


Thiel Love


Each love story is unique. But the love stories that follow all share one important aspect. Without Thiel College, these couples may have never met. For many of our alumni, 1,796 (that we know of!) in fact, Thiel gave them more than a degree; it introduced them to the loves of their lives.

This spring, Thiel asked for stories of alumni love matches. From chance meetings at Homcoming to encounters in the classroom to (of course) Brother Martin's Walk, these stories touched our hearts. Thiel College is proud that such strong and lasting relationships started right here on campus. Read on for some of their memories, and go to www.thiel.edu/alumni to share yours.

The Play was the Thing



My wife and I were cast as lovers in the play "Yes My Love" directed by Spencer Goodreds, and by the time the play was put on it was not acting—it was the real thing. We were married in 1953, and spent the next 20 years in the Air Force, living for three of those in Japan. After the Air Force, I taught school for 20 years. Our time spent in the Air Force gave us the urge to see more of the world, and we have! We have been to 76 countries and all seven continents, including ocean cruises and land tours. We have



five children and have been in love all these 57 years.

—Dorothy "Dot" (Hitson) '53 and Edward Kroen '52

Goin' to the Chapel

We met in chapel and got to know each other through the Lutheran Student Movement (LSM) during fall 2005. Chats at the Bistro extended into hours-long conversation and Thiel's campus became an exciting place as we found excuses to spend time together. After two weeks of getting to know each other, we decided to start dating. Nine wonderful months later, we became engaged and continued to date until Grace graduated. We were married at the Evangelical Church of the Holy Trinity in Greenville, Pa. Currently, we live in Fairfield, Pa., and still find ourselves deeply in love and often remember the delightful times we spent at Thiel College.

—Stephen '08 and Grace Lawver-Simmons '09
(also pictured on opposite page and on the cover)

Beginnings and Endings

In 1958, during my first year as a transfer, my roommate, Jim Dingfelder '61, introduced me to Ann Myford '62. She was the roommate of Jim's girlfriend, Karen Benson '62. I guess I was smitten. Ann quickly became my first "real" girlfriend. I think Ann would have preferred my writing about things like our first meeting in the cafeteria where she worked or our "borrowing" trays together from the cafeteria to use as sleds. She'd want me to remind the women of Sawhill that she cut their hair for cigarettes—and mine because, well, I guess because she liked me. On date nights, I'm sure she wasn't the only one to find her way into and out of the tightly locked Sawhill dorm via a certain window. The connecting happened quickly, but the marrying took a while. We were married five years later by Professor Rev. Theodore Scheifele (despite his telling Ann that I wouldn't amount to much—smart man) while my roommate Jim sang beautifully for us. Honing the marriage to perfection took still longer. We were married 46 years until cancer took Ann away, holding my hand, on Jan. 29, 2009. Ann never made it back to the campus (she thought), but if you go Riverside Park, to the west of campus, you might sense her presence at a favorite spot along the river bank where I've placed a bit of her ashes. In a way, I guess that means our 50-year love story began and ended at Thiel.

—Dr. Richard "Dick" Dickinson '61

Unexpected Surprise

Bill and I met the first week of our freshman year in September 1970. Neither of us wanted to get serious with anyone in college and yet we knew immediately that our lives would be spent together. We have been married for 38 years and together for 40. Thank you, Thiel! It's been great.

—Diane (Carlson) '74 and William Dickhoff '74

A photograph of a bride and groom embracing under a brick archway with the word 'THIEL' in gold letters. The bride is wearing a white wedding dress with a purple sash and a purple train with white floral patterns. She is holding a bouquet of purple and white flowers. The groom is wearing a dark suit and a black bow tie. They are standing on a paved path with trees in the background.

THIEL

*“As a clock or a bell
has not power to hear
its own sound, and
does not derive benefit
from its stroke, so the
preacher who lacks
love cannot himself
understand anything
he says.”*

-Martin Luther

A Chance Meeting

One day during my freshman year, some of my friends and I were in the bookstore and came across some really funny retro stuff. One was a "I met my mate at Thiel" button. We laughed, but I made it my mission to buy one of those pins some day! I dated several guys while at Thiel, but nothing ever worked out. Before Christmas break of my junior year, I decided that I really didn't want a boyfriend and that I'd rather focus on other things. Well... fate had different plans. In late January, the Sig Eps had an alumni board meeting and some of the alumni decided to stay the night. My friends, Sara (Evans) Cope '98 and Michael Robbins '96, were friends with one of the alumni and decided that I needed to meet him. Thinking he had a girlfriend, I blew them off. Later that night, we were all hanging out in the house and Rusted Root came on. We were all dancing and singing when Sara thought it would be funny to tie this particular alum and I together with my flannel shirt. It turns out that that alum, Matt Hughes '92, did not have a girlfriend—and we made an instant connection. We were engaged a year later and have been married for 12 years with three wonderful future Tomcats, Amelia, Declan and Finnian. I never did get that button, though.

—Angela (Lago) '97 and Matt Hughes '92

"Quality Students"

I met my wife, Barbara (Kelch) Toy, in 1957 while standing in line waiting to buy textbooks. Barb was a freshman and I was a junior, returning to school after three years of service in the army. We married after she graduated in 1961. We have two sons, a daughter and six grandchildren. We celebrated our 50th anniversary on Feb. 18, 2011, at a party at the Asbury Woods Nature Center in Erie, Pa., where we both volunteer. I have to say, you get great "quality" students at Thiel, especially the girls.

—Barbara (Kelch) '61 and Leonard Toy '59

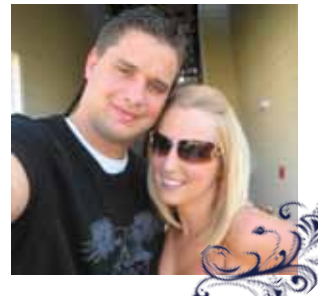
Spark to a Flame

During sophomore year, I switched my major to elementary education. In my first education class, I got stuck at a table with all boys. It was there I met Jon Howson. We were both in other serious relationships at the time, so we became friends. He swears to this day that he told his freshman roommate that I was the girl he was going to marry. He was always very quiet and I was always very talkative. Throughout college, we would see each other on campus and have conversations in the Bistro or walking to class, but never got the chance to get to know each other well. It was not until our senior year, the day of graduation practice, that I realized there was a spark between us. We both had recently become single. We ended up sitting next to each other at practice and being silly and laughing the entire time. Since that day, we have been inseparable. He coached football at Thiel after graduation and I went to every game. I eventually was offered a teaching position in South Carolina and Jon came with me. In December 2008, we completed one important task before we left Thiel's campus—we walked Brother Martin's Walk. That summer we got engaged! We have been married since July 10, 2010. We hold a special place in our hearts for Thiel College and still love to come back to see the wonderful people who shaped our lives. We love you Thiel! Go Tomcats!

—Amy (Holzshu) '06 and Jonathan Howson '06

Just Friends

Cindy and I met in Intro to Philosophy in fall 1976. I needed someone to take notes and she was a bright-eyed freshman who came to class and studied. We started out as just friends. Our first date was to a wrestling match in Ohio. We had to sit behind Coach Mel Berry on the bus. We dated steadily through spring 1977. In April that year, I was offered a job as a claims adjuster with Liberty Mutual Insurance. I knew Cindy was special by April. She was the first person to accept my behavior quirks and devotion to Thiel athletics. She was also the first girlfriend that my family totally accepted. I proposed to her at the Duquesne Incline Overlook on May 18, just three



days before graduation. We were married on March 18, 1978 in Meadville, Pa. We celebrated our 33rd anniversary this year. One of the fondest memories we have of Thiel is walking the entire length of Brother Martin's Walk. We would walk it many times, going to Roth House where I lived.

—Cindy (Runyan) '80 and David Palesky '77

Detour to Love

Driving across Route 80 one fall afternoon in 2000, I made a last minute detour to visit Dr. Bill Robinson, little knowing that diversion would change my life. That Homecoming Weekend, I met Lisa Kane. We developed an instant rapport with one another and at Homecoming the following year, I proposed to Lisa at the end of Brother Martin's Walk. We later returned to Thiel for our wedding ceremony and reception, where Dr. Robinson served as a groomsman. He also is godfather to our eldest son, William, who was baptized at the David A. Johnson Memorial Chapel. (William has two brothers, Rocco and Michael.) Thiel continues to hold a special place in our hearts.

—Lisa (Kane) '01 and Michael Capozzoli '94



Class Act

I met my husband at Thiel in 2004. Jerome and I had a physical fitness class together with Coach Mark Vennis. My husband and I often joked that if someone would have said that I would be dating the guy I used to chase and tease in gym class...I would've laughed right in their face. Most of the time in class we were both being silly and pretending to be hardcore workout fanatics. Most people would say that Jerome and I were inseparable on campus. We got married on April 22, 2006. We actually had our wedding on a weekend and returned to Thiel that next Monday to finish up our finals. We welcomed a beautiful daughter on July 4, 2006. Jerome graduated in December 2007 and we welcomed a baby boy in November 2008. I graduated from Thiel in December 2009. After I graduated, we decided we were ready for a change of scenery. I'm originally from Philadelphia and he is from Cleveland so we moved to Georgia in September 2010. We've just celebrated our six-year anniversary and in April we celebrated five years of marriage.

—Dana '09 and Jerome Young '07

Just Being Fraternal

During the late '40s and the '50s, the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity was notorious for their unique parties, the themes of which were selected so their guests, Thiel coeds for the most part, were obligated to wear rather revealing attire. Of the several Chi parties each year, none was more eagerly anticipated by the brothers than Sadie Hawkins Day, with co-eds dressed as "Daisy Mae" and "Wolf Gal." When I was a senior, my date for the party was to have been my "back home" girlfriend. Late the evening before the party, she called to say she had to substitute the next day for a sick co-worker. Now dateless, I volunteered to tend the "refreshment" bar. One of the guests the next evening was Sandra, a popular sophomore. Her being at the party was somewhat of a dual surprise because she was considered to be the "steady" of a Delta Sig and her escort to our party was brother Henry, a rather shy chap who rarely attended Chi parties. During the "talent show" put on for entertainment, Sandra, sat alone on a piano bench at the back of the room, presumably saving a space for Henry. The refreshment bar was closed, so being a good host, I sat down next to her to help preserve Henry's seat. The show ended about an hour later, the dancing began and still no Henry. (The next day we learned that he was in the hospital with appendicitis.) I did the fraternal thing and asked Sandra to dance. Another hour passed and still no Henry, so I suggested taking her back to the dormitory in the car I had just inherited. The fraternity house was diagonally across the campus from the girl's dormitory, which any Thiel grad knows is about a 10-minute walk. By car, the journey that night took an hour. After graduation, I joined the Army and spent about 18 months in Korea and soon after being discharged Sandra and I got married, a union that lasted 50 years.

—John Donaldson '51

Interested in getting married at Thiel? Wedding ceremonies can be held at the David Johnson Memorial Chapel, which features a flexible interior that can accommodate up to 240 guests. The Lutheran Heritage Room or the Sawhill-Georgian Room can be reserved for receptions. In the Lutheran Heritage Room, about 200 people can be seated comfortably with tables, a dance floor and a buffet line. For smaller weddings, the Sawhill-Georgian Room can accommodate about 80 to 90 guests with tables and a buffet line. Thiel can offer wedding dates from May through August as well as breaks during the academic year when classes are not in session. For more information about weddings at Thiel, please contact Sherrie Greenlee-Ogello at 724-589-2240 or sgreenlee@thiel.edu.