

A Fabulous Birthday Celebration at the Historic Alton Mill

Last week John Wright hosted his 65th birthday party - in style. The event was announced with artistic invitations designed by Gordon Wright and Peter Perko, "Another Milestone, Another Evening Soirée". The party unfolded in the elegant ambience that John created in the newly restored Alton Mill.

Well over 130 well-wishers turned out for this special occasion to honor their dear friend. The sumptuous buffet and exotic hors d'oeuvres were created by Jeff Holtom of Holtom's Bakery and served throughout the evening by Emily Stevens and Leigh-Ann Holtom. Bartenders, Melody, Tim and Alicia kept the guests' glasses full. Kent Tocher provided the musical background for the event.

Mr. Wright, decked out in designer duds, was, as ever, the consummate host. The evening was reminiscent of the Great Gatsby - such a relief from the doom and gloom of the economic times. The Millrace room was transformed, with the help of Anne Hicks, Tracey, Danae and John's godson, Justin.

Red lacquered urns displaying luscious palms, votives in the windows, Persian carpets on the floor, original art, provided by The Mill, and a unique kimono created by Sonja Bukata adorned the magical space.

In attendance were John's brother, Ward, his sister-in-law, Deanne, niece Louise and husband Jason and his two grand-nephews, Connor and Walker. Missing from this gathering was John's niece, Dr. Elizabeth Wright of Peterborough.

Other guests in attendance were dear friend, Jean Denison, John Denison, inspired publisher of The Boston Mills Press, Elke and Tim Inkster, recipients of the Order of Canada for publishing of The Porcupine's Quill, great companions, Sally and David White of Alton, Bonnie Gordon of Bonnie Gordon Inc., Heather, Peter and Matthew Kendall, and Anne and Neville Hicks.

Also thoroughly engaged in the celebration were friends, Kasia Seydegart and George Spears of ERIN Research, Stephanie and Jamie Gairdner, Jennifer and John Yang, Ann and Tom Cavan of Calipre's Landscape Design, Marion and John Carney, John Bennie and Joyce Warren of Burlington, Mary Lippert of Dana Interiors, Jill Beshiri from The Advocate with her husband, George, Gwen and Greg Coulter, formerly of The Bistro Rivière, architect Roy Brown and his partner Francie Downing of Green Lake, Peter Perko of Eye Cue Design and his wife, Patti Post, a journalist.

Lifetime friends, Bill Hurren and AnnaMarie Holtom were a key part of the event as were Gordon Wright, internationally known stained glass artist with his partner, Lori Mason.

More than twenty of John's colleagues dating back to his Canadian Airlines days came to celebrate and honor their friend.

Despite the wintry conditions on the night of April 7th, many beloved guests came from as far away as Toronto, Bolton, Kleinburg, Oakville, Canmore, Alberta and Laurel to pay tribute to John.

Set in the historic Alton Mill, a knitting mill established in 1881 on the Millpond of Shaw's Creek, John's unique generosity and thoughtfulness made the occasion a very "Memorable Milestone", indeed.