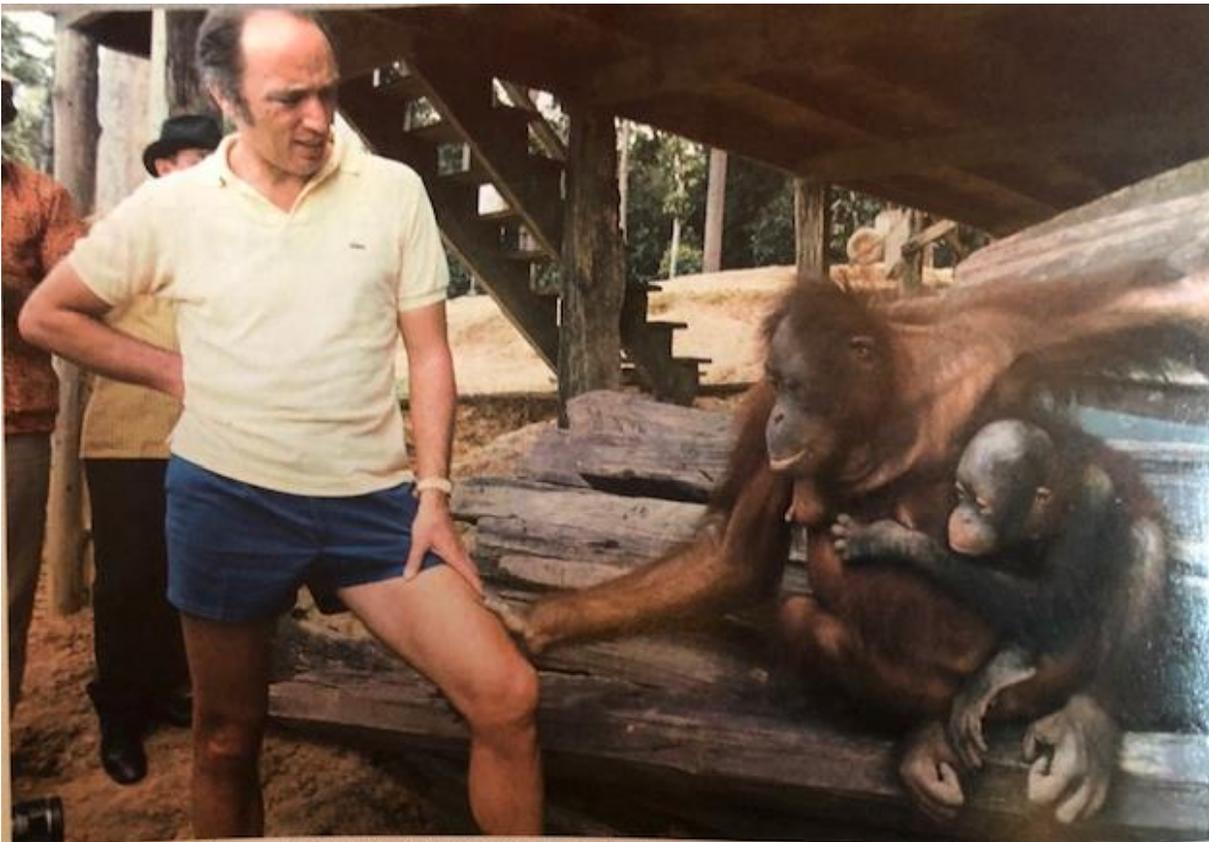
I must also tell you about Dr. Casey Schipper, a CUSO volunteer veterinarian in K.K. He married Elizabeth from Papar. Anita and I recall the Christmas of 1971 (our 2nd Christmas in Sabah). We felt like we wanted to invite someone for a Canadian Christmas dinner. Our children were less than a month old so Anita placed them in their baskets in the center of the table as she prepared the meal. We had a wonderful Christmas dinner with Casey and Elizabeth. Michael Steven and Robert (Elizabeth's brother) were also with us for dinner.

During our first years back in Canada we were very busy with our families, however, with time we made contact with Casey and Elizabeth who resided in Edmonton. We lived in Saskatoon

at the time. Around age 57, Casey needed a heart transplant that resulted in him moving into a care home. We visited him as often as possible. Casey could not speak, but his smile and expressions spoke volumes. He would not know that we were dropping in (though Elizabeth knew and would meet us at the care home), yet he was so overjoyed when he saw us. He always recognized us. Anita had made a bed quilt for him and one of the first things he would show us was the corner of the quilt with Anita's name on it. The visits always gave us much joy. Elizabeth was a great caregiver for her husband. She visited Casey every day (other than her brief trip back to K.K.) for those 17 years Casey spent in the care home. Casey passed away on April 24, 2013 at the age of 75. (We included this story with Elizabeth's permission).

Rudy & Anita Dyck

Post 27 – Pierre Trudeau Meets Some CUSO Orangs in Sabah—Many Stories



In Borneo, 1971: at home and abroad, a boyish impulse for foolery, especially within range of a camera

L to R: unidentified woman, Mikki, Pardhan, Gordie, Pierre, and Ben having a laugh

From Neill McKee: After I left Sabah in 1970, CUSO Ottawa hired me to make some recruitment films and photograph volunteers on my way home, traveling through Asia and Africa. While in New Delhi, the CUSO FSO invited me to attend the High Commissioner's garden party for Pierre Trudeau on January 12, 1971. He was heading to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Singapore, January 14 to 22. I only had a very short time with him, but I told him about my present mission, my time in Sabah, and I highly recommended him to visit Borneo. When I heard later that he did, I was so happy he had followed my advice. But then in April 2020, I received an email and some photos from Bruce Williamson, who wrote a different story:

From Bruce Williamson: After Trudeau met you in India he went on to a Commonwealth meeting in Singapore. Prior to this a group of CUSO volunteers and some Peace Corps had gathered in my house in Kudat. It was there it was decided that a letter would be sent to the PM to come to Sabah when he attended the Commonwealth meeting. (The Peace Corps said they couldn't imagine inviting Nixon.) He subsequently did not go to the R & R event that was laid on for the leaders and came instead to Sabah. He visited Sandakan and the Sepilok orangutan sanctuary as well. I had gone home for Christmas in Dec. of 1970 and had a prolonged transit stop in New Delhi on the way back. There were still billboards of Trudeau in the roundabouts. So, we were there around the same time.

Michael Steven's Story: In January 1971 Pierre Trudeau attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Singapore. At some point he made a day trip to Kota Kinabalu, for what purpose I don't know. Word got out and the available CUSOs assembled at KK airport to meet him, along with a couple of random Canadian tourists who happened along.

Someone had bought a case of finest Penampang tapai as a present to Trudeau from the CUSO group. I remember one of Trudeau's aides marching up and down proclaiming loudly that we were trying to poison him. Admittedly, the tapai would have been quite evil-looking to the uninitiated—a murky grey colour and presented in old Guinness bottles with crude hand carved corks. But Pierre Trudeau was not a politician for nothing. He ignored the aide and invited us to drink the tapai with him. Glasses were produced and a convivial discussion ensued. It was very good tapai. I can almost taste it now.

Throughout this event, a number of local dignitaries were sitting on the sidelines with studiously blank expressions. When their turn came, they presented Trudeau with a fine batik shirt. Trudeau promptly stripped off his white shirt to reveal an enormous peace medallion hanging on his chest (cue for much swooning among the assembled Trudeamaniacs), putting on the batik shirt to great applause.

He spent quite a while talking to me, which surprised me at the time as I didn't regard myself as very interesting. Years later (I'm a bit slow), I realised that it was because I came from his constituency in Montréal and as a politician he was alert to the possibility that I might write a report for public consumption. I'm afraid this one is a bit late.

Kathy (Hyde) Bedard's Story: After Pierre Trudeau attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Singapore, he travelled to Sabah to go scuba diving off the islands near Sandakan on the east coast. He was flying into the KK airport for a brief stopover before flying on to Sandakan. The CUSO volunteers in KK found out somehow the day before (I can't remember how we found out) and we excitedly prepared for his arrival. I remember staying up late, putting together a booklet about Sabah with photos and text, with the help of other volunteers. CUSO volunteers Gordie Thompson, Ben and Mikki Neufeld (now Kirk), and I were joined by Sabahan, Pardhan Singh, and Mike Steven, as part of the group to meet our Prime Minister.

We were at the KK airport the next day well in time, waiting for his arrival with the only Canadian flags we could find. There was at least one Peace Corps volunteer, probably Dwight Dustin, who was pretending to be Canadian in order to get in on the excitement. The red carpet was laid, the Malaysian dignitaries were ready, and finally the plane landed. We had our own "mini-Trudeau Mania moment," cheering, yelling and waving our flags. Trudeau was walking on the red carpet talking to the dignitaries, but when he saw and heard us, he veered off towards where we were on the second story veranda overlooking the tarmac. He asked us if we were from Canada and what we were doing in Sabah; and when we answered he told us to come down to meet him. I remember running through the airport towards the arrivals area at breakneck speed, only slowing down once I was almost there.

We crowded into a room with the press, his aides and Malaysian officials. I remember that a reporter began interviewing the Peace Corps member who said he was from Ottawa, only to have the reporter say he was also from Ottawa and start to ask him specific questions. Pierre wanted us to be close to him; I was sitting beside him.



L to R: Sandy (MAS hostess), Mikki, Pardhan, Gordie, Pierre, and Ben having a laugh

He was presented with a batik shirt and took off the shirt he was wearing to put it on, to our delight and the consternation of the Sabahan officials. I presented him with the booklet about Sabah. He admired my Rungus beads and of course I gave them to him. You can see them on him in the photo if you look closely.

Pierre asked me where I was from and I told him Vancouver. Whereby he said, "One day I think I might marry a woman from Vancouver". I was busy making plans to go home early, only to find out that Pierre Elliot Trudeau married Margaret Sinclair six weeks later on March 4th 1971!



Mikki (Neufeld) Kirk's Story: Of course, he kissed us both Kathy and me! Yay! I also recall him wanting our thoughts on issues in Canada. This was not too long after the FLQ crisis. Kathy commented on the need for more dialogue & respect amongst people of different backgrounds. So apt & still true. I think I mumbled something about the environment. I also remember Gord Thompson bringing a case of tapai as a gift.

Fast forward to August 2013: Kathy and I and our husband's, Ken Bedard and Doug Kirk, are on a large raft in Haida Gwaii waiting to be transferred to Windy Bay on Lyell Island for the

raising of the Legacy Totem Pole. Justin Trudeau and his family join us on the raft also waiting to be transferred. Justin is there in an unofficial capacity—he had recently been elected as leader of the Liberal party and was in opposition. Kathy and I approached him and told him we had met his Dad on another remote island—Borneo—when we were in our twenties.

“Well c’mon let’s get a picture,” he said but declined to  kiss us. Different times!



For those of you who are interested, and I hope you are, you can find more information on the Legacy Pole on the link below and elsewhere on the Internet. It is a 42-foot monumental pole carved to honour the 20th anniversary of the Gwaii Haanas Agreement between the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada to protect this amazing rain forest. The carver was Jaalan Edenshaw, Kathy and Ken’s son-in-law. www.pc.gc.ca/en/pn-np/bc/gwaiihaanas/culture/mat-heraldique-legacy-pole

What a privilege to be pulling on the ropes along with 400 people to raise this magnificent totem pole. A traditional potlatch followed in Skidegate. Elders who had protested the logging and had been arrested spoke and were honoured. (Justin had reportedly visited Haida Gwaii as a youth, along with his Dad, and had remained in touch with the lad & family he had met. There was no fanfare over his attendance—he was just another guy pulling on the ropes.)

Post 28 – Brian Pollard Recalls Pierre Trudeau’s Visit to Sandakan



I have a bit to add to the Trudeau visit story of January 1971 (Post 27). Ron Harder and I were sitting on our porch at around 4:30 in the afternoon when this black Mercedes' pulls up in front of our house. A fellow gets out and comes up to our door and informs us that we are invited to a cocktail party for our Prime Minister at the Polo Club (a different name but can't remember) later that day (maybe 7'ish). (As I recall, Beverley Mantha, also a CUSO, was out of town.)

What a surprise! The PM coming to the middle of nowhere! Ron and I get changed and head over...along the way we picked up an American teacher from a missionary school. We get there and wait and wait...the drinks are free. Needless to say, we partook. We're all standing, sort of looking out the front door when all of a sudden people start coming in the back door. The first fellow comes up to me (sussing me out, I'm sure given how radical I looked). He was an aide to the PM, Vic Chapman, who used to play football for my hometown Eskimos ...I had even got his autograph way back when he was playing for the team.

Eventually, he introduced me to Pierre and we quickly got into conversation about SFU, my Alma Mater, and the use of recreational drugs...he couldn't understand why students were smoking dope when they had such wonderful views. I told him it was socked in most of the time, and on top of that, looking at the same mountains day after day got monotonous. Then I met another member of the group he was with...my former natural Resources Economics professor. He was doing a CIDA project enumerating the number of trees in Sabah, or something like that. Ostensibly this was the reason Trudeau had come to Sandakan.

A fun evening. My friends were quite impressed that I could hang in there debating with the PM. We were then invited to go for a ride on a Malaysian PT boat, which was taking our PM out to an Island to see turtles hatch the next morning. Having nothing better to do on a Saturday, we accepted. Bright and early and somewhat hungover, we boarded the ship. I don't think I had ever seen so many orang *putehs* in Sandakan before. Everyone was jostling to spend time with Pierre. We just stayed back and observed.

Upon arrival near the island, we get into rubber rafts and head to shore. Once there, a local official pulls away a tarp and a whole bunch of baby turtles start running heater-smelter towards the sea...so much fun!

Then we start down to the sea...we already had our trunks on. As I mentioned, a lot of people are trying to impress our PM, who seems oblivious to it all. Us guys are trying to impress the girls but they don't notice us. Then Trudeau runs towards the water and does a forward flip into it. We're gobsmacked!

The only other thing I remember from the outing is that the High Commissioner, a chubby, bald-headed guy's head was beet red once we got back on the PT boat. Two events were to follow, a trip to the orangutan reserve and a pot luck dinner. Ron and I passed on the first...we were gassed from the heat and the night before.

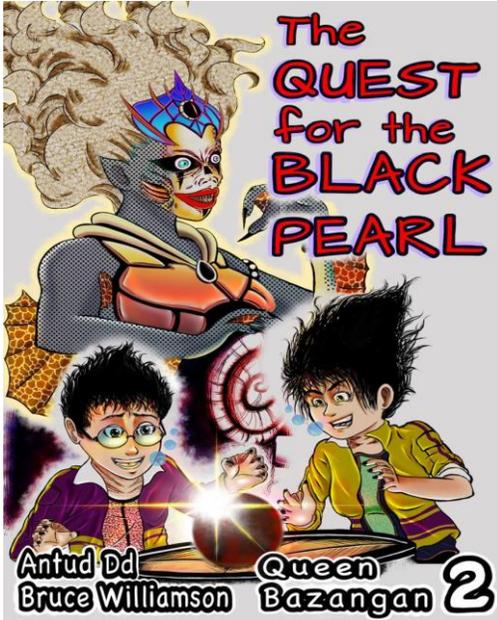
Anyway, we went to the dinner. After filling my plate, I headed over to where Trudeau was sitting by himself. And here comes my biggest regret (beyond not getting a selfie :). I really, really wanted to talk to him about Canada's complicity with providing arms to the US in Vietnam. But I was shy and he was shy and he got up and joined a group....sigh!

Although all of us were invited to visit him in Ottawa, I never did. Anyway, it has been one of my favourite memories of Sandakan. Such an unbelievably brilliant guy!

One more comment. The locals were really chuffed by Trudeau's visit. The Malaysian PM had not even been to Sandakan.



Post 29 – Bruce Williamson’s and Didi’s Creations, continued



When the COVID stay-at-home protocols were introduced on March 18, 2020, in Malaysia, shops were shuttered, and streets emptied. People truly were afraid to go out. Schools were already closed for the March holiday, but it was announced that the break might be extended. People in Canada, I am told, starting baking, cleaning out closets, or busying themselves on various home improvement projects. When in Sabah, I live in a house in Kudat, provided to me free of charge by the former Chief Minister of Sabah, Tan Sri Chong Kah Kiat. I did not have access to home projects so I read and wrote. Fortunately, I had already begun a project with Didi, the graphic artist who had assisted me with the drug education unit, which I described in my last post (see Post 23).

Didi likes to tell and draw horror stories. Dripping severed heads have been a feature in a few of his stories. He also is very good at illustrating fantasy tales. I researched some Sabah folk tales which we turned into a three-part fantasy story featuring siblings Beb and Zara. The stories, written in English, appeal to young readers between 8 and 11. Didi draws in the Japanese anime or manga style.

Many of you may remember hearing one tale about a dragon who lives at the summit of Mount Kinabalu. It is the basis for the first story. Beb and Zara set out to find the gem which the dragon guards. Along the way, Zara, the naturalist, is knocked out by the powerful smell of a rafflesia flower and swallowed by a pitcher plant. The Quest for the Black Pearl continues in Part 2 with an undersea adventure and finally in Part 3 with their struggle to get the pearl back from a Sabah folk tale villain called Gayo Nakan, Big Eater. Didi is presently working on the drawings for Part 3. Unfortunately, he caught Omicron this week and has been suffering from fever and cough. We communicate almost daily, sometimes twice a day, using the social app Telegram.



When the protocols were lightened in May, 2020, every Friday I would cycle the 30 km to his place at the Tip of Borneo, Simpang Mengayau, for a face-to-face work session. It takes about 6 months to illustrate a story because some of the drawings are very detailed.

If any of you have any illustration work that you would like done, please get in contact with me. Didi lives very simply and any income he can earn from his talent helps him to assist his parents, and buy new drawing software.



In a well known folk tale from Sabah, (North Borneo), Malaysia, a dragon at the top of Mount Kinabalu, jealously guards a luminescent gem stone. The local people say the dragon is playing with the stone when they see lightning. Illustrator Antud Dd and writer Bruce Williamson were inspired by the tale to retell it with a fantasy twist in three linked stories. Siblings Zara and Beb are caught in a series of adventures as they seek to gain possession of a Black Pearl and its awesome powers in Part 1, Dragon Mondou. In Part 2, the siblings lose the pearl to Queen Bazangan, Queen of the Undersea. The quest continues in Part 3 when Beb and Zara seek to regain the pearl from another character based in Sabah folklore, Gayo Nakan/ Big Eater.

Post 30 – Remembering Forester, Ronald Burrell (1947-2020)



Ronald William Burrell, a graduate forester from New Brunswick, worked at the HQ of West Malaysia's Department of Forestry from 1971 to 1973, setting a survey and inventory system for managing and saving the hardwood forests. He spent time venturing into the jungle and camping out with Malaysian foresters and assistants. His wife, Eppie, a Registered Nurse, reports that, "I worked at the Hospital for Orang Asli in Gombak. It was located approximately 25 miles from KL. My work involved supervising staff at the hospital and undertaking trips to the Orang Asli villages, often a few day's walk in the jungle. We lived in a comfortable house at the hospital and hosted several fun CUSO parties. This was a very important experience for how we came to view the world."

Eppie would like to share Ron's obituary in the **Campbell River Mirror**, October 24, 2020:

Ronnie was born on February 02, 1947 in Harvey, New Brunswick to Agatha (McCue) and Ronald Burrell. Both his big brother, David (Viota) in Riverview, New Brunswick and his younger brother Charlie (Dawn) in Sproat Lake grew up with him in New Brunswick and will continue to crack jokes here on earth in his memory. Ron joined the Student Militia in New Brunswick from 1963 to 1965 (rank: Corporal) and learned many outdoor skills and also how to make a perfect bed.

Judith Elspeth (Eppie) Burrell (MacKnight) met Ron at University of New Brunswick (UNB) in 1968 where she was a star student in the nursing program. Ron was so glad he met Eppie because she helped him buckle down and study to complete his degree in Forestry. Ron loved the forest, nature and the wild and he was able to have a long career in Forestry launching off of that good education at UNB. Eppie married Ronnie on September 4, 1970 and they quickly started a life of experiences heading on a grand adventure to Malaysia and other far-flung places with the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO). They came back to Canada in 1974, pregnant! Ron got work as an Inventory Specialist with the BC Ministry of Forests and they moved all the way west to Victoria, having their first daughter Sarah Burrell (Peter) in 1974. Moving to Prince Rupert in 1976 because Ron became a Silviculture Specialist and both Ron and Eppie preferred smaller communities, they settled in and they were blessed with a second daughter Emily Burrell (David) in 1979. Having produced two perfect girls, they decided their family was complete.

The family moved to Mackenzie, in 1980, for Ron's work and he took up every past time he could, from pottery to swimming lessons, from hunting and skiing to learning the first MicroSoft DOS and hosting fun potlucks. Ron made many lifelong friends in Mackenzie including Roger and Cathy Roy. He was an approachable, funny, playful, and loyal friend, and this made it easy for many people to enjoy his company. As an Operations Manager with the Forest Service, he got to spend lots of time in the great outdoors. Camping with his family in the wild was definitely his happy place. In 1985, Ron got an Operations Manager position in Campbell River and Island life began for the Burrells. Ron joined the Noon Rotary Club in 1988 and soon Ron and the family were swept up in hosting International Exchange students (8), helping out at the annual Rotary Auction, flipping pancakes at the Annual Father's Day breakfast, leading projects and taking his turn as President of Rotary.

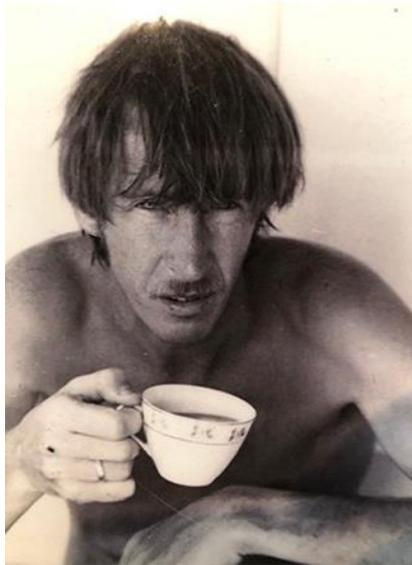
He also became very involved in the Campbell River Salmon Kings and Killer Whales swim clubs, taking on tarping the entire Centennial Pool deck for the swim meet as Equipment Manager for numerous years and doing his share of cheering for his girls at the pool. During this time he also started to get more interested in nature photography and extreme hiking. Ron, Cathy, Roger and Eppie completed the Great Walk in 1997 and 1998 and did the West Coast Trail with many training trips to Cape Scott and shopping at Spinner Sports so that Craig could convince them of the next awesome contraption to take camping and into the wild.

Ron was deeply involved in protection of the Beaver Lodge Lands and was continually active in the Beaver Lodge Trust Committee since its creation in 1993. Ron was a Greenways Director from its creation in 1996, through 2013, and served as President from 2001-2005, 2008 and 2009. Sandra Milligan, current President of the Greenways Land Trust writes: "Just last Tuesday, Oct 20, he was advocating strongly to protect stream habitat from an ill-placed ATV trail and agreed to be champion of a project to have bathrooms installed in Beaver Lodge. When I moved to town in 2003, his name was always in the paper, I thought, 'Wow – that guy is getting stuff done.' He inspired me, but he also kicked my ass and said, "We need to do something...", and so we tried, and we try, and now we will keep on trying, because he wouldn't have stopped trying. For me, he'll never be gone. I'll still hear his voice pushing me forward to protect Nature that can't protect itself." For our family, Sandra's musings sum up Ron's stubbornness and persistence and of how Ron showed up for nature, the wild and the environment again and again.

Ron retired in 2002 and took every advantage of retirement. He dove into his passions and interests. He acquired a horse named Sherman and took up horseback riding, which lasted until he decided mucking stalls and falling off Sherman breaking his ribs might be too dear a price for the hobby. He bought a motorcycle and had a great time wearing 'Born to be wild' kerchiefs and motoring all over British Columbia with friends. Once Eppie retired in 2006, they bought a truck and camper and started the snowbird life with winters in La Penita, Mexico and later El Centro, California. Ron and Eppie had a heck of a time playing golf, enjoying happy hours, seeing all the sights, laughing, and connecting with other snowbirds from across North America over the last 14 years. During this time period, in 2009, Emily and her husband David blessed our family with a gorgeous grandson named Jacob William Fandrich. Jacob is the apple of Ron's eye and Jacob's humour and long legs and arms definitely came from Ronnie's genes.

Ron and Eppie enjoyed a great camping trip this past August with Emily and her family at Ghost Lake, Alberta where they were able to connect, play and enjoy the views. Spending time with his grandson was very special to Ron and they had many private jokes together. Ron also loved dogs and he liked to play guitar with the dogs in the room listening, cause the humans didn't always appreciate it. We really hope Ronnie's exploring the heavenly outdoors and snuggling up together during rest with Buffy, Boomer, Grapple, Molly, Avi, and Jaffee. Ron and his good friend and sister-in-law Anne spent many happy times walking the dogs all over the woodlands of Campbell River and watching endless hours of Lonesome Dove, Deadwood, hockey and football games.

Ron was surprised by Sarah and Emily on Oct 13 with the newest canine edition to the family, Deedee. Deedee and Ronnie got to know each other for 10 beautiful days and she gave him so much joy and sparkle. These last 18 months, Ron finally got into using social media. He loved posting on Facebook and connecting with friends. It's wonderful for all of us now that we have those posts to look back upon and he so enjoyed taking nature pictures and dog pictures and selfies and sharing interesting forest trivia. He liked to be the life of the party, be a jokester, educate and have an audience and Facebook checked those boxes for him in the last year, especially when COVID kept us all apart. Bob Dice shared: Joseph Campbell said that 'The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are.' Ron was one of a kind, after which they broke the mold. He was friend and mentor. He was a leader, dedicated to the environment and to a life in Public Service and his volunteerism in the Beaverlodge Trust, the Greenway Land Trust, Rotary and civic politics (with 2 mayors elected). I recall one year in which Ron was President of Rotary, President of Greenways Land Trust, and Chair of the Beaverlodge Trust. Ron had a big heart and a trusted internal compass, anywhere he led, we were proud to follow. He will be missed.



Link to obituary: <https://www.campbellrivermirror.com/obituaries/ronald-william-burrell/>

Link to CUSO Malaysia forestry film where you'll see Ron and others in action in 1971:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEPEjF9Z9w4&t=51s>

Post 31 – Penan challenge logging giant Samling with video message from the ground



Bruce Bailey, CUSO Sarawak (1964-66) (see post 24) asked me to send out this interesting press release. Bruce wrote, “Hi to all the CUSO returnees from Malaysia. I thought I would send out this one-time press release from the Bruno Manser Fund to give you an update on one aspect of the timber trade in Sarawak/Sabah. We all have enough emails coming in each day and if you wish to receive more regular updates from the Bruno Manser Fund, I leave it to you to get on their mailing list. Best wishes, Bruce Bailey”

So, who was Bruno Manser? Read about him on Wikipedia:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruno_Manser

You can get involved here: <https://bmf.ch/de>

Neill McKee

From: **Bruno Manser Fonds** <info@bmf.ch>Date: Thu, 24 Mar 2022 at 17:07
 Subject: PRESS RELEASE: Penan challenge logging giant Samling with video message from the ground
 To: Bruno Manser Fonds <info@bmf.ch>

PRESS RELEASE - KERUAN & BRUNO MANSER FUND FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 24/25 March 2022 Penan challenge logging giant Samling with video message from the ground

After Samling denied claims that it entered the Penan territory of Long Pakan late last year, the community has released proof from the ground of a clear intention to extract timber: satellite images of a logging road built by the company on their land.

(LONG PAKAN / BARAM / SARAWAK) In a video message, Penan villagers from Long Pakan in the upper Baram area stand up against logging company Samling: while Samling claims that Long Pakan is outside their concession area, satellite images show the construction of a logging road into the Penan community’s territory, a clear intention that logging will take place on Long Pakan’s NCR land.

Penan villager Dison Betik addresses Samling in a video message recorded on the 20th of February 2022 at a fresh logging road close to Long Pakan: “We are from the village Long Pakan. Here we can see the work of the timber company Samling, taking place on our land. (...) According to Samling, this area is outside of Long Pakan. As we are standing here, we can tell you, this is not true. The land that is being destroyed from Samling is our

Native Customary Rights (NCR) land. (...) They already took trees and built bridges and roads. (...) We ask please help us get rid of the Samling Company. That is the desire of the people from Long Pakan. (...) Our headman never gave Samling the permission to exploit our forest. We stand up for our land and our forest.”

With this video, the Penan from Long Pakan directly refute Samling Group’s COO James Ho Yam Kuan, who wrote in a letter to Malaysiakini late last year stating: “Samling did not carry out any logging operations in Long Pakan as the area is outside its concession area”. While the actual village site of Long Pakan is outside Samling’s concession T/0405, the concession boundary lies only a few hundred meters away from the village and a large share of the community’s territory is under the concession.

According to the villagers, Samling has been constructing a road into Long Pakan’s NCR land since August 2021. Simon Kälin, project coordinator and GIS specialist at the Bruno Manser Fonds, visited the area in February: “The villagers brought me to the logging road and I took GPS coordinates of the destruction. I also analyzed available satellite images. There is no doubt, since August 2021 Samling has been building a road into the area claimed by the community. By late February, the road was only around 2km away from the village of Long Pakan. Samling would not build a road without the intention to extract timber.”

Komeok Joe, head of the Penan organization KERUAN, is appalled: “Samling is denying our very existence. How can they claim that the territory of Long Pakan is not within their concession? We Penan might have no roads to our villages, but we are here and will stay.”

Samling entered the area in August with the support of some of the youth of Long Pakan. The village elders and other community members reacted with a blockade in September, and headman Pada Jutang subsequently lodged a police report in early October.

-- End of release --

Video message of Dison Betik, Penan villager from Long Pakan:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TyrvqByMbU>

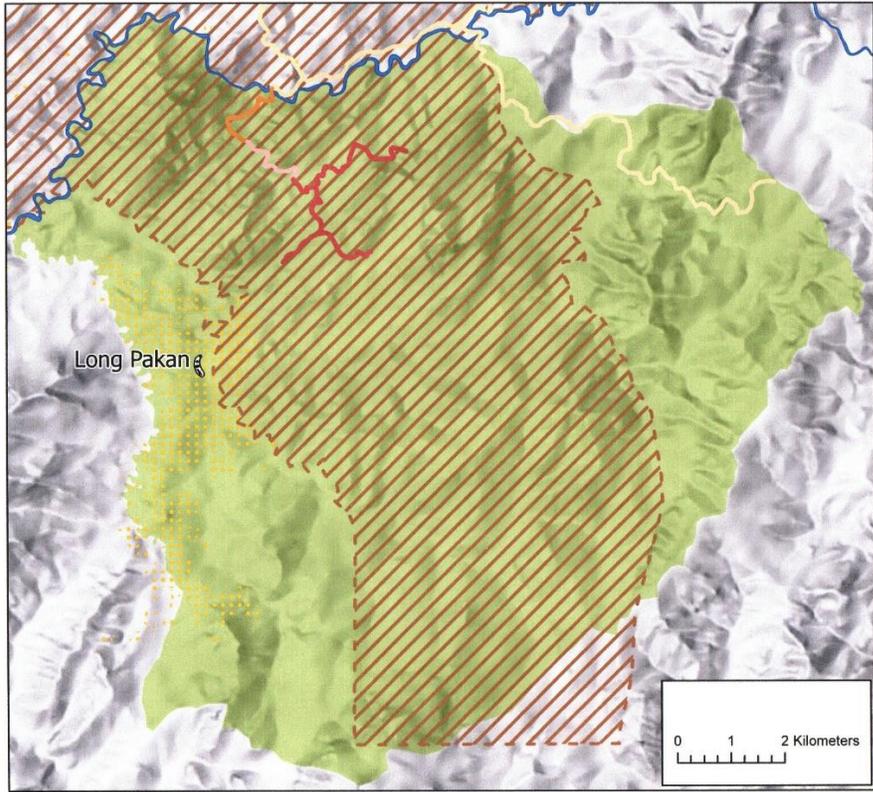
For further information and more statements, please contact: Komeok Joe, head of the Penan organisation KERUAN: selungo@gmail.com

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Logging activities of Samling within the NCR Land of Long Pakan

- Village Area Long Pakan
- Long Pakan NCR Land
- Main River
- Paddie Fields of Long Pakan
- ▨ Samling Concession T/0405
- Samling Roads, until 8/1/2021
- Samling Roads, until 10/1/2021
- Samling Roads, until 12/1/2021
- Samling Roads, until 2/1/2022



Post 32 – Update from Tim Babcock (Sarawak, Aug 1967 – Dec 1969)

April 2022



I worked as a CUSO volunteer high school teacher at the government-assisted Chung Hua (Chinese) Middle School in the pretty little coastal town of Miri, Sarawak, from August 1967 to the end of 1969. Donna Bailey was the director of our three-week orientation program in Toronto, and the eminent Barbara Geddes (Hoffman) our chief resource person and teacher-trainer. (Peter Hoffman was in this cohort with me.) I taught English, Southeast Asian history and math, and after the May 1969 anti-Chinese race riots in Kuala Lumpur, I taught the hastily introduced civics course as well. I recall that few of my (Chinese) colleagues were particularly interested in teaching a course on the virtues of their system of government at that time! It was definitely challenging to teach my students about the virtues of queueing, alias standing in/on line, something most uncommon in public spaces in Malaysia at the time.

In my memory, my time in Sarawak was truly wonderful (no, I don't have my rose-tinted glasses on). Yes, there were the usual, or in some cases unusual, "challenges"—the daylight abduction and killing of a formerly left-wing neighbor by remnants of the communist insurgency; the close brush I had with the much-loved police Special Branch, who had spies in our school (Chinese schools being suspected of continuing to harbor communist agitators); nearly drowning in some rapids in ulu Baram; the bout of keratitis that left me with a permanently scarred left cornea (gratitude to Ian and Cheryl Gamble for their kind hospitality while I was being treated in Kuching)—and a few other less dramatic incidents. For someone who had just turned 20 that June, armed with only a degree in anthropology and a two-semester course in Cantonese, but precious little "real-world" work experience, it could indeed get a bit overwhelming at times. But, as I said, it was mostly wonderful.

Wonderful in particular was teaching—what teacher in Canada could have imagined having such amazingly and universally hard-working, polite and unproblematic students (mine were mainly from non-wealthy rural farming families and petty trader or shop-keeping families, not from the wealthy/elite families whose children attended church- or government-run schools)! Some, only a very few years younger than me, became close friends and remain so to this day, nurtured by at least half a dozen return visits to Miri on my part, one good visit to my home in Canada by a couple of them, and of course these days by conversations on WhatsApp and Telegram. My Form 5B 1969 students have an active WA group chat, these

days largely focusing on the state of the covid pandemic in Sarawak. Sadly, a recent count showed that seven of the original 35 or so classmates have passed away over the years.

There were of course many other pleasures and memorable activities and events—overnight visits to Iban longhouses gorging on baskets of rambutan and bottles of tuak¹; travel upriver to the Kayan/Kenyah longhouses of Long San and Long Moh (my first and only Catholic mass, on the veranda of the big house at Long San); the Marudi regatta; trips to Singapore sleeping deck class, a year-end traipse around Java and Bali with David Sunahara (singing “Hey Jude” all the way), Lynne Bussey (if memory serves) and a PCV; the ritual climb up Mt. Kinabalu (we should NOT have drunk all that red wine on the way up, but hey it was hard to come by!) One of the more challenging, and fascinating, adventures was leading seven male students on a bicycle trip to Brunei to take in the 40-day festivities surrounding the coronation of the new, young Sultan. Especially in the evening, it was like being in a wonderland!

What was the medium and long-term impact of the work of CUSO volunteers such as myself? How should we measure impact, anyway? I am not aware that CUSO has ever conducted a professionally designed outcome and impact assessment of the Sarawak or Malaysia program (still so rarely done in the wider world of development). In the case of teacher-volunteers, for sure we were not creating unsustainable dependencies, as we were filling locally-identified vacancies in the established education system while the country forged ahead with producing trained teachers to replace us. In particular, in the Chinese community-run schools that were converting to English as the medium of instruction — where many of the Chinese-educated teachers had very low levels of English — we likely had an important impact on our students’ mastery of the language. I recall one of my Form 5 students remarking that I was the first teacher they had had whose English they could actually understand!²

I like to think that my students became more comfortable expressing their own opinions and thoughts, after coming through six years of Chinese primary school education where the chief education method was rote learning. (My school shared grounds with a Chinese-medium primary school, where all day long we could hear the chanting as classes of students repeated together the lessons they had memorized. I can still hear them now!) I like to think that they also developed some skills in critical thinking. Equally important, I think, they learned about the wider world and became more “cosmopolitan” than they might have done, in part through daily interaction with teachers from elsewhere in the world (Canada, the US, the UK, India). Sadly, none of my students made it into Form 6 (last two years of pre-college education) at one or the very few (government) schools that offered this program (Tanjung Lobang in Miri). Only a handful had the grades and the finances to undertake higher education overseas, primarily in nearby Australia. Those who did tended to settle abroad as well.

¹ My first longhouse visit, not long after I arrived in Miri, was at the invitation of **Cathy Duffy**, who was finishing up her teaching stint at the government secondary school in Lutong. Buying food gifts to bring along on that trip, we stopped at a shop in downtown Miri where, among other things, Cathy asked for some Campbell’s soup. Leaving the store, I noticed she seemed to have forgotten the soup, so I reminded her. “What Campbell’s soup?” she replied. “I bought some *ikan pusu*.” Spoken rapidly, the two items do sound pretty close to the unattuned ear 😊

² Switching from Chinese to English as the medium of instruction was facilitated by the one-year Transition Class undertaken by all students coming from Chinese-language primary schools before beginning middle school. This was a wonderful innovation – students spent a full year learning English intensively, aided by daily radio broadcasts from Kuching specially designed to enrich the process and to fill part of the gap in the cadre of local teachers. Many of the students ended up speaking English far better than their Chinese-educated teachers, and made much fun of them!

Like most of us, I too, over the years, have tried to analyze how my time in Sarawak impacted me. Was this time in Sarawak what led me, like so many others, to pursue a life-time career in international development cooperation? It probably was the single-most important, though not the only, factor --- and it saved me from the main alternative I had envisioned (a no doubt equally honorable one!) of becoming a full-time academic☺. [I have actually, along the way, done some sessional lecturing, undergraduate and graduate, at Guelph and Cape Breton universities mainly, as well as supervising numerous Canadian (York, Waterloo, Dalhousie) and Indonesian graduate students].

The experience with CUSO in Sarawak most certainly enriched my graduate studies (anthropology, Southeast Asian studies) at Cornell, and certainly assisted me in landing my first “paying” development work. Unfortunately, though, it was not in Sarawak, as I would have preferred. At Cornell, I prepared a doctoral research proposal (and obtained research funding) focused on a comparative study of Muslim and Christian Melanau people, but was denied permission to carry out fieldwork in the state by the then Chief Secretary of Sarawak who was of a particularly anti-foreign bent and would not permit foreigners to carry out research even under the sponsorship and supervision of the Sarawak Museum. The alternative for me was to conduct a similar research project in neighboring Indonesia, which subsequently, and quite by chance, led to my first (Canadian-assisted) project assignment there and then to the next and the next, with only short stints in other countries (Bhutan, Peru) but never, sadly, Malaysia until I hung up my gloves about four years ago. It was during those many years working in or on Indonesia that I reconnected, and worked, with Bruce Bailey, met and worked closely with the late Dwight Watson, and became friends with Helen Vanwel in Jakarta --- all former CUSO Sarawak volunteers.

Born in an up-and-coming paper-making town in pre-Confederation western Newfoundland, I have by a strange chance ended up in nearby Cape Breton Island / Unama’ki in Nova Scotia, where I moved to, in 2003, after living and working for so long in Indonesia. When I was selling my parents’ house in Nova Scotia and looking for where I’d really like to be, my other choices were Ottawa or Vancouver! But here is where I have ended up and where I have been wonderfully happy, and busy, ever since—for one thing, Cape Breton Island is somewhere where friends and acquaintances are very likely to want to visit! But my long relationship with Malaysia and Indonesia still remains strong and I visit as often as I can—my son (half-Asian himself) basically grew up in Indonesia and went back to live and work there after putting in his time in the dreaded tar sands of northern Alberta. With his Indonesian wife and my little grandson, they live in Bali—so who wouldn’t want to keep travelling in that direction?

Here in Cape Breton, I have looked for useful activities in areas where I could try to contribute some of the experiences and skills gathered during the working part of my career. I have taught the occasional development-related course through our local university, in some cases with Mi’kmaw communities or university students, and several times a course in comparative international development for students --- many of them international --- in the unique MBA in community economic development program. I have been active on the boards of our local cycling association (a successful advocacy group) and a local wilderness trail association, and (like Bruce Bailey) have done work with a restorative justice organization.

A sideline, and a passion that took root during my days in Sarawak, is tending to my collection of Southeast Asian hand-woven textiles and batiks. I am currently working with a colleague on a proposal for an exhibition of Indonesian and East Timor textiles in Halifax in 2024, focusing on the preservation or revitalization of dying textile traditions, and am also supporting the preparation of a new book on the woven textiles of the Iban and related

Kalimantan peoples being written by Dr. Traude Gavin, a well-known expert on the textiles of Sarawak³.

The politics of Malaysia, since Independence, have been mostly awful, and of late have taken a turn for the worse. Sarawak, with its corrupt politics based on the distribution of timber licenses, has overseen the massive destruction of its forest environment (something Bruce Bailey has helped make widely known, and which allegedly has had impacts as far away as the real estate sector in Ottawa). The quiet little Miri town that I once knew is now unrecognizable, having become a large urban sprawl with a population of over 300,000, with almost nothing left of historical interest except old No. 1 Oil Well up on Canada Hill behind the town. But nostalgia is a powerful thing and I'm looking forward to my next return visit to Sarawak before too long.



With my little grandson Kai, born in Cape Breton and raised in Bali, on an “orientation” trip to Canada at age 3+ to experience his first taste of winter and snow ☺ (December 2021)

³ Going over old slides and photos recently, I came across one taken during a visit to Sabah to climb Kinabalu, of a vendor selling hand-woven cloths of the Bajau people. That is where and when I bought my very first hand-woven textile, which I still have (**Donna Deschner** was there when I bought it, and is in the picture). It was during those days that on a two-week trip through Java and Bali I bought my first pieces of batik, too. Clearly, I owe this life-long passion for textiles and batik to my CUSO assignment, too!

Post 33 – John Soehner's Durian Dream Journey up the Pahang!

In the summer of 1977, I made a trip back to Malaysia for a few weeks then took the train up to Thailand before returning to Canada. In Bentong, West Malaysia, where I had taught for three years (1972-75), I visited my old school, Sekolah Menengah Sulaiman, to meet with many of my former colleagues and on chatting with one particular teacher, Mrs. Koo, she informed me that her husband, who was Head Geologist with the Geology Department for Bentong District, would be going “outstation” and up the Pahang River. She wondered if I would be interested in heading out on the river with the team! Jeez why not! --- So up the Pahang!



Typical docking station at a small Malay kampong on the Pahang River

Now here was the cruncher for the epic journey. Durians were in season and I must say I love durian, "smells like an outhouse in need of a scrub of whitewash lime (CaO) but the custardy fruit, heavenly!" So, I am on for the trip. Not sure how long the trip was but with the Geology group headed upriver, the jungle drums aware of the impending visit along with a “Mat Salleh” who liked durian!



Camping out in one of the small settlements “up the Pahang”!

At each of the Malay kampong settlements along the way there is an official greeting or meet with the Head Man, the Geology group may end up doing some research or take readings of water clarity, temperature and other things, then later a meal of some sort either by the kampong folk or riverside campout and cooking by the river by the Geology people.



Kampong Headman of Malay settlement on the Pahang

Well with the “Mat Salleh” liking durian, it was fresh durian to be tasted, *dudol* made of fermented and preserved durian, durian cake, and whatever concoction of durian considered to be tasty.



Now I do love durian, but as it turned out over the week, or whatever length of the trip, I did get my fill of durian. I was very happy to get back to Bentong to balance my diet with some papaya and rambutan.

Post 34 – Joanne Huskilson’s Memoirs on Borneo

Joanne and Charlie Huskilson from Eastern Ontario were posted to Saratok, Sarawak as teachers during 1965-67. Joanne wrote an unpublished memoir, titled ***Letters From Borneo: Life in the Jungle, 1965-1967***. It is dedicated to Charlie, who passed away in 1994. Joanne is a good writer and tells us about their eight-day trip to Sarawak from Vancouver to Montreal, France, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Kenya, New Delhi, and then Singapore, an endurance test! She has included many photos in the 103-page document. You can read it [on this link](#):

Joanne also wrote this photo memoir ***Life Changing Years***, available [on this link](#):

Joanne also published two stories in the **Borneo Post**:

www.theborneopost.com/2012/11/11/life-changing-years/
www.theborneopost.com/2012/11/11/life-changing-years/2/

Joanne now lives in Kingston, Ontario with her second husband, Ron Hotchkiss.

