

President's Corner

*By Léo Lefebvre,
President, Toronto Users Group
for Midrange Systems*

Twenty years already! Twenty years since the very first TUG meeting on May 30th, 1985. The meeting was mainly a social gathering of a few people whose main (work) interest was IBM System/34, S/36 and/or S/38. (Of course the AS/400 was not born yet.) The meeting agenda topics were: "Getting to know each other" and "If the meeting participants would like the users group to continue". Obviously, the results of that first meeting were excellent and positive. Here we are, twenty years later and TUG is a tremendous success story and is still flourishing.

What happened during those 20 years? Many, many, many things... Preparing for this "corner," I reviewed **Neil Andrus'** articles on TUG's first 10 years ("She's a Ten" published in September 1995) and TUG's first 15 years ("He's a Fifteen" published in September 2000). Neil's articles were quite informative and lengthy. I do not have enough room to repeat them in these few columns, but if you're interested you can find them in our on-line archives at www.tug.ca.

Suffice it to say that with the endless events, meetings, and other activities, we could write a book about TUG. We could write chapters about all of the Directors who helped manage the group during those 20 years. We could also write chapters about the numerous volunteers who gave us a hand when needed. And how about the numerous speakers who took the time to share with us their knowledge and experience? Every year we host 5 Meetings of Members with 2 topics each. So with 10 speakers per year, that makes almost 200 MoM speakers. With twelve annual TECs at an average of 20 speakers per conference it makes another 240+ speakers. Too many to enumerate! Also – not that we would really need it for a good sized book – but we could also garnish it with thousands of pictures.

Another area where TUG is unique among all of the local users groups in the world is its own full-colour magazine (the magazine you are currently reading.) Isn't it a beauty? **Vaughn Dragland** has put his talent into the layout as well as editing the articles submitted by the numerous brilliant writers. The TUG magazine, its editor, and its writers would also be the subject of an extremely informative chapter in that TUG book.

One chapter that we just cannot leave aside is the one about the TUG members. Where would TUG be without its devoted members who, year after year, renew their membership and participate regularly in meetings and conferences? In his 10th anniversary article, Neil Andrus listed what he called the "Pioneer Group of Companies." There were 23 names in that list. Today, many of those companies are still listed as "member in good standing." Congratulations and TUG thanks you! Without too much investigation, I would venture to say that from those original pioneer companies there are numerous employees who (as their careers progressed) made sure that each of their subsequent employers would become a TUG member.

There are so many things to mention about TUG and its 20 years, but I have limited space in this column. However, I would like to talk with you about it in person... Let's make an appointment! On Wednesday evening, August 17, 2005, TUG will be celebrating its 20th anniversary with a boat cruise on the open waters of Lake Ontario aboard the sailing ship Kajama (Ka-ya-ma), This is a fully restored 1930, 165 foot gaff-rigged schooner. It will be a unique experience. The sails will be hoisted (your help will be welcome) so we can enjoy an exquisite cruise all around Toronto's "outer



harbor" like only a sailing ship can offer. This sunset cruise will be memorable for the good company, good food, dancing under the stars and much, much more...

Get a slice of TUG's 20th anniversary cake and have a drink (or two) to TUG and YOUR future. Let's get together and let's talk about your past (and present) experience with TUG. Let's talk about your plans for the future with regards to TUG. Let's talk about where you see TUG five years, ten years and even twenty years from now.

Bring your spouse, your partner(s), your colleagues – and join a crowd of happy "tuggers." You won't regret it! Look at the flyer you received with this magazine or download it from TUG's website (www.tug.ca/20). See the Kajama promotional video, also on TUG's website (follow the links). Register soon, seats are limited! Don't forget, a dinner cruise on the Kajama is available only with charter groups, you won't get it individually. So, this is a unique opportunity! Let's write another chapter in TUG's book with this special celebration.

If you can't make it on August 17 but you would like to share your memories with us, send me an e-mail (leo@tug.ca) and I will be glad to read it to the attendees during the evening.

Happy 20th Anniversary to all TUG members and thank you very much for your ongoing support! 