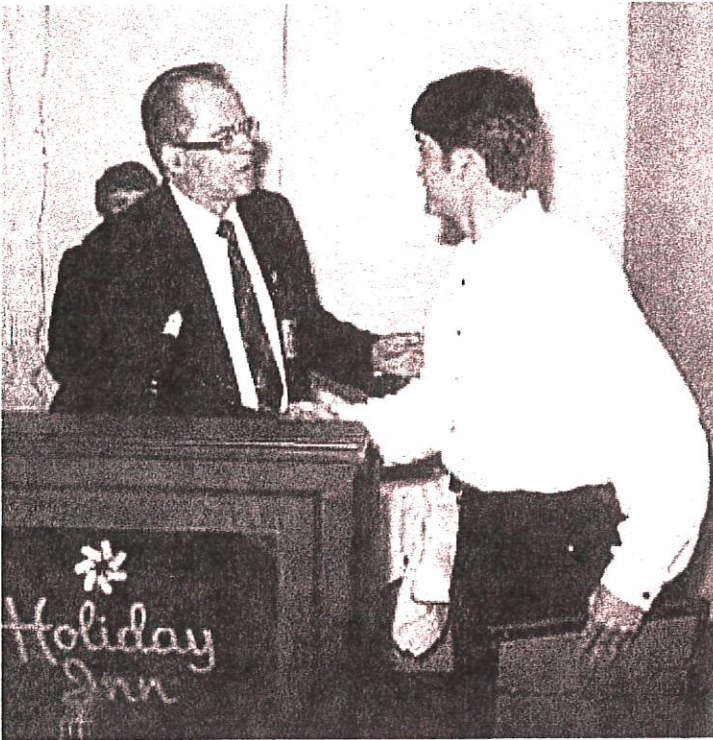


Helping Others - Helping Yourself

When I was at the CMHA BC Div AGM in mid September I met Lorne Fraser. He was there to present bursaries for further education to people whose lives had been disrupted by mental illness. I asked him for more information.



"The LORNE FRASER EDUCATIONAL FUND was not a spur of the moment process. In 1981 I was hospitalized and sent to St. Pauls Hospital. On the second day of my admission the Head Nurse asked me if I would talk with a particular patient. She advised me that this person was not talking to the Medical Staff and that they needed to have some sort of dialog with him so that they would be able to treat him. I responded to this and said that I would attempt to have his trust and friendship.

I was able to establish a dialog with him. He said he was 55 years old, he was unemployed, an alcoholic, and now a mental patient and very depressed.

Over night he escaped from the hospital and jumped from the 13th floor of his apartment and killed himself.

Now I was determined to give people with mental illness money for job skills training. Ever since 1982 I gave whatever money I could to someone to go on to College with the idea that they would find work.

In 1983 I gave some money to Wendy Gosse who used her money to advance in her field of Early Children Education to become a supervisor. She said "I have been in and out of hospital for 20 years but I am doing great now"

To another, Linda Carpender, I gave 85 dollars and she took Creative Writing and went on to publish her work.

I have heard from many people who have received bursaries and they are very thankful that it exists. The courses they have taken have enlarged their scope of life and they have become productive members of society.

I feel great for doing this thing. My health has improved and my zest for life has grown, furthermore, I have experienced a tremendous peace of mind."

Lorne who was sometimes was very ill and living on modest means, initiated the fund in 1982 with a \$65 donation through CMHA. He now works diligently to increase the fund by putting on country music jams and car rallies. This year's Oct 1st rally raised \$2850. Others have added bequests and CMHA regularly contributes to ensure a perpetual awards program.

Those awards this year amounted to a total of \$5000 and Lorne was radiant with the joy of presenting them.

"Bruce, regarding the Lorne Fraser Educational Fund- all my involvement in it has been very satisfying. Just how would you feel if someone who went to Kwantlen College said these words to you: 'Thank you so much for encouraging me in my struggle to gain back many years that have been lost to an illness.' Well, they said that to me and I leaped with joy."

Lorne Douglas Fraser

Lorne's fund raising cassette of Country Western standards will be featured at MM events during this current program.



Bruce Saunders Oct 30/00