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McCarthy House at 45 Walmer Road

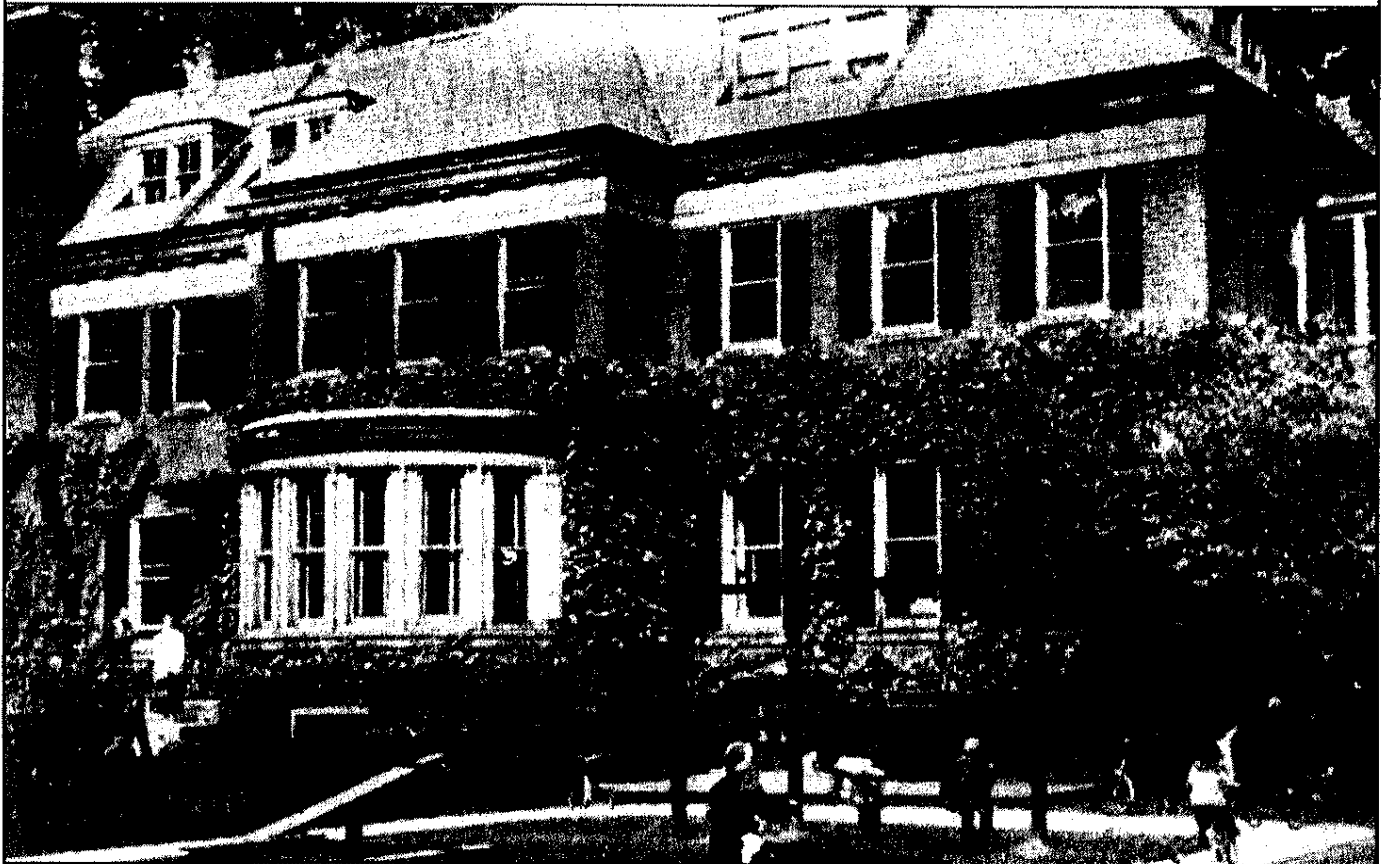
by Sam Linton

It was the 1950s and Carolyn Gossage was a young teacher at the Institute of Child Study. She loved the quaint old building at 45 Walmer Road, but knew nothing about its former life until one day a friend picked her up after work and said, "Oh my God, this used to be my grandfather's house!"

Many of us are so overwhelmed by the Institute's contributions to education that sometimes we forget that 45 Walmer was "someone's grandfather's house."

That grandfather was Leighton Goldie McCarthy. He was a member of the University of Toronto's governing council, as well as being the second Canadian ambassador to the United States in Washington and a personal friend of President Franklin Roosevelt. McCarthy had the house built for him, his wife and five children in the late 1920s. In 1952, he donated the residence to the University of Toronto, and the following year it became home to the Institute of Child Study.

One of his granddaughters, Elizabeth Bell, 68, recalls visiting her grandparents' home every Sunday after-



noon. Her mother and grandmother would have tea in the sunroom with the curved windows, which is now the grade one classroom. While she strongly endorses the house's present use as ICS, she says "I must admit it is a bit hard to see it all cut up. It was a very special place."

With mom and grandmother occupied over tea, the grandchildren celebrated the house's architectural details as only children are able. She remembers sliding down the black polished banister on the grand staircase and playing on the sprawling lawn. But the house's most attractive and enticing feature was the dumb-waiter, which legend has it is still buried in the wall beside what is now Principal Elizabeth Morley's office.

"It was two big shelves that carried a huge laundry basket. There were no automatic laundry machines those days so it would have to be lugged. If we had enough of us, someone would stand guard and the other would take the basket out and we'd get in the dumbwaiter and ride it from the basement to the second floor... then run downstairs and do it all over again. It had a huge one-inch thick rope that you'd use to hoist yourself up."

I was a student at ICS in the 1970s and I can tell you that the same charms Elizabeth Bell loved are not lost on the kids who go there. Even at age ten I knew how special it was to have a classroom with a fireplace. (At last count, the house has eight.) I knew something creative was up when we were encouraged to curl up and write our poetry in our favorite nooks all over the house. My magical place was an over-sized gap beside the stairs in the main grand staircase. In Grade 2, I could get to it by squeezing through the spindles; by Grade 4, I had to hop the handrail.

What I didn't know was that the art room where Dorothy Medhurst covered my body in plaster of Paris had been built as a wine cellar. The music room (now the grade 2 classroom) where I first learned how to whack a tambourine was originally a billiards room. The garage out back had been the domain of a chauffeur. And the secretive "third-floor", which had housed the bedrooms and tea room for a housekeeper, a cook and a laundress, is now the Laidlaw Research Centre. In Grade 4, we would dare each other to see how far we could get up the creaky dark staircase.

So there was wine, a cook, and a chauffeur. All very exotic to my son Charley, currently an ICS student. Two years ago, his Grade 2 class was intrigued by the stories of the house – so much so, that in perfect ICS tradition the research mission became part of the curriculum. The three-story "dumb-waiter" that still brings a smile to granddaughter Elizabeth Bell has become legendary in his class. "Now that's cool," he says.

But despite pulling out all the stops and using every cranny in the most creative way (fireplaces have been lined with pillows and duvets and transformed into cozy reading nooks) the house is no longer able to keep up with the needs of its 200 young lab school students and 150 graduate students and faculty. In 2005, an \$8 million capital campaign was launched to renovate the McCarthy house and build a new facility behind 45 Walmer for a gymnasium/auditorium, music room, lunch room and more.

Last summer the McCarthy grandchildren, now in their 60s and older, came together to make a major gift towards the renovation of the former family home in honour of their grandfather. The newly named Leighton Goldie McCarthy House will have a name



Leighton McCarthy (left) with President Roosevelt

plaque displayed on the front pillar of 45 Walmer Road. "I am wistful that it could still be as grand as it used to be. But we'll hold on tight to our memories. It's clear it needs a renovation, so we need to support that and make it happen," says Elizabeth Bell. "Perhaps the new designers can turn the dumb-waiter space into an elevator." If so, history would come full circle.

Sam Linton (ICS 79) is the mother of two ICS students

Where Are They Now?

THE CLASS OF 86 - TWENTY YEARS LATER

Over the years, this class became a very close-knit group. They bonded over their collective love for snowy recess soccer, long Christmas tree paper chains, and the incomparable Duran Duran. Today, they live near and far across the globe. The people whom we were able to contact were more than eager to provide information and very curious about former classmates. *Information collected by Jonathan Ruby, 86 class representative*



In Quebec City, May 1986

Front: Meghan Cole, Claire Rothfels, Gillian Novick, Joanna Englander, Melanie Williamson, Karin Emond, Jessica Ferguson, Mira Rao

Middle: Claire Dehenne (french teacher) Genevieve Robson, Meredith Stretton, Jamie Campbell

Back: Francesca (student teacher), Derek Ohlendorf, George Bevan, Daniel Drost, James Shaw, Nicholas Hrynkiw, Jonathan Ruby

George Bevan...Toronto, Ont., teaching Greek history and language at U of T

James Campbell...Please forward any contact information to us.

Meghan Cole...Nova Scotia and Toronto, Ont., film costume designer, dog lover

Daniel Drost...Ottawa, Ont., environmental consultant (contaminated site remediation)

Karin Emond...Golden, BC, completing law school at UBC, avid skier

Nicholas Hrynkiw...Taipei, ROC, teaching English, traveling Asia

Joanna Marcovici (nee Englander)...Toronto, Ont., golf sponsorship manager, married

Gillian Novick...Toronto, Ont., M.A. through ICS, teaching kindergarten, married

Derek Ohlendorf...Whitly Bay, UK, financial advisor, married with three kids

Mira Ray (nee Rao)...London, Ont., working in breast cancer research, married

Genevieve Robson...Boston, MA, completing Master's at Harvard, working in fine art

Claire Rothfels...Toronto, Ont., operations manager/freelance writer, one daughter

Jonathan Ruby...Toronto, Ont., advertising copywriter, married with one son

Jessica Russo (nee Ferguson)...Far Hills, NJ, gold medal kayaker, married with three kids

James Shaw...Toronto, Ont., guitarist with Metric and Broken Social Scene

Meredith Stretton...Please forward any contact information to us.

Melanie Williamson...Toronto, Ont., marketing sales agent, baseball fan, proud "auntie"

**WHERE
ARE YOU
NOW?**

We welcome updates, inquiries and comments.
To contact us, or to get on our mailing list, email the Alumni Association at:
icsalumni@oise.utoronto.ca
Visit the ICS WEBSITE at: www.oise.utoronto.ca/ICS



The class of 78 held a small reunion in the Junior Kindergarten room last summer, organized by class rep Nick de Pencier
Back: Tom Selby, Eric Jaffary, Nick de Pencier, Lindsay Rogan, Jessica Porter Front: Ben Stein, Jennifer Gray

Notice of Class of 1979 Reunion Thursday, June 27, 2006 7 pm

At Sam Linton's home, 500 Brunswick Ave., Toronto 416 961 1732

RSVP: Dorothy Carson 416 489 2823 or dorothycarson@sympatico.ca

ICS Welcomes Kang Lee

By Gillian Graham

Kang Lee is an internationally renowned developmental psychologist, yet he jokingly admits he is missing one credential for his new job as director of the Institute of Child Study. Along with much of his generation in China, he himself had virtually no formal childhood schooling.

Born in 1962 in Hangzhou, a large city 200 km from Shanghai, Lee came of school age at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. His mother was a school

librarian in the training school for civil servants, and his father held a position in the department of fisheries. The backlash against the educated classes meant that Kang, his sister and his parents spent much of that period hiding in the countryside. "I had so much freedom. There was no homework, no exams — it was great! My only real education was the last year of middle school", he recalls.

Once back in school, Kang excelled at academics. He received his masters degree in child development at Hangzhou University, where he also taught. As a faculty member, he was forbidden to get involved in campus politics. But having signed petitions sympathetic to the students, he left China during the crack-down after Tiananmen Square in 1989. (He now visits China two or three times a year to see his parents and

to pursue joint research projects.)

A scholarship enabled him to study for a year at University College in London, England, where he met his future wife, Susan Wong, an accountant from Singapore. A chance connection with a colleague in the University of New Brunswick took him to Canada, where he finished his PhD. He taught for eight years in the psychology department at Queen's University, and in 1998 he became a Canadian citizen. In 2002, he moved to the University of California at San Diego, where he was a professor in psychology.

By then, he was famous for research which challenged previously held assumptions about the age at which children can deceive others. According to Lee, children are capable of telling small lies as early as age three. By ages four to five, the child can successfully lie using his face, and by six or seven that ability extends to verbal statements. As a direct result of this work, the Canadian courts have instituted new procedures that Lee feels are beneficial to child witnesses.

At ICS, he has spent much of his first year learning the ropes. "ICS has a lot of accomplishments but the school is still too much of a well-kept secret" he says. "My job is to be the cheerleader."

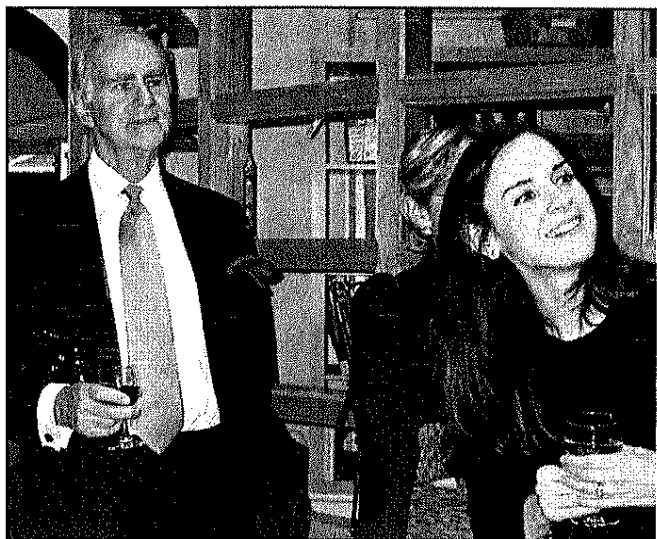
He looks forward to experiencing ICS from the vantage point of a parent when his son Nathan, 3, enters the nursery in the fall. Lee personally favours the



child-centred approach to learning pioneered by ICS founder Dr. William Blatz, and shares his belief in the value of early socialization. "Confucius said that part of education is forming good character and respect for others," he says. In both North America and in China, he fears that the balance may have swung too far towards the academic.

He also questions what some have seen as the overly structured lives of privileged children today, especially in comparison to his own carefree youth. "Look at us. No exams and somehow we learned!" An inquiring mind is preferable to a mind stuffed with facts and figures, he believes. "When these children go out into the world, they will have to discover it for themselves. If we don't give them the tools, we fail them."

Gillian Graham is co-chair of the ICS Alumni Committee



Jackman Art Studio

Victoria Jackman (*right*) joins her father, Hal Jackman, a 1930s ICS alumnus and former Chancellor of the University of Toronto and other family members at a reception in April 2006 to officially name the school's new art room at 56 Spadina Road, the Jackman Art Studio.

ABBY HOFFMAN AN ICS FRONT RUNNER



Abigail ("Abby") Hoffman, who graduated from ICS in 1958, was inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame in 2004. She ran in four Olympics, from 1962 to 1976, and she won the 800 metres gold medal at the 1966 Commonwealth Games. Long devoted to the cause of women in sport, she was the first female director of Sport Canada (1981-91), and lives in Ottawa. The following reminiscence is by former ICS teacher Carolyn (Schmidt) Gossage (1954-60).

Back in the 1950s, when 45 Walmer Road had just recently become the new home of the University of Toronto's Institute of Child Study, there was already part of the playground to the south of the former McCarthy residence that boasted a smooth black asphalt surface. It began just under the sheltering branches of the magnificent old

copper beech tree by the iron fence and stretched as far as the grassy area that had been set aside for the Nursery School children. An ideal place for excess energy to be burned off by skipping, or hopscotch or games of tag ("You're it!... No. I'm not... Yes, you are... I got you! Nah, nah, nyah nah") along with the usual climbing and running about, accompanied, of course, by a good measure of exuberant hooting and hollering. Meanwhile, the teachers who'd been designated to be "on duty" by their awe-inspiring lady principal, Mrs. Minkler, often perched on the steps where they could exchange gossip while keeping a sharp eye out for any unseemly behaviour or the eventuality of a skinned knee or a twisted ankle.

For one particular student, Abby Hoffman, whose energy quotient was at the top of the scale, the perimeter of this asphalt square also served as the closest possible substitute for a running track. And run she did! Day after day, week after week. There was never any question that she possessed a special brand of determination and drive, the very qualities that would one day lead to her appointment as director of Sport Canada. But it never crossed my mind, as a young teacher on the steps timing Abby's laps with a stopwatch, that this determined ten-year-old girl would eventually make headlines as one of Canada's foremost runners.

Not that making headlines was anything new for Abby Hoffman. At the age of nine she had already managed to create a media sensation through her prowess on the ice. She had two brothers (Paul and Ben, also ICS graduates), so what could be more sensible than to get a boy's hair cut? It was this hair-cut, combined with the name Abby, that enabled her to slip through the net and become a bone fide member of a boys' hockey team. There are several versions of how the story came to the attention of the press, but there is no doubt about Abby's overnight notoriety from coast to coast and beyond. Who can forget the pride that everyone at #45 took in having one of our own, not only breaking new ground, but also managing to pull the wool over the hockey establishment's eyes? It felt wonderful! At that point, the expression "empowering" had yet to be invented, but we experienced the identical effect.

Watching our Canadian girls bring home the Gold at the 2006 Winter Games in Turin, I couldn't help thinking back to those decorous days of the 1950's and the incredible furor that was generated by a girl not just wishing for a chance to play hockey, but actually pulling it off. It was a classic



beginning for the kind of change that couldn't be stopped in its tracks. In the many dedicated years spent in the advancement of women athletes, Abigail Hoffman has never wavered in her commitment to keeping those changes coming. A role-model who's still.... first and foremost a front runner!

*The Alumni Echo is edited by
Gillian Graham and Anne Tough
and designed by Lynne Dalgleish*