

# Douglas Burnet Smith-- The Poet

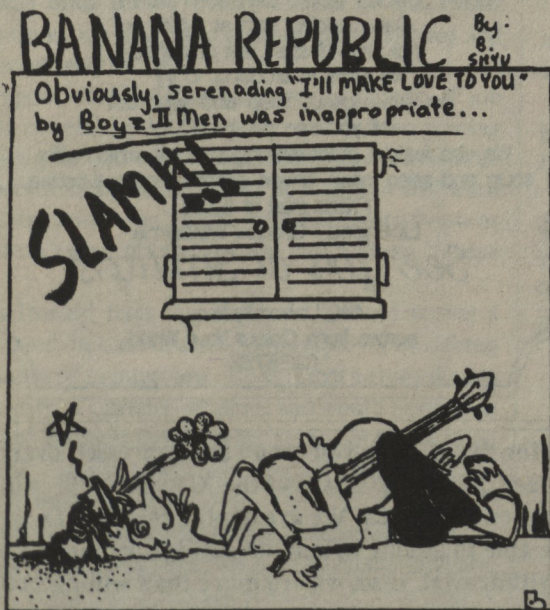
By Jason Roberts

If you have read such books of poetry as "Voices from a Farther Room", "The Knife-Thrower's Partner", "Ladder to the Moon", and "Living in the Cave of the Mouth", then you have read some of the works of Douglas Burnet Smith. Besides being a winner of the *Malshat Review's* long poem prize, a recent Governor General's Award nominee for poetry, and past president of the League of Canadian Poets, Smith has become one of Canada's most distinguished writers of modern contemporary poetry. I got the chance to meet and interview him while he was Writer-in-Residence at UPEI, on campus from March first to the tenth.

Being a rookie to the interviewing business, I went into my first challenge with much confidence, some nervous feelings, and though being the keener I try to be, little preparation. After a friendly greeting and a run-down on what I wanted to do, the nerves were gone and I felt much more relaxed as his manner of speaking was very easy-going. He then told me that he had been interested in languages and writing ever since he was a boy watching his father typing columns for a newspaper. As he went through school, it seemed to him that English was the only subject that he did well in and enjoyed. His interests in writing increased as he entered university and he soon realized that poetry was his strong point and that he would enjoy writing as a profession. Today, Mr. Smith teaches Creative Writing and Twentieth Century Literature at St. Francis Xavier University.

Although I only write poetry as a hobby, I wanted to get a second opinion on some of my own work as well as test Mr. Smith's ability. I presented him with a poem I wrote and was very impressed by his quick response and helpful criticism. He told me things such as "poems should tell stories", and that in his opinion, a poem was not good until it satisfied the curiosity of the reader. I may have figured these things out with time, but who said a little encouragement is not required?

I left Mr. Smith's office with a new perspective on how I would write from now on. He was very informative and interesting to listen to, and his personality made it easy for me to talk to him. My only regret is that he was not here long enough to read some of my other poems and comment on them. Yet he did his job well and I am glad I got the chance to meet him.



## RESTAURANT RETROSPECTIVE WITH JEN AND AL

### Silver Streams

In our unending quest for yummy Chinese food we decided to tackle reviewing the Silver Streams restaurant. When we discovered that there was a Chinese spot we had not been to yet, we were delighted.

The Silver Streams is across the Hillsborough bridge, in the Lo-Food shopping center. This might be a bit out of the way for some of you, but it is worth it. The menu held the usual fare, no big surprises, and the prices were comparable to most Charlottetown Chinese food. The big surprise is the amount of food you get. We all ordered combo platters, and the platters were stacked so high that you could not see the plate underneath, or the person sitting across from you, for that matter! Even though I was ravenously hungry, I still had to take home a doggie bag, and that provided an ample lunch the next day.

With such large amounts, one would expect the food to be pretty bad. Actually it was great -- from the chicken fried rice, to the complimentary fortune cookie. Our server deserves a raise for putting up with us. She was polite even when we sat gabbing for an hour after we were finished eating.

The restaurant is pretty small, but on the night we were there we were the only customers so it did not feel too crowded. I thought that the Silver Streams easily ranks with the best Chinese restaurants in Charlottetown. It's only drawback is the difficulty of getting there if you don't have a car, but if you get the opportunity give them a try.

The Silver Streams deserves 4 out of 5 cookies.

### Sam's Lunchbar and Steakhouse

Sam's is located on University Avenue across from the Confederation Court Mall. I am amazed that Sam's is not more popular than it is; it is one of the best restaurants in the Charlottetown area.

When you walk in, you will discover a truly elegant interior. Don't let this fool you into thinking that it is an expensive restaurant. While there are medium to higher priced entree's on the evening menu, the lunch menu (which is also available at night) is perfectly reasonable and has a wide selection. Sam's also has a great all-you-can-eat buffet, each day is a different special, and Sunday is a brunch special.

Of course, the name will tell you that steak is a specialty at Sam's but they also make a great clubhouse sandwich. It comes with fries, and I dare you to try and finish it.

I have eaten several lunches at Sam's and I have no complaints. The tables are arranged to offer privacy, and for the most part, the service is great! Sam's would be ideal for an evening date, it is romantic without having to cough up a week's income for your meal.

Sam's features Lebanese and Canadian foods, I have not had the Lebanese, but my boyfriend has and he highly recommends it.

I'll give Sam's 4 and a half cookies, and a hint.. try the pecan pie... it's amazing!

Aldera

### Silver Streams

I know everyone will agree with me that on a student budget it just is not feasible to eat out a lot. Well, that's what we tell our parents and the student aid office anyway. I am not here to review cheap restaurants and I don't receive reimbursement of any sort for reviewing these restaurants, so why then you ask do I do them? Simple, for the glory and the prestige of having my name in the X-Press, (and the free PIZZA every Tuesday just for showing up at the meeting --this is an attempt to get you to write for the X-Press).

My companions on this particular evening were Al Shannon, and Carol. We dined at the Silver Stream restaurant and boy did we dine. The service was fine, I have no complaints. Our waitress was polite and patient with us, (it only took us about 10 minutes to decide what to order -- a new record we're getting faster), she was even patient with us when we stayed for about an hour after we had finished our meal. Now that's hospitality! About the food, I could hardly see Al over the full plates we were served. Everyone took home a doggie bag, (that's an amazing feat for me), and everyone enjoyed the meal.

If you are tired of the usual Chinese food joints in town go across the bridge to Bunbury or whatever its called now and try the Silver Stream Restaurant. I give the Silver Stream Chinese Restaurant 4 fortune cookies.

### Stage Coach Steakhouse

For my next dining experience I would like to take you to the Stagecoach Steakhouse, located on lower Queen Street. My companion for this event was my boyfriend who loves to eat out as much as I do, and has 2 for 1 tickets for almost every restaurant in town. The name of this restaurant is very deceiving, I pictured a sort of western atmosphere that served big plates of ribs and other barbequed foods. WRONG... This place has class, it's sort of dressy, although no one was dressed up, but you got the feeling that you should be sort of sophisticated to eat here. Our waiter was very polite, very kind and very understanding about my aversion to turnips. I enjoyed my meal and was impressed that you could get your potato done in more ways than mashed, fried, or baked. Steve enjoyed his ribs and was ever so grateful when our waiter brought him out a finger bowl. I think we had a very nice meal, and I would recommend it to anyone looking for a nice quiet spot to sit with a loved one and enjoy a good meal. I give the Stagecoach Steakhouse 3.75 cookies.

Jennifer.

#### Ranking System for

#### Restaurant Retrospectives:

- 5 COOKIES Better than MOM's home cooked turkey dinner
- 4 COOKIES As good as that first cup of coffee in the morning
- 3 COOKIES Good, but I'd go home for dessert
- 2 COOKIES As good as army rations
- 1 COOKIE Kraft dinner watered down to last until April