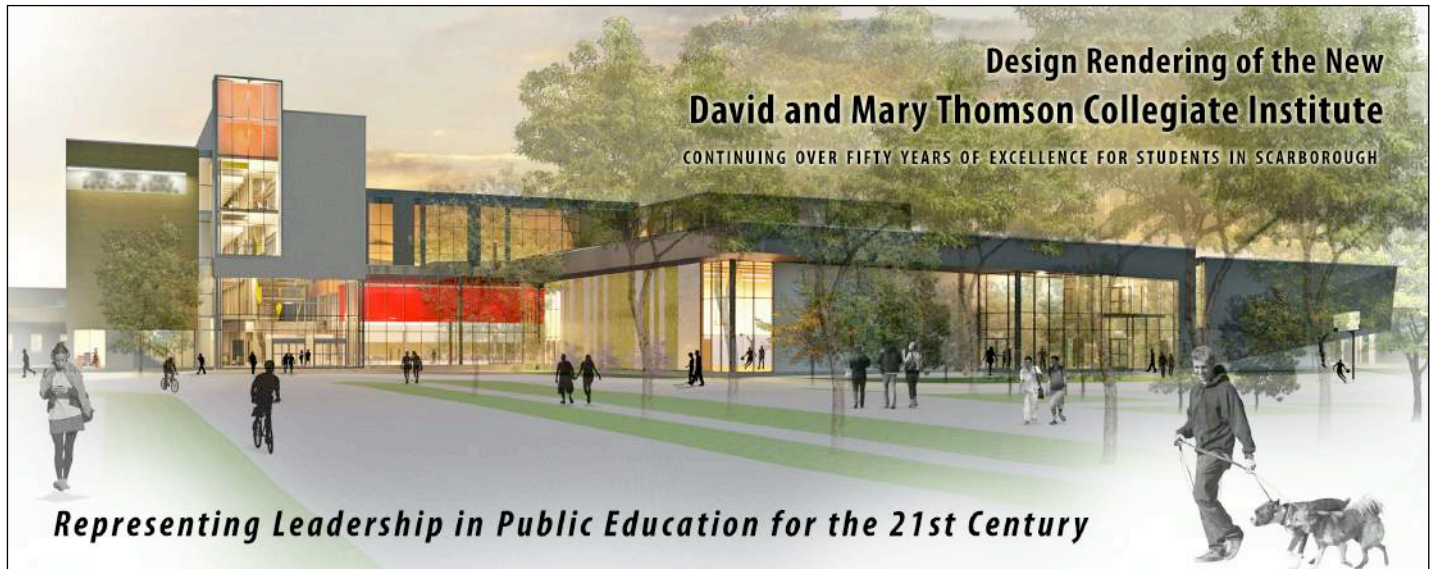


AUTUMN 2014

# Thomson TRADEWINDS

DAVID & MARY THOMSON C.I. ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



## NEW SCHOOL? NOT SO FAST!

Since our last newsletter, in the spring, unexpected developments have stalled progress on plans for the new David and Mary Thomson Collegiate, so optimistically rendered in the design drawing above. The future of the present Thomson site is now up in the air following the City Council Motion to suspend all approvals as a result of the French Public School Board's withdrawal of their offer to purchase. The most likely outcome will be demolition of the building (there may yet be souvenir bricks available for alumni!) with commercial or residential development. However, since the property is presently zoned as School, consultation with the community will occur as part of the City Planning approval process.

Councillor **Michael Thompson**, anticipating and reacting to community concerns, successfully put through his motion to place a hold on all planning and construction even before the matter of rezoning had officially been introduced. This means that although the new school itself has received support and approval, nothing can be done until the fate of the rest of the property has been resolved. The Toronto District School Board are exploring ways to react to this set-back. The 2016 opening date suggested in our spring newsletter will undoubtedly be delayed by one or even two years. That will involve extra costs. And, if you have been in the "old school" recently, you will realize that, understandably, not much has been spent on repairs and upgrades, leaving the present students and staff to toil in less-than-ideal surroundings for a longer time than they had anticipated.

One aspect of the plan for the present four-school complex has been initiated. Donwood and Highbrook graduates may be interested to know that Donwood has been converted to a K-8 school from its former K-6 designation. Room for the extra students, and for full-day kindergarten, has been found by using most of the space in the Highbrook building as part of the Donwood program. Otherwise, we await developments.

You can check our alumni website: [www.thomsonforever.ca](http://www.thomsonforever.ca) for updates until our Spring 2015 newsletter.



# NEW SCHOOL: HERITAGE PLANNING



*NTCI Alumni Room hallway entrance display*

The Toronto District School Board’s administration staff have invited Thomson Alumni to be involved in planning for the old schools’ (Thomson’s and Bendale’s) and the Thomson family’s heritage to be represented in the new building. The initiative for this action was taken by alumnus **William Strat**as, who also acts as the webmaster for our alumni website. He made contact with board officials and they have responded by including alumni reps at two planning sessions earlier this year. Former teachers, **Jim Myrvold** and **Stan Farrow** joined William and Bendale’s and Thomson’s principals at the first, where the architect displayed plans and drawings. The second involved a visit to North Toronto Collegiate, to see how they have preserved and displayed their heritage in a new building. Photos taken by William of some of these can be seen left and at the bottom of page 3.

North Toronto, at 100 years + has a sizable heritage, but Bendale and Thomson total over 100 years as well. NTCI grads, however, already from a relatively affluent part of the city and with more time to attain influential positions in society, could underwrite costs and organize support more easily. It will be up to us to decide how ambitious we want to be and how much fund-raising we are prepared to do. William is excited at the possibility that our new school, with high, eye-catching walls by the gymnasium and the cafeteria, could handle large, imaginative digitally-produced murals at lower cost and with grander effect than traditional trophy cases, etc. provide. We invite comments and suggestions from all of you (heritage and fund-raising ideas). William can gather them at our website contact address.

Our thanks also to superintendent **John Chasty**, who has been our board liaison for this initiative.

# LIVING ON THE EDGE FOR PUB NIGHT

The coolish, damp weather didn’t deter about 40 dedicated souls from attending our May 2 Pub Night. Hoping to attract some new attendees, we ventured out to a new location, The Edge Lounge, in Ajax. We did manage to pull in some east-end non-regulars. The live band was good, with an extensive play list, but also loud, making reunion conversations difficult. Perhaps that reaction is a sign of our ages, as most of the attending alumni graduated between the 1960s and the 1980s. Still, most were partaking late into the evening.

Special thanks to **Sue Botelho-Lee** for making the arrangements. Mark May 1, 2015 as the probable date of our next Pub Night. Tentative location is back in Scarborough at Borsalino’s (formerly Joey Bravo’s) on Sheppard between Brimley and McCowan. Check Thomson’s internet groups or our spring issue for details.

*Thanks to **Bob Doi** for this note and to **Bob Forrest** and **Bob Doi** for the photos below.*







# ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS 2013-2014

In 2010, following our 50th anniversary celebrations, the Thomson Alumni established an award to honour Grade 9 students who demonstrated leadership skills and who enthusiastically participated in the school community - displaying the kind of Thomson spirit we share as alumni. There is one award for boys and one for girls. We are proud to introduce the winners from last year's Grade 9 class.



**Sulaman Karimi** was a member of the rugby team and also made a point of participating in class and working hard at his studies. He applied too late to join the Future Aces leadership group, but intends to remedy that oversight this year, while continuing with rugby as well as the chess club. He was enrolled in the extended French program at Charles Gordon Senior Public School, so it's not surprising that he lists French among his favourite subjects. But he includes Science and Phys Ed as well. Prior to Charles Gordon, he graduated from Donwood Park. He has two older brothers, an older sister and a younger brother, with whom he enjoys playing basketball.

For the past nine years, he has attended Kids' Kapers, a children's camp in Scarborough run by four nurses with an emphasis on instilling "good qualities" in the campers. Sulaman has risen to the role of junior leader. When asked about possible future careers he suggests he has considered becoming a nurse or a police

officer, with Mechanical Engineering as another option.

He likes Thomson, finding it a calm place to learn. He also has a group of six friends who make school fun.



**Hannah Patrick** was a member of Future Aces and the badminton team. She is pleased that she was able to help her teachers and also excel scholastically. She has added field hockey to her activities in Grade 10. She had a game shortly after our interview, so is wearing her field hockey sweater in the photograph. She had also attended a leadership conference at Pigeon Lake for the three days prior to our meeting, so she learned of her award only as she sat down to chat with us and with vice-principal **Nicholas English**, who is responsible for prizes, awards and commencement planning. Her favourite subject in Grade 9 was Geography, but that is replaced by History in Grade 10, necessitating a different choice this year - which she hasn't decided yet! She attended Lord Roberts and Charles Gordon prior to Thomson. She is the youngest of four girls in her family.

Outside of school, she has been taking piano lessons for two years, working on her Grade 3 syllabus now. In October and November she sings with the Eagles Chorus, a choir that performs in a Christmas production at the Markham Theatre. She attends the Global Kingdom Ministries on Markham Rd., where she was a junior choir member and now is waiting to be old enough to join the adult choir. Interestingly, she also lists Mechanical Engineering (at Ryerson, if possible) as her next step after high school, because she loves cars!

The awards were presented at the annual Awards Assembly on October 16. We congratulate these worthy winners and wish them every success in the future.

More photos from North Toronto Collegiate. William's collection can be seen at <http://adobe.ly/1vJXZbh>.

*Sports Display Wall*



*Central Courtyard*



*Alumni Archive Room*





# THOMSON'S NEW ADMINISTRATORS



David and Mary Thomson C.I. has a new principal, **Bill Papaconstantinou**. Bill is not actually new to the school, having served as Head of Boys Physical Education for eight years, when he replaced the retiring **Jim Myrvold** in 1999. Prior to that he began his teaching career at Northern Secondary School in 1991 and after seven years moved to West Toronto as Head for a couple of years before creation of the amalgamated Toronto board allowed him to move to Scarborough at Thomson. After Thomson, he served as Vice Principal at Bendale B.T.I for three years and principal at Winston Churchill C.I. for four. He jumped at the chance to apply for the opening at Thomson when **Soriana Mantini** retired, echoing her judgement that "Thomson's the best". "The staff are engaged and take responsibility for the school's success. The students are enjoying themselves here. I love this place," he says.

His background at both Bendale and Thomson puts him in a good position to handle the preparations for the new combined school. The fact that he knows many of the staff members already is another plus. He lives just north of Thomson Park; so his commute is very short. However each morning that commute is preceded by an hour's round trip to Bill Crothers Secondary School in the Markham district, transporting the older of his two teen-aged daughters to join her fellow national-class athletes in the special sports-oriented program there. Interestingly, the architectural and contracting team that built Crothers are also responsible for the new Thomson, so Bill has had a chance to assess their work. The building atmosphere is amazing, according to Bill. All the facilities are inviting and state-of-the-art, but the third-floor library, airy and inspiring, is a real winner. So he's quite eager to see what transpires in the next few years.

**Alison Kelsey** has also joined Thomson as a Vice Principal. Her background is in Phys Ed, the same as Bill's. In fact, she and Bill grew up across the street from each other, attending Glen Ravine, Charles Gordon and Midland Ave C.I. She would have preferred to attend Thomson, a shorter walk, but lived just south of the creek boundary. Her teaching career has taken her to William Osler, Sir Robert Borden, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, an exchange in New Zealand, back to Laurier and Borden, then to Albert Campbell and George S. Henry and Vice Principal duties at A.Y. Jackson and Cedarbrae before finally getting her wish to attend Thomson. She finds the students very polite and friendly and the staff supportive. Just what she always hoped for at the school.



We cannot welcome our new administrators without saying an appreciative goodbye to **Soriana Mantini**, whose positive tenure at Thomson included the extra pressure but excitement of working with the alumni on the gala 50th Anniversary. Planning and organization involved many dinners missed at home staying over for meetings with the alumni at the school. Now that she has become a Thomson alumna herself, we wish her a happy and fulfilling retirement!

## IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to report the death of **Clara Strozyk**, a teacher in Thomson's Business Department from 1968 to 1982. She was a week shy of her 89th birthday. Clara is remembered for her cheerful disposition (most of the time), her secret supply of daily jokes and the fact she taught in Thomson's most secret classroom in the far north-east corner of the second floor. A tree has been planted in her memory in the Toronto Botanical Gardens (Edwards Gardens) west of the main building near Lawrence Ave.

We also received word just after going to press with our last issue, of the death of Thomson alumna (1967-1971) **Lynne (McMaster) Vanderreest**. We thank her friends for letting us know. Please keep us informed of alumni news, good or bad.



Clara



Lynne