

**India III 54<sup>th</sup> Year Reunion, Sept. 2017**  
**St. Paul, Minnesota**

India III returned to their campus training site, the University of Minnesota—St. Paul campus fifty-four years later (1963-2017)! A group of nine RPCV's and two spouses joined together for a three day reunion from Sept 13-16 hosted by Minnesotans, Donna Anderson and John Chromy.



The weather was beautiful, the hospitality exceptional and the camaraderie typical of India III—warm and comfortable. Donna Anderson, life-long resident of Minnesota (a true ambassador for St. Paul) was our main organizer. She kept us busy, on-schedule, on the-right-roads most of the time, and very well fed!

We gathered together at Donna's house on Wednesday afternoon Sept 13 for snacks and then dinner. Mary and Harry who had driven from Michigan (ferrying across Lake Michigan) went to the airport late that afternoon to pick-up Joe Bette and Ken and Maria Lyvers. Luck was with us—without even a contact by cell-phone, we met-up with both parties and whisked everyone back to Donna's House. In the meantime, Larry Brown drove-in from Colorado in his new RAM truck (very impressive) and Jack Slattery arrived after traveling to two weddings on the east coast and having been on-the-road for a few weeks. His wife Cynthia joined us for some events,

but was staying with her 98-year-old mother! John Chromy had a board meeting at his old elementary school and arrived just as we started dinner. Connie Hankins had arrived earlier in the day; her brother bringing her in from the airport. So we were finally all together!



We met at Donna's home in an older residential area of St. Paul. Her flower gardens both on the street and in the back yard were



gloriously welcoming. We sat with the bees and butterflies and

started with our stories of India and travels and reunions—the beginning of three days of non-stop reminiscing. Connie brought some of Hank's DVDs of Guy Clark songs and we enjoyed our memories of those three months in the spring of 1963 when we were so young, naive and impressionable.

After dinner and birthday cake (Donna's birthday earlier in the month) we gathered the group and caravanned up to Lake Phalen and our rental home.



Nine of us stayed at this modern house right on the lake. It was a glorious home—more up-scale than we anticipated. Below is a photo of breakfast on the patio (Chromy, Bette, Ken Lyvers and Maria (Hein) Lyvers).

Below left are Harry, Larry and John.



After breakfast, Connie and Donna joined us to guide us to our appointment with Mary Buschette, the Director of Alumni & Constituent Relations in the College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources. We learned about the changes on-campus since our days there. At this time, Donna shared a wealth of information that she had gleaned from her own files (India training syllabus, case studies, and discussion questions) and from the Campus Archives about our training program in 1963. From the final report of our training program, prepared by staff---

*“India trainees were a very heterogeneous group. They varied widely in age (from 19-65), intelligence, experience and education....The India group had bonds and customs that no other*



*training group had demonstrated. Probably the most observable of these was the habit trainees acquired at Puerto Rico of running everywhere.”* We walked over to the area where Dexter Hall once stood (green grass) and even had ice cream at the newly expanded Student Center (where we sang along with Guy Clark, Bob Geissel and Harry Andrews on instruments). While in our meeting with Mary Bruchette, she mentioned the Norman Borlaug



book about the green revolution, “Our Daily Bread” from Amazon for \$2.99.



Dexter Hall stood on the spot where the men are standing.



After our visit to campus, we went over to Como Park for a box lunch picnic and strolls through the gardens.



We returned home for a late afternoon nap and preparations for dinner. John and Harry were the grill-masters and Connie and Donna set up the salads. Jack and Larry were bartenders. Mary had planned to organize the dinner, but as she sat talking with Cynthia, she saw one billowing cloud of smoke after another coming from the grill. It seems that the fire was much larger than anticipated and cooked the brats and burgers in record time! We ate them all and enjoyed a leisurely put-together-meal. In the meantime, Joe and Donna were organizing their few slides



for a slide-presentation later. We thoroughly enjoyed the images of training in MN—especially the tulips buried in the snow, the group taking-off for Easter dinner at the Anderson’s or Chromy’s and the camaraderie of trainees between classes. Joe had images of a group walking across the Rotung Pass in the snow and various northern volunteers at their work sites.



Friday morning found us with a leisurely schedule—no activity until the afternoon. Ken and Maria took-off for a four mile hike and the rest of us enjoyed breakfast prepared by Chef Bette! Boy can he make a mean omelet!!!



Friday afternoon we planned to meet at the Harriet Island Harbor for a riverboat ride down the Mississippi. This was a spectacular trip with narration of some of the history of the steamboat era and early founding of St. Paul and Minneapolis.





Donna is speaking to an alumnus of the Korean Peace Corps, “Peace Kor” whom we met on the boat. What a small world!



Our last evening was spent at an Indian/Nepali/Tibetan Restaurant, “Everest on the Grand”. We had wonderful moomoos and a variety of north Indian style dishes. It was a delightful closing event for a very enriching and rewarding reunion of old friends! The owners of the restaurant were supporters of “Empower

*Nepal Foundation*”, a small NGO started by an MSU professor whose village of “Hamaspur was a stop on our India/Nepal trip with Donna, Joe, Linda, Jack, Cynthia and the Andrews in 2013.







Other Notes: While at the reunion, Donna shared a copy of a small book that **Carolyn Banks** created to document her trip to India to distribute Roger's ashes in the Ganga. The little book, "*Tigers, Temples, and Marigolds*" contains poems and descriptions of the various cities that she visited on the trip in January-February 2013 after Roger died. It includes pictures of placing his ashes in the Ganges River in Varanasi with the sunset in the background!

When Donna was talking with **Pat Cantlon's** sister it was agreed that we would try to contact Pat by phone when we were together....Well, Joe Bette tried to do so. On the first try they were disconnected and Joe never knew if Pat was aware of who was calling. But on the second try, the next morning, Pat answered and mentioned that Joe had called the night before! So he knew who had tried to call. But on this attempt the quality of the line

was so bad that although Joe could hear, Pat could not. Thereafter they never did connect. Pat mentioned that he was going into surgery that afternoon for macular degeneration issues.

Lastly, sad news—Donna did a search on the internet for **John Reid** in the Columbus Ohio newspapers and came across his obituary. He died in 2008 while in the John Hopkins Hospital (so he may have been seriously ill). It mentions his two daughters and a son, but no mention of a wife. His career was in hospital administration. Following is the obit. If any of you have information on the following "lost" India III volunteers, let us know: Sammy Mitchell, Dick Pine, or John Stein.

### **John Edward Reid--from the Columbus Dispatch**

REID John Edward Reid, 67, died a peaceful death surrounded by his children on Wednesday, January 9, 2008 at Johns Hopkins University Medical Center in Baltimore, MD. He was born March 25, 1940 in Laurelville, OH. He was a wonderful father who raised three healthy children and always gave a helping hand to family and friends in need. An undergraduate degree from Ohio State University and a Master's degree from George Washington University allowed John to enjoy a successful 37 year career in the hospital administration field. Spent two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in India, served his country during the Vietnam War, and traveled to numerous overseas countries as a young man. He was a member of multiple civic, fraternal, and professional organizations throughout his career. Hobbies included spending time with family, watching Ohio State athletics, and following the real estate market. Survived by son, Aaron Reid; daughters, Beth Reid and Hailey Scott; and sister, Janet (Richard) Biery. He was preceded in death by his parents George and Audrey Reid. Memorial service will be held at 3 p.m. on Saturday, January 19, 2008 at the FRANK E. SMITH FUNERAL HOME, 405 N. Columbus St, Lancaster, OH 43130 with Pastor Mark Eaton officiating. Calling hours will begin one hour prior to the service. Memorial contributions can be sent to the American Diabetes Association, PO Box 11454, Alexandria, VA 22312 or The Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute, 1328 Dover Rd., Wooster OH 44691. "Sign the online guestbook at [www.dispatch.com/obituaries](http://www.dispatch.com/obituaries)"





Picture on left is a “selfie” with Mary Bruchette in front of Coffey Hall. The sculptures of a set of three bulls are set in a green field in front of Coffey Hall.



