

E.N.S.S. REUNION

Former Rotary exchange student returns

Janice Wykes was a Colborne Rotary exchange student at East Northumberland Secondary School in 1982 -- and she has never lost touch with the community.

The Australian, who now works in the office of Australian Prime Minister John Howard, is on a three-month paid long-service leave granted many employees in Australia after 10 years' service.

She and her four children are spending the time in Poilhes, France. Nicholas, James, Alix and three-year-old Anna are attending school there, augmenting the French skills they are learning in their French immersion programs in Canberra, Australia.

And, as Janice says, "Once you're in France, it's not far to Canada."

This isn't her first trip back to the country she visited as an 18-year-old.

She was back in 1986 and again last year on business. She is part of a team trying to improve the delivery of government services.

When she heard about the school's 50th-anniversary reunion, Janice decided it was time to return. For a week she has been catching up with her old friends, friends she has maintained for over 20 years. She also took time this time to visit with her former host families.

Glenn and Gerry Spence, George and Suzie Boycott, Vi Warren and Muriel Churchill all took time during her whirlwind visit to reminisce.

That year in Canada was, in Janice's words, "one of the most special years in my life. That's

why I've kept in touch.

Teenage buddies Stephanie Bird, Ann Simpson, Lisa Peister, Patty Green and Ian Colby, and through them a host of others formed Janice's group of friends in 1982. And she was bound this time to meet as many of them as she could.

Perhaps her one disappointment of the trip was that some were missing at the reunion. That is somewhat tempered when she remembers that she saw Keith Moore, Kristen Fawcett, Dawn Westrope and Guy Brummel last year.

The student decides to travel

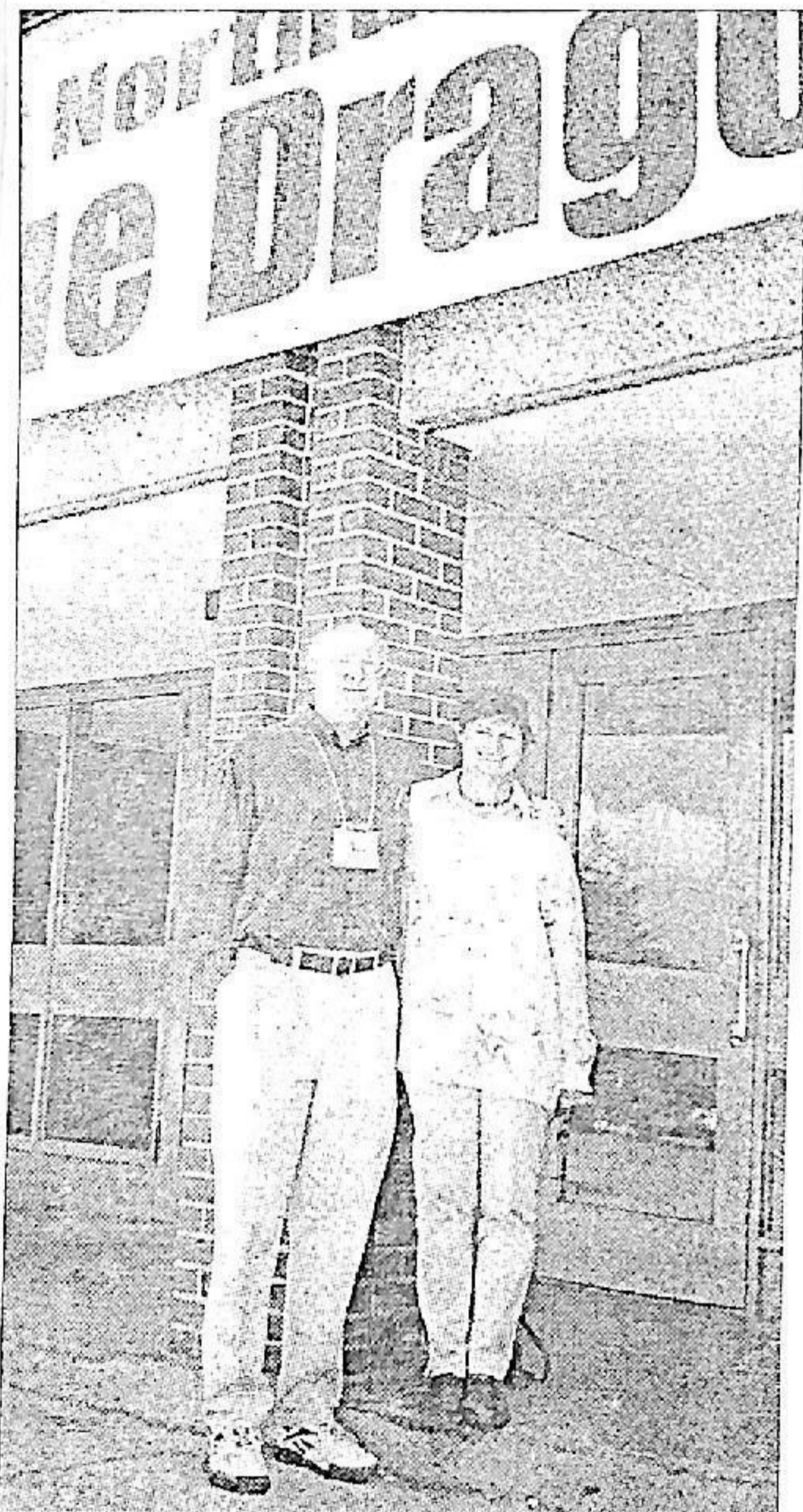
After talking to exchange students at her own high school in Wellington, New South Wales, Australia, in the early 1980s, Janice applied to become a Rotary Exchange Student. They'd all remarked on how wonderful the experience had been. It looked like an opportunity to travel without being a tourist.

When Janice explains what is needed to be a successful exchange student, it's obvious to see why she was so successful.

She sparkles as she engages her listener in conversation, and clearly lives life fully. She outlines that a student must be relatively outgoing to be a success. Students are ambassadors for their countries and are expected to speak to many groups during their year abroad.

The Australian made many connections while here. She remembers it as a closely-knit area. A lot of former ENSS students have remained here. She has observed many changes as well.

*Photos and text
by Bob Owen*



Former Rotary exchange student Janice Wykes and Colborne Rotary exchange co-ordinator Glenn Spence shared many happy memories while Janice was visiting from Australia. Janice scheduled the trip so that she could take part in the 50th anniversary of ENSS.



In 2004 she was Eponine in Les Miserables; in 2005 Britney Hope graduates. She can still evoke emotions with her singing of 'On My Own'. Britney was one of the performers at the Saturday Gala.

