

Position recently held:

Mayor, City of London

Glory days - that's how we often remember our youth and in many respects that's what those days were because high school gave us a time when ideas were new and it was okay to be enthusiastic about our lives and our dreams.

I have great memories of Timmins High School. My love of music and performing began as a band member and the Kiwanis competitions. Yes, there were some butterflies and an occasional miss on the downbeat, but our music teacher Joe Bilenki always knew how to get us back in time, on key and how to feel good about the performance. I was the drummer and I thought it was very cool. I still think it's very cool and I still grab the sticks and play whenever I can.



My fascination with politics began at Timmins High School. The introduction came from a charismatic Canadian that changed the course of our country. Pierre Elliott Trudeau was new to the job of Liberal Party Leader but he was passionate and exciting. After his visit to the school, I never looked at politics the same way again and I was elected to London City Council just ten years after my graduation. I made the jump to the Federal government and served as an MP for over 20 years and now as Mayor of the City of London, I think maybe my direction in life was changed the day I met Mr. Trudeau. I never miss an opportunity to meet students and listen to their ideas because who knows who may be sitting in that classroom. Young people have the energy and ideas that ultimately change the world.

Did I take away anything else from my glory days? Yes. Good, true, lifelong friends - Carmen, Frank, Mario, Vince and of course Tom. No one calls me Pepi anymore except these guys and it's usually when we're reminiscing about the people and places that made us who we are today.

Some people say you can never go home again. I beg to differ. I can always go home and although I am a proud Londoner, a part of me will always be from Timmins. Best wishes to all the alumni and staff. Welcome back!