

Keeping up with the Jones's

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

Lin Jones has decided to leave the classroom after 29 years, the last 25 of which were spent teaching history, economics and law at Stouffville District Secondary School.

And having made the decision to hang up his chalk holder, the Jamaican-born Mr. Jones is looking towards the future, although he claims he doesn't really know what he'll do next.

He first came to Canada in 1955, where he enrolled at Osgoode Hall, University of Toronto's law school.

But after a year, he changed his mind, enrolling at the Ontario College of Education. He began teaching at a junior high school in Toronto, then started at SDSS in 1964.

He moved to Stouffville two years later, taking up residence in the Ninth Line South home he has maintained ever since. His wife Sheila would eventually become Manager of Parkview Village.

Mr. Jones recalls there were only two of the present SDSS staff members when he came, Jim Rehill and Gary Harding.

He also remembers that relations between teachers and students were more intimate in those days.

Mr. Jones recalls taking two different groups of students to Europe for a month as part of a school travel program.

Of all the changes he's seen, he notes one of the most significant involves the kids themselves. "The students have the opportunity to learn more today, but the attitudes of the kids in the 1960's was different. They were more dedicated. Kids today seem to want to take the easy way out."

But he points out that despite the high-profile incidents of teens becoming involved in destructive activities today, the majority of teens are on track.

"Sixty-five to 70 per cent of our kids are still solid citizens."

Mr. Jones recalls with delight the antics of days gone by. "In the 60's, the teachers used to sell themselves to the students on Slave Day, to earn money for school trips. A group of my students put their money together to buy me. They made me wear the clothes they gave me, and I had to wear a sign saying I was the property of the girls."



PHOTO BY BRUCE STAPLEY

Stouffville teacher Lin Jones has decided to leave the classroom after 29 years, the last 25 of which were spent teaching history, economics and law at Stouffville District Secondary School. Having made the decision to hang up his chalk holder, the Jamaican-born Mr. Jones is looking towards the future.

Jones also remembers the serious side of days gone by. "After graduation day, the teachers would wear gowns to class for a day. The kids got a good impression of what academic life was about." Jones remained fiercely loyal to both the classroom, and SDSS during his 25 years. "To me, the classroom is where it's at. I enjoy teaching, and I only missed 10 days in 25 years. And I still believe SDSS is one of the best schools in York Region."

Mr. Jones maintains there is a good rapport between staff members, although he admits they don't socialize together like they did back in the days when the school was smaller.

"I am going to miss the classroom. But I realized it had to happen. Teaching is a tough job, and I wanted to leave while I was still on top of the game."

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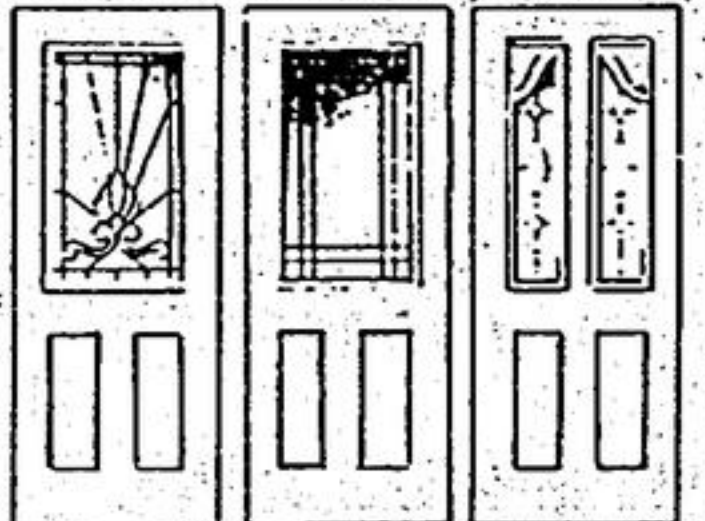
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