



**Hon. Bill Graham
Upper Canada College**

As a student at Upper Canada College in the 1950s, William (Bill) Graham was a prefect, a member of the Debating Society and president of the students' United Nations Club — fitting training, indeed, for a life in international politics.

In 1957, the year he graduated, Graham provided his school yearbook, *College Times*, with an enigmatic personal quote: "A diplomatic line between two points." Those parting words foreshadowed Graham's destiny as an expert in diplomacy and multiple points of view.

The Honourable Bill Graham, named minister of national defence earlier this summer, has served as Canada's minister of foreign affairs since 2002. His political career includes experience as chairman of the Standing Committee of the House of Commons on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. He was the founding president of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas and is a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Council Against Anti-Semitism. In addition, Graham was the first North American parliamentarian to join PD Burma, an organization of legislators from around the globe who are concerned about democracy in Burma.

First elected as an MP for the riding of Toronto Centre-Rosedale in 1993, Graham was previously a law professor at the University of Toronto, teaching international trade law, public international law and the law of the European Community. In recognition of his commitment to public life and cooperation among peoples and nations, the faculty established the William C. Graham Chair in International Law and Development a few years ago.

Born in Montreal, Graham lived in Vancouver before studying at Upper Canada College. He returned to his alma mater in February 2001 as the keynote speaker at the "Founders Dinner," a reunion event that includes a celebration of the UCC's founding, in 1829, by Sir John Colborne.

"Bill had great interpersonal skills," recalls former classmate Eric Barton, who has crossed paths with Graham in his own international travels. "He's a very friendly, outgoing person today — exactly the same personality as I remember from our days at UCC," adds Barton, a one-time principal at Upper Canada College.



W.C. GRAHAM '51-'57
SEATON'S HOUSE
Vancouver, B.C.
Prefect
U.N. (Pres.), Debating Society (speaker), Travel, Curfew, Ski Clubs,
Past Associate Editor, *College Times*, Head Librarian,
Intended Profession: Law
"A diplomatic line between two points."

**Elizabeth Thomson
Bishop Strachan School**

"I wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for BSS," claims Elizabeth Thomson from her summer home in Thunder Bay. "The experience there changed my whole focus and I am exceedingly grateful."

Thomson graduated from BSS in 1967. Today, she is an established and highly successful businesswoman operating out of Hong Kong — a long way from her roots in Thunder Bay. In 1977, armed with a law degree from McGill alongside a facility in French, German and Italian thanks to her experience at BSS and as an undergraduate at the University of Western Ontario, she traveled to Hong Kong for a vacation and never looked back.

After three years as legal counsel for a company there, she saw the opportunities for entrepreneurs in this burgeoning part of the world and started up her own business, International Corporate Services, forerunner of today's ICS Trust. Her specialty was international tax law, and she ran a no-frills operation out of her tiny Hong Kong flat. The office was the dining room in her modest apartment, the desk her dining table, the filing area her bedroom, the

boardroom anywhere you could find a seat or piece of floor. ICS Trust now helps hundreds of international companies operate in Hong Kong and throughout Asia, expanding their markets without the hefty cost of infrastructure overheads.

Of her experience at BSS, Thomson is emphatic. "I came to BSS out of the public school system and can only say that girls need single-sex environments in which to learn. At BSS, being female is celebrated — it's okay to be bright and to succeed. It instills such confidence and a belief that you have endless possibilities."

"One of the things I remember most about BSS in boarding was meeting girls from all over the world," recalls Thomson. "Coming from Thunder Bay that was quite an experience for me and really changed my outlook."

Thomson is poised to join the BSS Board of Governors this fall.

"At BSS we're focussed strongly on what we call World View," states BSS Head, Natalie Little. "It's part of our mission to ensure that we not only reflect a world view in the student body, but also that global perspectives permeate all aspects of our curriculum and co-curricular activities. Elizabeth has been a wonderful voice for BSS in Hong Kong and has continued to offer her perspective and ideas to help the School. She's a wonderful and committed Old Girl."

**Neysha SOODEEN
Branksome Hall**

(The READ, Fall 2003)

It beggars belief when a successful publisher and former runway model, known since her school days for glamour and grace, declares "I was such a nerd at Branksome!"

Yet Neysha Soodeen ('89), who came to Branksome Hall in grade 11 from Barbados, insists she was a science geek who found a welcoming home for three years as a residential student at Branksome.

Her parents wanted her to have a superior education in a safe yet challenging environment, and "everyone pointed us to Branksome Hall," recalls Soodeen.

Friendships forged in Residence proved more enduring than Soodeen could imagine. "The boarders were all very, very close," she notes. "We didn't have cliques at all — we were one big group. We only got into a little trouble, and we had such great times!"

After earning an undergraduate degree in criminology from Carleton University, Soodeen swept into the world of high-fashion modeling in Milan, working for the Elite Agency. Her two years strolling the runway for Armani, Missoni and Versace were "too much fun," followed by a much darker period in her life.

"In 1993 I was diagnosed with cancer," she recounts. "I returned to Toronto and celebrated my 21st birthday between cancer treatments."

But she wasn't alone. Soodeen's Branksome buddies came in "from everywhere," giving a great boost to her spirits.

Recovering at her parents' home in Barbados, Soodeen was struck by the lack of lifestyle publications in the West Indies. Tourism promotion abounded, but Soodeen saw an unfilled niche for a high-end magazine covering architecture, cuisine and unique Caribbean destinations. So she created one.

October 1999 saw the first issue of *MACO*, now an international glossy magazine. She has managed to echo the camaraderie of her Branksome years by having an office filled with young women of her own generation. They relish the joy of creating magazines that reflect the beauty and vibrancy of the Caribbean. Like Neysha Soodeen herself.

