

# Thomson TRADEWINDS

DAVID & MARY THOMSON C.I. ALUMNI NEWSLETTER  
SPRING 2016

## NEW SCHOOL UPDATE

It seems as if we've been issuing updates on the proposed new David and Mary Thomson Collegiate forever. In fact it was September, 2008 when a review committee first recommended that the Toronto District School Board consolidate Bendale and Thomson into one composite school. At pub nights and other alumni get-togethers (such as the reunion mentioned on the following pages), rumours abound that the school has already been torn down, that the Thomson family name has been abandoned or (out of frustration) that nothing has happened or will happen.

The present students and staff at the school know better. The bulletin board in the front hall by the office now displays the architect's drawing (right) of the new building, with the label "Our Future". And the Board sent home a letter at the end of January updating progress on the plans.

Before the letter was sent out, the Ontario Municipal Board had cleared the way for progress by approving a compromise plan worked out with the local community. All of the Bendale site and most of the present Thomson site will be turned over to the Toronto Lands Corporation,

the TDSB's real estate arm, and will probably be sold to developers for town houses and similar projects. The City of Toronto has agreed to purchase a 2-acre parcel of the property to provide community park space and a future child care program. Exclusive access to the park will be for student use during school hours. It was the community's concern over use of the land that has delayed final approval of the full redevelopment package.

Now final plans can be put in place, contracts signed and (dare we believe it?) shovels put in the ground. The new school will be built on open property behind Thomson and Bendale. The old schools will remain until the new one is ready to open. As to when that will be, there's no word, as yet. Should we place bets? September, 2018 seems the earliest practical date. 2019 would correspond with Thomson's 60th anniversary. Either way, your alumni committee plans to "celebrate" with various activities, once we know the dates.

The students whom we profile inside this newsletter were there at the exciting opening of Thomson in 1959. Sad as we may be to see the old place torn down, a new generation will soon get to re-experience that excitement.





# LIFE SINCE THOMSON

## A CROSS-SECTION OF CAPSULE PROFILES FROM THE CLASS OF 1964



It all began when **Dave Upton** (Class of 1966) died on February 1, 2016. He and **Sandy Offenburger** (also 1966) were high school sweethearts at Thomson. They had married while Dave was still at McMaster University and Sandy was working for Bell Canada. After Dave graduated, they started their family of three boys, moving to Cobourg, ON between #2 and #3! When their youngest was in school full-time, Sandy purchased a fabric and drapery business in town with a friend, then joined Dave later in



a furniture store adventure for many years. Dave became very active in community work, being named a life member of Kinsmen in 1986. Sandy took a computer/accounting course at the local high school to update, and moved to accounting work at a local car dealership. She retired in 2009 after several years as the office manager. When the couple moved to a property in Baltimore, just north of Cobourg, their home continued to be “the party house”, as the Offenburger home had been in Scarborough. (Nine grandchildren helped!) So it was no surprise that even the funeral turned into a gathering of old friends. When Sandy’s older sister, **Linda**, flew from Germany to help with post-funeral details, Linda’s classmate from 1964, **Carol Gray**, hosted a reunion of some fellow Thomsonites, and we used the occasion, in Dave’s memory, to catch up on their post-Thomson careers:



**Christine (Clements) Kitchen** graduated from the University of Western Ontario in 1967 and began teaching Business subjects in Whitby, Oshawa and Scarborough (a couple of years at Churchill Collegiate). In 1968 she married **Paul Kitchen** (Thomson 1966), who was studying at Carleton University, but then switched to a career in surveying. Chris’s career moves followed Paul’s, until they ended up in Barrie in the early 1970s. Chris worked in business there until their first child was born in 1973. Chris stayed at home as three more offspring arrived, then returned to teaching in 1985 until retirement in 2008 (by now a full-time Librarian).



The Kitchens now have 12 grandchildren. Paul has gone through many career changes, but he and Chris are now proper doting grandparents. They have a summer cottage on Skeleton Lake in Muskoka but also still travel the continent with their tiny trailer (a glorified bed in a box on wheels). DIY construction/renovation (both) plus sewing, knitting, crocheting, even smocking plus avid book reading (Chris) leave few empty moments.



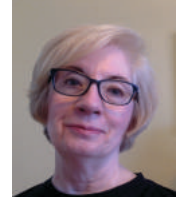
**Richard Clements**, upon graduating with a degree in Economics from UWO, held a series of sales and marketing positions in Toronto and Montreal that led him into an international management career. He and his wife, **Joan** (originally from Quebec) married in 1973 and spent much of the next ten years constantly on the move, including relocation to Chicago in 1982. In 1985, to preside over the start-up of a new company, they moved to Williamsville, NY (Greater Buffalo) and, to their surprise, they’re still there! For the last six years of his career, before retirement in 2013, Rick was able to work from a home office with Tolar Manufacturing of Corona, CA - very convenient, but hard to “switch off”.



Rick and Joan have two children and two grandchildren who have all grown up as Americans, but with many Canadian cousins. Family, recreation and a bucket list of travel destinations (Singapore and Thailand now completed) take up his time these days. He also continues to see special friends from Thomson days, notably **Eric** and **Al Green** and **Glenn Miller** and their wives, who do some cross-border visiting and travel.



**Carol Gray** graduated from Glendon College, York University, in 1967. She taught high school English (Whitby, Ottawa, Etobicoke) for about five years. In the 1970s she switched careers: she and her then-husband founded a downtown Toronto Public Relations and Advertising business. In the 1980s she lived and worked mostly in upstate New York doing newspaper writing, advertising design, editing and administration before returning to Canada and working as media liaison with the Halifax Busker Festival. After several years she switched coasts, moving to the North Gulf Islands, Cortes Island and Quadra Island, where she published weekly newsletters and annual community and business directories for over 20



years. She moved back to Ontario in 2010, settling in Cobourg, where her sister also lives.

Carol remembers agonizing in Grade 9 over whether to continue with instrumental music or to switch to typing. She consulted her music teacher, **Mr. Jolliffe**, who advised her, “You can never go wrong with typing.” She accepted that advice as judgement on her flute-playing prowess (or lack thereof). Given her subsequent lifelong career in communications, however, it proved to be wise counsel. No regrets.



**Eric Green** graduated from the four-year Design and Illustration Course at the Ontario College of Art in 1968 with top honours. Based on his portfolio of student work and his experience as a 3rd-year summer student in the art department at Maclean-Hunter Publishing, he applied for and won the annual travelling scholarship offered by the college. He planned to travel and study in Canada but was informed that most recipients spent six to twelve months in Europe (mainly on southern beaches!). Knowing he had a full-time creative job lined up at Maclean-Hunter and being involved with the set up of a new design studio with a few friends from the college, he headed to Europe, blew the money in three weeks of travel and enjoyment and returned to his Canadian commitments.

In addition, at his suggestion, he was invited by the college to set up a new curriculum in design and business and to teach it - which he did from 1972 to 1989. He was now art director at the Globe and Mail and still trying to establish his own design firm. Something had to give, and in 1972 it was his full-time day job with its guaranteed salary and benefits. Luckily the design firm, with Eric and two partners, became very successful. Eric's accomplished art work graces many areas in his home. He retired in 2009, leaving a partner to carry on the business and leaving Eric more time for his wife, **Wendy**, two grown children and two grandchildren. But not before one final pre-retirement fling: a trans-Atlantic voyage in a 40-foot sailboat with an English couple he and Wendy had befriended. The crew of three travelled from the Canary Islands down the African coast to Dakar, Senegal and then across to Recife, Brazil in 30 days.



**Lindsay Hunt** completed the University of Waterloo Applied Physics program in 1969. In 1967 he started as a co-op student at IBM, moving up to sales and sales management roles after graduation. From 1993 to 2010 he was the Business Unit Executive responsible for IBM's ATM business. He had a great time at the company, learning lots and meeting amazing people within IBM and amongst the customers, suppliers and business partners. He travelled extensively to destinations in North and South America, Europe and Asia. Since 2010 he has been self-incorporated as a consultant, with contracts at Wincor Nixdorf, IBM's supplier of ATM hardware and software.



In 2014 he became a member of the Living City Foundation board. The LCF is the charitable arm of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, an organization originally founded after Hurricane Hazel to keep waterways safe, but since expanded to roles such as managing parks like Toronto Brick Works, Kortright Centre and Tommy Thompson Park and running extensive education programs.

Lindsay and his wife, **Susan**, have two daughters and three grandchildren.. They have cruised extensively, circumnavigating Newfoundland and touring the Baltic, the Caribbean (including the Panama Canal) and, most recently, the Mediterranean. Currently Lindsay is completing the total renovation of one daughter's house!



**Rosemary Kent** spent 22 of her 35 working years in a classroom (Scarborough, East York and Hastings-Prince Edward). Of those years, highlights included teaching music and working with gifted students. The rest of her career was spent in business management.

She was married for seven years but had no children. She has enjoyed travelling - to Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Swaziland, several countries in the European Union, Mexico and, most recently, Jordan.



In 1999 her mother was diagnosed with vascular dementia, making it impossible for her to live independently. Rosemary and her sister, **Judy**, agreed they would not place her in any form of assisted living but would care for her themselves. They relocated to Prince Edward County, Judy from Ottawa and Rosemary and her mom from Toronto. They shared five exceptionally wonderful if challenging years with their mother before she passed on. But to their surprise and delight the two sisters have stayed on in the County, on the beautiful shores of the Bay of Quinte, where they remain active physically, emotionally and spiritually in this little piece of heaven on earth.



**Glenn Miller** graduated from York University in 1967. For a year he worked as an Auto Underwriter. Then it was off to Teacher's College and a thirty-year career as an English teacher in Scarborough (Midland Ave., Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Lester B. Pearson Collegiates), retiring in 1999 full of ideas, "some of which seem quite lunatic now." He has remained faithful to his goal of keeping fit by joining the YMCA and going there daily. He and his wife, **Graz**, also continue to fulfill their dream of travelling (on occasion with their two children) twice a year. They have been to Nepal (four times, for trekking), Tibet, Greece, Crete, Rhodes, Turkey, South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Morocco, Israel, Portugal, Jordan, Peru,



Key West, the U.S. Southwest, B.C. and the Gulf Islands, Boston and New York.

One "lunatic idea" he has achieved is becoming a writer, publishing two books about his travels (*Dreaming Kathmandu* and *Dancing at Ghunsa*) and one book of poetry (*of time and moving water*), which was 45 years in the making. But he also continues to hang out with Thomson high school friends. "You would have to have attended Thomson in the early '60s to understand the bonds we forged." He admits the repetition of tall tales from those "glory days" can get tiresome for their spouses.

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**LIFE SINCE THOMSON cont.**



**Linda Offenburger** graduated from York U. in 1968 with an Honours BA in English and History. After her 2nd year she spent almost four months working out of Germany on a ship in the North Sea. She visited Elsinor (Hamlet’s castle), Berlin and London before returning home. After graduation she joined CUSO, spending two wonderful years teaching English as a Foreign Language in Thailand and travelling throughout the country as well as in India, Nepal, Burma, East Pakistan (on the brink of separation) and Cambodia. En route home she visited a university friend in Japan and the 1970 Expo in Osaka. From 1970 to 1972 she was a Teaching Assistant at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, instructing Engineering and



Forestry students in English (compulsory for them), loving it, and realizing that teaching is what she wanted to do. The grad students at U of A came from all over the world and they still meet regularly - all over the world.

In 1972, Linda finished her Masters degree - and fell in love! She followed **Erhard Mioduszewski** (“Mio”), her husband-to-be, to Germany, where there was a shortage of English teachers, and began teaching English at a *Gymnasium* (grammar school). For over 30 years she taught classes from beginners’ English (Grade 5) to Grade 13. She still meets former students in odd places: when she was walking her dog one day by a field, a tractor driver veered in her direction and said she had taught him English 25 years before.

She and Mio bought a farmhouse on the outskirts of Essen in 1982. Since retirement in 2004 they have travelled a lot through Europe in their RV. In 2015 she met with 15 fellow grads at a U of A reunion in Thailand. She says she now feels caught between two worlds: reading English but seldom speaking it; worrying about elections in which she cannot vote (in either Germany or Canada); and enjoying the great outdoors in one of the most densely populated parts of Europe.

**Noel Simpson**’s dismal showing on the finals of first year Maths, Physics and Chemistry at U. of T. convinced him to switch courses to Psychology. This led to seven years as a psychometrist and therapist at Queen Street Mental Health Centre to aiding patients with long stays in hospital move back to the community. He then changed careers completely, moving to publishing and managing the Buy and Sell newspaper and motor racing magazines for over 30 years. The magazines allowed him to vet a passion for formula car racing, and he still does lapping in Formula 2000 cars at Mosport.



During his publishing years, he and his wife, **Heather**, raised “two wonderful kids” - and now they have two wonderful grandkids. However, as he neared 60, his employers decided to sell one of the publications and to replace him at the others. Luckily he had spent many years as a volunteer with a supportive housing agency for people with mental illness and addictions. For the last ten years he has been the Executive Director of Regeneration Community Services in Toronto. (Check them out on the web.) One of their main goals is to help people with long stays leave hospital and establish life in the community. Noel’s career seems to have come full circle!

**IN MEMORIAM**



We received word that **George Kuzmicz**, Student Council President in 1969-70 (photo, left) passed away last September. We have also learned of the deaths of **Steve Sellars** and **Sean McPhee**, alumni for whom we don’t have dates. Steve worked at G.M. in Oshawa and had been battling cancer for many years. Sean died in later 2015 and his memorial service was held in January this year. From our staff, **Lenore Streicker** (photo, right), respected and beloved math teacher 1969-1976, died on March 27. We



send our sympathies out to the friends and families of those we have lost.

**CONGRATULATIONS**

Not exactly stop-the-press news, but belated congratulations to **Tom Harrison** (Class of 1985) on being named a McCarthy Tétrault Fellow in Legal Ethics at Queen’s University. Thanks to his proud wife, **Andrea** (Thomson staff 1992-1995) for passing along this announcement.

**PUB NIGHT - APRIL 29**



To catch up on all the news and renew friendships and memories, we invite you to our annual Pub Night, at Borsalino’s Dining Lounge, 4505 Sheppard Ave. E., on the south side a bit east of Brimley Rd. We’ve picked Friday, April 29 as the date, any time after 8 pm. We were very impressed with the facilities and the service last year, and the place is handy to the 401 (and not too far from the old school). Mark your calendars, get a group together and join us.