

Thomson TRADEWINDS

DAVID & MARY THOMSON C.I. ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2017

IT'S HAPPENING!



Groundbreaking Ceremony

Monday June 5, 2017



- ◊ Welcome
- ◊ O Canada
- ◊ Acknowledgement
- ◊ Remarks
- ◊ Performance by Donwood Park PS Choir
- ◊ Ceremonial Groundbreaking
- ◊ Photographs
- ◊ Closing Remarks

Interlude provided by David & Mary Thomson CI Band

Refreshments provided by Bendale BTT Culinary Arts Program



On June 5, 2017, ground was officially broken for construction of the new school. Ceremonies began indoors in the Bendale gym (the Thomson band, the Donwood choir plus a mix of children and adult dignitaries in the collage), then moved outdoors in sporadic drizzle to allow invited administration officials to put shovels in the ground (Highbrook in the background).



ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS

At Thomson's annual Awards Assembly, October 12, we presented plaques to this year's two winners of the Thomson Alumni Award, "awarded to one female and one male student from the grade 9 class of 2016-2017 who have distinguished themselves through leadership and participation in the school community." Of special note this year is the fact that these students are part of the class that will become the first graduates from the new school that is scheduled to open in the fall of 2019. Here are brief profiles of the winners.



Aqelah Rezai arrived in Canada just two years and one month ago from Afghanistan. She had just a smattering of English, since French had been her "second language" at school. She was enrolled in grade 8 at Robert Service, then found herself placed at Thomson for grade 9, rather than at R.H. King, a closer school to her home. Since an older sister was already at Thomson and she quickly made friends here, she had no desire to change schools again when offered the opportunity, to start grade 10.

She signed up for the Newcomers Club as a participant, to help her with her English and with learning social customs and the like. Before long, however, she became a volunteer leader, helping others master the same skills. She was also involved in the Breakfast Club organizing and supplying basic breakfasts to students who had to travel to the school before having time to eat at home. She was on the soccer team (indoor and outdoor), a great source of new friends. In grade 10 she has joined the cross-country team, with the aim of improving skills for soccer, which she will be

involved with again. She has also continued her leadership with the Newcomers Club and hopes to get back to the Breakfast Club if morning practices allow.

Outside of school she has already accumulated over 100 hours of volunteer time at community centres, notably with East Metro Youth Services and the YMCA (in their Newcomers program). She has also volunteered for the local NOW program at Pearson C.I.

Her favourite school subjects are Math (her dad was a mathematics professor in Afghanistan) and French (thanks to her school background), but her Honours Award for an average of over 80% indicates she is doing well in all academic fields. In addition to the Alumni Award, she also won an ESL prize for her grade 9 achievements. She would like to gain a bilingual certificate (French and English) in the future, although she already speaks Dari, Persian, Pashto, Urdu and Hindi. She has a career as a doctor in mind, already on the look-out for volunteer hours in the medical field. But she also has dreams of becoming a professional soccer player!

Aqelah is the youngest of 5 girls and one boy in the family. She includes photography and designing/drawing amongst her hobbies. We think Thomson has lucked out in having her join our student body.



Aman Ayaz hails from Bangladesh. He is also the youngest in his family, with two older sisters. His academic average of over 85% earned him an Honour T in grade 9. He was a student at Donwood Park from kindergarten to grade 8 but has already made his mark at Thomson.

He is a member of the Future Aces program. He was part of the Robotics Team in grade 9, travelling to a number of meets. He played clarinet in the Thomson band, but has had to give that up this year because of time constraints. In both his first two years he has been part of the junior rugby team and the A.V. crew. At the end of his first year, he ran for office as the grade 10 rep on the TLC (Thomson Leadership Council), braving the stage in the auditorium to give a promotional speech, noting that he was "organized, responsible and punctual", that he would listen to his peers' feelings and that he would also take their ideas to the higher-ups. He even interspersed his remarks with a few jokes! Unsurprisingly he won a landslide victory and is thoroughly enjoying keeping his promises this year on the council at their lunch-hour meetings.

He volunteers in the community as well, particularly at the mosque across the road from Thomson, already earning more volunteer hours than needed for an entire high school program. Math and Phys Ed are his favourite subjects. He has eyes on Engineering as a future area of study. He really likes Thomson and, judging by his successes so far, the feeling appears to be mutual.



ALUMNI CHANGES



Alumni types at the Spring Pub Night: Bob Doi, William Stratas, Susan Botelho-Lee, Stan Farrow, Tim Luet

Since our inauguration in 1994, the Thomson Alumni has functioned as a very informal organization with no slate of officers, no constitution, limited banking privileges (withdrawals and deposits, yes; cheque writing, no) but a loyal band of former Thomsonites who have met regularly to plan small projects such as pub nights and newsletters plus large projects, especially the school's 50th anniversary reunion. If you've sent in your membership renewals imagining a smoothly running corporate office, think again! **Stan Farrow**, the one non-Thomson-graduate amongst us, has called and chaired meetings, edited the newsletters, deposited cheques at a

local Alterna Savings branch (inheriting that task from former student and teacher **Bryan Lake**) and keeping a Filemaker Pro alumni membership list up-to-date (sharing that task with alumnus **Bob McBride**). Another alumnus, **William Stratas**, has set up our website and posts new reports of school and alumni functions there. He is also responsible for getting electronic versions of this newsletter to those who prefer that method of delivery. **Bob Doi** is our principal resident photographer and often writes articles for this newsletter (see his Pub Night report on the next page). **Bob Forrest**, with the assistance of Bob McBride, keeps in touch with our Thomson Facebook members. (We are blessed with many Bobs!) Together we have a good time kibitzing, reminiscing and often actually accomplishing amazing feats of organizational expertise.



More Alumni committee members at the Pub Night: Front to back: Bob McBride, Elaine Selby, Tim Luet and Lorne Bellamy



Mad photographer Bob Forrest stalks a victim at the Pub Night.

As we look forward to an eventful year in 2019, celebrating Thomson's 60th anniversary, anticipating the opening of a new school and the demolishing of "our" building, and embarking on fundraising projects to allow us to include an alumni presence, in some form or other, in the new building, we feel it's time to put our organization on a firmer footing. So we're drafting a constitution (nothing fancy!) using as a template the constitution of the Haileybury School of Mines Alumni Association, in which our own **Lorne Bellamy** is very active. We've even had volunteers come forward to create an initial slate of officers, as suggested by that constitution: **Bob McBride** as President; **Bob Doi** as Vice-President; **Tim Luet** as Treasurer; and **Elaine Selby** as Secretary.

On November 6, as we were preparing this newsletter for mailing, we also held a "founding meeting" of our new set-up, having invited alumni from near and far to join us in person or electronically. You'll have to count on other forms of social media for an instant report. (Facebook and our website - www.thomsonforever.ca - come to mind.) We'll include full details and plans in the next newsletter. Meanwhile, here's a photo of the new school construction (from early October) to whet your appetite for the events in 2019.





BACK TO BOSTON: OUR SPRING PUB NIGHT

APRIL 29, 2017

On this cool spring evening, close to 40 alumni attended our Saturday Pub Night at Boston Pizza. It's been a few years since we were at this central location by the Scarborough Town Centre. This helped to bring out a larger-than-normal crowd to dine, knock back a pint or two and catch up on what's been happening. Many tables could be heard discussing the opening of the new school and the subsequent closing of the building we've all known as the home of David and Mary Thomson Collegiate Institute. Other conversations touched on the celebrations involved and the possibility of a 60th school anniversary reunion in conjunction with the closing of the old school. The next couple of years promise to be extremely busy as we approach this monumental event in our school history.

Our Alumni committee look forward to having all of you attend one of our next functions. We are always looking for new ideas to attract more of our alumni and volunteers to help run these events. If you have thoughts you'd like to pass along or services you could volunteer, please email us at info@ThomsonForever.ca and/or DMThomsonAlumni@gmail.com. Until then, you can check out news on our website: www.ThomsonForever.ca.



Pub Night report and photographs courtesy Bob Doi