

HSC Class of September 1960 Annual Class Newsletter for 2021

Hello Dear Classmates!

It has been 14 months since we first started coping with Covid-19, in Canada, and during that time, we have been staying close to home, socially distancing, wearing masks, and generally keeping safe. Amazingly, none of our class of octogenarians succumbed to this deadly pandemic. Most, if not, all of our class have now had at least one dose of vaccine, and some of us have had two doses, already. We look forward to brighter days ahead! What is wonderful is that everyone of our class, who have been in touch over the years, has sent a contribution to our class newsletter this time. We miss our dear classmates who died over the past year- Shelagh (Adams) Grant, Shirley (Green) Shanks, and Anne (Sutherland) Powell, and send our condolences once again to Gerarda and Norah, who have lost their spouses over the past year. Now, on to the NEWS:

**Diane (Bridgman) Funk:** writes 2020/2021 has been an eventful year! In October '20, I was presented with an offer for the lake house property. With mixed feelings, I accepted. 40 years is a long stay! After a month of purging and packing with daughter, Cynthia's amazing help, we cleared the house, and I moved in with her family in December. My address is now: 87 Northdale Blvd., East York, Ontario M4B 1X1. You can call me at: (647) 358-2120. Timing is everything, and daughter, Kimberley, and family moved the same month from Toronto to an updated historical home in Port Perry. Texting and phone calls keep that communication open. I am happy to see her kids on Facetime now and again. I am now caught up in teenage angst and anxiety of my two teenaged grandsons- 14 and 17! It is easier to observe the parental role than to be actively responsible. I am in the process of creating my own old age home! We are doing an addition here, to create my granny suite. It is exciting and daunting all at the same time.

In January, Daisy our Maltese-Shitzhu mix puppy, became a mother, as she had been cavorting with a mini-poodle neighbour. 5 puppies were a challenge and a joy, as we watched them grow and evolve. Cynthia sold 4 of the puppies to neighbours in the community, and kept the only girl, Gigi. Mother and daughter are great companions, and their bonding has been fascinating to watch. In keeping with last year's theme of **gratitude**:

I am grateful to be alive, a survivor, and relatively healthy (despite spinal stenosis)  
 I am grateful to be financially stable and able to help others, and remain independent.  
 I am grateful to have wonderful friends from all phases of my life, especially YOU, my HSC Classmates! Finally, we all have much to be grateful for, and I wish you all the greatest wealth, which is your HEALTH- physical, emotional and spiritual. All my love to all of you.

**Betty (Caufield) Martin:** that My contribution to our class news this year consists of the things I am grateful for. Of course, it is such a privilege to be part of this class of forty some women. We spent three years journeying as students, learning to be HSC graduates. Somehow, we have continued to stay in touch, and be supportive of each other through our life`s journey.

I am grateful to have been born and raised in this special country known as Canada.

I am blessed to have my husband, Gord. We have weathered this pandemic together, and hope to continue to do so. One advantage of the pandemic has been to slow down life`s activities. We have spent many mornings after breakfast just talking, and I am grateful for this opportunity. So far, my sons, and their families have stayed safe, and we communicate for an hour or two each week on zoom.

We go to our local provincial park most days, and have watched spring blooming. It is wonderful to see the foliage spring to life on the trees and plants.

Stay safe, everyone, and keep in touch.

**Carolyn (Cormack) Macdonald** sent her hand-written news inside a lovely hasti-note with the following message on the outside of the card- "Life should not only be lived, it should be celebrated". Great message for these times! Carolyn writes: I thought this card spoke to our class' 61<sup>st</sup> graduation from HSC, May 31, 1960. It is also Hugh and my 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary this June, and also, my 60<sup>th</sup> year of graduation from Queen's Nursing Science program. Very hard to believe all this!! But great to celebrate the wonderful time we had together, so long ago- all we learned, and all the friendships we shared then and now.

Hugh and I are still in our own home chugging along. We are happy to have received our 1<sup>st</sup> dose of covid vaccine in March (the 30<sup>th</sup>), and are scheduled for our second dose on July 13. We are shocked at the current outbreak of covid in Nova Scotia, and have been spooked by these variants- it just speaks to the virulence of the variants, and rightly so, we are currently in lockdown. Most of our ICU beds are full with Covid patients, and as a smaller province, we do not have much capacity to handle bigger numbers. (Might speak to why we had our Atlantic bubble).

Our sons- Ian in B.C. and Stuart in Ontario, have both had their first vaccine shots, so we are relieved, as both live in hotspots, and we, like thousands of others, have not seen them for some time now. Our only grandchild, Ella, is here in Halifax at university, but we don't see her often, as she lives with four other girls. Ella is studying Journalism at Kings College, and doing well.

We still hope to come up to our cottage at Lake Scugog (Ont.) this summer, but time will tell. However, there are no trains running, which is our preferred mode of travel.. The flowers in the gardens are coming to life and they sure brighten our days!! Stay safe, everyone.

**Carol (Finlayson) Self** sends her greetings to all her HSC classmates! She asks that we continue to keep safe, keep well, and get your job as soon as you can! Carol writes that she hasn't much news as the UK is only beginning to emerge from lockdown. We were allowed into church on Good Friday and Easter in small numbers, with recorded music, masks, and social distancing. At the end of the Easter service, we went into the church yard, and sang one hymn while the organ played inside. Son, Jonathan came for overnight for the first time since Christmas, and has now restarted his weekly visit for dinner and a family zoom session.

We have had a lovely spring with the daffodils flowering from January through to the end of March. Now, the fruit trees are in blossom, even though it is a bit cold. We have booked a mid-week getaway with friends in mid-May to a place near Stratford. Our girls are planning an afternoon get . Bruce skated on their pond. We are counting on our Florida family to visit us this summer. together somewhere for David's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Kari and Biggles, her dog, are hoping to come for a few days before that. We may try to get away later in the year if the virus keeps under control, somewhere in this country- maybe near family, so we can catch up on having missed them over this past year. Certainly, nowhere that requires flying!! That's it from this end. Wishing you all the best !!

**Jo-Anne Hunt** says that in reflecting on the past year, it helps me to realize more profoundly the things we have set aside as we adapt to the changes necessary to be safe during the time of this pandemic.

I have become more grateful for those who reach out by phone or e-mail more regularly. The small "bubble" for those of us who live alone has allowed interaction that is so enjoyable. I have two little boys aged 4 and 6 with whom I cherish facetime and occasional visits. I have successfully introduced miniature plants and trust there is a budding gardener developing (my niece, Erin's little fellows).

Grocery stores, Shoppers Drug Marts, Physio, Dentists, etc. become highlights. Learning to "Zoom" is just OK. Recording minutes (from PROBUS) and interacting on Zoom exhausts me.

Learning not to wish for what we cannot have, and enjoying peace and what we CAN do, has been a valuable lesson. Books have become a haven. Maybe, next year we can tell of special events!.

**Mitsue Kamada** also wrote a lovely hand-written note. She says: I just heard from my brother, John, regarding the class newsletter for this year. Thank you, Beverley and classmates, for making an annual newsletter possible. I have no exciting or different news to relate this year. The main focus is keeping well and safe, and listening to, and following public health orders from our chief public health officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry. I received my first covid-19 vaccine in March and look forward to the second dose.

Presently, we are enjoying the wonderful spring weather , with lovely cherry blossoms, magnolia and early rhododendrons in bloom. Last year, Diane `Bridgie` said in her part of the newsletter, she was **Grateful for having reached this exalted age!** Well, I am, too, and I am happy to say that I am OK. I want to send my best to all in our class, and to say thank you for keeping in touch.

**Beverley (MacCrae) McMurchy** says `Hello Everyone`! I have become a great procrastinator these past few weeks. This has been a strange year for all of us, but, hopefully, we are turning the corner. I want to thank the other Bev for organizing this newsletter, and thanks to Betty for keeping track of our addresses, telephone numbers and e-mails !

Bruce and I moved into this retirement Residence in October 2019. It was a difficult move, as we had already downsized into a townhouse 20 years before and loved it. However, steps were becoming a problem, and our family helped convince us to move, and, of course, clear out the treasures we could bear to part with. We spent this past summer at our cottage, and hope to repeat that again, this coming summer. At this retirement home, we have been able to play bridge with others, and, although this has been a quiet winter, time just seems to slip away. Bruce underwent surgery during the winter, known as EndoVascular Aneurysm repair, and he has done really well. He gets frustrated with the fatigue, but, is now back swimming. We had a great holiday with Dale and Rob, at their home, during the winter. There was a ton of snow, and we walked everyday. Bruce skated on their pond. We are counting on our Florida family to visit us this summer. They will drive here, but have to get across the border, and directions for that, seem to change daily! We`ll have a week at the end of May with Dale and Rob again. My best to all of you, and I am looking forward to reading YOUR news.

**Lynda (Morgan) Bennett says:** G`Day, fellow classmates (I`m from the Ottawa Valley).

Here in Eastern Ontario, just west of Ottawa, we are all coping with up and down, rain or sunshine, plus lots of wind. However, tulips and daffodils brighten the daily scene. For a bird watcher, there are too many crows and starlings around! Last week I spotted 2 warblers, and an Eastern Phoebe thought of nesting in my doorway. **SPRING IS HERE!!!**

With “no go travel”, I miss seeing my 5 grandchildren, who are too smart for Granny! I had a wonderful “Zoom” visit on Easter Sunday with everyone. We connected Almonte, Barrie and Kenora for a super, but short visit. What a pleasure for me to see and chat with everyone! I am keeping well. My Landlord`s son cuts my lawn which is great. Church services are restricted, with only a maximum of 10 allowed to attend. I am reading on Sunday, May 16, at church, and return again in June. I hope to lose a few pounds after 2 back teeth are extracted on May 31. I guess that`s the best way to look at it. I have had my first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine, and am due to have the second dose on July 4<sup>th</sup>. I hope that you, my classmates, are keeping as well as possible, and able to do a few interesting things for pleasure. Best wishes and lots of love to everyone in the Class of Sept. 1960.

**Gerarda (Nanninga) Kaye** writes: Well, one year plus, into this pandemic, a second widowhood, an extremely dry, dusty spring on the prairies, and far too much political jockeying for our attention on TV!! It reminds me of a Beatrix Potter quote:” It is somewhat trying to pass a season of enjoyment in the company of those always looking for matters of complaint...”, or something to that effect. We have only one option – stay positive and stay safe! So, what do we have to be positive about ? For starters, my immediate family has stayed healthy. I am blessed with the ability to stave off boredom with a multitude of wacky and not so wacky endeavours, some necessary (finally washed the kitchen cupboards), others not so (figuring out what to do with that huge wardrobe of TOO small clothes still taking up space in my closet). (I solved the latter by just closing the door!).

How grateful I am for modern technology. Without it, the isolation would have been much more severe. I often think of my parents who came to Canada totally deprived of that essential connection. If the phone rang for us, at the neighbours, next door, it was usually to get bad news at considerable expense... As it is, now, I can spend literally hours gabbing on the telephone to Judy in Prince Edward County!!

I marvel at grandchildren navigating their education on-line. I was invited by one of my granddaughters to sit in on a lecture, which involved group presentations. Very interesting, but it made me realize the challenge of navigating the first year of a nursing program without ever setting foot on campus (in Alberta).

We WILL get through this. I get through the day, grateful that I am not sitting in a little sod house, with no water, no heat and no electricity, like many did during the pandemic of the last century. The one constant is the recurring drought on the prairies...I look forward to the newsletter and to hearing the news of my fellow classmates.

**Jane (Panabaker) Woods** says: On this beautiful spring morning, the sun is shining and one can almost watch the leaves unfolding, as I sit on the deck, overlooking the waters of Georgian Bay. How fortunate we are to have such an ever-changing view!

Ken and I are doing pretty well, as we cope with the present pandemic conditions. We have kept very well and are vigilant about avoiding risky activity. Our daughter-in-law, Denise, has done most of our grocery shopping and we do pick-up delivery with large orders. We have managed to visit with our two local families on our deck, with masks and distancing. Christmas Day was fun with fluffy snow blowing around during each of our outdoor visits.

Our 26 pound Labradoodle, Bailey, keeps us more active with outdoor walks, and we also try to use the treadmill daily. I enjoy cooking and baking, so that can keep me busy, our our families enjoy the results. We both have several “Zoom” meetings each week, and keep in touch with friends we normally would be spending time with. I do miss my bridge club and games.

Our son, Dave, and his family live in Princeton, N.J., and we have not been able to see our three granddaughters for over 19 months. We are hopeful that they can spend some time on Georgian Bay in August???. I send my best to one and all, and pray that you and yours stay healthy and optimistic, as we wait out this pandemic.

**Donnie Parkes** says: I re-read all my news of 2020 for our class newsletter. With Covid-19, my life has been so much the same this past year.. I really miss travelling, and “big screen” movies. We did some overnight visits a year ago, plus outdoor patio lunches at a favourite restaurant in town, with some local and some Toronto friends, one couple at a time, last summer and fall. Hoping that can open up again in June.

We have managed well in our condo- lucky to have some very thoughtful neighbours. We do still drive for groceries, LCBO, and pharmacy supplies- just to get out. We are careful, of course. I've just planted flowers on our balcony to cheer us up, next, will do herbs. However, the days do go by quickly.

Our families, (Ann's in BC and the Ottawa Valley, and mine, in Ontario) are doing well, free of the virus, and have all had vaccine dose #1. We're both due for vaccine #2 at the end of June, but wish it could be sooner. I miss our exercise room, closed yet again, and my exercise therapist, who is not allowed into the building during this lockdown period.

Ann's cardiac status has stabilized, but she has had to deal with 2 serious duodenal bleeds (due to polyps), in November, and March, treated with blood transfusions, medications, and IV infusions of iron. Her hemoglobin has slowly risen from 5.0 to 11.5 and she feels perkier now, Why does turning 80 bring more health issues?

I'm sorry about no reunion gathering, but, perhaps we can have lunch outside here in Stouffville next summer, with those who want to travel. I shall talk to Jill. My best to all of you, and I look forward to reading your news.

**Mary (Parks) Croft** reports: The Crofts have both been doing well. We have been vaccinated since early February, so we can visit back and forth between Glen (where I live) and Sunrise (where Paul is in the memory care unit). We are looking forward to July when Paul will move to the Memory Care Unit here at the Glen. He will be 5 minutes away from our apartment, so I will see him daily- no phone calls or using the car to visit. Also, all the family has rented a B & B for a week at the end of July. We will all be together for the first time in over a year, and Paul and I will be able to celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with our family. By then, all family members will be fully vaccinated, as they are starting to give the Pfizer vaccine to kids over 12 by the end of May.

Everyone in the family has survived the pandemic, mainly unscathed, and have been able to continue working throughout the year. Our grandkids survived the school year on-line, and are now back in the classroom. Our big news is that daughter, Heather, is to become the new Vice-

Principal of her school. She has taught third grade for 25 years. She has a challenge to clean out her classroom, but fortunately, her daughter, Jillian, will help.

All in all, we are very fortunate this year, and now have a new President who actually is quite “Presidential” and determined to get the country going again, after 4 years of disaster! All the best to everyone, and I am looking forward to hearing all your news. Hugs to all!

**Susan (Purdy) Dew** writes: I am hoping that the terror that is plaguing the globe has not caught up with any one of you, and that you have all been as well, happy and as active as possible, throughout the past year or so. Unfortunately, we did lose three of our group, as well as 2 husbands- not to Covid, mind you, but still very sad news indeed.

Scintillating bits of news from me are scarce, as this past year has seen me pretty well confined to home. Much like everyone else, socializing is restricted to a couple of close friends. Here in Toronto, it’s beginning to feel like living in a ghost town, anyway.

Unfortunately, my health is not great, now; however, I refuse to dwell on it. Who wants to listen to a cranky old dolly grumbling over ever increasing ailments? I’m sure most everyone has some. However, most levels of activity are restricted for me, due to advancing breathing issues, save for bending my right elbow to sip a goblet of wine from time to time!

My former husband, Christopher, and I have reconnected with a deep and caring friendship over the past couple of years. He has been of enormous help to me- shopping for food, doing errands, taking me to appointments, and fighting battles for me over various companies’ billing issues. I can’t imagine how I would manage without him now. How strange some turns of fate, from long ago in our past! Stay safe, well, and happy everyone! Let’s keep on hoping for a reunion, even if it takes another year. We are not a group of quitters!!

**Libby (Riddell) Shackleton** commented that her husband John passed away a little over a year ago, and she misses him terribly, but is slowly adjusting to life without him. Libby lives next door to her youngest daughter and family, and they see each other every day. Her middle daughter also lives close by, so she feels lucky to have had close connections during these trying times. Recently, Libby underwent a hip replacement and is making good progress. She has a Wheaton terrier-Scottie cross puppy called Aila, a Gaelic name, and, fortunately, with Libby’s daughter’s farm next to where they live, the dog has a big space to run for exercise. Libby sends her greetings to everyone in the class.

**Jill (Robson) Maxwell** says: Tom and I are both well, and have had our first shot of the Pfizer vaccine. Now, we’ll wait until July for our second dose, and hope that our immunity hasn’t totally gone. Our major “travel” has been a walk on a trail near us or on the main street of a local town. Oshawa is catering to the homeless, so it’s not pleasant to walk in downtown. We read the Globe and Mail each morning, and exchange books and magazines for the rest of the

day. The computer and TV are our constants. There are “Zoom” meetings for Rotary and senior lectures, U-Tube for Church, and a house party each week to visit with our distanced family.

We played golf most nice days last summer, and are starting back this week to do the same. We are fortunate to be able to do that sport. I’ve done a cross-stitch picture for my sister, a large acrylic work for a grandson, and lots of “zentangle” pictures. As well, there’s always the kitchen and meals- not my favourite place. I am still hanging the clothes outside to dry, if you can believe it (my choice)! We watch the news- again, everyday about the same. We enjoy the travel show with Rick Steeves on PBS, and Doc Martin and Chateau, on Vision TV. I miss all of you, and as soon as we can have a reunion, we will!! Keep safe, keep distanced, and get the vaccine as soon as you can.

**Mary (Shackleton) Bell** makes her contribution short and sweet! We are still hibernating in our condo in Toronto. Feeling stir crazy with the lockdown. The kids are helping out with deliveries and delicious food to eat. Hoping to get my second vaccine shot soon, so I can gallivant with my grandkids!

**Sheila (Shipley) Billings** writes: Thank goodness for the “good, old telephone” and the wonderful new technology of “Zoom”, & my faithful i-pad, and like all of you, I am surviving Covid!! Fortunately, I live in a wonderful “condo village”, with a community of caring, careful neighbours, and two longtime Military good friends!! They came to my rescue, when, last December, I fell and fractured my knee cap while helping a neighbour with her very ill, very uncooperative husband. I spent 8 weeks non-weight bearing over the Xmas Season, which wasn’t fun, but, no, all is well, and I am fully mobile with no further problems. My 18 year old grandson’s comment, “Grandma, don’t you know, “No good turn goes unpunished”! I’m sure that’s not the original sentiment, but, apparently, some well-known Comedian coined that version. It’s so hard to believe how many precious occasions have had to be cancelled in the past months- don’t you just want to give your family a friends a big hug?? Telephone calls, Zoom, and even good, old-fashioned written letters from friends are such a welcoming event, so let’s us all keep in touch until we can get together again. Spring is now here- the Kite surfers are back out on the Lake outside my window! Love to all!!!

**Sue (Sketch) Hultgren** was the first in our class to respond, this year !!!! We find ourselves in the same boat as everyone else, although living in Florida has had its upside as well as the downside that everyone else has suffered. Being able to be outside all year has been a sanity saver, as well as Tor being able to play golf. While being technically challenged, and wanting to heave my computer at the wall sometimes, I have to say it has been a lifeline to family and friends these past months.

We did not, for reasons all too well understood, make our annual pilgrimage north last year, and spent time wondering if we would encounter our first hurricane, which, thankfully, we did not. We did, however, invest in a generator that would keep our fridge and fans going for periods of

time, a few items to eat that would not go bad, and WATER (an interesting selection of tins, things that could be eaten cold, but should be heated (YUK), and a lot of “good for you” dried items). None was used !! Items that had a “use by date” went to the food bank. We were fortunate, but there were many that were not.

We always had an eye out for my daughter, Molly and her family, who were living in the Houston area, but they were spared as well, and now, have moved further inland. They did encounter difficulties during the Texas cold blast, but despite having to get burst pipes fixed, go to friends to get water for 18 horses and assorted other animals, plus a few other problems, they felt they were far more fortunate than many others!!

Son Jim, and his wife, Ashley, had it rather rough this past year. Ashley has been dealing with cancer, and Jim’s work has been spotty, as he is an osteopath, and sees patients in person, so was subject to the lockdowns imposed on so many. The good news is that both of them have received their first shots, and Ashley has done well with her treatments, although physically and emotionally draining. They do have the advantage of living in the country, so were always able to get outside with their two dogs.

Tor’s family in Los Angeles, have all made it through this pandemic with no illness, and all have had, at least the first shot. There is an “at home” wedding planned for the eldest granddaughter May 29, about which there is great excitement, but we are still not sure if Tor will be able to go. The guest list is just over 100, with a lot of young people, of course, and travelling is still not really recommended. The jury is still out....

Florida is still a Covid hotspot, so we’ll be hiding our faces for some time (at our age, though, not necessarily a bad thing, and it certainly saves time spent on makeup)! We personally feel that the leadership has been rather “iffy” in this State, to say nothing about the fuss re-favouritism in shot distribution!!! Much sympathy to those who have lost family and friends and hope for an improving future.

**Libby (Slemin) Grist says:** Life on the farm continues as usual. I am happy to report that my son David’s boys are doing the farm chores; they drive the tractor and care for our cattle. Our “bubble” consists of the 7 of us- David, Shannon , their four children and me. We have enjoyed board games that are fiercely competitive and contribute to communal. I am proud to announce that our grandchildren continue to grow. I have 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. My oldest daughter, Heather has officially retired from teaching and she is learning to enjoy her much-deserved retirement.

I am grateful for our local walking trail. I enjoy a 6Km. walk everyday, and usually have the trail to myself! Don’t worry, I always go prepared with Nordic poles and my cell phone.

Blessings to everyone! ‘Till we meet again, stay safe, wear your mask & no gathering.

**Norah (Spooner) Hewson** wrote on May 3, and she said: Today is a cold, windy day in Calabogie, so no outside work for me, but I am not too worried, as my garden is really a rock garden on top of the Laurentian Shield. So, what have I been up to these past weeks and months? Staying in, at the cottage or apartment, phoning friends far and wide, shopping on-line, watching too much TV as the mutants of Covid-19 cause immeasurable harm and worry, that we are being governed by the media and not our elected officials. Would love to discuss this with Anne (Suds) Powell!! She would have had something to say, for sure!

But, hoping for a happier spring has become my goal. I tell myself that everyone is trying to do their best, even the Premier of Ontario! Frequently, nearly everyday, Richard and Douglas call from BC or Kanata. Stephanie and Marisia text and phone- both are accomplished on-line shoppers. I still have not figured out how you can buy shoes without trying them on. Returning articles is a bit of a pain.

Mitchell, our oldest grandson is on his way to somewhere overseas (top secret), with the RCAF helicopter squadron, for possibly, a six month posting. His girlfriend works from their PMQ, in Petawawa, for an aerospace organization, but she is planning to visit her parents in Saskatchewan for a few weeks, now that she has received her vaccine. She plans to take her work with her!! Working from home, during this pandemic has certainly changed the workplace environment. Our other grandson, Spenser, and his fiancée, plus their dog, travelled out to Vernon, BC, when Ottawa went into another lockdown. They, too, are working from home, but with the difference in time zones from BC to Ontario, their day starts at 5:00am. Their plan is to return to Ottawa, as she prepares to write her final exams for her CPA designation. It is a 3 day exam, I am told, and many fail, so Chelsea has her work cut out for her. But, I am confident she'll pass with flying colours. She is a good student, and loves numbers. Spenser starts his law degree this September at the University of Ottawa. Will the classes be in-person or virtual? No one knows, at the moment, but Public Health will decide. Networking in the legal world is important, so the classroom setting is preferable to Spenser.

Without Bill, life is quieter, not as purposeful, nor as exciting. We were certainly “connected at the hip” for so many years. Our life was full and good. How fortunate we were, and are. The boys and I have not been able to plan the burial or Service of Remembrance, due to Covid-19. Hopefully, though, before the snow comes this winter, the Public Health measures will allow us to plan and carry out the plan. Bill would be very sanguine about this, so shall I be, too. So, take care, everyone, enjoy what you are doing, wherever you are.

**Normie (Staples) Boyles says:** As is likely the case for most of our classmates, due to the pandemic, my life has been quiet and uneventful over the past year. However, I am blessed by still having good health, having my daughter living close by, plus by residing amongst so many friendly and caring people in my condo building.

Losing classmates Shirley, Anne and Shelagh over the past year was both sad and sobering, as was learning that both Gerarda and Norah had lost their husbands.

Regarding news of my offspring and theirs, I'm usually reluctant to say much, despite being extremely proud of all four (two children and two grandsons) !

Regarding the Covid situation here in New Brunswick, we are doing well, except for the north-western part of our province. I don't think we can compare Ontario's situation with New Brunswick's, primarily because of the huge difference in population, and lengthy borders. I had my first dose of the Pfizer vaccine, but will have to wait close to 4 months to get the second. This "go nowhere" and "no one may come to visit" phase of our lives will pass....eventually. Meanwhile, I hope all us gals, and our families are staying well. I want to pass along my best wishes to everyone.

**Judy (Thomas) Burgess writes:** As we stay home in isolation, due to the enforced lockdown of the pandemic, Kerry and I are "travelling in thought" through our grandchildren, as they travel with their respective careers.

One grandson is studying geology, and his summer placement has him somewhere near the Arctic circle. Another is with the Airforce, and is stationed in Moose Jaw, Sask. A granddaughter is currently enroute to inland BC, with her career in Forestry. Bonaire finds a granddaughter enjoying that beautiful and warm part of the world, as a professional SCUBA diver instructor. Grandson #3 is in Calgary, working in the business field, hoping to celebrate his wedding next year, when things open up. Our youngest grandson is still in high school, and last, but not least, a granddaughter who is still trying to find herself..

Kerry and I are in reasonably good health, but experiencing more aches and pains that accompany our advancing years. Prince Edward County finds us still in our own home, and enjoying our gardens, as plants and birds show up after a very strange winter here.

We count our blessings that our three boys are well and happy, and we truly look forward to the time when we can see them and hug them. I wish to all of you, who are reading this, the very best that life can offer. Stay safe and stay well.

**Joan (Vila) Grandfield says:** Our news will likely be much like yours- just trying to live with the Covid-19 rules, not getting infected or infecting others. So far, Jon and I are safe, as is our family. Muskoka has avoided much of the trouble with few cases in our hospital since it all started. We went to Parry Sound to get our first dose of the Pfizer Vaccine, but the second dose is not not due until mid=July. We miss our grandchildren from Oakville, but they are in school, and their Mom is teaching, so the risk is too high. Hopefully, with warm weather, outdoor visits may be possible. Warmest wishes to all of you, and stay safe and well.

**Donna (Wall) Kirby** begins her letter with: “Greetings to all my octogenarian classmates. Hope this letter finds you all safe from the Covid virus, and feeling as well as possible. Since our last newsletter, my situation has changed somewhat. I moved to a retirement residence in April 2020, after suffering a fractured ankle. While in hospital rehab, everything started to close down, due to Covid-19. Because I was living in a townhouse with many stairs, I could not be discharged home.. Thus, I had to find “new digs” quickly, so to speak.

I had been looking at Retirement Residences, and narrowed them down to five preferred choices, but no commitment to one. Fortunately, my son, Jon and his wife scurried around to determine who was admitting new residents at this time. Talk about bad timing- I was in the midst of it!

My current address was my place of choice, so I came right here out of hospital. The Port Credit Residence is one block north of Lake Ontario on Highway #10, at the Lakeshore.. There is a small park, next door, and a Community Swimming pool, with lots to explore in Port Credit, itself. Over the years, I have walked my dogs many kilometres, all around Port Credit, and spent many hours bird watching along the shores of Lake Ontario. We have been in and out of lockdown several times since last April, and currently, we are enjoying a bit more freedom, such as taking meals in the dining room, instead of in our own room. Group activities are very limited right now, which makes daily living a bit boring. Thank God for books, selective TV, Netflix, etc., and walks around the building! I can also do some bird watching on my large balcony where I have a couple of feeders. Watching a male cardinal offering a seed to his potential spouse is precious! The first goldfinch flew in yesterday (May 7), so I hope there will be many more to come. My daughter, Lisa sent a picture of a robin’s nest on the window ledge of her bedroom. I saw the 4 turquoise eggs, and then, a few days later the wee naked birds! Wish I were there in person to see them fledge. Son, Jon, also has a `birdy` yard. Lots of Orioles, woodpeckers, cardinals and even a wild turkey that alit on his front yard grass. Warblers will be arriving any day now, a magnificent time of the year to observe new life and growth. Although I can’t be out in the field with the binoculars at the ready, I have ways of enjoying the winged ones as they return from their wintering grounds.

I hope you are enjoying these spring days, and then, the lazy, hazy days of summer. Who knows, perhaps, we can enjoy our reunion sometime this fall, once we have left this dreaded Covid virus well behind us. Stay safe, everyone, and I send each of you my love and best wishes until we meet again.

**Barb (Webb) Peacock** reports that she is missing her dear, late husband, Michael, but is so grateful for the attention she receives from her three children and her grandchildren, who drive her to doctors’ appointments, get groceries, run errands, etc. They make sure I keep safe at home during this pandemic. I have had my first dose of Covid-19 vaccine, and I look forward to getting the second so that I can get outside more often, and meet up with people. Because of my macular degeneration, I can no longer see well enough to do the puzzles I used to love to do, but I still enjoy chatting on the telephone, and am delighted when any of the family drop by. I still

have my two little dogs, Ivy and Muffin, and three cats to keep me company, so I am not “alone”, and they keep me busy.

**Tiiu (Wiilup) Klein** says she has not traveled for over a year, except at times, last summer to their cottage in Port Burwell. She has seen her three grandchildren, and her children, occasionally during the pandemic, and, mostly from a distance. Both Tiiu and Bob have received their first vaccine dose. Recently, Tiiu’s husband, Bob suffered a stroke, and is currently in a Rehab. Program and, thankfully, is making some progress.

**Beverley (Bacon) Robertson** will conclude this year’s newsletter with a brief report of her pandemic year. She and Alastair travelled to Fort McMurray, Alberta in late August 2020 to meet their new great-granddaughter, Piper Maher, and to see her Mommy and Daddy’s new house, as her parents’ previous home was lost in the big fire that destroyed most of Fort McMurray a few years ago. Alastair had a pacemaker implanted in November 2020, and it has certainly remedied his arrhythmia, but did nothing to ameliorate his shortness of breath. We spent our first winter in 10 years in Canada this past winter, and with the help of volunteer work (Alastair delivers meals on wheels, and Beverley does volunteer visiting for Palliative Care), the days and weeks flew by. We were thankful to get our first Covid-19 vaccine in March, and look forward to receiving the second dose soon. I want to thank each one of our class for their willing participation in contributing to this newsletter, and for all of our efforts for reaching out to each other over this past difficult year. Let’s hope we can get together again soon.

