


The Moments That Shaped Us

Brantford Lifescapes Writing Group 2017
Brantford Public Library



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This book was written by participants in a memoir writing program sponsored by the Brantford Public Library.

Editor: Robin Harding

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Introduction

Lifescapes is a writing program created to help people write their life stories, to provide support and guidance for beginner and experienced writers alike. 2017 marked our tenth year running the program at the Brantford Public Library, and *The Moments That Shaped Us* is our tenth collection of stories to be published.

A limited number of print copies were made available at the time of publishing. The library retains print copies for borrowing but also archives online versions that may be viewed via our website at <http://brantford.library.on.ca/adults/lifescapes/>.

On behalf of the library and this year's participants, I would like to thank local author Larry Brown for once again sharing his time and expertise as a writing instructor.

To our readers, I invite you to note a special aspect of this year's edition – namely, the recipes and references to food found peppered throughout the anthology. It may interest you to know that this theme emerged in honour of Canada's Sesquicentennial.

No country survives a century and a half without controversy and conflict. As a nation we have a lot to be proud of and much still to accomplish; this benchmark was an opportunity to reflect and to acknowledge both. As a group we reflected on what it means to live in or immigrate to Canada and found a great deal of common ground in the many links between food and culture. From the sourcing of ingredients to the manner of presentation, it became clear that the food we eat connects us to family, to heritage, to our very sense of national identity. I hope you will enjoy the culinary tidbits presented to you among these stories, and encourage you to reflect on how your own heritage, culture, and environment influences the food you eat and serve.

It is my very great pleasure to present this year's Lifescapes anthology, *The Moments That Shaped Us*.

Bon appétit!

Robin Harding
Coordinator of Programs and Outreach (Adult and Senior)
Brantford Public Library
Brantford, Ontario

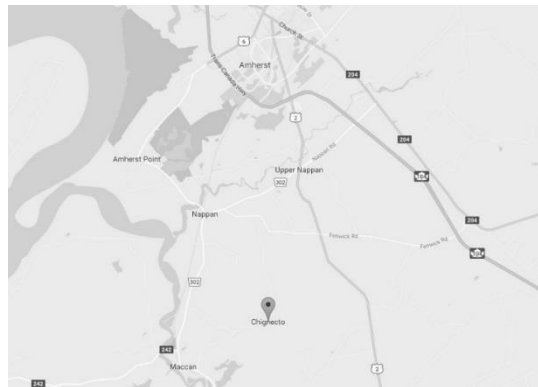


Chignecto Precious Memories The Darkness of Night

By Bertha Joseph

Chignecto

Chignecto is an artist's concept, a painting of peace and tranquility. The once busy mining Village has declined to a few homes with a miniscule population. Nothing remains except the beauty of the land, its forest, and fields of blueberries. It is located in Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, south of Amherst between the villages of Nappan and Maccan.



Chignecto, Maccan, Nappan, and Amherst, Nova Scotia. Source: GoogleMaps

Chignecto Mines

Chignecto was a thriving mining town. In the early 1900s a power house was constructed at the mine head for “pit head power” to run the mine. Due to a lack of water supply in Chignecto for expansion, however, mining operations were moved to Macan in 1929 and the mines in Chignecto eventually closed.



Chignecto Mines Located south of Amherst, between Nappan and Macan in Cumberland County. This image shows high flues, railway equipment and the power house to the far left. Coal was discovered at Chignecto in 1863, first coal shipped in 1864.

Date: ca.1885

Reference no.: Coates Nova Scotia Archives no. 2 / negative no. N-1589

(Photo and caption: *Men in the Mines: A History of Mining Activity in Nova Scotia, 1720-1992*, <https://novascotia.ca/archives/meninmines/>)

My grandfather purchased a vacant house, located between the Landry Property and the Government Farm woods, from Duncan Ripley's father. The house was torn down and rebuilt on Chignecto Hill. Grandfather's white-washed home, enclosed by white pole fences, was bordered by the forest to the front and rear of the home.

Duff is the fine dust left over from screening coal. It was used mostly for banking fires in our stoves at night and to fill pot holes in roads. Folk who could not afford the graded coal bought duff coal at a much lower price.

Precious Memories

It was one of those special days in summer. The sky was clear blue, absent of clouds and a cool early morning breeze was busy drying the dew, and I was on my way to Chignecto to see my Grandparents.

I found myself thinking back in time to my visit in June 1943. My first recollection was the smell of duff coal. As we drove through the small Village and up the hill to Grandpa's home, the vehicle caused the coal duff on the road to cloud the air. There was no escaping this invasion into our bodies; it penetrated our nostrils and filtered into our lungs. My mind became flooded with memories I held most dear.

Seven years later, on a fine day in July 1950, I was reliving that first trip. Driving up the hill to Grandpa's, nothing had changed. It was the same narrow road, with duff still clouding the air. As the vehicle slowly made its way up the hill I wanted to escape and walk the rest of the way.

Grandpa's home was a white-washed two story home with an L-shaped veranda, facing the small village below. A pathway down the front property to a gate was bordered on one side with a garden of sunflowers and on the other side by a garden of bamboo. The property was surrounded by white pole fences and at the back of the house there were outbuildings and barns, painted the same white wash. Beyond the barns, at the tree line, Grandpa's coal mine was located. At 78 years of age Grandpa was still working his mine.

We turned into the driveway. As soon as the vehicle left, I was alone with my Grandparents. At last I was free to breathe the scent of fir and spruce.

Grannie was wiping her hands on her apron when she rushed out into the yard, her arms stretched out to greet me. My Grandmother was a small, 68 year old, very pleasant lady. Her gold tooth sparkled in the sunlight as her eyes gleamed and her smile touched my heart. Her greeting revealed a slight accent, rumoured to be Dutch while other rumours claimed the accent was Scottish.

I picked up my suitcase and arm-in-arm we entered into the mud kitchen. A butter barrel set in the corner.

"Ready to be churned," said Grannie, as I stood staring at it. "Come inside, my dear. You and I will have tea for I know how you love tea."

"Yes, I do love tea, but Mama is always saying tea will stunt my growth. Grannie, do you think she is right?"



Grandfather



Grandmother

“Leave your height to God, my dear. That is all predestined,” said Grannie. “Now tell me how your mama is faring now that dear Norman is gone. My own heart is broken, as is yours, losing your daddy.” We talked awhile. Tears ran down our cheeks, as memories flooded our thoughts.

Sometimes Grandpa and Grannie would come to Amherst, in his old black truck. They would visit us and do shopping. He would always bring us a load of duff coal for banking the night fires. In the spring of 1950 I remember Grandpa bringing a load of coal. We lived in a third floor apartment, at 4 Church Street. He, at age 78 years, carried all that coal up the two flights of stairs in oat bags, dumping them in the coal bin. There was no one to help as our father was at work.

A few weeks later, my Grandparents came once again to Amherst, not to visit, but to the wake and funeral of my father. My Grandfather dressed in his Sunday suit, walked, head erect, a heart-broken man. The family chain of fourteen children was broken. My Father was forty-two years of age and bore his father’s full name. I gazed upon Grandfather’s red-rimmed eyes that watered behind his spectacles. Grandmother rested in the arms of many daughters. That was the last time my Grandparents came to visit.

“You must help me now. I am very busy this morning.” said Grannie, interrupting my thoughts.

So there we were churning and blocking butter, mixing up a white cake, and all the while bread was rising on the warming oven of the kitchen stove. A stew cooked on the stove for dinner.



*Grandpa, Uncle Harry, Father, Baby Aunt
Prudence, Uncle Pearl*

Everything remained the same in my Grandparents home. A black chaise lounge remained in its place in front of the kitchen window, facing the driveway. The large table held its place on the opposite side of the kitchen. To the right of the stove was the pantry and to the left was the washroom.

There was a cellar hatch in the washroom floor. Grannie sent me down into the cellar for vegetables. This was not the first time I was honoured to do this. It certainly was a scary place. I battled with the cobwebs and spiders scurrying about. I then struggled to

dig potatoes, a turnip and carrots. These were buried in sand and hay. My reward would be presented at the dinner table with a feast of Grannie’s stew.

The morning quickly passed and we heard Grandpa coming into the house through the outbuildings, where he removed his pit boots and coveralls. He had already washed, but the coal dust still clung in rings about his eyes, nostrils, mouth and ears. My heart beat with joy as we exchanged greetings.

The stew was wonderfully delicious and served with fresh baked bread rolls. Grandpa finished eating his dinner and cake and tapped his large teacup onto his saucer. Grannie poured the hot tea and he sipped his tea from the saucer. When he finished, he returned to the mine. The dinner table lacked conversation. It had one purpose in Grandfather's house and that it was strictly for eating.

Conversations would take place in the evening. The table cleared and dishes done and put away; the table was reset for supper.

Entering the front door, into the hall, my Grandparents bedroom was to the left. To the right were stairs leading to the second floor. Grannie and I went upstairs. My room was at the top of the stairs to the left.

Grannie said, "This will be your room. Your window faces the rising sun in the mornings and throughout the day and night, you will look over the field to the lovely forest of trees and now and then an animal will visit."

"Grannie, can I have a clock?" I asked.

"Oh, Bertha, you won't need a clock for very early in the morning, the birds will waken you." She pointed to the door across from my bedroom and said, "You remember the back chamber, for you always spend a lot of time there, when you visit, reading the books and papers."

At the top of the stairs, to the right was the door leading to the back chamber. It was above the kitchen and was cozy and warm. The window faced south allowing the wonderful sunlight to also warm and brighten the room. I loved this chamber. When I entered it, my imagination ran wild. So many interesting things were stored there and the books were very ancient and beautiful.

Many of my hours were spent in the chamber, often referred to as the attic. In its coziness I would lose all track of time as I mulled through and read books. The chamber was all wood, appearing as if it had just been built, instead of many decades before. There were so many exciting things to look at and to figure out what they were used for. Sometimes I would just sit there and think of times our father brought us to visit, and remember the highlights of our time spent in Chignecto.

Grannie and I walked back downstairs to her bedroom, where she rested until time to prepare supper. As she opened her door, I was overjoyed to step once again



Norman & Sarah McFadden
May 31, 1918

into their room.

My mind was reeling, wanting to capture every memory possible about this house. Then my mind wandered to past visits and various events that took place here.

My thoughts went to my Grandparents bedroom. Early in the evenings, they would retire to bed. Grannie would read her Bible and if not too tired would read the news or a magazine. Grandpa, braced upright against pillows, would read stories, the news and any letters that arrived in the mail.

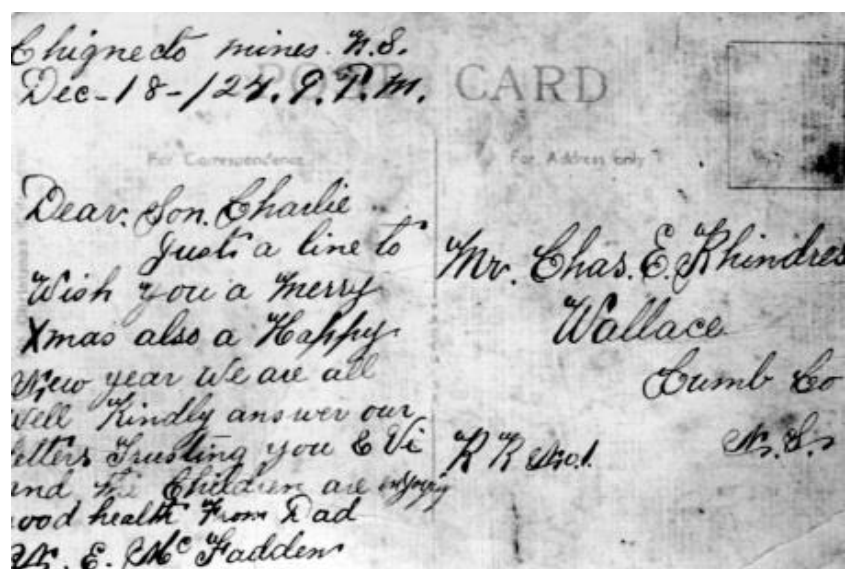
Grandpa chewed *Club Chewing Tobacco*. In their room he had a *Railroad Spittoon*. His father worked on the railway in Nova Scotia, since its inception, starting as a trackman, until he retired about 1901. Maybe that explains where this *Railroad Spittoon* came from. Grannie told me that as Grandpa lay abed chewing his *Club Tobacco*, he never missed the spittoon, which sat a distance from the bed.

In the corner of the room was a porcelain white chamber pot; the privy, as Grannie called it, was a distance from the house and certainly not convenient at night. On each side of the bed a kerosene oil lamp sat on their night tables. The big bed looked comfortable; I longed to crawl into it.

Grannie told me their bedroom was a very private place. She said it was a room where creation took place. I didn't understand then, but as the years rolled past, it all came to light. My grandparents had fourteen children, six sons and eight daughters.

Before returning upstairs I roamed through the house, exploring all within my reach, touching and smelling everything. Looking once again at all the framed photos on the walls, I was determined to remember it all.

In the living room, I looked at Grandpa's chair. It was a big chair; Grandpa was a big man. On his smoking stand, lay his pipe and can of *Club Pipe Tobacco*. A stack of answered and unanswered mail was neatly placed. His pen and ink, post cards and letter paper lay waiting for him. Grandpa was a prolific letter writer. He had beautiful penmanship and everyone loved getting mail from him. The walls in the living room held enlarged portraits of Grandpa and



Postcard to son Charlie, posted December 18, 1924

Grannie. On the wall directly across from the front hall was a portrait of a gentleman. Now, in recalling my last visit that wonderful July, I suddenly remembered this portrait. I thought it was Grandpa, thinking and believing, at one time, he was a sea captain. Now, as I write this Memoir, I am faced with a question. 'Was this Grandpa?' or 'Was it Grandpa's father?' What I believed to be a sea captain's cap and uniform, I now believe it to be a railway cap and uniform worn by Grandpa's father. I am now on a new adventure, challenge and search. I must find out who has this portrait.

Grandpa was a hard worker, kept care of his home and raised his family, by operating his own wood and coal business. He cut trees from his land and when and where allowed from Crown Land. He cut, stacked and sold the wood. He operated his own boot- leg coal mine and was still working the mine and selling coal until his health failed at age 80. He raised fourteen children and was married for 55 years at the time of his death, at age 82.

Some folk say Grandpa was a cantankerous old man. My perception was that he was a grand gentleman, overworked and tired. Most of his acquaintances were retired for decades or already gone to the Great Beyond. I was fascinated by him and I loved him dearly. There are no journals or diaries that recorded his life. There is just the odd old postcard he mailed to friends and relatives, which were kept and treasured.

Every evening, Grandpa would relax on his black coach swing on the front veranda, looking down into the Village. He enjoyed his quiet time and no one bothered him except one – ME.

One evening while I was sitting with Grandpa, I found myself staring at his sunflowers. No one dared touch his sunflowers. Then I remembered a time when I was very small. That evening, I followed Grandpa to the front veranda. On his way, he turned and saw me caressing the petals of a sunflower. He turned, picked two small sunflowers and intertwined them into my braids. He said nothing. I said nothing. When I was called into the house, it was discovered *'that I picked Grandfather's sunflowers.'* My mother was trying to untangle them from my braids, when Grandfather entered the door and heard her say *'I was in trouble'* Everyone avoiding looking his way, waiting for his roar except me, never enjoyed the wink of his eye and the sly little grin, partially hidden by his mustache. As Grandpa and I stared at each other, we both knew it was a secret ~ just he and I kept.



Uncle Leon, Grandpa, and Uncle Tom.

After supper Grandpa would go to his smoke stand, fill his pipe with *Club Pipe Tobacco*, strike a wooden match or two, and light his pipe. He would look over the mail, if any, and then walk at his leisure stride to his place on the front veranda. Grannie in her soft gentle and musical voice would suggest I leave my grandfather to his evening moments of enjoying the setting sun.

I would follow him and sit beside him on the old black coach swing, with Grandpa looking down over the Chignecto Hills to the Village below. With his pipe in the corner of his mouth, sometimes he would say, "There goes old Ripley. He must be going to the mail." Other times, he would say, "The guys are all gathering, something must have happened." But after a long day working his mine, he had no interest or energy to join them in the village to find out what or if anything had happened.

Grandpa liked his quiet time, but I was a chatterbox. I would ask him innumerable questions. On one particular evening, I asked him about his father, what he looked like, where he came from. Grandpa grunted some sort of unheard reply. He sat very quiet for some time and then proceeded to tell me about his people. He told me stories of ships, the stormy seas, people stowed away in barrels in the bowels of the ship. There were happy stories and very sad stories. Years later when I went to write it all down, the stories were gone, forgotten on the winds of time.

During the days of my visit I helped Grannie do the housework and helped with the meals and the dishes. She would send me down to the Village to the post office, which was the front room of a house. Then I was off to the little store to buy one pound of white sugar for ten cents and a can of clams for nine cents. That day, she let me make clam chowder for supper.

Many days, Grannie would go with me for a walk up and down the road. Many times we stopped to pick wild flowers and take in the wonders of nature. We had many memories to share with each other. I remember how she explained why the water and rocks in the ditches were a rich copper colour. I was fascinated but disappointed it was not gold and only caused by iron.

Grannie was a strong Christian and gave me many lessons to live by. The one important one was to read my Bible and to honour my mother, for now she would have a difficult life without a husband to help raise her children.

Grannie was a wonder woman. She never seemed to tire, pacing herself throughout the day. I sometimes wonder how this lady bore and raised fourteen children; at age 68 she was still active and ambitious. She was still baking her own bread, churning her own butter and doting on her husband and anyone who came to visit, and all the while wearing an everlasting smile. She was a truly great lady filled with so much love.

Nighttime in Chignecto was the most interesting. The air was heavy with dampness. On a moonless night, it was darker than dark. But on the nights the moon sailed across the sky, it waltzed with the clouds and stars. On my knees at the window's edge, I would watch the heavenly dance, to the hoot of the owls and the chirp of the crickets. All during this serenade, the frogs courted and a train whistle joined in.

This was my last visit to my Grandparent's home in Chignecto. My visit ended but the precious memory of it lives on forever in my heart.

The Darkness of Night

Once, when time stood still, a train whistle broke the night silence. Just moments before, I lay listening to all the sounds of night ~ the musical snoring of Grandfather and the crooning frogs and hooting owls. The air was as damp as it was dark. Stars gleamed and twinkled and all the while, the moon sailed in the misty dark sea of the sky.

Alone, I lay in bed at my Grandparents' home, in Chignecto Mines. The smell of duff coal from Grandfather's boot-leg coal mine penetrated my senses; and as the night breezes entered my open window, they purified my room with the scent of the fir and spruce that bordered the property

I knelt at the window's edge and peered out into the darkness of night. The moon and stars danced in and out among the darkened clouds. All was still in the big old house ~ a house filled with history and memories of better days, when industry thrived in this small Village.

Sleepless, back in my bed, I laid awake for long hours, dreaming dreams awake. Dreams, romantic imaginings, all taking place in Grandfather's white-washed house, surrounded by his gardens of sunflowers, bamboo shoots, white-washed outbuildings and barns, all enclosed with white pole fences.

*Often my soul roams the hills
of Chignecto Mines, searching for a
sunflower that may have survived the
winds of time.*

About the Author



I was born and raised in Nova Scotia and since 1964; Brantford, Ontario has been my home. I am a proud Mother, Nana and Great Nana.

I love to write stories. I am writing Memories. My book is called "Strolling Through the Diamonds". The "diamonds" symbolize the precious years of my life. These are my stories written for my children, their children and all their little children, who one day, like me, will wonder about those who lived before and from whom they descended. In reading my stories, they will come to know me and may grasp a little of what life was like so long ago.

Addendum: A Recipe

During the “Lean Years” the larder contained only the basic essentials for cooking. From these plain and simple ingredients my Grandmother and my Mama would produce delicious meals and desserts and treats that always warmed and satisfied our hunger and taste buds.

The following is my favourite dessert:

Cottage Pudding

¼ cup shortening	½ cup sugar
1 egg	1 tsp baking powder
1 cup flour	¼ tsp salt
¼ cup milk	

Combine together the shortening and sugar until light. Add the egg and vanilla and mix well. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt and add alternately with the milk. Bake in a greased pan for 20 to 25 minutes in an oven heated to 350 degrees.

Serve with lemon, vanilla, brown or caramel sauce – or my favourite, chocolate sauce.

Chocolate Sauce

2 tbsp. cornstarch	⅔ cups sugar
4 tbsp. cocoa	1¾ cups hot water
1 tbsp. butter	1 tsp vanilla

Combine the cornstarch, sugar, salt and cocoa and add the hot water. Cook over low heat, almost constantly stirring until thick and smooth.

Just before serving add the butter and vanilla. Serve hot or cold.



The Protestant Work Ethic: My Father's Life

By Brian Bosnell

Paternal Beginnings

*Communing with your significant dead is what it amounts to,
and that is an exhausting thing.*

-- Martin Amis

Canton, Ontario Con.4 (s. half) Lot 19. Yes, there it is, that's it! (Oh, the marvels of Google Earth.) That farmhouse inherited by Lily, who married John Bosnell my paternal grandfather. Canton exists to this day as a tiny hamlet a few kilometers from Port Hope, Ontario. Lily bore six children: Helen, Jean, Evelyn, Phyllis, Norman, and John Morley all of whom grew up on the farm. Coincidentally Canton was also the home of Vincent Massey, diplomat, lawyer, and Governor General of Canada. My father's only brother Norman, married Edna, one of two English girls brought over from England to work for the Massey family. At this writing, Aunt Edna remains vibrant at the age of ninety-six, the sole survivor of that Bosnell family group.

With sixteen years between Helen and Morley one of Helen's chores was to tend to my father. It's been said that Helen used to rock Dad in his cradle. She, the eldest sister, bundled him up, even in the winter, and tucked him into a horse drawn sleigh to attend Sunday services. Lily played the organ at two United churches, one in Canton and one in Welcome.



IXA

Front Row: L. Clark, N. Scott, H. Fox, B. Lowthian, M. Bickle, A. Hayden, H. Stinson, J. Philp.
 Second Row: R. Halstead, E. Halford, B. Palmer, K. Anderson, M. Sutton, M. Bennett, B. Peters, M. Merrifield, M. Dickinson.
 Third Row: A. Wilson, D. Brenton, B. Austen, A. Peacock, E. Austin, J. McGillis, R. White, H. Barrowclough.
 Back Row: N. Hodgson, A. Crowhurst, C. Hagerman, R. Sanders, G. Watson, R. Burley, M. Bosnel, J. Sherin

Above: Here he is in 1940: in grade nine, at Port Hope High School. Note the misspelling of Bosnell.

Below: Note the lack of parental signature (bottom right). I find that curious, along with the subject of "Agriculture". Agriculture remained a defining theme for the balance of Dad's life.

Report

of Morley Bosnell Address R.R. 3 Port Hope
 Date June 29, 1939 Grade VII to Grade VIII
 School Bunker Hill Teacher Willis A. Dowler

Social Studies	100	75	Arithmetic		
Reading	50	45	Science	100	79
Writing	50	35	Agriculture	100	80
Spelling	50	34	Health	100	78
Comp. & Grammar	100	67	Composition		
Literature	100	81	Art	100	70
Mathematics	100	77	Total		721
Method of Grading			Maximum	950	
E - Excellent 80%			Attained	721	
G - Good 70%			Percentage	75	
P - Pass 60%			Grading	G	
U - Unsatisfactory 50%					
B - Bad 40%			Parents Signature		
Comments					

Dad's earliest years remain a mystery. I have a broad selection of information: documents, newspaper clips, crests even from his school years.

Below is Dad's grade seven to grade eight report. His teacher, Willis Dowler, married Dad's youngest sister Phyllis and became Dad's new principal at Port Hope High School. Willis gained a reputation as a prominent local artist. We had several of his paintings in our family home in East Ward. One hangs to this day in mine. Willis, when Dad saw him outside of the high school setting encouraged Dad to write. (See "The Way I'll Learn to be a Man," next page.)

With his mother (date unknown) placed beside a poem from the same yearbook as the class photo (The BLUE AND WHITE, 1941) Odd that it's the only yearbook that I have.

Mum (She adamantly preferred the British derivative) referred to Dad several times over the years as a "Momma's boy." He hated the connotation. Mum would never repeat *that* around Dad. The photo does seem suggestive. I have never seen one with mom and any of his sisters, or his brother for that matter. Not one!

As you might not expect Dad had more in common with Helen, his caregiving sister. Both Helen and Dad were unconsciously made to feel special and entitled because of

The Way I'll Learn to be a Man

*Helping mother in the summer
Is the finest way,
Any little boy can spend
Each long vacation day.*

*We always have a garden
That needs a boy to hoe,
And pull up all the useless weeds,
So, things we plant can grow.*

*I can run on errands,
Help feed the chickens, too.
It isn't hard to find enough
That any boy can do.*

*Yes, I will help my mother
Just the very best I can,
For, don't you see, that is the way
I'll learn to be a man.*

Morley Bosnell

their birth order. Popular psychology has it that the youngest is generally a free spirit and a risk taker. That certainly did not typify my father. Dad became *more* responsible and too easily gave up later in life because there was no one to step in to fix whatever was wrong. The demise of White Farm (Cockshutt's) proved that.

Other themes (soon to be addressed) also appeared at an early age: Dad's musicality, his stubbornness, his competitive spirit, his anal nature and most importantly his fanatical devotion to the Protestant Work Ethic.

Dad must have attended church hundreds of times and heard organ music hundreds more. He loved to play the organ at the slightest hint of a potential social gathering. Organ styles were imprinted in Dad's brain! Several years after his death I inherited that organ. Over time it broke down and several keys wouldn't produce a sound. I tried to have it repaired, but never found anyone who was able. It was heavy and no one would come and pick it up even if offered for free. I eventually dismantled it and took it out piece by piece to be disposed of. The lamp he used to illuminate sheet music now hangs unused on a bookshelf. The organ bench sits with its secret fold up seat as a hiding place for some of my more obscure documents. A potted plant rests on top.

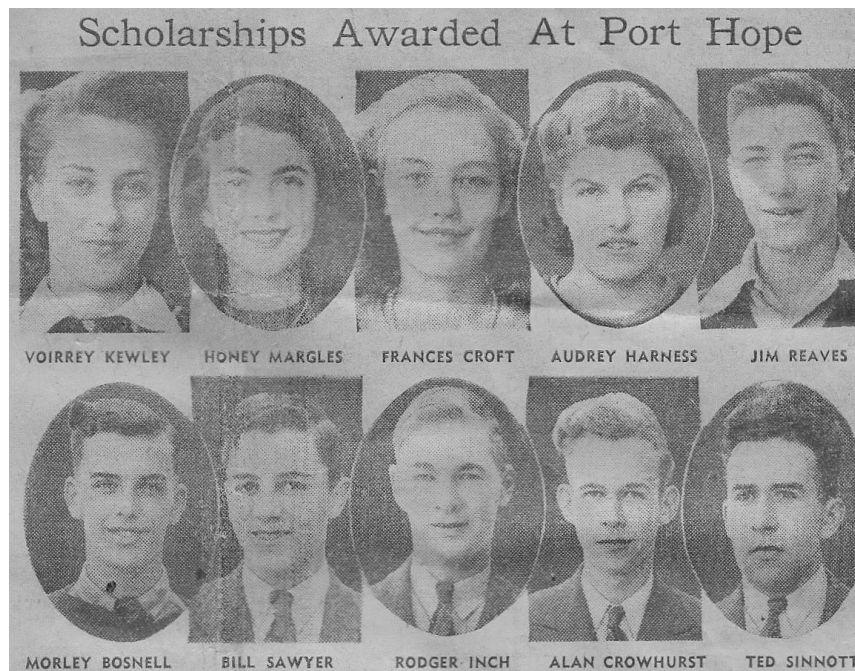
Dad shone athletically during high school. From the headline in the *Evening Guide*, "Three Champions Repeat in Annual H.S. Field Day: Bosnell Has Five Wins", to a series of first place ribbons spanning five years, to excelling at point guard Dad tore up the high school sports' landscape. Someone mentioned at the reunion of 2005 that Dad's ten second-flat one-hundred-yard dash record has never been broken. Recognition for this feat hung in the Port Hope High School halls for years' afterward. I tried to verify its authenticity by scrolling through archived material without success.

Right: In this shot Dad almost smiled. His mother, though, maintained the style de rigueur for the times. Family photos and group portraits were gravely serious. "Wipe that smile off your face" was not only meant for soldiers.



Post High School

*The time not to become a father is eighteen years before a war.
-- E. B. White (1899-1985)*



Dad smiles this time in his 40s-style graduation photo. (Oh, those oval-shaped ones!) The headline in the Evening Guide announces: "Scholarships Awarded at Port Hope." Dad beams, yet his name isn't mentioned in the accompanying article. Curious!

Matriculation in 1945 was extremely difficult. (I wonder if he went to Prom?) To pass with a B+ average made it even more demanding. Around the time of my own high school graduation (And no I didn't attend my Prom!) I heard rumors from Port Hope family members that Dad had been offered all the necessary resources to attend optometry school. A prominent uncle offered to sponsor him. Dad never accepted the offer and within months of his graduation reunited with his sister Helen on Eighth Avenue in Brantford. Here synchronicity took over.

The back fence of that newly erected wartime house was a shared fence. Essentially that property line separated Blanche and Kenneth Vallance from the Bamsey's on Eighth. (Helen Bosnell became Helen Bamsey.) An only child lived there by the name of Norma whose destiny was to become my mother.

As previously noted Dad came to Brantford just months after his graduation. He would have been eighteen or so. The young lady across the fence line would have been thirteen. The point in time when they met remains a mystery. But meet they did, and *date* they did. (Did people date in the late 40s?) Sometime very early in 1950 I was conceived. Morley Bosnell, virile farm boy was to marry a teenager from Eagle Place. John Morley Bosnell and Norma Floy Vallance married in June of 1950. I emerged early in the morning (1:00 A.M. I was told) on a miserable, pre- winter day. Incubated and five weeks premature I survived all preemie attacks to my existence.

However, the fact of the matter is clear. A *shotgun* wedding occurred, a marriage of necessity, imposed long before that disparaging term was invented. Certainly, the societal restraints at the time were so strong that the circumstances of my conception were never mentioned in my father's lifetime. (Or my mother's for that matter.) In 1950 marriage was the *only* option. To this day my affectionate references to Mum frequently include this statement. "Mum was just eighteen years older than me."

Dad took advantage of the burgeoning farm equipment industry by gaining employment at Cockshutt's, the very same facility where his father-in-law worked. After several years of the uncertainty of factory work Dad applied to an anonymous want ad that sought an entry level accounting clerk. Coincidentally, the employer was Cockshutt's and the department was Accounts Payable. Dad's attention to detail served him well and in short time he graduated to Accounts Payable Supervisor, a position he would hold for the next thirty years.

During that span of time Dad fathered and raised four children and strictly followed the standard, unerring devotion to one's employer. Of course, such devotion was the norm at that time. Change, though, was on the horizon.

During Dad's brief stint in manufacturing he befriended a lovable German fork truck driver by the name of John Dietzler. The house at number 2 Lloyd St. was his and he graciously offered the young Bosnells an apartment at a reasonable rate. Even though Mum and Dad left to take up residence on Brock St. in a house owned by the Vallance family, John remained a close friend until his death in the late 80s. John taught Dad every handyman skill there was from plumbing, to basic electricity, to how to pour cement. I recall John troweling cement at the house on Brock when he was in his late seventies.

Under John's tutelage Dad totally renovated a ramshackle out-building on Brock St. into a comfortable three-bedroom home.

Although it was years it also seems to me like time speeded up. Dad's edifice, his foundation, the promise of the Protestant Work Ethic crumbled in an instant before his eyes. Cockshutt's became White Farm. White Farm shriveled from a hostile take-over and died. He had to quickly band together with the remaining group of salaried employees and fight for severance. The battle raged. Under Canadian law severance was awarded, but in settlements that never came close to those claimed by union



The date is 1952 or so. Number 2 Lloyd Street stands just off Locks Rd., in Echo Place at the very top of the hill. John Dietzler added on to the house several times. He lived with his wife and one son to the right side of the house which is out of sight. Note my carriage to the left.

employees. Dad at fifty-five was jobless. He never seriously pursued employment in his field again. He relied on his handyman skills to pursue odd jobs and remained covertly depressed until his cancer diagnosis.

Dad's focus remained the *house* perhaps at times despite family needs. Hundreds of weekends and holidays were spent upgrading the *house*. I helped as a youth, as a teenager and young adult. I vividly remember filling and unloading more than fifty half-ton truck loads of fill down just off River Road. It took an entire summer, if not more to excavate the basement. Dad did the foundation, too. When I say house, I mean home because the forty plus years of renovation made that property into a home!

Note the rosebush to the right front of the vehicle. It's much smaller than in the first photograph, a testament to regrowth after being hacked away.

That rose bush is my age! It's more than sixty years old! Dad laid those driveway stones twice-over, one-by-one. That is, he dismantled the entire driveway twice. Over time undulations would appear. Suddenly, without announcement Dad would be on his hands and knees in the middle of the driveway and my Volvo would be parked on the street. Several times I spent an entire day carefully sifting that special sand and aligning paving stones. Dad would issue a directive if a single weed sprouted between those stones.

A few rather negative memories percolate. First, after Dad's stellar high school athletic career he didn't engage in any athletic pursuits whatsoever. He didn't exercise or play ball (in his case basketball). He never played catch with me or my siblings. He never learned to swim.

Secondly, he refrained from voicing any religious points of view. Yet, I was forced as a youngster to attend Sunday school. I'm convinced that it was indoctrination, really. I still repeat "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep" (The New England Primer Version) from time to time. At the time of the Kennedy/Khrushchev confrontation I prayed constantly with prayers adapted from Sunday school. Dad attended Christmas services once or twice over a forty-year span.

And then, only when his brothers or sisters visited would he dust off his organ and (at Christmas, too) play for fun. Finally, he never read for pleasure. At least I never noticed. It might

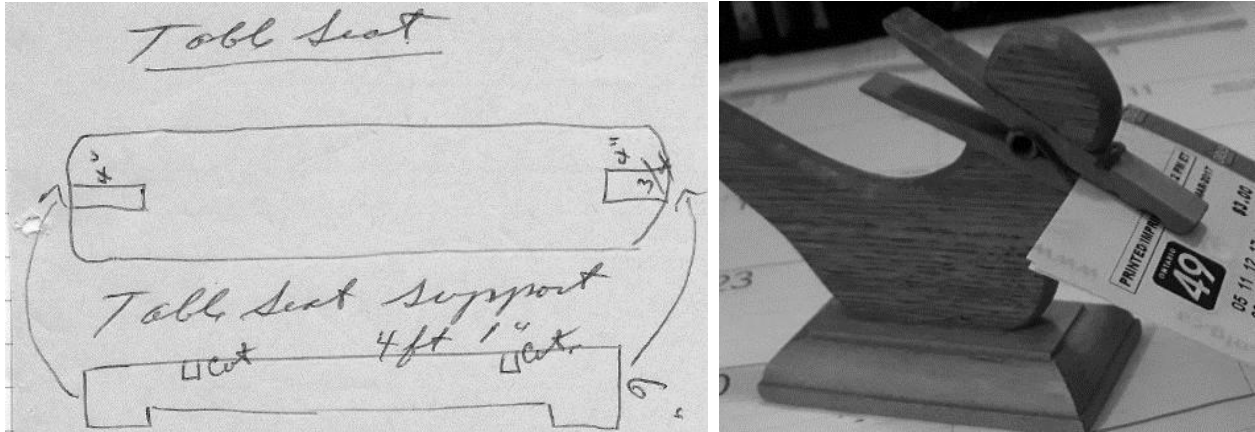


Above: Dad single-handedly transformed a one-time swine enclosure into this.

Below: Here it is today. From love to contempt!



have been the Lee Valley catalogue or “Workshop”, but never a novel for the joy of reading. It was work and “the house” or items for the “house.”



Above, left: here is one diagram selected from hundreds that Dad drew.

Above right: Dad would prepare a parts list, obtain materials, and construct the item. Several were unusual desktop items.

I continue to use my clothespin for lottery tickets. Other knick-knacks in my desk, on a night table, or in a bookshelf keep memories of my father close to my heart.

It's perplexing in a way how time advances. I marry in '79 and leave the comfortable confines of East Ward. Before I blink Dad's employment at White Farm terminates. In the next instant (1993 or so) Dad's diagnosed with colorectal cancer which launches a four-year cycle of muted recovery and inevitable relapse.

Dad: Denouement

ALBANY: How have you known the miseries of your father?

EDGA: By nursing them, my lord.

~William Shakespeare, King Lear, act 5, scene 3

Of course, Dad upheld the prevailing view of masculinity at the time i.e. *acceptance of pain, toughness, and no doctor visits*. That view persists to this day. It's just an extension of the Protestant Work Ethic. Look what *that* religious and societal anachronism did to Dad! Even in 1993 a medical visit at the first sign of symptoms could very well have saved his life.

Instead by the time that a diagnosis was made the cancer had spread. No longer was it colorectal, but truly the *Big C* omnipresent throughout his body. I had taken up meditation at

the time and showed him some breathing exercises as a form of pain management. I didn't realize that Dad was beyond the use of deep breathing to manage his pain. I regretted my misuse of those exercises for a long time afterwards. Today, they're appropriate for me after a great deal of practice.

It can't be said that someone *nursed* my father. No one ever could. I believe that Mum tried, but he resisted to the very end, even to the moment of death. He truly left as he was born, alone. Dad ordered everyone out of the hospital room, even Mum. He passed as he desired reconciled to his God.

Here is a letter (unabridged) written to his brother Norm in April of 1996, three months before his death:

Dear Norm & Edna,

I am writing you at this time to try and explain my sickness to you. I know you must be wondering why I have not called before now. The first operation back in June, 1994 removed the growth, but tests earlier this year revealed some cells had returned. The doctors decided to operate again and found the cancer had come back. They could not remove it all so decided to remove the infected part and join the two ends of my colon together. I now have an ostomy to collect waste outside the body. Since then they detected more scattered cancer cells using a Catscan [ct scan] machine.

Now I'm taking chemotherapy to try to eliminate these. This is not a painful procedure, but has its side effects. I feel very tired all the time. This treatment will go on for six months at least.

With all this going on I can't go out much and only have my family to console me. I would dearly love to see you, but not under these circumstances. I hope you understand.

Norma and I are facing our most difficult times and have accepted the inevitable. I am in my 70th year now and have had a good life, a good family, brothers and sisters.

*Thank you for your prayers and may God be with you.
Good bye for now,
Love Morley*

It's not known if this letter was ever sent. I transcribed it from a rough copy. I don't know if he ever re-wrote it. It's important (in my mind) to note that he included Mum as his partner in the decision to *accept the inevitable*.

Very early the morning after he passed I wrote a eulogy at the kitchen table with my candle flickering on top of the fridge. In my grief-laden confusion I mixed up two songs that reminded me of Dad – *It's a Wonderful World* (by Herb Alpert, Lou Adler and Sam Cooke) and *Handyman* (by Jimmy Jones and Otis Blackwell). Not until years later did I correct the discrepancies, after a family member pointed them out.

I wrote the original the day after Dad's death but here is the corrected version:

As I reflect on Dad's life I'm reminded in a peculiar reverse way of James Taylor's song "The Handyman". Dad didn't fix broken hearts but he fixed everything else. He worked with wood, he had a solid, working knowledge of electricity, he worked on cars, he could roof, he worked with concrete, and he could paint and hang wallpaper. He fixed "broken stuff". I see these talents and abilities expressed through Bruce. He will carry them on.

Dad read to repair, to fix, to act. He read to problem solve. He didn't need the gardening books that everyone gave him. Nature responded to him. On Garden Ave. at the former Schmidt's farm he grew so many red potatoes that he gave fifty pound bags away. In the summer of '95, in an old washing machine tub he grew the biggest tomato plant I have ever seen. I swear he had to support it with two by four's. Vegetables and flowers morphed for him. I remember when the frigid winter of (94,95?) just about killed his ancient rose bush. (It's older than me.) He was so upset.

I remember Dad in the flow and softness of Sam Cooke's song. Dad sang and played the organ for many years. He enjoyed social gatherings where friends and family could assemble around him as he played.

He took his role as an economic provider very seriously. Cockshutt's and White Farm were his working life. Those two institutions defined him as a

"Protestant Work Ethic man". The ugly demise of White Farm embittered him. His rock-steady fifty-year image as "sole-provider" died at once.

As Cooke's lyrics state, "I do know that I love you". In Lynn, I see Dad's rational, clear, practical approach to life. Dad was a private person. He expressed his emotions rarely and only at selected moments. He never said it but I know he loved us.

To stray from the metaphor of the song Dad was a fan of the "Young and the Restless". I remember him in the fifties watching "Search for Tomorrow" and "The Guiding Light" the first two "Soap Operas" ever. I can see Leanne here. Dad appreciated the acting inter-play, the changing roles, and the complexities of the relationships. He observed the drama, the melodrama.

I think he found emotional expression through the countless characterizations.

As for me I reflect Dad's competitiveness. He did hate to lose, more I think than I do. Whether it was cards or the Blue Jays: "I'll turn the damn thing off!" Dad was fiercely competitive. When the score is tied ten to ten in the fifth game and I need an ACE to win that racquetball match God knows it will be DAD serving that drive serve to the forehand.

BRIAN BOSNELL JULY 1996

Author's Note

I have felt a sense of obligation to write about my father for a long time.

What turned that desire into reality?

I've always been the "repository" for all historical items and relics, either Bosnell or Vallance (maternal side). In 2005 I submitted to Dad's high school (Port Hope High) an entire collection including crests, report cards, and other memorabilia. As I was completing my research and pulling items of interest for the present exercise I found an old Lee Valley (tool store) membership card. That card dated the year of his death connected me to a poem that I had written very soon after titled "Memorandum". The poem was drafted twenty-one years before I found the card. Here they are together. The time has arrived!

This memoir is as close to actual events as the vagaries of time will allow. Memories fade, identities quickly merge, dates mix up, names are misspelled, past heated conversations are dulled, and epiphanic moments morph into the mundane. Therefore, I have embraced this flow of time with some abandon.

MEMORANDUM #20

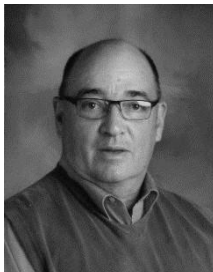
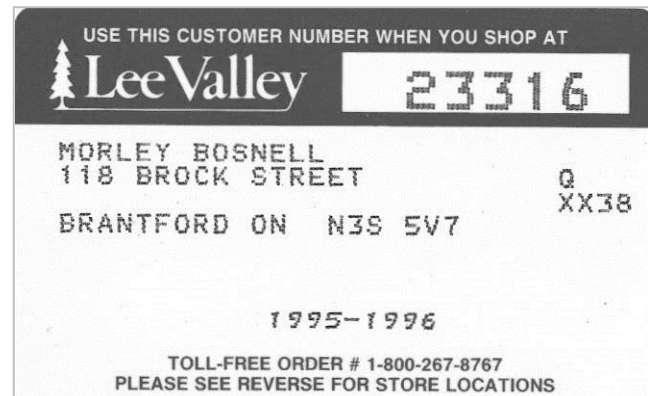
Cc: Dad

Twenty years gone and still I find objects of interest:

- A reference to WORKSHOP Magazine about an old piece fit for fine dining.
- A multi-use tool from LEE VALLEY.
- A digital dashboard compass.
- A synthesizer that echoes like voices trapped between icy December hills.
- A Vic Franklyn on a garage sale table.

This memo rests in your dovetailed drawer marked July 19, Memo # 20

Brian



Brian Bosnell is a retired elementary school teacher who spent 26 years teaching youngsters from JK to Grade 3. A reader by day and a writer by night he is not excited about descriptions in the third person, but here's one nonetheless. Email him here at bosnellb@gmx.com or find him on Facebook www.facebook.com/brian.bosnell



Important Life Lessons Learned From a Feral Cat: A Journey in Mental Health

By Chantelle McLaren

Mental illness has been something that I struggled with for many years. This memoir is about an important part of my journey to take the steps to learn to manage my illness. Many years have passed, so I strive to re-tell this story with as much accuracy as my memory will allow. While I cannot remember the precise position of several coworkers in my story, should they come across this memoir I hope I convey how thankful I am that they are a part of my journey of deciding to live, grow and manage my mental illness.

In 2006, when I was living in Hamilton, I had not yet connected with the services of The Canadian Mental Health Association. I was struggling emotionally with many unresolved demons from my past. I was becoming frustrated and beginning to feel suicidal. I felt ashamed to reach out and ask for help. I was working at a baby sitting room that was located at a gym in Hamilton. I enjoyed looking out for the kids and thinking up silly and fun games for the kids with my coworkers. While at work, it was easier to pretend my pain and emptiness did not exist.

Even in my darkest days, I was determined that I would hold in my anger and frustration. I managed this well at work with the kiddos. I was always happy to watch the children play and be kids. Each evening, I left work I would feel deeply empty, as if I was not important and that the world was still better off without me. I felt that I did not want to risk making others miserable because I was bottling up my own misery.

One night I was standing at the bus stop, watching the bus approach I decided to step in front of the bus, but at the last second I stepped back and I went inside my work and talked with my manager. I do not remember the conversation as I was feeling in a fog, but after a long talk, and made plans to seek help and take the steps to access the Mental Health services I needed, my co-worker drove me home.

In the days that followed I was able to get a referral to CMHA in Hamilton.

A few weeks later I was sitting in the staff lunchroom when I saw a flyer from one of my co-workers who had rescued a mother cat with a litter of kittens. I was certain that I was not interested in having a cat, but I did feel compelled to talk to my co-worker and find out about the litter. I found out that someone had probably dumped the mother cat near her farm and my co-worker was trying to gain the trust of the mother and try to socialize the kittens.

I believe that this co-worker did not know about my attempted suicide, but she did know that I was very shy and guarded. She seemed to have a good measure of my personality and she told me about one kitten in particular that she thought would be a perfect match for me, even though I kept saying I wasn't sure if I wanted a cat yet or not.

After talking with her for a couple weeks, she managed to persuade me that there was one cat in particular that she thought would be perfect for me. She told me this kitten was very shy and said she saw how I was so patient with the kids in the babysitting room, so she told me that she was worried this kitten would not find a good home and that she thought I was the best person to take in this timid kitten. I decided I would take the kitten. My co-worker was pleased and told me this cat was scared and just needed time to trust people. Little did I know then that I also needed time to trust people as well.

[Doxie:]

I'm hiding in this small plastic crate when this large head looks at me. I am shaking all over. The lady taking care of me said we were going to meet someone who would be my forever mummy. I did not know what that meant. My cat mom told us a story about being put in a box and left alone. I was very sad and scared. This lady tried to make me feel less scared as she talked to me. This new lady I had never seen before poked her head and then suddenly opened my cat crate. She started to reach her hand towards me so I hissed as big of a hiss as I could. Maybe if I kept hissing, this new lady would go away. I did not want to have anything to do with her. The lady taking care of me then told me I was a good girl



and that she knew that lady I met would adopt me. I was scared and just wet my towel as I stayed in my crate till I was back with my littermates.

I did a little research online to learn ways to make this cat feel a little more comfortable. It was suggested that I put a pillowcase or socks in the sleeping area that the cat would be. I told my co-worker that I wanted to take this kitten, so I gave her my pillowcase with a couple socks in it. I wanted this kitten to get used to my scent. After a short time my co-worker arranged to bring this now 13-week-old kitten to my home.

This was very strange. One day the lady brought me to this new lady's house. I was very confused. It was the same person who stuck her face in the crate. The lady that found me took me out of the cat crate and showed me the litter box that this new lady had set up for me. She told me the new lady was now my mom and would take care of me. I just wanted to stay in the crate so she left the crate for me to sleep in. The lady who found me was talking with this new lady. They spent a long time talking. I was very scared and did not understand what was going on. Suddenly the woman who found me left. I was so confused and so I ran all around the apartment trying to find a way to get out and find the woman who left. I kept hissing and decided to hide. I did go back in my crate and found my towel that was there. Something else was there too, there was a strong smelling bundle that kind of smelled like this new person, but the smell was stronger. I stayed on my towel and slept.

After a week I was feeling discouraged as this cat was still not warming up to me. I decided to put my couch cushions on the floor and sleep on the floor near where this new kitten liked to hide. I hoped this would win her trust. I lay very still for a long time and eventually the kitten curled up beside the cushions. At first she would run away if I tried to pet her so I would just lay on my back looking up at the ceiling and talk to the kitten. Even though I was discouraged, I was determined to gain the kitten's trust.

Why is this strange person laying on the floor? She is laying on her back. I sniff around and that smelly bundle is by her strangely shaped back paws. I realize that I kind of like this person's smell. She has been giving me fresh water and food and always talks to me in a quiet voice. She does try to pet me but I run back to my hiding spot for a little while. She continues to talk to me and eventually I curl up near her feet. Now she does not try to pet me but she talks to me for a little bit then when she seems to be asleep, I go to sleep too.

After sleeping on the floor, I had a small “a-ha” moment when I realized that this cat was slowly trusting me, so I felt like I had some purpose and would keep this cat’s trust by being there for my cat. Little did I know at the time was that we would continue to keep learning from each other. Trust and breaking each other’s brick wall. I would learn to trust, and she would learn to feel safe around others other than myself. Eventually I would be more outgoing, and visitors



would never suspect my vocal greeter was once a feral kitten who was afraid of all people. That first night that Doxie slept next to me, I realized her trust in me was a nudge for me to trust and open up to a worker at Canadian Mental Health in Hamilton.

Over the months, Doxie became very comfortable with me. I felt like I needed to work on getting better so I could make sure I was always around for her. She would climb on my desk and sit on my shoulders or watch me from one of several perches in my apartment. Once,

in the morning before work, I had made the mistake of removing a cat mat and placing a lamp on top of a dresser. That evening I got home and saw that the lamp had stayed on the dresser all day and I mistakenly thought I could keep it in the new spot. Doxie was sitting beside the lamp but I did not give this any thought. I started making dinner. I did look over, and when I did, Doxie lifted her paw to the lamp. I figured Doxie was small and decided to ignore this. Once my dinner was done, I looked over at the cat to see she was still there. I had only looked up for a second or two when she took her paw and pushed the lamp down off of the dresser. I knew Doxie did not do it to be malicious; it was where her bed had been. As I carried the broken lamp to the garbage shoot, it occurred to me that I intruded on her ‘territory’, her ‘boundary’. I started to think that perhaps I needed to stick up for myself in life and establish boundaries with friends and family.

As the years pass, Doxie’s favourite thing to do is stick her head in my running shoes. She will also place her favourite toys in my shoes.

Now that my sweet cat is eleven years old and we still have our morning snuggle time in bed. I still struggle with aspects of my mental illness, and I also do need to take medication, but I am so thankful for my coworkers and this special semi feral cat that helped me find my purpose.

About the Authors



My name is Chantelle McLaren. I am registered legally deafblind and have CHARGE syndrome. When I am not wrapped around my cats' paws, I enjoy reading, crafting and taking photographs and being outdoors.

Doxie is eleven years old and likes to snuggle in the mornings.



Our Quest for a Cure

By Douglas and Donna Summerhayes

We are so very proud and thankful to all the brave souls who have believed in us and caught our vision for a better life for children with Cystic Fibrosis.

It is hard for us to believe that this is the 58th anniversary of granting the Federal Charter to the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, and in that regard a thumbnail sketch of the early days of what is now Cystic Fibrosis Canada.

We take you back in time to the last century, specifically the early 1950s, long before many, if not all, of you were born.

New Family Beginning

We were in our early twenties, high school graduates, living in suburbia. We were married October 20, 1951. Doug worked at his family lumberyard just outside of the small City of Brantford. Four wonderful children were born to us, Heather Anne in 1952, Pamela Gaye in 1954, Douglas Gregg in 1956 and Earl Jeffery in 1961. Pamela and Jeffery were ultimately diagnosed as having Cystic Fibrosis, then known as a genetic and terminal children's disease.

Our little family of two beautiful girls and a baby boy delighted us, but there were worrisome signs that our youngest daughter Pamela, born March 28, 1952, was not progressing as she should.

Early Treatments

Pam had always looked like a “failure to thrive child” that you see in magazines or on TV despite our efforts to feed her enormous amounts of food. She suffered with frequent bouts of pneumonia, had loose bowel movements and coughed incessantly. Our mothers suggested we use mustard and onion poultices soaked in goose grease to ease her breathing problems. These were applied to her chest and feet to no avail. We noticed early on when we kissed her the taste of salt was ever present.

Those were the years when one depended on what your family doctor said and he told us that she only had allergies. Referral to a paediatrician was quite unusual, if there even was one nearby.

Canada’s proposed universal health care plan to pay for health needs was legislated in 1957 and it would be several years before it was fully rolled out to be implemented as the OHIP we (Ontario residents) all enjoy today.

Voluntary health organizations were in their infancy and golf tournaments, galas, runs, walks and other popular fundraisers, were not a part of daily life as they are today.

We purchased private health care insurance from Physician Services Inc. and Blue Cross Inc. to help us to pay our mounting debt for health costs. The advent of computers, cell phones, copiers and fax machines were not available then, as they belong to the twenty-first century. We did however have modern equipment of the time known as typewriters, Dictaphones and dial telephones.

This then is the environment that cradled the momentous change that was about to take place in our lives.

Diagnosis

It was after Pam had experienced a particularly difficult infection and had lost yet more weight that our family doctor was finally persuaded to refer us to Dr. T. Emmett Cleary, a newly arrived paediatrician in 1957.

He became our great friend and supporter, who told us later that he suspected Pam had Cystic Fibrosis the moment we walked into his office.

Pam was subsequently referred to the HSC to undergo several weeks of testing in March 1958. Spring was in the air as we drove to Toronto in hopes that the diagnosis would be a good one and all would be well.

A week later, Dr. Collins-Williams sat us down in a small dark cubical and explained to us that she had an incurable, rare disease called Cystic Fibrosis. There was little known about it and very little that could be done to treat her. He advised us to take her home, keep her comfortable and enjoy what time she had to live, as she likely would likely not live to go to school.

He gave us a large jar of granulated pig enzymes and instructed us to spread these on her food to help her digest it. Much to our surprise it started to digest the food on the plate before our very eyes.

From that moment on, our lives and that of our family were turned upside down and we were headed in an entirely different and unknown direction. We were both overwhelmed with the shock of receiving this news.

Determined to Do Something

Stunned as we were with the diagnosis, determination soon set in and we resolved to do whatever we could to help Pam.

Dr. Cleary told us about Dr. Irene Uchida, a geneticist at the Hospital for Sick Children who was studying the life-cycle of fruit flies and had undertaken a small project to determine the extent and differences of sweat chloride in the extended family members of someone diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis. At his request we arranged to have our extended family participate in this study.

Following one of the evening sessions for collecting sweat, we invited her to join us for coffee and asked, "Do you know if there is any organization from which we could obtain information and/or assistance." She indicated that she knew of none and challenged us with one comment: "Why don't you start one?"

The Wish Trip

In light of Pam's prognosis, we decided to take her and her sister Heather on a wish trip to a 'Dude Ranch' in Arizona just after Christmas in December 1958 and then on to a new theme park called Disneyland in Anaheim California in early January 1959.

Arriving in Phoenix very late on a Saturday night we stayed at a hotel to await our transportation to the ranch. Donna was tidying up the room on Sunday morning and picked up the hotel directory to find a nearby Baptist Church.

There, before us, out of the blue, we learned that a CF organization existed in the US. No time was wasted making a telephone call. With the information we obtained, the girls jumped up and down on the bed and Heather shouted, “We are going to fix Pam!”

The seed was planted.

Feeling empowered with this great news we looked forward to enjoying our trip, returning home in early January 1959 to get started on our new adventure.

What an adventure it would become!!

The Beginning

Within days of our arrival home in early January 1959, we contacted Dr. Cleary to tell him what we had learned while on our holiday.

Within a few weeks arrangements were made to meet in Toronto with the Chief Medical Officer at the Hospital for Sick Children, to discuss the possibility of starting an organization to help children with CF. He gave us little encouragement and was quite adamant that there was no known cure and so little could be done to treat children afflicted. We were stunned when he asked, “Why break the hearts of the parents by holding out hope that improved treatment or a cure may be possible?”

Donna replied, “Sir! Our hearts are already broken. Without hope what kind of future do we have?”

Ultimately, he agreed that letters could be sent to the parents whose children had been diagnosed, inviting them to a meeting at HSC on the afternoon of Saturday May 23, 1959 to explore the possibility of organizing a Canadian foundation.

The Founding Meeting

One hundred and twenty people from all over Ontario and some from Quebec came together at Sick Children’s Hospital on that rainy Saturday afternoon. It was exciting and emotional to see the look of anticipation and hope on the faces of so many people. One couple drove from Pembroke carrying their children in their arms seeking immediate help.

There was unanimous agreement that we should proceed with the incorporation of an organization to help children afflicted with Cystic Fibrosis and their desperate parents.

At that moment the groundwork for beginning what would become a great National Voluntary Health organization became a reality, and was subsequently incorporated as The Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Doug became the first President, supported by a dedicated and committed Board of Directors who were elected at this meeting.

Since Donna was appointed the first administrator, it was decided the office would be in the kitchen of our home.

Establishing Parameters

Initially, there were four main building blocks that required the Board of Directors immediate attention:

1. Establish both a Medical Advisory and a Scientific Advisory Committee.
2. Establish as many Chapters and Clinics as possible across Canada.
3. Organize a central accounting system that would serve the whole organization with a single charitable number.
4. Produce and disseminate information and literature, including a publication called Candid Facts, which served as the organizational newsletter for the next 50 years.

The federal charter was granted on July 15, 1960.

Now the Real Work Begins

Doug traveled across the country speaking to groups and organizing chapters.

By the end of his term as president in 1962,

- 14 chapters were formed or in the process of forming;
- 6 clinics had been opened or in the process opening;
- 6 medical student research grants were awarded;
- the medical and scientific advisory committees were in place;
- the accounting system was functioning well;
- mist tents, inhalation masks and postural drainage tables were introduced;
- grants for funding were being negotiated;
- partnerships were made whereby parents could obtain medications at a more reasonable cost;
- digestive granules became available in capsule format.

Initial Funding Efforts

Our early fundraising efforts were rudimentary compared to today, but nevertheless the chapters and volunteers enthusiastically took up the challenge and thousands of dollars was raised through the sale of Christmas Cards, Tulip Bulb sales, Mother's Day Teas, Wine and Cheese events, and many other projects.

Since that small beginning so long ago, more than 50 chapters and 42 treatment centres have been established across Canada. The office long ago moved from our kitchen table to Toronto, where a fantastic staff supports the chapters, clinics, and research centres.

Moving Forward

With the passing of the years, the fundamental values, governance procedures and purpose has essentially remained the same as the ones put forth in the original charter.

Pam inspired everyone she met. She lived another 22 years after her diagnosis and left us with a legacy of love, courage and the will to "Never give up."

For us the fight continues. Our 55-year-old son Jeff, a CF Warrior, has just been advised that he should be giving consideration to having a double-lung transplant and is following the procedure to determine if he is eligible yet. *Our adventure continues.*

Something to Think About

Many of you may remember Paul Henderson, best known for leading Team Canada to victory at the 1972 hockey summit series against the Soviet Union. This quote attributed to him sums up our story and it goes like this:

Start Small!

Think Big!

Dig Deep!

Finish Well!

Those who have come before started small and most certainly thought big. Together, over the years, they have all dug deep. Now, our friends it is time to bring it home.

NOW IS THE TIME TO FINISH WELL BY FINDING A CURE OR EFFECTIVE CONTROL FOR CYSTIC FIBROSIS by 2020.

About the Authors



Donna and I are very proud of the tremendous progress and accomplishments that Cystic Fibrosis Canada has made, since the momentous occasion when we met with doctors at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children in March 1958. The shocking, life-changing diagnosis we heard that day, led to the formation of what has become a great world renowned children's medical health organization.

We thank God that we have lived long enough to see and participate in this fantastic adventure that has helped so many children in Canada and throughout the world.



One of the Last Rural Schools in Ontario

By Elaine Walsh



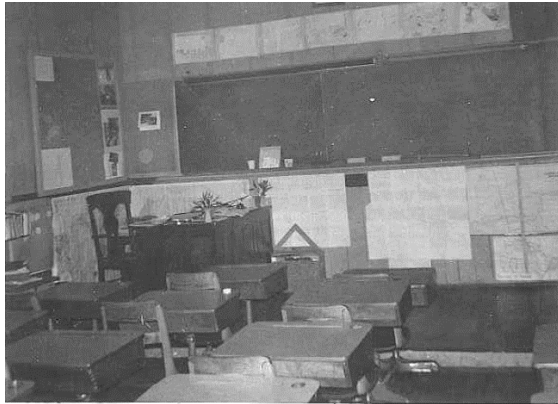
The Teeswater Schoolhouse

It was June of 1961 and I had just graduated from Hamilton Teachers College.

Due to a surplus of teachers that year I didn't have a job like most of the people who graduated with me. It was important that I find a job as soon as possible as my parents were taking me to England in July. I was applying to every teaching position that was advertised in the newspaper. I was so happy when I finally got a reply from the Culross School Board in Teeswater (I had no idea where this was and had to look it up on a map.) The gentleman wanted me to come for an interview, promising that "If everything checked out I was assured of the job."

I drove up to Teeswater to a barn to sign my contract. It was there that I found out the teachers that the school had, the two previous years had only gone to summer school and were not really qualified and that they would pay me an extra \$100.00 that would bring me up to \$3,100.00 a year. I asked if I could go see the school. He told me that he really didn't want me to go to the school but he did want me to go to Walkerton to see the school inspector of schools and that I would pass the school.

The visit to the inspector did not go as well as I expected. He asked the questions that anyone would ask about my education, etc. He said, "You are not what I want at that school. I want someone older with more experience. That's when I told him I had already sign the contract. He was not happy but there was nothing he could do about it. I now had the job!



Inside the classroom.

After my trip to England, my parents and I took a trip up to Teeswater to see the school I was going to teach in for the next two years. The construction workers were just finishing installing two bathrooms inside the school. What a happy surprise that was. Going inside was a mixture of surprise. I was trying to put a good spin on everything in front of my parents. The school room had fairly new desks but when I opened one its top came off in my hand. I realized I had better bring some tools to fix what needed repair. The school room was a buzz with flies as there were no screens on the windows. There was a player piano in one corner but there was no music and I didn't play piano. Large cupboards had recently been installed in the back of the room for storing supplies but on one of the door was drawn a stick figure of a teacher, which wasn't very flattering. There was a large furnace at the back of the room that looked like it belonged in the basement of someone's house and a pipe ran the length of the school. There was the wood all stacked in the corner. Big huge logs and a little bit of kindling and there was a wood shed outside at the back of the school. I had been told that one of the families whose children I was going to teach would be the janitor. But it ended up that I and the boys did most of the work. I had also been told that I could board at the house right next door to the school. We were shown the room I would rent for \$20.00 a week, washing included. The lady seemed pleasant and I was happy to accept.



Class photo, 1961.

I arrived at my boarding house a week before school started in my Mini Minor car. I was introduced to my land lady's husband and son. Her husband worked in Kitchener and only came home on weekends if he could get a ride home as he had no car of his own. They raised pigs on the farm.

After I got settled into my room I went over the school to get it ready for the first day of school. There was going to be 31 children in grades one to eight. I cleaned the school as best as I could

and worked up my lesson plans for the first day putting out the supplies that had been left at the school.

I arrived early the first day. The children started to arrive around 8:30 am. They all walked to school. At 9:00 am I rang a hand bell and all the children rush toward me. I quickly said, "Boys on the right, girls on the left," and they all obeyed. I brought them into the school and arranged them in grades and introduced myself. I had them make name tags to pin on their clothes. I had thirty children with 8 surnames.

At around 10:15 am I let them out for recess but when I went to bring them in at 10:30 am they wanted to know why they couldn't keep playing outside. They told me their last teacher didn't call them in. They were just allowed to do what they wanted.

I had one boy in grade eight. He must have been 16 and I was just 20 myself. I could see he was going to be trouble so at noon hour I went back to my boarding house, phoned the school board and told them that either he didn't come back or I quit. He didn't come back so now I was down to seven grades and 30 children.

My boarding house was separated from the school by a field where the sows wallowed in the mud and were fed. The house was a two story frame house. The bottom floor had a large kitchen and living room. In the kitchen was a wood burning stove that heated the whole house. There was an oil stove in the living room but I don't remember it ever being used. The upstairs had three bedrooms and a bathroom. The land lady and her husband had one but he was rarely home while I was there. Her son had the second room but he had a mental problem. He was quiet and rarely spoke and was in his room when I was there. The autumn and the spring were not too bad but the winter was horrible. It was so cold in the house that there was two inches of ice on the inside of my bedroom window. I slept in my winter coat. I couldn't take a bath as the temperature was just too cold. After supper I would go back to the school where I could keep warm. The meat at meal time was always ham. It would be ham for lunch and supper. I used to ask the children at school if they would trade me a peanut butter or cheese sandwich for a ham. They would look at me and ask, "How do you know it's ham? You haven't even opened it."

I replied, "It's not Friday so I know it's not cheese."

The second year I couldn't take it any more so I found two rooms in a boarding house that I could rent in Wingham which was about 40 minutes from the school. I was allowed to put some food in the refrigerator, and I had a hot plate therefore I could make myself something to eat. It wasn't the healthiest food but it was better than what I ate the year before. I lost over 20 pounds that first year.

The winters were something else. The first year I didn't have to worry about getting to school. I walked there. The second year I had to drive my Mini to school and back which was fine in the spring and fall but the winters were different. We lived in a snow belt. They didn't plow the snow they had a big truck snow blower. The snow banks were very high and to find my way to

the school I would count the four holes were the roads came out to the highway and turn right two more holes and park my car.

On a snowy day in the second year, just before end of class a father of one of my pupils came into the class. His wife was a teacher in Wingham and she had phoned him and told him not to let me go home but to take me to their house as there was a big snow storm coming. I let him drive me and the Children to his house. He dropped the children and me off and went to pick up his wife in his nice big truck. Needless to say I was there for a whole week. I didn't mind but I think the children did, as I got to school every day.



Winter in a snow belt.

On a nice spring day, I had just sent the children out for recess, when I realized there wasn't the usual sound of the children at play but rather a squealing sound. What a shock I got when I went outside. There was a group of pink piglets in the school yard.

The children were running around chasing them and the pigs were squealing. To say I was shocked was an understatement. I quickly got the children to chase the pigs into a corner of the schoolyard where the old fence looked the strongest.

"Where did these pigs come from?" I asked. The children didn't have a clue.

"What farmer raises pigs?" The children mentioned four or five farmers who raised pigs. I chose three of the bigger boys and sent them in three different directions to knock on doors and find the farmer who owned the pigs. About 15 minutes after the boys left and old pickup truck came chugging along, a farmer got out.

"I see you have my pigs," he said.

"So they are yours?" I asked.

"Yes" said the farmer. I sent them here to see if you could teach them how to multiply."

I was so shocked. I said, "Come on kids, it's time to get back into school."

In the spring of the second year a member of the school board phoned me and asked if I would be willing to close the school. They explained to me that most of the children were Catholic and there was a nice new school in Teeswater that would be better for them to go too. The three other children had a nice school to go to also. I told him I wanted to talk to the parents of my students before I gave them my answer.

The parents didn't want them bused to school. They were afraid they would get stranded on the road in a snow storm. I could understand this and told the school board about their concern. It was several weeks later when a large animal ran through the classroom and one of my grade two girls fainted. I was a little surprised and after she came to. I asked the class why anyone would be afraid of a cat (because that's what I thought it was).

One of the older boys said, "That was no cat. That was a rat."

As soon as I had a chance I phoned the school board and told them I changed my mind. I would sign the papers to have the school condemned.

I really tried my best to give these children a taste of what life was like outside their little community. During the two years I taught there I brought each one of them home to southern Ontario. I brought them one grade at a time. I know now that I could have been in serious trouble if I'd had an accident. But how do you teach children about things like stop lights etc. when they have never seen one? The last school year I hired a school bus and took all the children to Niagara Falls. It was such a hit that the bus driver asked me if I wanted a summer job giving tours, which I refused.

Twenty five years later one weekend my husband asked me if I'd like to go for a drive. It was a pleasant day so I said yes. "Where are we going?"

He said, "How about going back up to that rural school that you first taught in?"

I thought this was a good idea as I had never gone back there since I closed it and I wonder what had happened to the school. So we took a long drive up there. The schoolhouse was now someone's home. It looked nice.

We continued down the road a bit when we spotted a name on a barn roof. "Isn't that one of the people whose children you use to teach?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied, but I didn't want to go see them as I felt this was part of my history that was closed forever. But he was turning into the driveway and I couldn't just sit in the car while he knocked on the door.

When the lady answered the door I was shocked that it was a parent of some of my children. She invited us in and we sat and talked about things that had happened in the intervening years. We were just about to leave when a young gentleman came out of the living room.

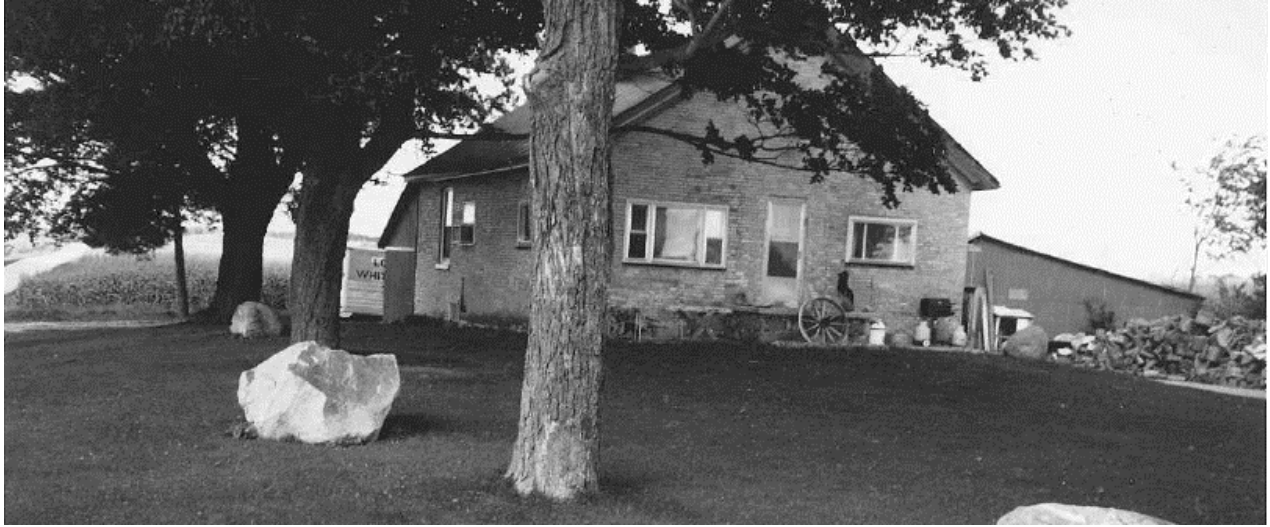
He asked "Are you the last teacher to teach at that school down the road?"

"Yes," I replied.

"I want to thank you, because of you I got the best education of all my brothers and sisters."

His mother then spoke up, telling me he was the little boy I helped bring home in my car from the hospital when he was born. What a gift they had given me!

I now knew that I had made the right decision 25 years ago.



Once a schoolhouse, now a home for a family.

About the Author



I've lived in Brantford nearly all my life. This is a true story of my two years teaching in a rural school from 1961 to 1963, when such schools were being phased out in Ontario.



What Was My Life

By Gail Barnes

The angry wind howled savagely while snow spun 'round us on the trip to the car. I knew we had a rough time home, just because of where we were: Tilbury was in the heart of the Snow Belt.

Filled with Christmas spirit, the children spoke loud and fast as they bounded into their seats for the journey home. Roger had wiped the car off and warmed it up. The children settled in and promised no fighting so my concentration would be on the road and not their bickering.

The road was busy and snow-covered, with other drivers moving too fast for my liking, but I said a prayer and proceeded to merge into traffic.

The children were talking calmly now. Their father was in the front passenger seat and happy not to be driving – as well I was, because he had been drinking. He was the more experienced driver but it was my car and my family's home we were leaving. I was scared but I knew I was the best choice to drive.

At one point we had a Volkswagen Beetle ahead of us and a tractor trailer coming up behind us fast.

The Beetle's driver kept touching the brake and sending my heart into a brief panic. I decided to pass the Beetle and pulled out and around. At that moment the transport bulleted along his path and sent a blanket of frozen slush across the windshield.

The wipers decided not to work.

I cried out. "Daddy, help me!" In my head, I thought: *can't let me kill these children!* I yelled at their dad to reach out the window and smack the wiper. The wipers answered my prayers by springing to life just as the Beetle's brake lights lit.

Thank God! We would be okay. The worst was over. We all had to use the bathroom, especially me, and I appreciated how the children stayed calm. A coming rest stop would be our next step towards home.

Unfortunately, there were many special occasions with Daddy in a bottle and arguments about who would drive.

Still, I'm free now to live a blessed life. Booze is just a memory to me, except for the occasional drink with a friend in my house where everyone is safe.

I choose solitude now ... but my reasons why are another story.

About the Author

I grew up in St. George, Ontario. All my life I've lived around, and always came back to, Brantford. I'm a social butterfly and I love pets – including Arrow, my budgie, who was in Cirque du Soleil in another lifetime. I use a wheelchair but as I like to tell people: it's attached to my butt, not my brain! I'm a survivor and proud of it.



Memories of Lion's Park;
The Receipt Book;
Lady Rhoda Bromiley's Journal

By Gillian Holden

Note From the Editor

The following is a creative interpretation of what it means to write memoirs, balancing personal recollection with the legacy of others. In the first section, Memories of Lion's Park in Paris, Gillian shares her memories of visiting the park as a child. Her use of poetry conveys those memories in metaphorical snapshots, encapsulating precious moments in time in bright, textured visuals. She then imagines what life would have been like for a young lady in 1898, incorporating a personal recipe in Lady Rhoda Bromiley's Journal that would have been as welcome then as it is now. Finally, in The Receipt (Recipe) Book/Journal in Canada, 1867-2017, she reviews books that a woman in the 1800s might consider indispensable.

Memories of Lion's Park in Paris, by Gillian Holden

Jeanette! Hurry! Come here.

Step up to the viewfinder.

Tell me what you see.

Yes! Yes! It's us. In 1953.

We are in Lion's Park in Paris.

See my mom rooting around in the picnic basket.

She'll be calling us for lunch soon.

Look. There's your dad in his kilt practising on his chanter.

And your mom spreading out the tartan blanket.

Look at my dad strolling the grounds, keeping an eye on us.

Will you just look at us in those matching bathing suits?

Hoisted up to cover our non-existing bosoms,

But revealing the cheeks of our bottoms for all the park to see,

And wearing those semi-deflated life preservers around our waists

That we bought at the five and dime.

We never took them off except to put them around our heads and act silly.

Oh look. The metal rocking horse.

Remember how difficult it was to get it rocking?

But when it was going, wow, what a ride.

It made a terrible noise didn't it?

And the sun made it unbearably hot.

There we are running with our little metal pails of water

Attempting to cool the metal sides before we sat on it and scorched our knees.

Weren't we fun?

So happy. So carefree

So lucky to have parents who took us to Lion's Park

And we were able to make a memory.

From Lady Rhoda Bromiley's Journal

Sept. 1898

Sometimes I become bored with my life as a lady, so I take it upon myself to do what pleases me, much to my family's letdown.

Today I laced up my stout boots and retrieved a trug and a small basket from the gardener's shed and headed out to Bilberry Wood to pick the blue-black berries and a dozen or so apples from the orchard so Cook could bake a Mucky Mouth Pie. Picking fruit was really the task of the undergardener, but it was just too tempting for me. All that luscious and ripe fruit.

Just for a lark I rang the front doorbell and watched for the look of surprise on the footman's face when he opened the door to me.

"Milady"!

"James, James. Invite me in," I teased.

"Yes Milady," he stammered

I brushed by James and made my way down to the kitchen. Cook too was gobsmacked when she saw me.

"Milady?"

"Relax Cook. I've brought apples and bilberries for you to bake mucky mouth pie. One for family. One for staff."

“Thank you Milady. I shall get right on it.”

“Thank you cook. I look forward to it for our afters.”

With this I made my way out. I had been cheeky enough for one day.

I actually would have liked to stay and learn how to bake, but I’ll save that for another day when they aren’t so surprised at my forwardness.



The lady in dress.

Mucky Mouth Pie

Place 1 cup blueberries, 1 cup blackberries, and 1 cup thinly sliced apples, in a bowl:.

Add ¼ c. flour, ¼ c. brown sugar, ½ tsp. cinnamon, ½ tsp. ginger, grated lemon, and lemon juice

Mix well and place in pie shell.

Put little knobs of butter over top of mixture.

Place pie shell lid on top. Crimp edges. Brush with egg mixture. Make 3 little slits in top.

Bake at 375F for 50-55 min.

My mother always referred to berry pie as Mucky Mouth Pie because it stained your teeth and tongue.

The Receipt (Recipe) Book/Journal in Canada 1867-2017

From the time Mary Gapper (nee O'Brien) crossed the Atlantic Ocean in 1828 to come and make a new life in Canada, right up to the newest immigrant in 2016, women have been keeping family recipes and secret ingredients, making recipe books and sharing recipes with other women. Even today, while waiting my turn in the hairdresser's, the dear soul next to me is carefully ripping a recipe out of a magazine. It is our secret code.

As each new immigrant arrived through Pier 21 or Port of Montreal, a new recipe might have been tucked away in a pocket, or a Bible, or maybe sewn into the hem of a skirt or coat. It represented a little bit of home, a reminder of mama or grandma, or it was a childhood favourite. Everyone brought something to the table. When recipes were shared, every woman had their own recipe book, which also held knitting patterns, crop advice and cures among other tidbits.

We have come a long way from eating rock biscuits and fried, salted pork fat served on a steam packet making its way across Lake Ontario.

From The Journals of Mary O'Brien, Mary says:

My stock of fresh provisions is now reduced to three eggs, butter, cheese and rice. I have found a receipt (recipe) in the cookery book, which by leaving out the eggs, will do very well, and there is the cheese which they all like very well.

Just then our long expected supplies arrive- four quarters of mutton all at once. We are rich enough to think of our neighbours, so instead of rowing about to beg for eggs, we carry a quarter of mutton to our neighbour Mrs. Oliver.

P. 214, The Journals of Mary O'Brien

Mary found joy in a well-appointed kitchen. "Oh, who can number up the uses and perfections of a Canadian bake kettle and frying pan." (p. 141, *Journals*.)

Mary Cook also used recipes to describe growing up on the prairies during the depression.

Mother wasn't surprised that relatives poured out of the city to visit us and she was always prepared for a gang at the Sunday table. I realize now that is probably why we usually had a huge, white enamelled pot of chicken and dumplings on the stove on a Sunday. You could add to it as the crowd increased.

P. 110-111, Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire!

Food still brings people together. I don't think that there is anything better than that.

Mrs. Beeton's Cookery Book was published in 1861. It was a guide to running a Victorian household, managing servants, animal husbandry and childcare. Fannie Farmer's Cookery Book was published in 1896. She too covered household management, canning and preserving foods, and also many good recipes.

Then came WW2 and a slew of cookery books. Women now had to learn to cook with most staples rationed. They had to make do and mend.

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About the Author

Hi. My name is Gillian Holden. I have been writing poetry and journals for about 60 years. It is time to put pen to paper and write a story. My hobbies are scrapbooking, genealogy, card-making, sewing children's jackets, and writing class.

There are not enough hours in a day.



God Hears Our Cry

By Herb Sormin

*“The Lord is near to all who call upon Him,
To all who call upon Him in truth.
He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him;
He also will hear their cry and save them.
Psalm 145:18, 19 NKJV*

I. Childhood Years

I was born in Kuching, Sarawak, Borneo, to Mian Pastin and Alma Sormin, Christian missionaries from Sumatra. As their seven-year term concluded, Papa and Mama were excited about their upcoming home leave. With luggage and tickets in hand, my parents, sisters Alice and Irene, and Auntie Mauli, carrying eight month old Herbert, waited at the dock for the SS Charles Vyner Brooke, a cargo vessel of the Sarawak Steamship Company that had left Singapore the evening of February 12, 1942. When the ship arrived, the captain informed the waiting passengers that the ship had been requisitioned by the British Royal Navy and was now heading south to Australia. The ship, which normally carried 12 passengers and 47 crew, was now loaded with evacuees – 181 passengers made up of civilians, soldiers and 65 nurses.

With great disappointment my family returned to Sunny Hill School at Third Mile Rock Road – my birthplace. We soon moved with other missionary families to Ayer Manis, a village close to the border of Kalimantan (Dutch Borneo, now Indonesia). We lived in a house whose floor and walls were made of bamboo and a thatched roof of coconut leaves. I grew up enjoying delicious bananas, cheekus, coconuts, durians, guavas, langsats, mangosteens, papayas, pineapples, and rambutans that flourished on the mission compound. Besides the fruit trees, the families grew black and brown rice that was uncommon to the local farmers. The Ayer Manis School was where the indigenous Dayak, Iban, and Chinese children studied the Bible and the English language.

Looking out the kitchen window I could see banana, guava, lime, and papaya trees. The dining table was decorated with fresh, ripe papaya and a bunch of bananas for desert. As you step out of the front door, down the bamboo steps, you'd walk under the guava tree – my favorite playground. I enjoyed swinging from one branch to another, munching the delicious fruit like a monkey. When I bruised my knee or elbow I'd chew the guava leaves and plaster them on my wound. Often Mama would hand me a basket to fill – an errand I'd enjoy. She'd wash them, crush them and mix them in water and a tinge of lime juice. Out came delicious guava juice!

I looked to Friday evenings when the families would gather around an open fire and have supper. Then we'd welcome the Sabbath, singing hymns and worshipping together. There were times when Japanese soldiers with the red spot on their caps would come up the path through the rice fields. Greetings of "Ku-ni-chi-wa!" were exchanged and heads bowed in respect. They might accept our invitation to eat together and some would join in the singing of hymns. And I asked myself, "Why are Christian Japanese soldiers our enemies?"

On a number of occasions I'd miss Papa when he was taken away and forced to work on the military runway at the Kuching airport. That would lead to a strange anger and animosity within me.

My cousin Lawrence was older than me. While we had fun growing up, there were times when he would playfully push me on to the warm embers of the fire at the end of the evening fellowship. Having no shoes and walking barefoot, it hurt! A desire to retaliate would grow within me. *I will teach him a lesson*, I thought once. ... *But how? He is bigger than me ... Ah! Huh ... there are days when he comes up the rice field with a stack of harvested rice on his head! I will tie two throngs of rice across his path ... he will walk into the trap, trip over, and fall into the muddy field! I will laugh my heart out!*

So there I lay, crouching ... peering through the rice stalks ... my heart pounding! He was just about five meters from the trap when I heard a hissing, swishing sound to my right. I saw a water snake slithering towards me! I jumped up and ran! I ran right into the trap and splashed into the wet, muddy rice field!

"Bert! Are you all right? What happened?" he cried out.

The most memorable day of my life as a child happened on a beautiful, sunny afternoon while Lawrence and I were playing marbles on the hard, dry ground under the shade of the durian trees.

Suddenly the roaring, booming of a warplane zoomed over us. It seemed as though our ear drums would split! We could hardly hear each other! We looked up as red, white and blue papers filtered through the tree branches! Just as we raced to catch the papers, another booming sound roared over us! The sky opened up as shiny, brilliant, coloured boxes and parcels attached to little white parachutes went sailing by. We grabbed the parcels as they hit the ground.

We heard voices screaming. "The war is over! The war is over!" I sat on the ground with all kinds of colorful boxes around me, munching my first chocolate bar. Unwrapping candies of unknown flavours but enjoying every sweet, crunchy bite!

Families gathered bags of flour, powdered milk, and sugar. When all was quiet the families embraced, sang and prayed together, thanking God for His love, grace and peace.

Yes, God hears our cry.

II. Struggles in School

In 1948 Papa was invited to head the Business Office of his alma mater, Malaysian Seminary, in Singapore. Our family would be blessed with three more siblings: Dorothea May, during the War; Edwin Victor, after the War; Florence Grace, just before we left Kuching. We lived in one of the staff homes on Woodleigh Close underneath the Girls' Dormitory.

The cement steps in front of the dorm was my meeting place and introduction to girls from Burma, Ceylon, China, French Indo-China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Siam. These cross-cultural interactions taught me lessons of respect and love for those different from me.

Newton and Vincent, the younger boys of the Tan family who lived next door, were my friends. Vince and I loved climbing the Japanese cherry trees in front of our homes, sometimes racing to see who would get to the top first. Across the street was a field where Vince and I played soccer.

Besides her regular work, Mama ran an embroidery school at home. It was my job to make sure the machines were tip top. After some time I became pretty good at sewing too.

One afternoon I was working on a piece, moving the cloth back and forth under the fast pumping needle, when I screamed. "Ouch! Mama, help me!"

She rushed to my side and yanked the cord out of the wall. I closed my eyes in pain. Blood gushed from my thumb. I bit my lips as she gently removed the needle. She dabbed iodine on the wound, wrapped a band aid around it and said, "Okay! Bert, no more sewing! Go! Play football!"

I sprang up, ran out the front door to the field and cried, "Hey! Guys! I'm playing!"

"Come on, Bert! You're on our side!"

One day I came home from school with blood running down my bruised nose. "Bert, what happened?" cried Mama.

"That bully! I got beat up!"

"Not again! Son, you mustn't allow that. You've got to stand up to this guy!"

"But Mama, the Bible teaches that if someone hits you on your right cheek, you're to give ..." I said, quoting Matthew 5:39.

She pulled me to her breast and cried with me.

Bulling was rampant. I was torn between following the teachings of Jesus and maintaining the respect of my peers. Boxing took place incognito at the Boys' dorm so I took up boxing. One day while I was reading the sports section of the Straits Times in the library, Betty grabbed me and plead, "Bert, Bert, they're beating Vince in the washroom. Please help him!"

I ran out ... down the stairs ... across the basketball court ... and bounced into the washroom. Two guys were beating Vince up as others cheered. I flew over Vince and swung my fists and feet at his assailants. They fell, squirming on the floor. "Get up!" I screamed. "Leave the school grounds! Don't ever show your face here again! He is my friend and this is my turf!"

One Sabbath, I returned from church and excitedly announced, "Guess what? I have been invited to sing a solo for the Youth service next week! Liz, will you accompany me?" There was no response. "Rin, will you?" The dining room was silent. I was crushed. I skipped lunch, walked to my room, dropped on my bunk bed and cried.

A couple of days passed. I was looking across the soccer field when I felt a hand on my shoulder. "Well, have you chosen the song?"

"What? Mama! You will play for me?"

Mama had never played in public but she came to my rescue. Come Sabbath morning, Mama's fingers hit the keyboard as I sang this song, written by Albert Allen Ketchum:

*Deep in my heart there's a gladness, Jesus has saved me from sin!
Praise to His name---what a Saviour! Cleansing without and within...
Why do I sing about Jesus? Why is He precious to me?
He is my Lord and my Saviour, Dying! He set me free!*

I treasure my copy of Rodeheaver's Gospel Solos, No. 3, with Papa's signature dated Sept. 12, 1949 inscribed. It sits in my library.

While I was involved in sports, temperance, youth and church activities, I had problems with anger management. In college and doing practice teaching, I had an argument with a colleague outside the classroom. He disagreed. I slammed my fists over four glass window panes. President Philip G. Miller, recently from Lacombe, Alberta, motioned me to a seat. "Well, Herb, tell me what happened?"

I told him of the argument, my anger and the smashing of the window panes. He passed a piece of paper and said, "Please put it on paper and sign it."

"Is that all?"

"Yes, you're fine."

Remembering the lashings I had received in that office, I was amazed that I had gotten off scot free. Miller truly had a positive impact in my life. The way he connected with us as students drew me to teaching. Often he and Mrs. Miller would come to watch the soccer games. Some Saturday nights, he would share Hockey Night in Canada, introducing us to Gordie Howe and ice skating! My pals and I loved putting on our roller skates whenever torrential rain poured on to the basketball court – our wet, slippery hockey rink – scoring goals with tennis balls.

One day Linda Wu, the librarian, called me over. "Heh! Herbert. You may enjoy reading this book that just arrived."

"What's it about?"

"Oh, it's about the sinking of a ship off the coast of Sumatra."

"Is it about the SS Vyner Brooke?" I wanted to know, remembering the ship that had once denied my family passage.

"Hmm ... yes it is!" she responded.

I ran to her desk. She handed me the book. That evening I shared the tragic story as told by Sister Vivian Bullwinkel, one of the few that survived. My family was stunned. I've often asked the question, "What would have happened to me if we had boarded the ship? Why, Lord Jesus?"

III. Australian Sojourn

In late December of 1960 I left home to complete my studies in Australia. When I arrived in Sydney, Fred Long, a school mate in high school, welcomed me and a group of guys. Wilfred Pinchin from Melbourne, became my roommate; both of us were majoring in Education. I soon joined the choir along with my cousin Lawrence. Judy Betts from Tasmania was a member of the choir – she'd accompany me when I sang solos on and off the campus – and we enjoyed the choir tours to Sydney, Canberra, Newcastle, and South Australia. Arthur Ferch, a German majoring in Theology, was a work supervisor in construction and painting. Ferch inspired me to look deeply in my connection with Christ. In my second year, an outbreak of measles sent a number of us guys to sick bay.

It was exam week. I had a temperature of 104 degrees Fahrenheit. Close to tears, the nursing sister said, "Herb, I am sorry ... I told your professor that you are sick ... that you're not in a position to write the exam ... but he insisted. Herb, I ..."

"Sister, you are right, I shouldn't be ... but give it to me, I will do it." I was fuming with anger. Other professors had kindly withheld but this particular one had insisted.

When I recovered, I packed, went to the Business office and requested money to buy a ticket home.

"Herb, why are you going home? You've got another year..."

"I am sorry but I've had enough! I want to go home."

Late March, 1963 I returned to Singapore. As the ship moved slowly towards the dock, I saw my parents waving. I waved in return. "Will they be mad at me?" I asked myself. I walked down the ramp with my suitcases. Mama ran up to me as Papa took one of the suitcases. She hugged and kissed me.

"Welcome home, Bert, we love you," she cried. Word soon got around that I was home but I refused to see anyone.

I cried out in my pain. "Lord, please forgive me of my uncontrollable temper. I've shamed my family. I've let you down. Humble me and heal me of my pride and anger. I surrender my life to you. I will do whatever you want me to do!" I cried and prayed every day.

Five weeks later, I received a letter from Mrs. Alma Milne, veteran missionaries to China and India. “Mama, Mrs. Milne is inviting me to teach at Adventist English School, a new training school in Bangkok, Thailand. But I haven’t got my degree yet. What do you think?”

“Son, what have you been doing this pass month?” “I’ve been praying...”

What about?”

“Mama, it’s amazing how God responds and touch me with His grace. Yes, I will go to Bangkok!”

IV. Answering the Call

As I stepped out of the Air Lufthansa plane, the heat engulfed me. I walked as fast as I could towards the terminal building. “Sawat-dee Krap! Welcome to Thailand!” called the Milnes.

“Thank you! Thank you for inviting me to teach in Bangkok!” I responded.

As we got to Ekamai, Mrs. Milne turned and said, “Herbert, it’s been a long day and I’ve not prepared supper. But there’s girl from the Chinese Church who’s boarding with us while preparing for her Thai language exams. She said she’d prepare supper.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Milne. That’s fine.”

It is a meal I fondly remember – fresh veggies, Thai curry and rice – prepared and served by Susan Lek. After supper, Pastor Milne turned to me and said, “How about durian for desert?”

“That will be great!” I responded.

“Enjoy your durian in the garage!” chirped Mrs. Milne.

One day I was in Grade 6 when a gecko ran screaming across the ceiling. It continued running and screaming – I couldn’t stand it. I got on the teacher’s desk with my shoe in my hand – expecting to hear girls cheering me on. The class was silent. I looked down to see the girls had their hands over their mouth.

“Is everything okay?” I asked.

“Sir,” responded Suchada, “you taught us that the Bible says, “Thou shalt not kill!”

I got off the desk in embarrassment – a Christian, doing the exact opposite of what he had taught his Buddhist students. I sat, my head bowed down for a long time, quietly praying, asking the Lord to forgive me. I stood up. “Students, you are right. I am very sorry.”

A number of the students came up to me and said, “Sir, we forgive you. You are a good teacher. We forgive you.”

A year and half in Bangkok taught me a great deal about respecting others of different cultures and religions – Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam, and Christians of other faith groups. The Thai culture and customs had a definite influence in soothing my temperament and how I deal with people who disagreed with me.

I thank God for calling me to Thailand at the most difficult time of my life.

V. The Philippines and Mission Call

When I arrived at Philippine Union College (now Adventist University of the Philippines), I was welcomed by Philip G. Miller, the Academic Dean. I had a Vietnamese and Filipino as roommates. My lower bunk was empty for a couple of weeks. We asked the dean of men who would be joining us. He said, “You’ll see.”

One afternoon I was alone in the room. There was a knock on the door. I opened the door. There next to the dean, stood a strange looking guy with black hair and a round, fair-skinned face. “Here’s your new roommate. Please welcome Yoshihiko Kuniya from Japan.”

I was uncomfortable – a strange feeling came over me. I struggled to say something. I stepped forward, shook his hand and blurted, “Welcome.” But as Yoshi unpacked I walked out. I couldn’t accept the fact that I’d have a Japanese guy in my lower bunk. Pictures of the War years rolled before me. “Lord,” I cried, “Please forgive me. I need your help ... please help me to accept Yoshi as my brother.”

At the cafeteria I introduced Yoshi to the other overseas students. The guys from Palau, Micronesia greeted, “Kuni-chi-wa! Kuniya-san!” and exchanged slaps on the back. Softball drew us close. I enjoyed pitching and Yoshi was my catcher. One afternoon when we were alone in our room, I felt moved to apologize how I treated him the first time we met. I shared with him my War experiences.

“May I tell you my story?” he asked.

“Certainly,” I responded.

“My father, he pastor ... Japanese government put him in jail. I no see my father until the war ended ...”

We both had tears in our eyes. With arms outstretched we embraced. “Oh! What an amazing God!”

One day I got a note to see Miller at his office. As I walked in, he pointed to three brown envelopes. “Please take a look at them.” I opened them and smiled. “You know them?”

“Yes, Sir!”

“Go! Have your lunch and be here in half an hour. You’re coming to the airport with me.” Su and I had been corresponding but she had not told me the date of her arrival. Imagine her surprise and my joy when we welcomed her at Manila airport.

We dated and spent time together on campus. I had completed my comprehensive exams in graduate school and just needed to complete the writing of my thesis. I had also received an invitation to teach and pastor in Sunny Hill School.

One evening Dr. Irene Wakeham, Dean of the English Department, invited us to her home for supper. It was raining when we left for the girl’s dorm. I had an umbrella over us. Su was holding on to my hand. “Su. I love you. Pastors don’t make much money. Will you marry me and join me in ministry?”

“Ah, you need to know that I don’t cook. I am the youngest in my family so I never cook.”

“Oh, I remember my first meal in Bangkok,” I assured her. “Those fresh veggies, Thai curry and rice were delicious.”

“Yes ... yes, I will. Thank you, Bert!” Shortly after our engagement at the home of Dr. & Mrs. Sydney Allen, I left for Kuching, Sarawak. The next year, in 1969, Su flew home after graduation. Mama and I took the train to Bangkok. Papa was in Toronto for Alice and Marten’s wedding. We were married on August 12, 1969 at the Bangkok Chinese Adventist Church. After ministering for three years in Kuching we were invited back to Bangkok by John Falconbridge, of Hamilton, Ontario, the new principal of Adventist English School.

1975 found us loving teaching and ministering at AES, a fast growing international school. Linda was four years old and Clarence was one year old. I loved Thailand and was considering Thai citizenship when we were visited by my brother Ed and Bonnie. They shared the beauty and the golden opportunities in Canada. Papa and Mama had immigrated to Canada and Ed encouraged us to join the rest of the family. I was torn between mission work in Thailand and family.

We took the matter to the Lord in prayer. His will be done.

VI. Canada Calling

At the Canadian Embassy the clerk asked what jobs we planned to do.

“As certified teachers, we would like to teach.”

“I’m sorry,” she responded. “There are many teachers without jobs right now. Come again next year. We want people like you in Canada.”

Ed had a friend in the house construction business. I received a job offer of \$19.95 per hour as a carpenter and took it to the Embassy. “Wow! That’s great! But unfortunately the housing industry is at a low. There are too many carpenters without a job.”

Ed didn’t give up. He knew I had sold Christian literature while in college. He approached the Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and asked if they had a territory where I could do that ministry. They said that I could have all the towns and villages between Windsor and London. We arrived in Toronto on July 10, 1977 and I soon responded to calls for Bibles, health and Christian literature in Chatham, Dresden, Leamington, Oil Springs, Petrolia, Wallaceburg, Walpole Island, and small villages.

Our first winter turned out to be the worst across southwestern Ontario in 50 years – with snow levels rising almost four feet from the eaves trough! Some days I accompanied Linda and Sonia to school. They would follow the same route home. From the school gate, there was a long sidewalk that would take to the main street. After crossing the street, there was a large field that they would walk beside as they trudged the last 100 meters home. One afternoon it was late and Linda had not shown up from school. Su sent me to look for her. When I got half way past the field, I looked across the street hoping to see them. I stood there for 15 minutes with no sight of Linda or Sonia as the snow fell gently. I continued walking another 20 meters and then I could hear girls giggling to my right – and there, five meters away, two snow angels were giggling and waving their wings in the snow. Winter is fun!

In 1978 I accepted the position of a teaching principal in a two-room, Grades 1–8, in Kitchener. In addition to teaching, I would also drive the school bus and pick up the children in Kitchener and Cambridge. After the interview we headed back to Chatham. We had just exited 401 West on to Highway 40 North when I noticed the highway veering on a slant to the right ... *boom!* *Boom! Bang!* The car rolled over and crashed on to its side. “Su, are you all right?” I screamed.

“Oh, my mouth. I’ve got a mouth full of glass,” she moaned.

The door on my side was crushed. I reached across to open the other door. It didn't budge. Two truckers ran towards us, wrenched the door open, and gently lifted out first Su and then me. We thanked the angel of truckers. Except for the mouthful of glass that Su spat out and a blue black mark on my right thigh, we were fine.

I remember a huge officer motioning us to sit. "Tell me what happened?"

"It was a long day, Officer," I told him. I had a job interview. I must have been tired. We got off the 401 on to Highway 40 to Chatham ... there's that sudden curve to the right ... I may have ..."

"I don't hear you," he said, looking out the window.

"I may have –" I repeated.

"I don't hear you," he said again. After a number of repetitions, he explained why he didn't want to hear me blame myself. "Last month a car rolled over at the exact spot where you did. None of the occupants survived." Grasping our hands he said, "Someone up there is watching over you. You may go."

I never cease to thank God for His care over us.

The next year the Conference administration invited me to start a new school in Orillia where I taught for six years. Su enjoyed counselling at Huronia Regional Centre. Linda loved reading. In 1980, at her suggestion, we drove to the Maritimes to visit the home of Anne of Green Gables in Summerside, Prince Edward Island.

We had just passed Rivière-du-Loup when traffic stopped on both sides of the highway. Suddenly cheers of "Terry! Terry! Terry!" rang out. A man sprinted and waved towards us as we joined in cheering Terry Fox in his historical run across Canada.

One afternoon we were driving home on Highway 400 to Orillia. It was raining. We were following a huge truck when the rain turned into a storm. I could hardly see beyond the windshield. We were almost to Barrie. I knew that a gas station was coming up and we'd stop there until the storm subsided. I kept close to the truck, my eyes fixed on the rear lights. Suddenly the lights disappeared. Blinded by the storm, I prayed. "Lord, help us! I cannot see!" There were vehicles behind us so I hit the brakes gently and pulled slowly to the right. The car rolled to a stop as the storm continued. I put on the blinkers and turned off the ignition. The car was silent as we cried to the Lord for help. Then the storm cleared. With sun shining down I turned on the ignition and started the windshield wipers to clear the glass. As the window cleared I looked out in amazement. "Thank you, Lord! You protected us!"

Right in front of us was a 30 foot drop.

That year, 1981, we were honoured to join hundreds of other emigrants in becoming Canadian citizens at the City Hall in Barrie. Thank you, Canada!

VII. Church Ministry

In 1985 I was invited to pastor the Owen Sound and Harriston churches – both were warm and mission minded, sharing God’s love to their community, especially the needy.

Our first Sabbath at Harriston was memorable. After shaking hands at the door, I walked to the car for the drive home in Owen Sound. “Wait! Open the trunk of the car!” cried Herr Frau Burkhardt. “Here’s home-made cheese and butter.”

“Here, have some fresh farm eggs,” added Herr Frau Tjiersvitch.

“It will be winter soon ... you’ll need this ...” sang Herr Frau Hammermueller as her husband loaded the 100 lb bag of Yukon gold potatoes.

Su hugged the ladies as I said repeatedly, “Danke schoen, Herr, Frau ...”

The Burkhardt family took us home for lunch. The hospitality the Owen Sound church was also something to cherish. The Bairds, Bruggemans, Geisslers, Hepburns, Kwans, La Pointes, Sanzes and others were a tremendous support in ministry.

In 1990 we were called to Sudbury and the North Shore Church in Walford Station. Colleagues warned me of the severe cold winters. As we drove into Sudbury the signboard said, “Welcome to the Sunshine City!” Su and I laughed. “Really?” Yes, the signboard told the truth. The temperature may go down to minus 23 Celsius but there is sunshine from mid-morning to around 2:30 pm most days.

Every time we move, it is amazing how God provides a job for Su. She teaches English as a Second Language and helps newcomers. I remember one young couple driving to Timmins. He was a doctor, she an engineer. Su had arranged work interviews for them. At the end of the day, he got a job as a medical technologist and she would be supervising men in the mines.

A couple of years ago, I was standing in front of ladies shoe store at Lime Ridge Mall in Hamilton. A guy in suit and tie walks up to me, “Where’s Su?” I point to the store. He walks in. I hear women screaming! The guy had Su in his arms. Su was his ESL teacher in Sudbury. She had placed him in a job. Today he manages the men’s department in a large company.

One Sabbath when the Ontario Special Olympics were on in Sudbury we decided to head to the site after church. A soccer game was in progress. We stood on the sideline as Su pointed to boys from Owen Sound. The ball came directly towards her. She stepped aside. I lifted my

foot and brought the ball down. A boy ran over and picked up the ball. Just as he is about to throw the ball into play, he drops the ball and cries, “Mummy! Mummy!” and hugged Su. The game stopped as other boys come running for hugs too!

We loved the North – camping on Manitoulin Island, at Grundy Luke, the French River and Killarney Park. One time we were picking blue berries, laughing and enjoying ourselves, when we saw a huge black bear with two little bears coming towards us. My heart was pounding. Our Francophone friend spoke quietly. “Don’t panic. Don’t run. Don’t talk. Keep on picking ... we will be all right.” As the bears came by we moved back slowly and gave them space. They munched their berries peacefully and we breathed a sigh of relief. Thank you, Lord!

By 1995 we were ministering to churches in Kingston and Belleville. Su had the privilege of teaching at the School of English at Queens University for two years and took up ceramics at the Potter’s Guild. Working closely with the Salvation Army Church, Su and the ladies of the Kingston Church started a soup kitchen that continues serving the needy today. The church also ministered to the men and women in the penitentiaries and one day I received a call from the chaplain of a prison near Belleville. A young man from Kitchener had requested for me to give him Bible studies. We studied and prayed together. The Holy Spirit touched him; he gave His heart to Jesus and accepted Christ as his Lord and Saviour by baptism. Yes, God hears the cry of those in the pen.

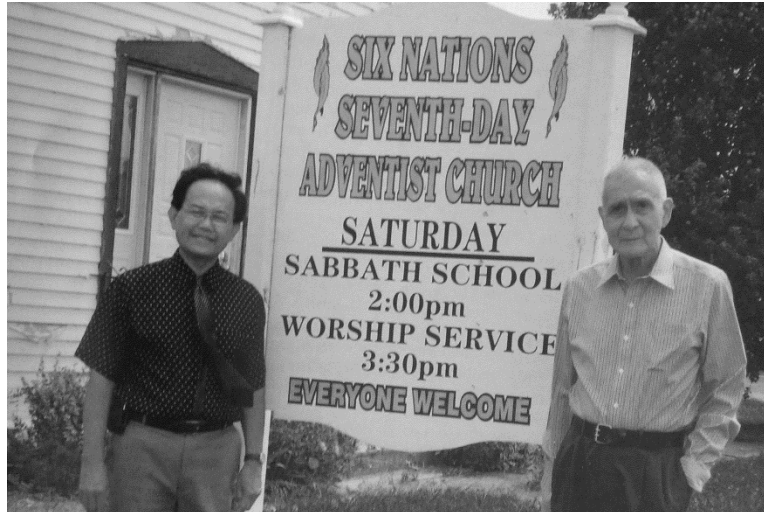
The year 2000 was special for Seventh-day Adventists in Canada because the world church held its quintennial General Conference in Toronto. The parade of nations featured delegates in colourful costumes from over 200 countries with their flags, marching up the platform at the Roger’s Centre. This marked a time of spiritual convocation when delegates from around the world came together to make plans in fulfilling the gospel commission of Matthew 28:18, 19: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.”

A few weeks after the conference we received a letter from the headquarters of the Church in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA inviting us to Mission College, Muak Lek, Thailand. Su would teach in the English Department and do promotional work in the Marketing Department. I was invited to be the senior pastor of the bilingual College Church and teach in the Theology Department. It was inspiring to work with professors from Australia, Denmark, Finland, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the UK, and USA. I enjoyed working



A poster celebrating the 115th Anniversary of the Church.

closely with Dr. Kai Arasola, Dean of the Theology Department, from Finland. Su and I treasured the three years we served at the College, which is now fully certified and called Asia Pacific International University.



Herbert standing with Len Maracle, Elder of the Six Nations Adventist Church

VIII. Coming Home

It is February, 2004 and snow was blowing as we drove along the escarpment passing Hamilton, heading for Norfolk County – our mission – Simcoe and Six Nations. The move in winter was challenging, especially after having driven on the left side of the highway the last four years. “Lord, is this where you want us to serve?”

It is Wednesday. I am kneeling in prayer at the Simcoe Church. The phone rings. “Hello, I’m Jarrod ... is this the Adventist Church?”

“Yes, it is.”

“Oh! I’ve be reading the Bible and watching “It Is Written” on TV. I am looking for a church that worships on Sabbath ... may I visit your church this Saturday?”

“You are welcome. See you on Sabbath.” I shared the good news at prayer meeting that evening. On Saturday the church welcomed Jarrod. He was baptized in May and today serves as a Deacon. Yes, God was calling us Home.

The next Sabbath the Six Nations Church welcomed us. In the late 1800s the Battle Creek Adventist Church in Michigan designated Ontario as a mission field and sent two literature evangelists to the Iroquois Reserve by the Grand River. Joe Woodruff and Charlie Green were among those who bought the classic, “Bible Readings for the Home” and shortly after began keeping the Sabbath as God’s day of

rest and worship. They sent a letter to Battle Creek and two pastors, William Ward Simpson and William Spear arrived. The baptism of the Woodruff and Green, both Mohawk, led to others to search the Scriptures – worshipping in the home of Jessie Cayuga on Sabbaths. A church was built at the corner of Garlow Line and Cayuga Road and organized as the Iroquois Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1898. In 1914 it was renamed Six Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church and was inclusive of all the nations: Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora.

Len Maracle, a Mohawk, was twelve years old when he was baptized. Maracle served as a judge in British Columbia for many years. He and his wife Kitty started a street ministry for the struggling and needy on the streets of Vancouver. They had just retired and returned to the Reserve when we arrived.

This God-fearing couple inspired and mentored my ministry in the Native community. I enrolled for Mohawk language at Six Nations Polytechnic in the fall and was privileged to have their son Owennatekha (aka Brian Maracle) as my teacher. An author and journalist who served in Ottawa, he returned to the rez, mastered the Mohawk language, and now teaches his mother tongue. In 2014 Owennatekha was conferred an honorary doctoral degree by Wilfred Laurier University. Both Len and Kitty are sleeping in Jesus, awaiting the Lord's return.

The Six Nations Church celebrated its 115th Anniversary of God's leading in 2013 and continues to lead others to "Search the Scriptures" that they may come to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. I retired from full time ministry in 2010, but at the invitation of the Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and with Su's support, I continued to pastor the Six Nations Church. Despite my retirement on June 30, 2016, my heart and prayer is with my Six Nations family. It is incredible how the Lord has blessed and led Su and me. On the fourth weekend of June, we and our children, Linda, Clarence, and their families celebrated our 40th anniversary in Canada. We tented at Grundy Lake, and were blessed with three days of pouring rain.

We are grateful and proud to sing, "Oh! Canada, our home and native land ..." and to celebrate with fellow Canadians our country's 150th Birthday this year.

Finally, with the political uncertainty taking place around the world today, we know we need not fear but instead hold on to the Lord's promise in John 14:1-3:

Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.
*In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you.
I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you,
I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where
I am, there you may be also.*

NKJV

Miso Maple Tofu Rolls

Ingredients

1/4 cup miso paste, preferably white	2 medium carrots
2 tbsp maple syrup	4 cups mixed salad greens
4 tsp rice vinegar	1 cup basil or cilantro leaves
2 tsp sesame seeds	1 cup hydrated rice noodles (optional)
350 g pkg extra-firm tofu	8 rice-paper rounds
1 firm, ripe avocado	

Whisk miso with maple syrup, vinegar and sesame seeds in a bowl. Slice tofu into 16 strips. Cut avocado in half, discard pit, scoop flesh from peel and slice. Peel long ribbons from carrots.

1. Lay a damp kitchen towel on counter. Fill a pie plate with warm water and place beside towel. Line up ingredients.
2. Dip 1 rice-paper round into water and leave until pliable, about 30 sec. Lay softened round on towel. Place some salad greens just below the centre. Layer with basil, carrot, avocado noodles if using and tofu. Drizzle with about 2 tsp of miso dressing.
3. Lift rice paper edge closest to you up and over filling, then roll toward the centre. Fold in sides, then continue rolling to form a log. Set seam-side down on a platter. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Slice rolls in half diagonally.

Dipping Sauce

In a bowl, mix ½ cup water, 2 tbsp lime juice or rice vinegar, 2 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tsp hot chili sauce to taste, 2 tbsp honey.

Shopping Tip

Miso paste is sold in plastic tubs or packets in the Asian section of the supermarket or near the sushi counter. Once opened, it keeps for several months in the fridge. Rice paper rounds are sold in the Asian section of the supermarkets.

About the Author



Herbert and Su have lived in Brantford since 2004. He has served the Lord as a pastor in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church since 1968. Su has been a strong support in ministry while teaching ESL and helping new immigrants. Her last posting was with the Grand Erie District School Board. Daughter Linda is a professor of ceramic art at Alfred University in New York. Son Clarence is in photography and advertising for Whirlpool in Benton Harbor, MI.



Sucker Punched (Part I): My Second Brain Tumour

By Kathy Roberts

*My body swirled in a slow-moving eddy. I drifted outwards, toward the edge.
The river bank was high above me. I couldn't quite reach the top of it. I could hear others up
there – cheering me on. I couldn't reach them. They were back from the edge.
They couldn't help. I had to do it alone.*

*I tried harder. I stretched farther. I got my fingertips up over the edge and I held on for dear life.
I clawed my way up and dragged myself over the edge. The grass was warm.*

5 pm. Friday, January 10, 1975

"Hello, my name is Dr. Ritchie."

"Hi."

"So why don't you start by telling me what's been going on?"

"We were just in Abnormal Psych class and I felt that I had all the symptoms the teacher talked about. My friend Mac suggested I call another teacher who's also a nurse. The teacher said that

I should see the college's doctor. So here I am. My balance is off. I've been riding my bike to school and I keep driving into the curb. I keep dropping things. I was taking pop bottles to the corner store for a refund.

"We're college kids, 'starving students' ya know, so every penny helps. Anyway, every few steps, one would fall and smash on the sidewalk – only one out of five actually made it."

(My mum once told me that the little old ladies on the block would shake their heads and tut-tut. "Imagine, drunk at 9:00 A.M.!" My landlady thought this was quite comical and told my Mum. It took Mum ten years to tell me that.)

"Anything else?" Dr. Ritchie asked.

"Yeah. Apathy. It's like I just don't care. About anything, ya know?"

"Any nausea?"

"Well ... yeah. I was thumbing a ride and I was sitting in the back seat of the car. I spit up in my mouth a bit. But I had to swallow it. Ya just can't throw up in somebody's car, ya know." The doctor peered into my eyes with ophthalmoscope, tapped my knees with a rubber hammer, and asked me to touch my finger to my nose.

(Soon, I was to become very accustomed to these tests. Over the years, doctors have always asked me to do new ones. That surprises me. Each time, I think I know them all ... and they bring up another one I haven't done.)

After a few minutes, the doctor said, "I'll be right back. I want to check on something." When she came back, she said, "I just called my classmate. There's definitely some kind of a blockage in your brain. There is a strong possibility that the tumor is back. You need to go directly to the hospital. I'll call ahead and pave the way."

My heart did a cannon-ball to the pit of my stomach.

I went back out to the waiting room. My face was ashen. "I need to go straight to the hospital," I said to Mac. She drove me there immediately – no questions asked. At the hospital, they did all the usual intake stuff. The next thing I know, it's six o'clock and I'm calling Mum from the nurses' station. Feeling terribly alone, I cowered behind the counter. There was some kind of overhead partition. I ducked behind it, as if that could protect me.

(There's something about being totally naked under a cotton hospital gown with the back gaping open -- those were the days when you weren't even allowed to wear panties. My usual confidence was gone. I felt very vulnerable and very afraid.)

"Mum?" My voice faltered. I couldn't hold it in any longer and I began to bawl. "It's Kathy. I'm in the hospital. The tumor's back." I wanted and needed my Mummy NOW! Mum came from

Sudbury down to London as soon as she could and lived in my apartment for the next seven weeks while I was in the hospital.

Surgery

I was taught that in situations way beyond your control, you just make the best of it. This was one of those situations.

I dreaded going through the same emotional chaos as after the first tumor two years ago.

Oh, the mood swings. They were awful. So total and so ... so utterly depressing. One minute I was feeling like my old self on the outside and the next minute my mind was thrown into a bleak abyss.

My First Brain Tumor (Keepsakes of our Past), 38

But I'd gotten through it before. And I would again. Mum tells me that I was smiling and waving as they wheeled me off to surgery. Yeah, the best I could do was put on a good face.

Coma

I lie in a pit of blackness. A blanket of thick warm tar encases me. I try to get up.

Nothing moves. I struggle. I try to get away from the tar. I fall back down, exhausted. Again ... and again, I try. During one of the "up" times, I overhear two people talking. They were tidying something in the far corner of the room. "How long has she been out? Will she be OK?"

"No, she'll be a vegetable for the rest of her life."

NO!!! NOT ME!!

I try to scream! Nothing comes out. I realized I didn't have control over my voice yet. I thought I'd just roll over and get a paper from the bed-side table. Then reach into the drawer and grab a pencil.

Totally ludicrous! I couldn't move any part of me. How on earth could I hope to do all that?

It seems pointless to struggle so hard. But this is ME, so much of life ahead of me, so physically fit, a lifeguard, a swimming instructor, an athlete, a college student, I won't accept this!

Frustrated, I re-focused. OK Kathy, what can you do? I can get better. And I WILL.

It might take some time and effort, but I'll get there!

In many ways, I still refuse to accept total defeat and I think that is a very good thing. It keeps me trying. Keeps me stretching, continually challenging myself. That is the essence of neuroplasticity – the whole notion that the brain is capable of healing itself. Of re-training and re-learning, beyond what we'd once accepted. The other day, there was a program on TV by David Suzuki. The topic was "neuroplasticity". I thought ... hmph, it's about time somebody discovered that. Maybe now they'll understand why I'm as good as I am.

I've always tried to do as much as I could. Of course, I can't do everything I want to do, but I can do the best that I can do. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind about the healing powers of the mind. Given time and challenge, the brain will find a new paths, new ways to do the things it needs to do.

Of course I have limitations – we all do. But I can try. We can all try.

I remember meeting a patient who was on a "striker frame", a kind of stretcher with a hole in it so that you can lay face down and still remain perfectly flat. I think he had been involved in a motorcycle accident. When I got involved in Sport for the Disabled, I was half expecting to see him again.

Many years later, a young neighbour was hit by a car and was placed on one of those frames. I went to visit him in the hospital. When I saw the bed, my knees went weak and I almost fell. But I recovered myself and instinctively scooted down under the bed so he could see me.

Consciousness

Mac and her then-husband (Randy) were there when I finally came to for good. Mum had gone for a much needed coffee. "So, what's the first thing you want to do?" said Randy. "Go down to the pub and have a beer." Everyone thought that was quite hilarious. My speech was so slurred, most people couldn't understand me, so they wouldn't have served me anyway.

Recovery

I had to learn everything over. When I learned to brush my teeth, it was so exciting that I had to share my victory with everyone – Mum, the cleaning staff, every nurse that ventured into our room, even the doctors on rounds.

At that time there were three branches of therapy available: speech, occupational and physiotherapy. I used them all.

There were other doctor appointments too. My mornings were full. At first the nurses took care of requisitioning an orderly with a wheelchair to come to my room and take me to each activity. After a few weeks, I took on that responsibility. One day I forgot and missed my appointment. I

was furious with the nurses. It was “their” fault. “They” should have made sure that it had been done.

(But I would’ve gotten mad at them if they’d nagged me every day).

Hospital life

The nurses wake us up at 7:00 am but they don’t serve breakfast until just after 9:00 am. About 8:00 am, a nurse rattles a cart into my room and takes several samples of blood from my hip. “You look like a pincushion,” she said. “I’ll have to use the other hip for a few days.” *Just another annoyance to put up with and not worth my attention.* We were in a teaching hospital so a team of doctors and interns visited me daily. They poked and prodded and asked questions. Short lectures erupted. I was bored by this and didn’t even bother to listen. As far as I was concerned the job of recovering was way more important and took my full attention. I had little energy left to worry about what “they” were doing.

Apparently I wasn’t getting better fast enough. One morning an orderly pushing a wheelchair came in to take me down to another part of the hospital for yet another test. He rolled me right up to what looked like a dentist’s chair with a hole in the back-rest. The open back of the hospital gown lined up with the hole in the seat back to expose my bare back. They were going to do a lumbar puncture, that is, insert a bubble of air between the vertebrae in my spine and watch it travel through my body. The resulting paperwork is called pneumoencephalography. (I just looked it up the spelling and learned that before adding the air, they drain most of the cerebral-spinal fluid out – no wonder I had such a headache after). They administered the anesthetic. While I was still conscious, they wrapped each of my limbs from top to bottom with elastic bandages. I looked like a mummy. That step worried me because I knew they would be working close to the nerves.

I asked why they were wrapping and the nurses told me that it was just a precaution to prevent any bruising. I pictured me going into convulsions and uncontrollable spasms. Thankfully, I wasn’t awake much longer to see what actually did happen. But man, did I pay for it later.

The doctors had warned me that I would feel some “discomfort” if I moved around too much. In 1975, the word “discomfort” was just a code word for PAIN. Moving around too much meant moving anything more than my eye-balls. It produced an immediate and massive headache.

Eating

Mum came every day at noon to help me with lunch and stayed ‘till after supper.

At first she had to spoon-feed me. Then I could manage mashed potatoes, etc.

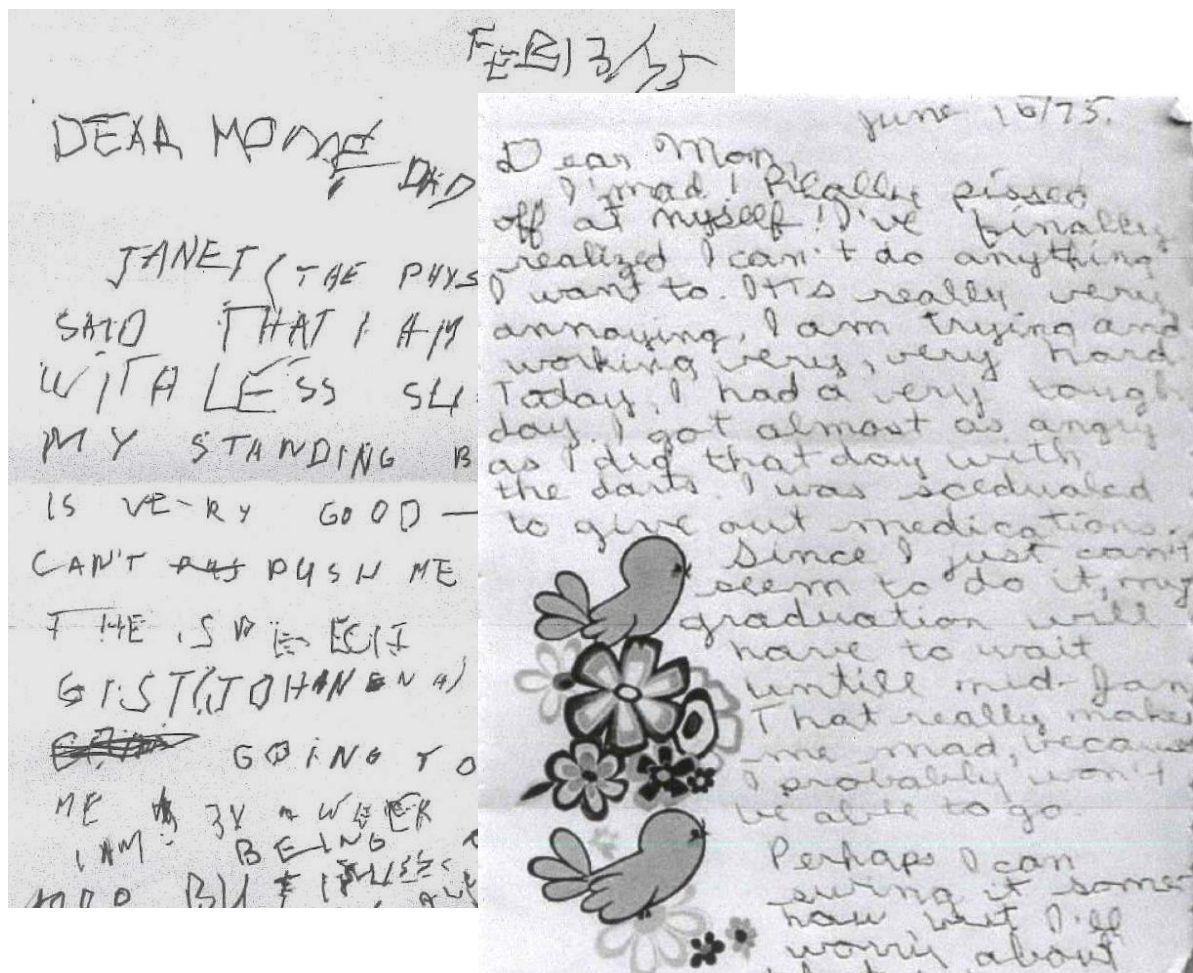
“AAGH!! Here, you do it,” I demanded as I handed Mum a yogurt container.

"Don't they know I can't open these stupid little containers?"

One day Mum was late. I was furious. In hindsight, maybe that actually turned out to be a good thing. It forced me to try doing more for myself – a life-long mission.

I had lost a lot of weight and was slow to heal so the staff allowed me double desserts. I had trouble breathing at night and needed many intubations. My throat was raw, so every meal ended with sherbet. Green was *(and still is)* my favourite.

During this time, Mum went back to Sudbury for a few days. I must've been driving the nurses crazy; they suggested that I write to her.



Letters to Mum. My fine motor skills varied with my condition.

While she was gone they served a meal with green peas. Since my co-ordination was poor, a lot of peas ended up on the floor. Nurses good-naturedly teased my room-mate and I of having wild parties. At that point, we were both incapable of sitting up let alone getting out of bed.

Physio

I remember learning to walk. It was hard work. I began practicing by stretching my arms out, like a zombie and leaning into the front of the therapist's shoulders while she walked backwards.

The only walkers available then were the kind you lift up, take a step and repeat. After mastering that within a few weeks, I progressed to other things. My physiotherapist thought that maybe because they were hand-held, I could manage darts. I couldn't! I threw wildly and missed the dart board completely. That just made me furious with myself. She quickly decided that it was unsafe and so not worth the aggravation. Another time, she had me straddle a horizontal barrel. My balance was so poor that I fell off. My temper flared. I tended to over-correct and fall off the other side. That just got me madder. The therapist decided that again, my frustration wasn't worth it. On the weekends, Mum took me to the physio room and we were allowed to practice some of the exercises. Some required a trained therapist. We practiced the barrel thing, but I only continued to be frustrated.

(Years later, I was on a Christian retreat. We went horse-back riding. My weight slipped and I was afraid that I'd over-correct. The horse was uncomfortable with my lop-sided weight. In his attempt to shift the load, he jerked his head back at me. I was leaning forward. His head hit me in the face knocking my sunglasses into my nose and cutting it. With a little trickle of blood running down my nose, I was sufficiently mad to get off the horse, leave him and stomp back to the main building. Adrenaline is amazing.)

Discharge

I was wearing an eye-patch and sitting in a wheelchair. Mum and I were in the lobby, waiting for a taxi to go back to the apartment. A little boy and his father were waiting for a car. The little boy (probably about six) circled the wheelchair staring intently at my face (the right half was paralyzed and the right eye was covered by a salmon coloured, plastic eye patch). The boy tilted his head and looked up at Mum in confusion. Finally he asked, "Why is she wearing that thing on her eye?"

"Her eyes don't see the way yours and mine do. That helps her."

"Oh. Okay."

The apartment was on the second floor of a century home. Mum put her arm around my waist. I draped one arm over her shoulder and with the other leaned heavily on the banister. We managed to stumble up. We had to rest at the landing, while I repositioned around the post before going up the last few steps. Thankfully, that whole process got easier on subsequent trips. I gradually learned to shift my weight more on the banister and less on Mum. I knew she'd be returning to Sudbury at the end of the weekend, so I had to master this stuff.

To celebrate that first night back, Mum made lamb chops. A real treat! Mmm ... they were delicious – the whole meal was! She got them fresh at the farmers market. Extra-thick slices of New Zealand Spring lamb and browned gently in real butter. Naturally they were served with mint sauce and accompanied with fresh asparagus and new potatoes, also dripping in real butter.

The social worker at the hospital had already arranged transportation to and from school, through Action League for the Physically Handicapped, (a service club).

Mum worked hard all weekend to set everything else up. Theresa (my room-mate) was also a student in the helping profession, I expect that she promised Mum that she would take good care of me and indeed she did. She did all of the cooking at first. She did everything at first. I don't ever remember doing laundry.

My landlady had me down to bake peanut butter cookies with her. We measured all the ingredients. My brain still worked fine, but I guess she wasn't sure. Anyway after that, I was allowed to cook. To be truthful, menus were simple as preparation time was much longer. That's still true today.

Mum went home and slowly I learned to cope.

After a few weeks, the guy I was seeing over the Christmas Holidays, came up to visit. I asked him to sit on the floor and roll a ball back and forth with me. He did so, most graciously. I was 20, he was 27. Can you imagine?

One week before discharge, the neurosurgeon told me the tumour had been the size of an orange but was benign. I didn't care about the size, just that it was gone and so was the pain. He said that they put in a Torkelian shunt. It went in just under the skin, running down the back of my head then over to the front of my body and on to drain into the the lining of the stomach cavity. As far as I was concerned, the fact that it was benign and not likely to return was just a bonus.

Once a security guard at Union Station eyed me suspiciously. I was leaning heavily on my brother Bill (well, more like I leaned and he dragged) to get to our train. It was March break and we both fully expected to take advantage of the extra time and go home. "Is there a problem here?" the guard wanted to know.

"No, we're OK. She just got out of the hospital," Bill told him.

When the security guard stopped us, I prayed (and I didn't pray in those days) that Bill wouldn't be more specific. I thought that if the guard heard the words "brain tumor" he might think I was nuts and not let us go.

It took the better part of a day to get to Sudbury from Toronto. As the train pulled out of the station we each lit up a smoke. The Conductor came over and asked us to put them out. He said

he had emphysema. We put them out. After he left we grumbled quietly to each other. “Probably doesn’t even have emphysema.”

My, how times have changed. I wouldn’t even dream of smoking now, not ANYWHERE.

Once back in town, I took an apartment in the same house as a childhood friend. I didn’t see much of her. That was fine with me – I was busy learning to make my way in the world.

I gradually worked myself from the part-time use of a wheelchair to leaning heavily on walls to using a cane (that first the cane spent a lot of time flailing around in the air (lack of coordination plus I couldn’t keep it on the ground long enough to complete a whole step))

A service club lent me a quad cane (at that time the four prongs were pointed in a “t” formation, rather than off to one side like they are now). The problem with the old design is that your foot tends to get caught between the prongs. Still it was much better than a regular cane. That just didn’t have the kind of support I needed.

People I met were always asking me what was wrong with me. I would say a benign tumor of the cerebellum. That wouldn’t mean much to them and their faces would just go blank. I was careful not to use the “brain” word, for fear they’d think I was nuts.

Somewhere along the line, a doctor said that I exhibited “residual Cerebral Palsy”. I latched on the words “Cerebral Palsy” and thought, ‘Good, now I have an answer that at least some people can relate too.

One winter I was working at a group home in Sudbury. I remember looking back at the freshly fallen snow that covered the driveway. The four-posted cane and my very staggered walking/dragging had left an erratic scraggly trail.

That job ended in the spring. My little sister was in grade eight; they were going on a class camping trip and needed chaperones. She begged me to come. At this point, I had progressed to using a single black lacquered cane.

(Did you know that “Off” bug repellent also takes the paint “off” black lacquered canes?)

After they got the tents set up, one of the male teachers called the whole group together for instructions. Two of the female teachers helped me. With one under each arm, we managed to cross the carpet of soft pine needles. Actually, I slid and their job was to keep me upright. By the time we got there, the meeting was over! But oh, the smell of those pines – in fact, the whole campsite – the ferns, the undergrowth, even the canvas tarps had the wonderful smell of my childhood.

I don’t remember too much else from that trip, except that I so enjoyed being camping again and my sister seemed to be pleased to have me there.

My eyes have been on a journey of their own. Before the operation, I had 20/20 vision (much like many 20 year olds). So, like most kids that age, I took my eyesight for granted. My eyes were perfect and I expected everything to continue that way. I was beginning to experience life on my own and really enjoying the freedom. I could do pretty much do what I wanted, when I wanted. I still had to pay rent on time, and eat, and do laundry – but it was mostly on my terms. After the operation, all that changed. When I awoke, among all the other physical and emotional changes, my eyes had the most to deal with.

They were completely crossed which also meant no peripheral. They wouldn't focus and nor stay still. Talk about frustrating! No matter how hard I tried, nothing worked. They just would not do what I wanted them to. The world looked like chaotic disaster ... and I was helpless to do anything about it. The room was spinning ... and I saw double of everything ... several times around. It took more than a month for that to settle down. At first I could only concentrate for a few minutes, then fifteen, then more.

The kids in my class sent a huge, green terrarium – a garden in a bottle. Great gift – no maintenance. I began to worry about missing so much school. So I asked Mum to bring in some text books and read to me. Also, this was a way for me to check that I still had the brain power I had before the operation. When Mum read, I heard and I understood but nothing would stick. The whole experience left me more frustrated with myself. My concentration gradually got better, but I never asked Mum to repeat the text book thing again. Once bitten, twice shy.

Several years later, after I had graduated and was now living on my own in Hamilton, a Priest made a reference to a book I'd read and loved in high school. I felt like I needed to read it again to make sure I hadn't forgotten anything important. I remembered as much as anybody else would have. Okay, passed that test ... again.

Now when people doubt me, I have abundant patience ... because I've already had and calmed those same doubts.

I wore a plastic eye patch at first but it cut my skin and was uncomfortable. The only other thing on the market was a black adult-size one, like a real pirate. At twenty-one this was not the look I was going for. At one point, I did buy a black one and covered it with a light pink material. That was too bulky and didn't work. I was getting so many stares that Mum and I thought we should sew a semi-circle of fringe on it to replicate a closed eyelid and eyelash. But we never did.

My eyes see independently (that is, they don't work together). When most people view things, their eyes separately focus on the object and send feedback to the brain. The brain then puts that information together and instantly sends back a signal to the muscles to react accordingly. That doesn't happen with me. When I was first learning to pour milk, it wasn't at all unusual for me to miss the glass entirely. Over the years, I have learned to adapt.

This problem with my eyes, also means that I have no depth perception. When I am trying to cross the road, I cannot judge just how fast a car is coming. Both of these have improved too.

As with any such situation, my body has learned to pick up clues from other things. I rely on shadows a lot. However, I have ridden my bike into curbs and stepped into holes by misreading these clues.

Whenever the brain is injured or “jarred”, everything is disturbed. Now, whenever I have a major fall, my eyes are again the first to react. On a recent visit to Emergency a doctor checked my eyes. He said, “I take it this bouncing around of the eyes is normal for you?”

“Yes it is. I have nystagmus (the medical term for it). However it’s probably exaggerated just now.”

Later, back in Sudbury, I went in to the hospital to have three ligaments cut to release the pull on my eyes. I was probably 22 or 23. There were three other ladies in my room. All, much older – in their late seventies or eighties. They were there to have cataracts removed. When I came into the dimly lit room, the blinds were closed. Being young and rather thoughtless and brash, I went straight to the blinds and pulled them up sharply. All three women gasped. I quickly snapped them shut again and apologized. I was to spend the next few days also craving total blackness. The nurses and patients alike were amazed that I could still knit. “Of course I can still knit,” I said. “You don’t need your eyes – you do it by feel.” I was only knitting dishcloths – little pattern, you just have to keep track of what you’re doing.

At that time they kept you in the hospital overnight. When I got back to my apartment, the curtains stayed closed. I wore dark sunglasses and kept my eyes shut. Each day I could open my eyelids a little more. I remember pouring tea with my eyes shut. I poured with my right hand and put the tip of my left-hand index finger into the cup.

Variegated sunglasses were in style, so I wore them and covered the inside of the right lens with masking tape. Eventually I took to squinting one eye closed but the muscles became tired and I couldn’t read like I had as a child.

With age, glasses to correct my vision became necessary.

In May of 2015 I had an optometrist appointment. It was just the usual routine checkup. The new doctor had access to the latest advancements. She did all the usual things then asked me to look at an image. I asked, “With which eye? They see independently.”

She sounded confused and asked, “What do you mean, ‘independently’?”

I explained. “One image is up and to the left and the other is down and to the right.”

She played around with the equipment until the image was level, then she held up a strip with what looked like 12 different strengths of prisms (my former doctor was only aware of two).

As I looked through the third or fourth level, I gasped. “Go back two!” I shouted.

She did. Pronto.

I was seeing a single image – a bit stretched, *but ONE image*.

My forearm vibrated with excitement and tears rolled down my cheeks.

The contraption that she had inserted the extra lenses into looked like aviator's glasses made with a Meccano set. In order for the lenses to be in the right place, she had waded a Kleenex under the bridge of the glasses. I looked bizarre, but I didn't care. My heart was singing.

I was as happy as a lark. I went back into the waiting room to try out my new eyes. I even opened the front door to see across the street. Everything shone. It came alive!

Imagine seeing everything in the world all flat, in two dimensions. Now for the first time I could see in 3-D – I could scarcely dare to believe that this could be possible. There was a toddler in the room who looked at me kind of strangely. I hadn't brought my walker and I was so excited, that with the extra concentration it took to walk and be aware of the unpredictable movement of a toddler, I got tired, but I remained as happy as a clam.

That night I woke up in the middle of the night. I couldn't catch my breath – it seemed like a panic attack, but instead of panic it was excitement. In between gasps for air, my face distorted itself into crying tears of disbelief.

It was May 26. I was still in a state of euphoria and disbelief. I didn't dare speculate, except to think, "Reading will be much easier."

On June 4th I was at Value Village with time left over. I browsed through the titles of some pocket books and happened to come cross a sci-fi trilogy that I had wanted to read. I bought it in anticipation.

Then, June 5th. *Just one and a half weeks to go. I can't wait!*

June 8th: I was jittery with excitement. I couldn't seem to settle. *How am I going to make it through eight more days? Will I be disappointed? Will my eyes revert?* I so wanted to be able to read with ease.

June 9th: I picked up my new glasses in the late morning. The cab driver looked so ... real. Even the clouds looked beautiful. I managed to stay calm enough to unlock my front door. I was so excited. I had never (in their whole lives) seen my children clearly. I studied their pictures. They were absolutely beautiful! All three of them. My son John had died nine years earlier so I had completely missed his whole life, but he was beautiful! I studied pictures of my two girls. I cried some more. I had to call and tell them how beautiful they were. Maria wasn't home but Anya was. Excitedly I told her that she shone. I called my Mum, my siblings. I was ecstatic.

However, reading wasn't as easy as I had anticipated. I could feel my eyes fighting for control. The next morning, the reading was gone altogether and by afternoon my eyes had completely reverted.

I crashed. I took a metaphorical swan dive into deep, dark depression.

I hadn't experienced that kind of depression since my first brain tumor in 1972. I didn't feel suicidal but apathy, withdrawal and isolation were all there. I cancelled anything that wasn't a medical emergency. I snapped at friends. My therapist wiped his agenda clean and we talked on the phone for two hours. I was counseled and consoled by many friends. I prayed with friends. I turned it over. Another friend pulled strings and got me in to see his optometrist.

After a week of desperate and bleak depression, I was lifted to a place of acceptance. I saw the doctor again. She saw me squinting and told me of an eye patch that attached to the inside of your glasses.

Later I reasoned to myself: *Ya know what, these eyes have served me well for 40 yrs. There's no reason they can't continue.*

Yeah, well, that was false bravado if I ever heard it.

A week later, I got back into my routine, but my heart wasn't in it. It took another six months of processing when something finally snapped. "C'mon Kathy, get a grip!" I told myself firmly. "You're not gonna let this thing win. You're better than that. You got out of here before, you can do it again. It's November 2015 and it's high time you started living."

Looking for the Gifts

I've learned to see my realization of my own strengths and perseverance as a gift.

When I called my daughter Anya to tell her I could no longer see 'one', she asked permission to write a song. She sang it to me while picking on her ukulele. It is about her but my eyesight was the catalyst. I know 'the fruit don't fall too far from the tree'. The lyrics could also apply to me.

Shine / lyrics by Anya Slater (2015)

*so you thought you might not survive this
yeah you thought you might not get by
but babe, you're gonna shine
you're gonna shine, shine, shine*

*cause baby, this darkness won't last
and it might not feel that way yet
but you can heal the wounds of your past*

*you're gonna feel that joy
you're gonna feel connected
you're gonna find your spirit
and resurrect it*

*you are made of light, and you shine so bright
you are full of joy
see yourself through your mother's eyes
when she saw you clearly for the very first time*

*she said... baby you shine
you shine, shine, shine*

*she said the world seemed so harsh
but it's soft and beautiful
look through her grateful eyes
you've got the same vision don't ya*

*and you're lover sister
is back to remind ya
of the joy you hold inside
oh, how you've missed her*

*you've got that joy
and together you shine
yeah you shine, shine, shine*

*the journey's been long
and it's been so dark
you've felt alone
but you know within your heart*

*one day... you're gonna shine
you're gonna shine, shine, shine*

*you're gonna shine like the moon on the ocean
you're gonna shine like the magical stars
you're gonna be that light in the darkness, yeah
one day it won't feel so hard*

*so baby, keep up the fight
you're surrounded in darkness at times
but inside there's light*

*you're gonna shine
you're gonna shine, shine, shine...*

My invaluable Eye patch is another gift. I still need a straight edge under lines of text (because of the nystagmus) but the patch makes it so much more relaxing to read.

Memory of Kay and the EMI

According to the medical records and Kay, this actually happened in 1974 – before the second tumor. However, in my memory it happened after the tumor. Memory is a shape-shifter.

Kay was a classmate who drove me from London to Hamilton for an EMI scan (the forerunner of the MRI, or magnetic resonance imaging). At that time, there were only three such machines in Canada. The nearest was Hamilton. Unfortunately I didn't make a good navigator.

"Ahh! It's a one-way street!" Kay shrieked.

"Quick, take the next corner."

"Thanks Kathy," she said sarcastically. Then, "Eeek! It's one way too."

I could be sarcastic too. "Geez Kay, it isn't this tumor that's gonna kill me. It's your driving!"

"I can't help it if they're all one way," she said.

In retrospect, my words were terribly hurtful. I certainly didn't mean them that way and I have since apologized. I once read that the root of the word "sarcasm" means to tear flesh. I'd be hard-pressed to tear anyone's flesh, ever. We all need to choose our words with more care.

During the EMI I had to lie on a table with my head resting in a depression. A balloon-like lining gradually filled with water and became tighter (similar to the restriction around your arm when they pump up the cuff to take your blood pressure). Only this was around my head. As the bag inflated and pressure increased, I lost my composure. I began to cry.

Immediately Kay leaned over and grabbed my hand. "What's wrong? Are you okay?"

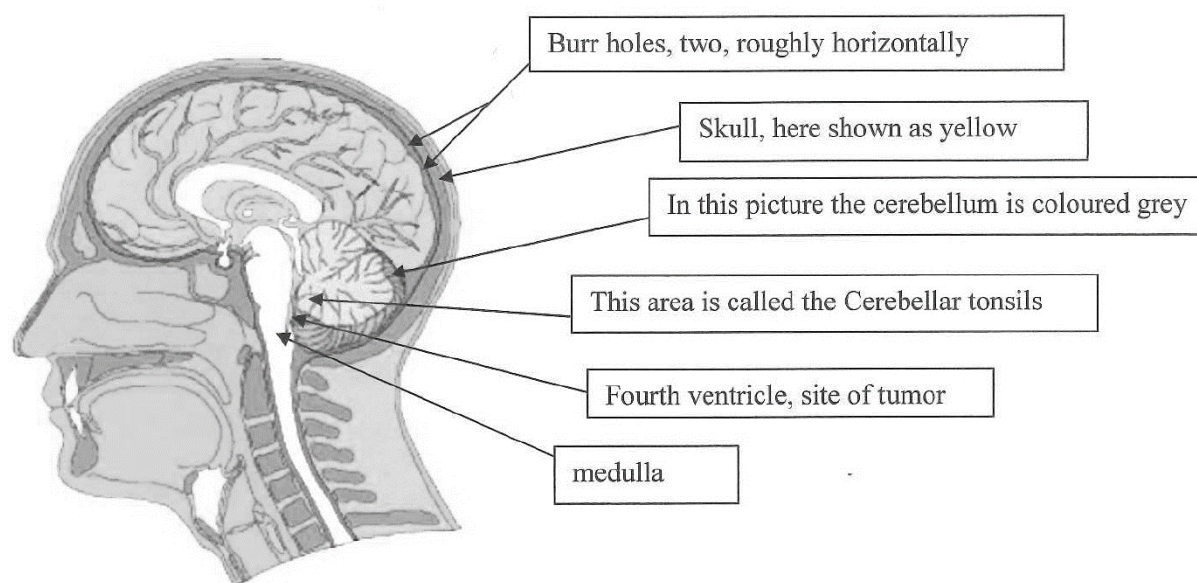
I stammered, "It's ... it's just that ... yeah, I'll be okay."

The test itself wasn't at all painful and the results were good. Everything was normal and there were no blockages. But I'll never forget how eerie it felt, or how much it meant to have Kay there.

Burr Holes and Reflections

Recently a friend of mine underwent a procedure for burr holes, which are drilled through the skull to relieve pressure on the brain. I was eager to talk to her, because in all my years, I didn't know anyone else except myself who'd ever had undergone that particular procedure. My burr

holes had been done in 1973, for my first tumour. In 1975 the right hole was reopened and the



Source for anatomical image: <http://www.longestlife.com/ebook/change.html>

shunt runs down and drains excess cerebral spinal fluid into the lining of my stomach.

“It was the worst thing in my life,” she said. I didn’t feel that way at all, but I tried to keep an open mind and listen to what she had to say. “Did they put your head in a big wooden box thing?”

Well ... now that she mentioned it, I vaguely remembered a square wooden frame. They adjusted it by screwing in the sides (the same concept as the “C-clamp” my father used on his workbench). Small green, heavy-linen table-napkins were used to isolate the area.

(In school, one of the methods to simplify instructions was called “isolation”. You cover up all but the focus word. Like the way dentists cover up all but the tooth they’re working on.)

They gave me a local anesthetic. I don’t remember much, but I do remember feeling groggy and wanting to go to sleep. As soon as I shut my eyes, a doctors said gently, “No, don’t go to sleep. We need you to stay awake. We’re going to drill into your head now. We need you to tell us if anything hurts or if we get too close to anything that does.” I didn’t find that reassuring at all. My brain is one area where I want them to know EXACTLY what they’re doing.

I was reminded of the times Dad and I used to go ice fishing. It had been warm in the little wooden shack, lit only by a lantern and a small square window in the door. Once inside we were out of the howling wind and quite cozy. We took turns with the auger, drilling a hole

through the thick ice. This is what I remembered as I felt the vibrations of the hand-drill biting into my skull, crunching as it churned up the bone,

The scars from the burr holes never go away. There is a man at our church who reads from the scriptures. He has dark hair cut in a brush-cut. When he goes up to the front of the church to read, we see the back of his head. He has two small circular bald spots, though in different places from mine. I always think, *thank goodness I don't have that problem*. Then I go home and I look in the mirror and see that my head looks much worse. Hair will not grow on the spots where the doctors drilled into my skull.

I tell myself it doesn't matter but inside I am doubly embarrassed. Once for my judgmental attitude, and again for the sight of my own head.

About the Author

Like all of us, there have been many experiences in my life. I hope to compile a book documenting some of them. This memoir is but one. It continues the story of my first brain tumor.

I am the oldest of six children. We lived all over Southern Ontario before moving to Northern Ontario. Now I live in Brantford. I enjoy challenges in different writing forms which include memoirs, Bible Stories for Children and unusual forms of poetry. I appreciate folk and classical music, live theatre and art galleries.



My Culinary Journey

By Kay Boyd

My mother would never have made the Michelin Food Guide, however it is through our mothers that we begin to learn about what we like to eat. As well, it is our life experiences that often determine how our loving relationships with food grow and expand. As a little kid I remember one of my favourite suppers was fried bologna topped with mashed potatoes and slathered with fresh sweet butter. As I look back, I realize that as a child I had no clue about much of anything when it came to food. I mean, fried bologna!

While Mother's culinary skills may have been lacking, she had other redeeming qualities when it came to food. She laid a fantastic table, always complete with white linen tablecloths and napkins, shining silver cutlery, sparkling crystal and every imaginable type of serving spoon to portion out whatever was on the menu. Mother had several sets of fine china and it was always a treat to see what she would use at each meal. It didn't much matter what was on the menu. The table always looked so pretty and inviting.

Dining was an event in our family. My father sat at the head of the table as we gathered around for our everyday family meals, and always in our own place. Sunday dinners were special; Mom and Dad always invited someone to dine with us. I learned a great deal listening to the adults discuss everything – except politics, money, and religion. Mother always said that such topics were not for mixed company discussions – ever. In those days, such topics were very personal and not subjects for Sunday dinner conversations. Lunches were also well laid out. It might have been fried bologna and mashed potatoes but it was served with panache. The best part of every meal was having everyone together around the table in the kitchen or in the dining room. It was a time to share the events of the day, ask questions, learn new ideas, laugh together and enjoy.

My real learning about food began after I left home and entered into the great big unknown world away from the security of my parents. It was a revelation to discover new tastes, new foods, new cooking methods and new likes and dislikes, and indeed, begin to learn about food traditions in other cultures.

When three of my friends and I decided to move into our own apartment, the food adventure really began. We had to agree on what we would eat – or go without. I didn't like that option and so agreed to eat things that I'd never tasted. One such journey of discovery led to roast duck. It was agreed that we would buy a duck and Oz would cook it. The other girls were busy and so I agreed to purchase the duck. Oz instructed me to go to the Kensington market where I would find fresh ducks for sale. At home, Mother would prepare a chicken by first cleaning out the innards and I loved to watch that operation. As Mother 'drew' out the insides of the bird, she would tell me what all the parts were and their purpose. I learned about gizzards, bile, hearts, and livers, and what their functions were. The process began with hanging the bird by its neck, pulling out all the feathers, singeing off the pin feathers with a rolled up lighted piece of newspaper, then cutting it open and pulling out all the entrails onto the old newspapers. I thought it was like magic. Oz didn't. Since she was the one who pushed for cooking a duck, it fell to her to prepare it for the oven. Oz did not grow up on a farm and so any birds that her Mother cooked, came 'oven ready'. Our duck didn't. The ducks at the Kensington market were hung in a row by their necks, with no feathers but I didn't know that they weren't 'oven ready' and needed to be 'drawn'. When we returned to our flat in anticipation of a roast duck, Oz was not in a good mood. While the duck that I purchased had been cleaned of feathers, it hadn't had its insides cleaned out and Oz was not amused. She made it clear that she would *never* clean another bird! We learned something: "The next time you buy a bird, don't buy one that hasn't been 'drawn'."

Years later, of course, we laughed over that episode. We learned that she had worn the washing up rubber gloves to do the dirty deed.

I guess I have to thank Oz for my interest in cooking. She loved to try new things and for the most part whatever she made was wonderful. I'd never eaten spaghetti with meat sauce and to this day I remember how good my first foray into 'Italian' food proved to be a new relationship with international cuisine. Oz was adamant about having proper cooking utensils and talked

about that a lot. She had invested in pots and pans and good knives and waxed eloquent on the necessity of having those things. In fact, when I married, the girls went together and bought me a complete set of Revere Ware cooking pots and I'm still using them over fifty years later.

Oz was the person who opened us up to our food adventures at the large and diverse Toronto Market. We would get up early Saturday morning and take the streetcar to the downtown market where I learned of a whole new world of food. It was Oz who convinced us that we should buy slimy green shrimp to cook. Ugh. They had to be touched to clean them and to remove the squiggly legs and ugly heads before cooking them to pink perfection. It went against all that I believed until I dipped a whole shrimp into hot sweet butter. My gawd, what a taste thrill. Oz seemed to know everything.

School finished and work began and I found myself in the world of commerce, working at Fisher Scientific and with great bravado taking on substantial quotations for major customers. One such task was to bid the job for the laboratory installation and lab equipment for a hospital that was being built in Brantford, my home town. Little did I know that years later I would be sitting on the Board of that very hospital. We won the contract and to celebrate the success, the salesmen took me to dinner at Le Chaumiere, an elegant French restaurant in downtown Toronto where I was urged to try frog legs for the first time. I didn't relish the thought of eating frog legs, but at the time, my hosts were senior to me and I would never have dared to say no. I accepted the suggestion to order frog legs. Another taste thrill and one not soon forgotten; no wonder those tasty morsels are so expensive!

Life goes on and I had learned enough about food and cooking to enjoy preparing meals for husband and family. Actually, I truly enjoyed inviting friends for dinner and preparing 'company' meals. On one occasion it was my in-laws who were coming to dinner and I decided that desert would be a cream pie, commonly called Flapper Pie. A crust of crushed sweetened graham crackers filled with homemade custard and decorated with slightly browned meringue. The kitchen in that first apartment was tiny and cramped and as I removed the pie from the oven, I dropped it and it went all over the floor. Undaunted, I scooped the contents into sherbet dishes and served it as my own invention. No one suspected. Other than the mess, it was a successful dinner.

Until I was a single parent, I had never been required to be too inventive, but facing the daunting task of trying to feed my growing children on a miniscule budget, I do believe that is when I really began to learn. Making a nourishing and flavourful meal out of practically nothing I believe is the measure of a real cook. My children still laugh about my "Friday Soup". Each Friday I took inventory in the fridge and tried to use up any less than perfect vegetables, stale bread, and anything else I could recycle before doing the weekly shopping.

I was fastidious about making sure that my kids went off to school each morning with full tummies. When there is no milk, no cereal, no bread, and no money, what to do? Those times

were not uncommon. I remember the first time I was faced with that predicament. All I had in the fridge was a bowl of leftover oatmeal porridge from the day before and one sausage that hadn't been eaten. Then I remembered something that my Mother had made a very long time ago. I crumbled up the leftover sausage, mixed it with the leftover oatmeal, packed the mess into a small square baking dish and let it set up in the fridge. I sliced it and fried the slices in butter in a hot sizzling frying pan and served it drizzled with homemade syrup made with brown sugar, water and a little corn starch for thickener. The kids loved it. I asked my Mother if such a dish had a name and she told me it was often made on the farm and called Scrapple. Any kind of meat worked well and whatever was on hand was mixed into oatmeal porridge or cornmeal, set up and sliced for breakfast. Scrapple is a family favourite. It's amazing what a little creativity can produce. And it's good for you!

I also learned to accept whatever was offered for free. It was the 'free' cucumbers, onions, and green tomatoes that garnered the title of my kids' description of me as "the Pickle Queen". I can credit Jeannie for that. Jeannie and I had a lot in common; her husband had run off with another woman and left her to raise her three boys on her own. Fortunately for Jeannie, the family home was surrounded with large fields and Jeannie became, of necessity, a market gardener. She learned to grow vegetables and she augmented her income by selling her harvest.

As parents at our kids' public school, we had volunteered to work with UNICEF to collect pennies at Hallowe'en. All the school kids were sent out with a tiny UNICEF box on Hallowe'en night to collect pennies as well as candies as they trick or treated around the neighbourhood. It fell to Jeannie, me, and two others to collect the boxes, count and roll the pennies and deliver them to the UNICEF office. We went to Jeannie's house, gathered around her kitchen table and began the task.

As women are wont to do, we talked about our families and our mothers and Jeannie began to tell us about her life without a mother. Apparently her mother had run off and left her husband and kids. Jeannie's father was well educated and was a high school teacher. There were several kids in her family and they were a somewhat unruly bunch. While counting and rolling the pennies, Jeannie had broken out a bottle of home-made red wine and we sipped as we counted. It wasn't long before we were a bit tipsy and Jeannie began to regale us with stories of the many housekeepers that she had grown up with. As we drank more wine, the stories got funnier and funnier. She recalled a time when she and her brothers actually tied one of the housekeepers onto a chair and danced around her like whooping Indian Braves. Jeannie said she often wondered where that particular housekeeper was so that she could apologize to her for their behavior. As we talked about being single parents and all that it means, we talked about not having enough money to buy food. Jeannie was a generous and kind person. She said to me that although the vegetable garden was pretty much over, there were still some cucumbers clinging to life and if I wanted them for pickles, I was welcome to take anything I could find. I had never made a pickle in my life but I remembered that my Mother had. The next day I went to Jeannie's garden patches and sure enough there were still cucumbers to be had. I remember that I picked almost a bushel of cucumbers that were far too large and many

BRAISED RED CABBAGE

1 medium sized onion, chopped (I like to use Vidalia onion when they are in season)

3 tablespoons butter or margarine (sometimes I use bacon drippings)

9 cups shredded red cabbage (I don't measure it, I just use a medium to small red cabbage)

1 large tart apple, peeled and diced (Granny Smith or any other firm tart apple)

3 tablespoons cider vinegar

1 cup water

3 tablespoons brown sugar

1 tablespoon caraway seeds

1 ¼ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper

½ cup raisins (optional and I never use them)

Cook the onion and apples in butter for 5 minutes on medium heat. Add cabbage and cook/stir for another 5 minutes longer. Add the remaining ingredients, cover, and simmer until crisp tender (about ½ hour). Makes six servings or more.

little tiny ones that were not yet mature. The remainder of the tomato plants looked quite dead but there were hard green tomatoes clinging to some stems. Now what was I to do with them? Although my Mother was not a skilled culinary expert, she did indeed know what to do with cucumbers and green tomatoes. She gave me my Grandmother and my aunt's collection of recipes suggesting that the larger overripe cucumbers should be used for relish and the tiny ones could be made into sweet gherkins. She gave me her old hand-cranked meat grinder so that I could make relish. A new journey of discovery ensued and I pickled my heart out. To this very day, my own kids like Momma's home-made pickles and relishes and are always happy to receive something from home. I learned that Jeannie, after her boys had all finished high school, went back to school and earned a University degree in Psychology. Well done Jeannie, and thanks for your support in making me The Pickle Queen.

My dear friend Margaret was a single parent with two girls. Neither of us had much disposable income and so our entertainment was often taking our kids into the woods and hiking and finding treasures and eventually getting together for our own modest meals. It was just such a day when we all went into the woods where we had played as kids to discover the forest all over again. It was Thanksgiving weekend and we were going to enjoy our 'potluck' together as our Thanksgiving dinner. One of the vegetable dishes

that Margaret had made was a dish of red cabbage. I had never eaten red cabbage nor had I ever cooked red cabbage but I tried Margaret's red cabbage braise and it was wonderful – sweet, sour, somewhat nutty, and unlike anything I had ever eaten. She told me that it was a recipe from a German friend. The kids all loved it.

Margaret lived in a modest upstairs flat on the main street in Port Dover. There was a very large sunroom over the main floor verandah and we often sat out there after the kids were all tucked into bed and watched the world go by. We laughed, we commiserated about our lives, and we shared our thoughts ... and the red cabbage. Margaret shared the recipe with me and it's been a family favourite ever since. Recently on a trip with my needlework group to Scotland, I saw a red cabbage in the grocery store and decided to cook it for our group. When we returned home, one of the ladies asked me for the recipe which I gladly provided and she has told me that it has also become one her family favourites and that she serves it whenever she has company.

The little kid around the corner from where I lived with my four kids and my parents was called Flub. I think his given name was Eric, but everyone called him Flub, including the kindergarten teacher. He was one of those kids who would do anything you asked and without hesitation or question. He came from a large family and I suspect he liked to be with us because he got lots of attention and we fed him well. We always went to our summer cottage for the summer and Flub was usually invited to come along.

When the kids were quite young – maybe six or seven – they had been out playing nearby the cottage and were eager to tell me that there was a ‘pond’ full of frogs close by. Aha! Remembering those frog legs I had enjoyed many years earlier, I suggested that they catch the frogs and we would have frog legs for supper. Yuck! My kids revolted and absolutely refused, but Flub, in his usual cooperative way, was anxious to try frog legs and volunteered to skin the legs. With much chagrin, the kids went off to catch the frogs and before long, Flub brought me enough skinned frog legs to have a feast. After the initial hesitation to try one, absolutely everyone gobbled them up and asked if they could have some more the next day.

SWEET AND SOUR HAWAIIAN MEAT BALLS

Meatballs:

2 lbs. ground meat (use all beef or a mixture of ground pork and beef)
2 eggs
¼ cup green onion flakes (or finely chopped white onions)
½ tsp. garlic salt or powdered garlic if you like more garlic flavor, plus ½ tsp. salt

Make approx. 35 one-inch balls. Roll in flour and brown thoroughly in shortening or oil. Remove from pan and set aside.

Vegetables:

1 cup green and red chopped sweet peppers, 1 cup sliced celery

In same pan as meatballs were fried and without cleaning the pan, toss in the vegetables and stir fry for **5 minutes only**. You want the vegetables to be crisp. Toss the vegetables into the dish with the meatballs.

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Sauce:

In the same pan as the meatballs were fried and the vegetables were stir fried and without washing it out, **measure exactly using level measurements**. This is important!

6 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch
¼ tsp. powdered ginger (could use freshly grated ginger)
¼ cup vinegar (I use white vinegar but could use cider)
½ tsp. garlic salt
1 cup water
¼ tsp. dry mustard
6 tablespoons good ketchup
½ tsp. salt
2 tablespoons soy sauce
½ tsp. onion powder

Cook and stir together until clear and thick. Pour over meatballs and vegetables in pot. Stir carefully with spatula so as not to break up the meatballs. Then, stir in one whole 10 oz. can of pineapple chunks, juice and all. Heat thoroughly. Can be served with steamed rice or scalloped potatoes.

To this very day, we laugh about that when we're all enjoying our family get-togethers. No one knows where Flub is now but I do remember him fondly for his expertise in catching and skinning frog legs.

I had learned while reading cook books that the large heart of a cow would provide lots of good nutrients and they were cheap to buy and so I bought a heart, cleaned it as directed in the recipe, stuffed it with dressing such as one would stuff into a chicken, roasted it and served it to my family. It wasn't very good. No one liked it very much, and truthfully, neither did I. As frugal as I was I didn't feel good about just throwing it away and so I decided to recycle the heart. I ground the cooked heart up with the hand-cranked meat grinder, added some vegetables, and seasonings and baked it in a loaf pan just like your usual meat loaf. Eureka. The kids ate it up and just assumed it was regular meat loaf. To this very day I've never told them that our meatloaf was made of a cow's heart. They will know, of course, when they read this story. We'll surely laugh again.

My family will eat almost anything before them. That's a learned thing. I never made anyone eat anything they didn't like, but the rule was, "you don't have to eat it if you really don't like it but you **must** at least taste it." The other rule was that you have 20 minutes to eat your meal.

After that, if you don't eat, I just clean off the

table and everyone knows that there will be nothing until the next meal – ever! It's amazing how real hunger will change behavior. It does, of course, require great discipline on the part of a parent. Actually, I think it's more difficult for a parent than a child but it pays off in spades, and there are no wrangles at mealtime.

During a recent conversation with my family, my middle son confessed to me that when he was in morning kindergarten, he would run all the way home from school in anticipation of lunch. He told me that he always knew there would be something wonderful waiting.

I used to set the table for lunch with all kinds of things, like home-made novelties such as little word games, coloured serviettes, and anything I could dream up to make the meal fun. Mark especially loved the trays of little sandwiches, all different, and which the kids could choose, as well as home-made soup that I would decorate with their initials using a dollop of cream.

Another friend, Marie, was also a single mother and she too liked to cook. She had asked me to taste some sweet and sour meatballs that she had made from a recipe she found in a magazine.

KIT MCDERMOTT'S BEAN SALAD

1 can green beans
1 can wax (yellow) beans
1 can baby lima beans
1 can kidney beans
1 cup celery cut in 1" thin strips diagonally
1 green pepper cut into 1" thin strips
1 sweet red pepper cut into 1" thin strips
1 small jar pimentos (optional)
2 medium onions sliced into rings (sweet or yellow onions)
Salt and pepper to taste.

Drain and rinse all beans and place in large bowl together with all vegetables and pimentos, if using, and mix well.

For the dressing:

1 ½ cups white sugar, 1 cup white vinegar, ½ cup salad oil (I use Canola)

Combine and bring to a good boil. Pour over the beans and vegetables while hot, toss well, and refrigerate overnight. This dish is delicious and gets better the longer it sits. Should be made at least 24 hours before serving.

Although the dish wasn't really awful, it did lack something although I didn't really know what. I do remember that Marie and I must have gone through many pounds of ground beef trying to perfect that recipe – and after many adjustments we were successful.

Although there are oodles of recipes for Sweet and Sour Meatballs in a variety of cook books, ours wins hands down. I often toss and pitch when putting something together, but our recipe is one that you must measure exactly as noted in our instructions. Over many years, our Sweet and Sour Meatballs have fed the hordes. My youngest son has made the recipe over and over again for his annual backyard barbeque for his employees. It is never served without someone asking for the recipe. Marie and I are still friends and whenever we meet, we laugh about our experimental journey and the pounds of ground meat that we went through in order to perfect Sweet and Sour Meatballs.

Kit McDermott hosted a daily radio show on CKPC where she interviewed interesting people, shared recipes and generally talked about all things family. One day, while driving to work and listening to her radio show, she talked about a bean salad that she assured her listeners was a wonderful dish. I actually wrote out the recipe on the back of an envelope while still driving! That bean salad recipe is again one of our family signature dishes. It will certainly be included in the cook book I've been working on. It's a great pot luck dish and although bean salads are made with different recipes, Kit's recipe is the best one I've ever tasted.

I met Mrs. Brown one day while rooting through a dumpy old fabric store that was on Colborne St. east looking for inexpensive fabric to sew clothes for my family. For whatever reason, she decided that I was to be her new best friend.

She was Jewish and one of the kindest ladies I've had the good fortune to know. She always referred to my family as "the babies". She would come by from time to time, to ask about my 'babies' and bring along wonderful Jewish delicacies for us to enjoy. There were latkes, sweet treats and one day, a container of cole slaw. It was fantastic. I tried to figure out the recipe and method but it escaped me. I was having company and decided to ask her for the recipe.

She asked me "how many are coming?" I told her there would be twelve all together. She answered, "I'll bring it."

She showed up the next day with a large gallon glass jar full of cole slaw. She handed it to me and said, "I want the boddle back." The cole slaw was the first thing to disappear and the accolades were many. Not long after that occasion, I was at an auction sale and the lady sitting in front of me bid on a box full of books. When the auctioneer brought the box, I noticed that on top there was a small recipe book. I asked her if I could look at it and she actually gave it to me. Later, when I was at home, I was leafing through the book and I noticed a recipe for "Everlasting Cole Slaw". The ingredients and method seemed to me that it could be like the cole slaw from Mrs. Brown. I followed the directions and Eureka, it was indeed Mrs. Brown's cole slaw. Once again, and to this very day when we are gathering as a family, the kids always ask me to bring the cole slaw. It's now a family tradition. Mrs. Brown has long since passed away but her friendship enriched my life and that of my family. Each time I slice a cabbage for cole slaw I feel grateful for her friendship.

During the end of a marriage I needed to do something about regaining confidence in myself and so I decided to enroll in a Survival Training program. As it turned out, I was the oldest student in the group. Undaunted, I threw myself into the program. We spent several hours in

MRS. BROWN'S COLE SLAW

½ large cabbage, shredded (I shred my cabbage on a meat slicer so that it is fine and stringy, or on a mandolin)

1 medium onion, finely shredded (also slice white sweet onions very thinly on the meat slicer or mandolin)

1 green pepper, finely chopped (optional)

3 carrots, shredded (I shred the carrots on the shredding disc in the food processor or you can use a box grater)

½ cup sugar, ½ cup white vinegar, ½ cup salad oil (not olive oil)

1 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. dry mustard and 1 ½ tsp. celery seed (don't leave out the celery seed)

In a large bowl, combine cabbage, onion, carrots and green pepper, if using. In a saucepan mix the sugar, oil, salt, dry mustard and celery seed and heat to a full rolling boil. Pour over vegetables in the bowl at once and mix thoroughly. Store in a covered airtight container in the refrigerator for at least 12 hours before serving.

the classroom learning various survival skills, one of which was learning to forage for food in a survival situation. Homework included identifying and finding examples of what could be foraged in a forest and eaten for nourishment. It was a whole new learning experience. We learned about where to collect such things as the roots of bull rushes and various ways they could be eaten. Although I didn't actually dry any, I did learn that when dried and ground into powder, they made a reasonable 'bread' substitute when mixed with water and baked on a flat stone over an open fire. I learned to find water cress, May apples, and various forest greens that made a nourishing salad. I learned what plants could be made into a poultice for cuts and abrasions, how to make wild herb tea and lots of other neat stuff. I discovered wild garlic which can be eaten raw or cooked into a wonderful soup. I learned how to use a compass and how to tell time by putting a stick in the ground and telling the time from the shadow it cast. I learned how to set simple small animal traps.

After many hours in the classroom and foraging for samples, we were taken by van into a densely wooded area and dropped off with compass coordinates and turned loose to try and find our way to an open area where we would make camp, build a shelter, search for potable water, set traps, put together a signal for searchers and forage for food to feed ourselves. We actually survived two nights in the bush all on our own. I was the only person who caught anything in the trap I'd set. I caught a small rabbit, skinned it, and cooked it over an open fire. Now, I knew I could survive almost anything and I did indeed regain a large measure of self-confidence – and a whole lot about cooking in the wild. I still forage for food, particularly fiddlehead greens in the spring and wild garlic in the early summer. In fact, our entire family enjoys a get together once each year where everything on the menu is foraged and/or caught. It is always such fun and it's even more fun sharing our adventures in finding the food. Finding the fiddleheads is a secret though. We don't want anyone else to discover where we find enough to freeze for the entire season.

Now I'm in a new stage of life. The kids are all married and raising their own families and cooking up a storm and I'm once again a single person trying to feed myself in a healthy way and a whole new learning curve is the order of the day. I'm once again trying to put together meals for one, a daunting task particularly after having raised a very large family. My cooking pots were too big and so I've had to adjust to smaller portions without waste and once again the food journey continues. I've learned how to make trifle for one, cook one lamb cutlet, soup for one using my "Friday" leftovers, and my journey continues. I have collected over 100 cook books and I read them like most people read novels. I'm working on my own family cookbook for my kids, and including stories and pictures of our family gatherings around food.

There is a thread of 'family' running through this memoir and I guess that is the facet of cooking that has most enriched my life. Eating together, listening and talking, feeling secure, laughing, enjoying, and loving. It's all good.

About the Author



My name is Kay Ridout Boyd and I am the mother of four successful and wonderful children, one daughter and three sons. I am retired from being an Academic Chair for many years at Mohawk College in the Adult Continuing Education Faculty. I studied Chemistry at Ryerson and worked for several years for Fisher Scientific Company in Toronto. I have been very active in the Brantford community having served on many boards and committees over the years including The Chamber of Commerce, St. Joseph's Hospital and Glenhyrst Art Gallery of Brant and so many more that I can hardly remember them all. I enjoy doing needlework, quilting, reading, writing and traveling ... and lots of other neat stuff.



Before Her Time

By Lois Oliver

On July 24th, 1910 a very special woman came into this world. She was named Lillian Maude Carter, and I have had the privilege of calling her my mother.

She faced many challenges in her lifetime but she always handled them with grace and determination. Her life was dedicated to helping others. Lillian's parents, Emma and George Carter, emigrated from England to start a new life in Canada. They lived in a home on Silverthorn Avenue in the northern-west area of Toronto, where they raised a family of eight boys and two girls.

Their house was not large by today's standards, and was not equipped with indoor plumbing or bathroom facilities. As Lillian was the eldest daughter she had to leave school in grade six to help her mother with the household chores. Her duties were to do the laundry in a large copper tub on top of a wood burning stove, scrub the pine floors, and take care of her brothers and sister.

When her father served in the First World War there were four brothers, George, Jack, Fred, and Bill, in addition to Lillian and her sister Edna. After he returned from the war they had four more boys: Cliff, Gord, Les, and Albert.

Lillian was sent to work in her early teens. As she did not have the opportunity of a further education, she sewed jute bags for The Canada Bag Company. She walked several miles to work and back, binding her legs in the winter to keep warm. All her wages were handed over to her mother to help the family. In the year 1927 Lillian Carter and James Goldie met in Earls court Park in Toronto. Jim was a trainer for soccer teams and quite a good dancer. He was very dashing in those days, and before he met Lillian he and a friend were hired to dance with the ladies on the ferry that went from Toronto to Port Dalhousie. However, once he met Lillian he never looked at anyone else. He always said she was the most beautiful girl in Earls court Park.



Lillian in her younger days.

I am very fortunate to have the beautiful cedar chest that he gifted her with that year. The memorable thing about it is the inscription written in red pencil on the inside, saying "To Lil from Jim, 1927". They married in January 24th, 1930.

The Struggle

Lillian and Jim struggled through the Great Depression. During this time my sister Joyce was born. I was born three years later. They managed to keep the family stable with mother baking and selling pies and dad picking up odd jobs because he was out of work. He would even go to the local railway tracks to pick up coal to heat our home.

Several years later mom's parents bought a cottage on Glenrest Beach on Lake Simcoe. The four younger brothers were in their teens then, and my mother, my aunt, my sisters and I spent our summers there with them. Mom took care of all of us. My fondest memories were of Gord and Les sitting in the sun porch, one playing a banjo and the other playing a concertina, singing two popular songs at that time, Tangerine and Maria Elana.

Hard Work and Devotion

Mom was expected to be so much older than her years.

When she was three years old her mother was about to give birth to twins and she had to help. She told about the one twin being stillborn and the surviving one, only one and a half pounds, being put in a shoebox on the oven door. When her other little brother fell into the tub of water which was left at the back door, she was punished for allowing that to happen.

She talked about her mother working in a munitions factory at night while her father was overseas. Mom was seven years old and in charge. There were no telephones so the local policeman would stop in and check on them every night.

When she was 17 and working at the Bag factory, her boss came to tell her she was needed at home. She ran the several miles home to help with the birth of her youngest brother. He was her responsibility from then on. She took him everywhere she went, even when she was dating my father. Mom always marvelled at the activities and opportunities that children have today. She told me, "I didn't know what it was like to go out and play."

Her life was one of hard work, devotion to family, and a constant source of help to anyone who touched her life.

The War Years

The good times came to an end when the Second World War was declared. Five of the brothers, my Dad, and my aunt's husband joined the services. My grandfather was in the army reserve. Jack was in the army in Italy, Fred was on Pacific duty in the Royal Canadian Navy, Gord was a gunner in the R.A.F. In the Middle East, and Cliff and Les were in the R.C.A.F. at Manning Depot in Toronto. My aunt's husband was in the navy, stationed in Halifax, and my father was in the Army. Dad went overseas when he was 37 years old.

My father left for overseas when I was eight years old and my sister was twelve. We walked with our parents up a hill behind the cottage to the main road, my Dad in his summer khaki uniform.



Dad before going overseas.

An army truck came along. He hugged and kissed us goodbye and left in the truck. My mother was very stoic, and I never saw her cry. The only time I can recall was when Dad passed away at age 89.

Mom worked shift work at the Massey-Harris plant in Weston, Ontario, where they made wings for the military planes. She worked in what was called "The Dope Room" in which she covered the wings of the planes using a substance that glued the fabric to them. She had to drink a lot of milk and milkshakes to counteract the effect of the fumes and gained weight as a result. When she sent a picture to Dad, he jokingly wrote back saying that he was afraid to come home, which was so out of character for him as he adored her until his dying day. We called her "Rosie the Riveter" as she was the image of the famous wartime picture of women doing war work in her overalls and her hair tied up in a bandana. When she was on the morning shift I would sit up in bed before she left so that she could braid my hair, which was down to my waist. When she worked the night shift I would lay in her bed at the front of the house, listening for the click of her heels coming up the street.

My aunt moved in with us with her little boy while her husband was away in the navy. She stayed home with us while Mom was at work.

With so many friends and family members overseas during the war it was terrifying when a



telegram was delivered. Mom received one telling her that her brother Jack had been killed driving a tank which had gone over a land mine. The second one we received stated that Dad had been wounded. We did not know any details until we eventually received the information that he had been working on a tank when it fell on his foot. It was such a relief that it wasn't any worse. During the war my grandfather was driving an army reserve truck when he had a heart attack and passed away. My mother took care of her mother the rest of her life.

Left: My uncles and grandfather in uniform. Entitled "The Carters – Silverthorn's Fighting Family", this article was published in the Toronto Star (circa 1940). Mrs. Carter and a daughter are mentioned in the article as "engaged in Toronto war plants".

My father came home in 1946. We were all at Union Station in Toronto when the troops marched in. It was such an emotional time for all the families standing behind the ropes looking

for their loved ones. I vividly remember standing beside the ropes when I saw him. I was calling "Dad, Dad!" but his head was up and looking over the crowd, yelling "Where's my wife?"

When we arrived home there was a banner across the front of our house saying "Welcome Home Jim", and all the friends and neighbours were standing outside to welcome him home.

It was a big adjustment for the family. My sister was 12 when he left and was 15, dating her future husband, when he came home. I turned 12 a month later and was not a young child anymore. My Dad was a quiet, loving person, but he had changed, and we had to understand how difficult it was for him and my mother.

The brothers all returned home except Jack, who was buried in a cemetery in Holland. Once again, Mom was there to help them in every way.

Creating the Haven

When her young brother Les wanted to get married, Mom took over, making food and decorating our house for a wedding. He and his bride were married in a lovely ceremony with the reception in our living/dining room. When her brothers started having families of their own, it was not uncommon for Mom to receive a phone call in the middle of the night when one of their children or their wives were ill. We all lived in the same neighbourhood and she would rush out the door and run to their homes.

Our typical Sunday was dinner at 4:00 pm eating roast beef and Yorkshire pudding with my grandmother. Mom would be up early cooking and making pies, butter tarts, squares and cakes. Later the younger brothers would come and she would serve another meal. We sat around the kitchen table while the boys regaled us with their stories about their escapades when they were growing up. In one of the stories Mom was looking out the window of the cottage and saw Gord holding Les' head under the water out in the lake. Although she was not a swimmer, she raced across the beach into the lake and pulled Gord by his ear. He ran away into the woods and did not come back until late that night, bursting in the back door and screaming, "A bear is chasing me!"



Raising daughters.

Another favourite story was when Bill was pushed off the roof of the house in a cardboard box. Bill always seemed to be the recipient of their pranks; on one occasion, one of them shot an

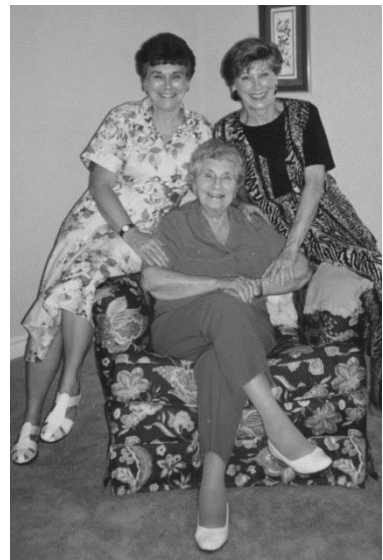
arrow into the end of his nose. The arrow came from a cross-bow that my grandfather brought home from World War I. It hung on the wall in the sun porch and it was not to be touched.

Thanks to Mom, our house was always a haven for people in need.

When her eldest brother George died from injuries in an automobile accident, his wife moved away with their eldest daughter, leaving their youngest daughter in an orphanage. Mom went to the orphanage and brought her home to be raised as our sister. Not only did she raise her niece, but her brother Jack was living with us at the time, as he was separated from his wife and hadn't yet joined the army. One of Mom's cousins from England lived with us until he found a place of his own. Once she met a young couple on the bus she took to work. They were newly arrived from Ireland and did not know anyone in Canada so Mom helped them set up an apartment and donated some household items. They spent a lot of time with our family. Mom was the person they turned to when they needed help.

Mom took care of her mother after her father passed away. When Mom and Dad moved to Etobicoke they always brought her mother over for Sunday dinner until they moved back into an apartment in Weston due to Dad's health problems. My grandmother came to live with them for several years until my mother had heart failure at age 69. She had to be resuscitated, but with her strong will and determination, she came back to us. As she came back to life her first words were, "The light was so glorious."

I had never heard my mother use that word before. It took several months for her to recuperate in a rehabilitation home, but when she got her health back she carried on with her life and taking care of others.



Mom, myself, my sister.

Christmas dinner was always at our house with our own family, Mom's brothers, and anyone else that wanted to come. In those days it wasn't like it is today when everyone contributes to the meal. When I was younger I just took it for granted that Christmas Day would arrive with the house decorated and Christmas pudding, mincemeat pies, cherry cake, shortbread, and every kind of squares and cookies made. The families would arrive and Mom would wait on everyone. I did not realize until I had a house and a family of my own how much my mother did even when she was still working five days a week.

My sister and I often talk about how fortunate we were growing up, thanks to both our parents.

We both can remember Mom saying “I will make sure my daughters will have an easier life than I had.”

She kept her vow. She was always there for us, helping in every way she could.

Many Talents

Mom seemed to be able to do anything she set her mind to, including household repairs. She was proficient at wallpapering due to her experience covering the wings of the planes during the war. Our house was always beautifully decorated and the decor changed quite frequently. When I had my first house she wallpapered my entrance vestibule. I can still picture her



standing on a temporary scaffold that she rigged up over the staircase, wallpapering to the ceiling. She also made my curtains and bedspreads. She made our clothes when we were growing up, smocked nightgowns and dresses, coats and hats. She did the same for the grandchildren, along with clothes for their Barbie Dolls.

Her knitting and crocheting were exceptional. When my sister and I were in our twenties and thirties we were fortunate to have beautiful crocheted and knit dresses, long formal gowns and sweaters which Mom designed and created.

On one occasion I was privileged to attend a conference with my husband in London, England in the company of some very elite people. For the formal evening I wore an outfit that Mom made: a cream-coloured long straight skirt trimmed in gold. The jacket to match was Chanel style to match the skirt in a lacey pattern trimmed in gold thread. She sewed a satin camisole to wear under the jacket. A very elegant woman, who I understood was a judge in England, approached me. She said, "My dear, may I ask the name of your couturier?" I replied that it was made by my mother in Canada. She then asked if my mother would design for her.

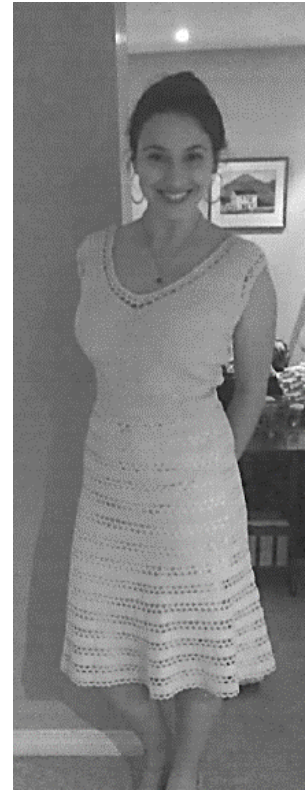
Left: My “couture” dress and jacket.

Another time I was shopping in a little boutique in Yorkville in Toronto, wearing a knit day dress. The owner of the boutique asked me where I bought my dress. Once again, I replied that my mother made it. She asked if Mom would work for her. I said "My mother just does it for the family, with her love put in every stitch."

When she made a gown for me she would make a similar one for my sister in a different colour as we did not travel in the same social circles. She also knit countless curling sweaters for me. My curling friends always commented on these beautiful sweaters. I still have the gowns, dresses and sweaters in my cedar chest. In fact, one of my granddaughters tried them on recently and they fit her perfectly.

We had many Halloween parties and Mom would make all our costumes. After I was married she would also create costumes for my husband. One year he was Matt Dillon from the TV show *Gunsmoke* and I was Kitty, the saloon girl. Mom created a dress for me from a strapless black sequined dress that she wore on their 25th anniversary. For my costume she added a bustle and a full net skirt on the bottom.

Another time my husband was the king and I was the court jester in costumes that Mom made, complete with the turned up little boots and bells on the hat. Then we were Anthony and Cleopatra, again made by Mom. The best was when she made him a dress in a large green and white check pattern with a white frilled collar and sash. He wore a long red wig and carried a huge lollipop. He was Little Orphan Annie, though he was not-so-little at six feet and 220 lbs.



The knit day dress.

Twilight

Mom was 85 years old when my father passed away. She lived alone for a while but health problems had her move into a retirement residence in Oakville. She kept busy knitting baby clothes to donate to the hospital and beautiful afghans. In her last years she made an afghan blanket for each of her six grandchildren and her eleven great grandchildren before passing away at age 94.

I was always so proud of my mother in so many ways. She was not only talented, compassionate and caring, she was always very fashionable. A good friend of mine told me "I always remember your mother coming into your house looking so glamorous, dressed in the latest style and wearing her favorite scent, *Estée Lauder's Youth Dew*."

She had a credit card for her favorite women's store in the Junction in Toronto, called *White's*. She would take a bus there on a Saturday and come back with her purchases. Even when she was in the retirement and nursing homes she was very particular about her clothes. She discovered a consignment shop in Oakville that she could walk to with her walker. The ladies there always welcomed her when she went in. My sister looked after her finances and arranged a Visa card for her for incidentals. Joyce would get these statements in from Visa, but mom would never let Joyce know about the clothes she bought. The caregivers that helped her dress said she was very definite about what she wanted to wear and would change if they put something on her that she didn't like.

Mom could be calm and unruffled in any situation. She handled adversity with intelligence and grace. She was a lady that approached life with her inner strength and skills. She had a way about her that attracted people. I happened to meet her previous neighbour years after mom and dad moved to their apartment, and she told me that her husband thought that Mom was the most beautiful woman he knew. He was a young man in his middle thirties back then, and my mother was in her late fifties.

Proud Daughter

Mom was very straightforward in her approach to life, probably because she was used to being in charge and "getting things done". That was part of her personality. Her life was dedicated to her loved ones. When I married and stayed home with my children she would call me from work every day at 12:00 noon just to make sure everything was all right in my life. She did not express sentiments vocally, but she would send me and my sister special daughter cards for every occasion up until she passed away. The beautiful messages that she would write in her cards were so heartwarming that I kept many of them.

My mother is the person that I have admired in my life, for who she was and for what she accomplished in her lifetime despite her early hardships. Our family always talked about what she would have achieved if she had been born a generation later. In the eulogy given by her grandchildren, they proclaimed that she was "before her time." If she'd had the privilege of an education, we are sure she would have been a designer, an executive, or perhaps a nurse or doctor. The list is endless.

My father's last words were, "The most beautiful girl in Earls court Park."

In my eyes, she was not only beautiful on the outside but also on the inside.



My father and the most beautiful girl in Earls Court Park.

About the author

I grew up in Toronto and moved to Brantford in 1970. I have one daughter in Calgary, my son in Brantford, and my youngest daughter in Paris, Ontario. I have seven grandchildren in their late teens and twenties. I have fulfilled my dream writing this memoir about my mother.

Addendum: Family Recipes

$\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour $\frac{1}{4}$ lb suet
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb raisins
 1 lb currants
 $\frac{1}{2}$ package of sticky raisins
 $\frac{1}{4}$ lb mixed peel or fruit
 $\frac{1}{4}$ lb almonds
 1 cup bread crumbs
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb brown sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teas salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teas nutmeg $\frac{1}{2}$ teas cinnamon
 3 or 4 eggs
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup molasses

Left: My grandmother would wrap up dimes and put them in the batter for her Christmas pudding, then wrap the pudding in a bowl and steam it. There was always a contest of who got the most dimes.

Mom's Empire Cookies
 1 cup butter
 2 cups flour (cake pastry)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar
 1 egg yolk
 1 tsp vanilla
 1 tsp baking soda

Cream butter. Add sugar.
 Add egg + vanilla. Add
 flour sifted with soda.

Chill.

Sprinkle flour on board
 Roll out. Cut in small
 circles. Bake 325° 11-12 min.

Let cool. Ice one cookie
 Top it with second cookies
 Ice the top & put a piece
 of maraschino cherry on top.
 Low Oliver - Christmas Cookies

Right: My grandmother passed the recipe for Empire cookies down to my mother, then to my sister and me. They were the most popular ones at Christmas, and still are with my grandchildren.



Camp Counselling By The Back Door

By Nancy Poole

"Please, Daddy."

"We'll see," he said.

I heard: *There is hope.*

My older sister said, "Don't be silly. When Dad says, 'We'll see,' he really means 'no,'" but I was not to be dissuaded.

The people from the Gideon's Society had said that if I earned enough points by learning Bible verses, the cost for their residential camp could be offset. Despite my explaining that to Daddy, his answer was the same, "We'll see."

The people from the Gideon's Society came to our school every few weeks and told Bible stories using a felt board and felt figures. They sent home a brochure about the camp to show my parents. From the brochure, the residential camp looked just yummy. It showed a lake and children swimming, boating and having a great time. Who could not want to go there?

After all, these were the Gideon people. Why would they lie? They were the ones who wrote the Bible, right?

I was seven at the time. Turning eight seemed like forever to me. I didn't realize I'd only have one kick at the can. Once I made it to the higher grades (three and higher), the Gideon's didn't visit those grades.

There was money to send my sister to Girl Guides plus a uniform. I just wanted to go to camp.

Mommy remembered my burning desire to be a camper at a residential camp. She showed me a clipping from the paper offering training to be a camp counsellor at the YWCA. Only two of us showed for the meeting.

Kathy was a girl from my high school, but we had not known each other as she and I were in different programs. We soon became very good friends.

The YWCA spent a pretty penny sending us (me, at least) to this training session and that.

One experience that stuck out in my mind was at a camp-counsellor-wannabe retreat on an island. It was there that I learned those crazy camp songs. We had a talent contest. I can't remember my talent if I even had one. I do remember that the weather was less than ideal, but we didn't care.

Another time, we congregated in Kitchener at the YWCA there for another intensive training.

In return, Kathy and I were asked to help set up a program for underprivileged children from an inner-city school.

At first we had someone who drove us to and from the local YWCA. She soon realized that we didn't need her supervision so much; Kathy and I had things under control. I went to the library and got books on crafts and records with popular dances such as the Mexican Hat Dance.

I soon realized that the children had pent-up energy because recess at their school was prohibited. I guessed the teachers felt threatened by the little hellions and thought they might hurt each other.

So, right off the bat, we had the children run and jump and play Red Rover.

After that was snack time. Only then could the children concentrate enough to make crafts.

It made my heart go out to this one little fellow who asked if he could leave his craft at the Y "Because my brothers will just wreck it." There was a special place in my heart for Joey.

Kathy and I took turns working on the desk at the YWCA and on March breaks we ran their day camps. We helped the swim instructors after school and on Saturdays.



Nancy, age 15, and two youth counsellors at YWCA.

It tickled me that some parents did not know their own children. As I was signing up children for day camp one of the mothers explained that “Johnny and Davey need to be in the same group because they are so shy.” That first day of camp, the two little angels had to be separated because the two of them together was so disruptive.

Another child who was getting swimming lessons thought nothing of jumping into the deep end and had to be rescued

before he drowned. When Bradley’s mother came to pick him up, he proudly announced, “Look what I learned today” and proceeded to blow bubbles. Perhaps he should have told his mother that he learned not to jump into the deep end of the pool when he didn’t know how to swim.

That summer and the next, I was lucky enough to be hired by the city’s day camp held in one of the best parks in the city. That first summer was great, but the second was outstanding. One of my very best friends in the world, Allana, offered to help me just for the experience.

I was given a group of young girls, but my little friend from the Y underprivileged group was being hauled up to the office for picking fights. I explained to the camp’s director that Joey and I had a history and that I would take him under my wing for the duration. She agreed to give Joey one last shot.

That first day, Joey didn’t have any lunch, so I gave him part of mine. The next day, the rest of my group showed up with extra for Joey. That made everyone feel good and there were no further problems with Joey.

Day camp only ran for a month, but I had a job at Camp Tinawatawa, a wonderful residential camp complete with a lake, canoeing and swimming. My first group of campers were thirteen. At thirteen, there was a wide range of maturity. I had one camper, a real tomboy who was game for anything. The rest were bored and wanted to stay in the cabin reading teen magazines.

We just had the weekend off before starting a new session. A friend I had just met at the camp invited me to stay with her and her parents in Elora. They were so kind to take me in as it was just too short of a time to head home and back.

That second week was more to my liking. I had a group of eight-year-olds.

One of my campers came to me and discreetly told me she thought one of the children had wet her sleeping bag. I took that camper to one side and suggested we air out our sleeping bags. The rest of my campers took my cue and hung theirs up, too. I asked her if she wanted me to wake her up when I was ready to turn in. The others went along, too.

It made my heart ache when little Suzie said her mother made a spectacle of her for wetting her bed and hung the wet sheets out the window for the neighbours to see. Some people shouldn't be allowed to have children.

I have very fond memories of Camp Tinawatawa. I saw the Northern Lights for the first time, and I fell in love with the only male in camp, the lifeguard.



Nancy and friends at Camp Tinawatawa

I had a few days to myself before I had an orientation week at Pierce Williams residential Camp. Not enough sleep and I had myself a good case of laryngitis.

That was the best and worst as far as summers went.

My father died, and I was only seventeen. I don't know if I was as upset that he died or that it would mean a whole disruption of life as I knew it.

My mother and I went from living in a seven-bedroom farmhouse to an apartment. In those days, apartments didn't allow pets, so my best buddy King was given away to a good home at a petting zoo.

I did go visit him, but he was happy and acted as if I was no one special, so I never went back.

The next summer, Mum wanted to head to the states to visit her sisters and an aunt of my mother, and she asked if I wanted to go. Of course I did.

Mum was ever so kind and always had my best interests at heart.

We first flew into Los Angeles then joined a bus tour up Route #1. We made several stops along the way. We saw monasteries, visited wineries and stayed at motels with pools. Mum would read while I swam.

The highlight of the trip was the Hearst Castle with its indoor and outdoor pools. The pool scene from the movie *Cocoon* was filmed using the indoor pool.

Mum met up with her aunt, a delightful little lady of eighty-two with a renewed lease on life thanks to her relatively new pacemaker.

Next, it was off to visit Mum's sister in Denver. My younger cousin kept me entertained and out of Mum's hair for a while. She and her friends took me swimming, and she introduced me to Michael Jackson and Dr. Pepper.

I was also re-introduced to my uncle who had been blinded in the war. He functioned just like normal people except that he was blind.

One day, on our way back from the pool, one of my cousin's friends saw Uncle sitting in the trunk of the car.

"What's he doing in the trunk?"

"He's fixing the taillight."

"How does he know if they are working?"

My cousin must have been used to stupid questions because she said, "He calls my mom, and she lets him know."

"What time is it?"

"Dad, what time is it?" When Unc said the time, the friend asked, "How does he know?"

"He wears a braille watch."

Next, we went to Connecticut to visit another of Mum's sisters. I was kept busy following my uncle around while he collected things from his garden, meeting my cousin's six children and having a corn roast and meeting my cousin's wife.

Last, but not least, we stopped in Virginia to visit the last sister. I was directed to the local pool, and my uncle took me to his English riding class. I got to ride my cousin's horse while Unc rode his own horse.

Somewhere in all of that, I worked for a week at Pierce Williams. What a breath of fresh air. These children only had a pool, no lake and no canoeing, but there weren't enough hours of the day for them. We slept in the woods. We cooked with a pit and lots of tin foil. It was delicious because each child made his or her meal followed by S'mores.

When we got back from travelling, there wasn't enough time to apply to day camp, so I took the next best thing, a Shivaree Hostess. Every year at the same time, the main street was blocked off and a big block party ensued.

The Hostesses manned a booth to give out directions, pamphlets and answer questions.

One day, I arrived at work to find upset Hostesses and an even more upset child. The Hostesses wanted to vent and the child wanted to be heard.

When the Hostesses from the day shift had left, I took the youngster aside.

“What’s this all about? This isn’t like you.” I gave her a big hug and she nodded.

“I know. I’m just having a bad day.”

“Are we all okay, then?” She nodded and wiped her tears with the Kleenex I just happened to have handy.

There are times when you really want to strangle someone that a hug works a lot better.

Being a camp counsellor is not rocket science, but it is good training for parenting. It is really all about keeping one’s priorities straight and doing one’s best. Then, the rest falls into place.

The name for this memoir was titled, “Camp Counselling by the Back Door” because had I gotten into residential camping as a camper and graduated to being a Camp Counsellor, I would have gone in through the front door being welcomed by counsellors as I greeted the new campers.

I never had that privilege, but having been a Camp Counsellor, I do not miss what I never had. I have no regrets.

About the Author



Nancy Poole has had a long and interesting career as a University-educated Registered Nurse. She has many fascinating stories about her childhood and her experiences as a nurse.

Nancy has always loved to write letters to her families and friends who begged for more. She started writing non-fiction in the 1990's and was amazed at how easy it was for her. She often felt the ideas were God-given and she only put the ideas on paper.

*Nancy has published three self-help books: **Ignite the Do Within You**, a general self-help book; **The Bitter Journey of Alzheimer's: One Wife's Daily Log**, a helpful guide to dealing with those with the terrible disease of Alzheimer's; and **Forgive Me, Forgive Me Not**, a useful tool employing simple, concrete steps toward forgiveness.*

Nancy lives in Brantford, Ontario with her co-authors, Rocky, the smartest of all Border Collies and her psychic tortoiseshell cat, Lacey.



My Summer Holiday

By Paul Benoit

On July 25th, 2016 I went to the YMCA Geneva Park in Orillia, Ontario for five days.

I travelled there by taxi and it took about five hours to get there. The driver, Wayne, was very nice and he bought me a coffee on the way there and the way back.



Rooms in the main building. The dining hall is on the left.

I decided in April to go to Geneva Park because I heard from others that had already been that it was a nice place to go. I was looking to go on a vacation that I had never been on before.

The park is on Lake Couchiching and the property is very scenic.

We all stayed in the main lodge. I shared a room with a guy that loved Christmas and Santa Claus.

The food was very delicious and I never went hungry because there was always so much to eat at every meal. But if I did get hungry, there was a great Tuck Shop full of delicious treats.

There was a common room so that we could play games and socialize.

I was able to choose the activities I wanted to do each day. I chose to go swimming, canoeing, sailing, take part in a scavenger hunt, and go on nature walks.

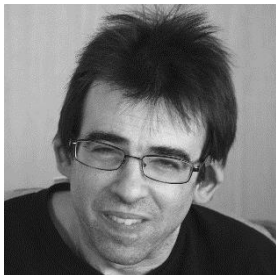


At the Swim Dock on Lake Couchiching.

I slept like a baby because of all the activity and the northern air in my comfortable bed.

I made lots of friends and I liked it so much, I am thinking of going back this year.

About the Author



My name is Paul Benoit and I have lived in Brantford, Ontario for about ten years now. I enjoy playing video games, drawing, and going to the movies. I was born and raised in Quebec.



Oh! Canada Glorious and Free

By Ron Sutherland

The first Canadians I met were soldiers, driving around southern England early in the Second World War. They were in large army trucks, sometimes long convoys of them, or they were at the side of the road eating “rations”. They were “on manoeuvres,” they said.

Then one day they were all gone! They were part of the large Allied army freeing Europe of the Nazis. Canadians were also overhead in aeroplanes, helping ensure England and the “free world” stayed free.

Some two decades later I was on the *Oronsay* as she steamed into the Canadian port of Vancouver. What a beautiful sight: large white-capped mountain ranges draped in dark green trees, marching down to the sea from all directions and dipping their toes into the blue ocean. Here the large city of Vancouver appeared from behind one of those toes, along with skyscrapers, the Lion’s Gate Bridge, and a busy port, but they all looked small in comparison to the mountains.

This is Canada, I thought. This is where the Canadians came from. This is the Land of Promise for so many people.

Chinese men left their families for years to help build the transcontinental railway, I knew, working in restaurants or laundries to support their families and sometimes bring them over. Filipino women came to do the same, doing house work and looking after wealthy families. Mexican labourers came to pick fruit and harvest vegetables and other menial labours that locals found too menial to perform, and yes, send money home to their families.

Let me see as much as I can see, and learn about this beautiful country.

Half a century later I am still in Canada. Those Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen did help keep us Free! Yes, this is a “glorious” country and so beautiful from coast to coast to coast. Let me tell you about some of the beautiful places I have come to see and love from coast to coast to coast.

That first summer I had agreed to meet my mother and sister in Toronto, so there was a wonderful four day trip by train through the very heart of Canada to her largest city. The train ride was spectacular, up the Fraser River and through the Rockies, to the prairies – so flat but covered in large farms growing wheat or pasture with beef cattle. Every small station and farm had grain elevators. Eventually the prairies ended and the odd tree gave way to forests of evergreen trees. We stopped briefly in Winnipeg.

As we entered northwestern Ontario we came to a land of rocks, evergreens, and the occasional river or lake that sparkled at us as we passed. The small railway stations seemed so isolated as the train roared by. A day later the evergreens gave way to deciduous forests of oak and maple and the farms now showed crops of corn and soybeans and herds of dairy cattle.

Towns became bigger and eventually we came to Toronto and the impressive Union Station where I met my mother and sister. What a joyous occasion that was! I had last seen them in England on a cold, wet November in Portsmouth four years earlier, and now it was mid-summer in a hot and steamy Toronto, Canada.

That summer Mother helped me make some important decisions: first, I would stay in this beautiful country with its friendly people. Second, I wanted to continue my academic studies and aimed for a science degree.

We looked into programs at the University of Toronto and the impressive Wycliffe College but there was nothing to my liking. Eventually we made our way to the Agricultural College in Guelph with its beautiful tree-lined campus and I thought it was just the place I wanted to study agriculture.

We made time for sight-seeing in Toronto, too, along with a visit to Seattle to see the 1962 World Fair. Finally, however, Mum and my sister left Toronto on a boat going through the ever-widening vistas of the St. Lawrence River for England and home.

This left me on this wonderful campus with its large limestone administrative building where I was to room with a soccer player. The “Softs” lined us “Aggie Frosh” us there, 200 or 300 fellows and only five girls – including a redhead who caught my eye. We were trotted around campus to see Creelman Hall where we were to eat and a small farmhouse where the Aggie girls had their dormitories. Then on to the old red brick Library, where students had dug out the basement and built a cafeteria. Down the road was the Physics building and across Edenborough Road was the Veterinary College. The pungent smell of the Billy goats was the first thing we noticed, and we were glad to leave. Then back to the brand new Biology and Botany building, followed by an older, ivy-covered Horticulture Building complex. North of these disciplines were Dairy Barns, a Physical Education complex, old wooden houses full of sheep, several fields of grain, and a large and beautiful Arboretum.

Eventually I got to downtown Guelph to see its impressive cathedral overlooking the downtown square, along with old limestone buildings and many beautiful churches. On the way down the hill to town the road crosses a stone bridge and the pretty tree-lined Speed River. Not far from the river is a small limestone cottage which was the home of Col. John McCrae, the World War One medic who wrote *In Flanders Fields*. This country gave so much to the free world in those wars, and in so many others.

Back on the top of the hill (or Drumlin) on campus I used to attend the Sunday services held in the War Memorial Hall erected to remember the students who fought in the first world war. There in the ceiling of the large hall were the fixtures that, I was told, held up a model of the aeroplanes flown by officers who trained there during the Second World War. Another reminder of how much our freedom has cost ... it reminded me of the day many years earlier when my whole family had stood outside our farmhouse in the south of England one early summer evening to watch a sky full of large bombers pulling gliders full of paratroopers. This, I thought, is where some of those air crew received their training!

One day, as I sat down to listen to a Chemistry professor tell us about the wonders of Organic chemistry, the redhead I had seen in the frosh line up came and sat beside me. Afterward we went together to the cafeteria for a bite to eat.

One clear evening soon after that we went for a walk through the golf course which followed the Speed River east of Guelph. The sunset was spectacular and then the stars came out: Orion in all his glory and the moon in all its splendour in the night sky. Then we started studying for exams together in the Library. This was a new experience for me, someone who was interested in sharing their ups and downs of student life with me. Ruby is the name I will give her for now. She was a Canadian and this was her “home and native land”, but that is another story. I want to tell you about this glorious and free land as I (and we) found it.

While we were studying at O.A.C, we started exploring the Grand River Watershed. Further up the Speed River we found the Guelph Lake Conservation area. There was a large blue lake there, surrounded by low, green grass-covered hills with the occasional tree. Down the Speed

River, it empties into the Grand River. So another day we took a picnic to the Elora Gorge, where a tributary passes through a limestone gorge and joins the Grand. It is a pretty conservation area with lots of trees, grassy banks and limestone cliffs. Further up the road is Edon Mills, with its restaurant in the old mill overlooking the dam. What a nice picture view that was! Many years later we moved to Brantford and its beautiful winding River Grand. Boats used to come up the river from Lake Erie and we learned that that was how Europeans first settled the area, but again that is another story.

Like most students on the Guelph Campus, I needed cash. I found out that I could join the Canadian Army (even though I was not a Canadian) and be paid to attend a one hour lecture about the Army and their exploits in Europe and other things, like the Battle for Vimy Ridge and how Canada became a nation. Then I discovered they would pay for my transportation from the college to home or where they wanted to employ me for each summer. To do this I had to choose an Army Corps to which I wished to belong. Being somewhat mechanically minded, I chose the Engineers Corps and their home base was in Chilliwack British Columbia. That is how I spent three summers, the first two as an officer cadet at the base in Chilliwack and further up country, north of Williams Lake for basic training. The third summer I was assigned as a young officer to the base in Port Churchill, Manitoba on Hudson Bay, near the geographic centre of Canada.

The first summer I found a friend who was driving his girlfriend home to Prince Edward Island. He wanted me to help him do some of the driving and, since that was as close as I intended to get to my own home in England, the Army was prepared to pay for the trip. The drive east to the Island was most memorable. We stopped to see the acres of tulip bulbs the Dutch had sent to Ottawa to show how much they appreciated the part the Canadian Army had played in liberating their country. We followed the Ottawa River to Montreal. Then the highway wandered down the South bank of the Saint Lawrence River through beautiful countryside of Quebec and New Brunswick, where we took the ferry to the Island. I had seen the white cliffs of Dover in England, but I was not prepared for the red cliffs of Prince Edward Island, capped with green fields of grain and young potato plants. That evening we drove Marg to her parents' small farm, where they met us with a wonderful dinner of steak and newly dug new potatoes. Dessert was apple pie and ice cream made using snow from the bush. We fell into bed into bed happy but exhausted, and had a very good night's sleep.

The next day I caught the train to Moncton to see the reversing falls. As the tide goes out downriver it goes over a barrier producing a water fall, and when the tide comes back in it falls over another low cliff producing another set of falls. This happens twice a day.

Eventually it was time for me to catch my train first for Montreal, with its huge Railway station, much the same as Union station in Toronto. Then on to the train for Vancouver, but this time the train followed the Ottawa River to Northern Ontario before connecting with the Toronto line. Then went onto Winnipeg, the prairies and the Rockies. I got off in the beautiful Fraser Valley at the town of Chilliwack. A Sapper in an Army truck picked me up and we drove through

the lush green country side – such a nice change after the near desert conditions in the rain shadow east of the Rockies! The Engineers’ base is situated in the small community of Vedder Crossing, where the tree covered coastal mountains come down to the southern edge of the Fraser River Valley plains on the Vedder River.

My third and final summer with the army started when I boarded the transcontinental train yet again, this time at the Union Station in Toronto. I had a first class berth bound for Winnipeg and Churchill. The army would have given me a second class air ticket but I wanted to see the country so I took the train instead.

In Winnipeg I transferred to the slower train for The Pas and Churchill. First the railway goes west of several lakes including Lake Winnipeg and Winnipegosis, some of the biggest fresh water fisheries in the world. European settlers came to these waters via the United States early in the twentieth century. The train made a stop at The Pas, which has a rich history of miners and trappers, before continuing through the dark Boreal forest to Churchill. There the forest ends and the tundra starts. The train had to slow down to avoid hitting the migrating caribou.

The port town of Churchill is located at the mouth of the Churchill River on the West coast of Hudson Bay. In the army camp I was shown my room and had a most interesting summer. I was now a Second Lieutenant and spent most of my time surveying a nearby lake which they proposed to use for water for the camp.

“Blue Ox” and Forest River Trailer “Surveyor”

Ruby and I went camping on our honeymoon, taking her dad’s station wagon and a tent. Later on we would buy a small Boler trailer to go camping in Haliburton, but at this point were planning to cross the country to see our son and his family in Victoria, BC. We were in need of a new vehicle too, so we decided to get a truck and a travel trailer.

We found an advertisement in the paper for a 23 foot “Forest River” travel trailer, slightly used and a year old. We visited Ruby’s brother and his wife because they lived close to where the trailer was for sale in Ottawa. When we got there we found the trailer in a large building surrounded by this company who were selling hot tubs and using the trailer as a changing room for the people testing out the hot tubs.

It was in very good shape and we thought that it was just what we needed. So we put a down payment on it, went back to the cottage where we found a year-old blue Ram truck with a good engine, and had a suitable hitch installed. Several days later we were back in Ottawa with



Camping in style.

our new truck to pick up our new Surveyor travel trailer and head to the cottage.

The next job was to get it ready for camping. Ruby said, “Let’s use the things we have use before when we camped and put them in the trailer – the plates, cutlery, towels and bedding. Then we can go shopping for the things we still need.” That is what we did.



Sunset over Rock Lake.

We made the bed and bought our supplies and headed for Algonquin Park.

The trip to the park was uneventful and we found a nice campsite close to a large lake, with the trails not far away. We had a very pleasant week or so, walking the trails, and even got to the lookout! On the opposite bank of the large Rock Lake were dark, almost black pine forests. They started and stretched to the far horizon from far left to the far right and even more if you walked further along the Cliff.

At the East end of Algonquin Park the Highway 60 Corridor runs through deciduous forest of maple, oak and beech. So another day we took our red canoe onto Canoe Lake. It’s a big blue lake surrounded by deciduous forest where you may see the occasional deer or even a beaver. Up a trail we found a beautiful view standing on a high limestone cliff overlooking the winding Madawaska River.

Eventually we made our way west, taking almost a week to get out of Ontario and another two weeks to reach Victoria. At Ucluelet we saw the Pacific Ocean and all the wonderful little creatures in the tidal pools, and heard the fishing fleet launching early in the morning, quite close to the campground. We visited the Qu’Appelle Valley on the way there and on the way back we stopped in Drumheller for the Dinosaur exhibits.

We explored Canada this way. The next year we would drive to Halifax and around the Cabot trail, to see the Atlantic Ocean stretching off into the distance. We camped in Baddeck, close to Alexander Graham Bell’s summer home.

Canada is indeed a wonderful country and I am so glad it is My Home.

About the Author



I grew up in the south of England during the Second World War.

After the war I was fortunate enough to see several European countries, and travel to several other places before arriving in Canada in the summer of 1959. Here I met a wonderful lady who became my wife, and we have enjoyed life together ever since. We have lived in several places in Ontario and took our travel trailer from coast to coast of Canada. In 2009 we moved to Brantford to be close to our daughter and her family. We enjoy living in suburbia where we can do our many hobbies which include reading, writing and gardening.



That Darndurn Castle

By Sharon Barnes

Run-a-muck-dump-truck honesty. I invented the phrase to describe a superb quality of my grandson, Pearson, when he was five. He was considered by most people to be a very striking little fellow. He was slender, with fair skin and hair and translucent blue eyes. He was almost angelic looking and very well mannered, most of the time. He was not a mischievous "Little Rascal" type. Pearson was more of a calculating 007 in the making.

In the summer of 2008 I took five year old Pearson and my ten year old grandson, Colin, to visit the majestic Dundurn Castle in Hamilton, Ontario. I thought a visit to an actual castle would be the most exquisite adventure for any little boy.



Pearson, age 5.

Our tour group consisted of the three of us and a mom with her young daughter and son, about Pearson's age. It soon became apparent that the other little boy, Jamie, was given strict instructions not to go beyond or even touch the gold barrier ropes that protected the antique furniture.

Jamie, incidentally, *was* a "Little Rascal" type, and the ropes quickly became a naughty challenge.



Dundurn Castle. Photo courtesy of Wikipedia.

The tour began in the castle foyer where I immediately noticed Pearson's eyes searching frantically. I could almost read his mind, and he was asking *where is the fun and when is it going to start?*

To make matters worse our guide was a tall stately man with polished elocution that evoked a serious respect for the grandeur of Dundurn. He blinked with slow precision; his gait rocked with a stiff heel toe, heel-toe. I pictured him more suited to a

group of sedate seniors able to last the whole hour in reverent silence.

Right about then I was feeling that kind of guilt one feels when you've dragged a person somewhere they really didn't want to go.

Pearson quickly summed up Dundurn by this institutional, straight laced, ho-hum escort. As we entered the large luxuriously furnished Red Room I was hopeful that its stunning colours would elicit an optimistic reaction, but Pearson was oblivious to its charm. Without delay he bent his head far back on his shoulders, and looking up into the face of the guide, he boldly and earnestly asked: "Is it over now?"

Jamie was pointing a tiny finger at the large gold cord hanging between two poles and shook his curly head from side to side. Sounding like a wound-up robot, he announced, "I cannot touch the rope."

Pearson scarcely glanced at the grand dining table elegantly laid out with glistening antique China. Instead, he rolled his eyes and swiped away the musky smell tickling his nose. His thoughts read like a neon sign across his face: *There is nothing fun here*. He patiently waited for the guide to pause then curtly repeated his question. "Are we done?" The guide shot him an evil look.

Again, Jamie chanted his mother's caution. His eyes stretched wide – he directed a serious stare in Pearson's direction signaling a comical warning that the rope rule did not apply to him alone.

While we stood in Sir Allan MacNab's office, alive with his presence, my reluctant tourist stared into space. He blinked hard to stay awake before slipping into a weary coma. Assuming the guide was the sole authority to grant him leave from the castle, Pearson stuck to him like glue, and while breathing a tired breath, he asked again and more loudly: "Is it ova *now*?"

He received a stern, "Not yet!" The guide instantly turned away to happily answer Colin's questions.

The twinkle in Jamie's eyes and his muffled giggles gave away his happy-go-lucky character. "I cannot go other side of the rope," he exclaimed again, but this time with a curious tone of satisfaction. He then smacked the rope leaving it swinging behind him.

I thought for sure the nursery and wooden toys would spark some curiosity in Pearson, but nothing would alleviate his boredom for this musky, antiquated, dull and dreary second fiddle fun. But he gave the guide a reprieve from his interrogation. Jamie gave in to his bubbling enthusiasm and grabbed the gold rope, dropped his weight under it, and let out a joyful squeal.

In truth, I was highly entertained by the back stage theatrical performance of the two unpretentious little comedians, and they proved to be as priceless as the castle.

Lastly came the kitchen and basement rooms, and it was over like a bad visit to the dentist.

Pearson had suffered a whole hour of Dundurn, and he couldn't wait to greet the door. Jamie's tolerance of the gold ropes had reached its end. He bravely ducked underneath one grinning from ear to ear.

Pearson's dazed and baffle expressions throughout the tour begged the question from a five year old perspective. *What's this place bout anyways?* Poor little guy just didn't get it, and I don't think he will forgive me for that mind numbing experience.

I think if he could have, he would have renamed the place "that Darndurn castle."

About the Author



Sharon Ann Barnes/Bolger was born in the small northern town of Espanola Ontario. She aspired to be a doctor but became a nurse. She loved writing from a young age. An entrepreneur at heart she started and operated two small businesses. Writing is her present passion.



Memories of My Mother

By Vicki Iorio

For as far back as I can remember, my mom was always strong-willed. My mom worked really hard to provide for her family, working a full day and returning home every night to care for my brother and myself.

Through difficult times my mom always kept a positive attitude. Her perspective on life was so amazing – she was always ready to lend a helping hand. My mom would give the shirt off her back if someone needed it.

Some of my fondest memories of Mom are when she shared her wisdom with me. My mom would often use funny little sayings to help teach us important lessons in life.

I will never forget what Mom told me when I was a teenager, maybe twelve or thirteen years old and dreaming of becoming an adult. She would say: "Don't wish your life away, it'll happen soon enough."

Back then I did not understand what she was trying to teach me. When I think about it now, her words were filled with importance. Mom was telling me to live life in the moment. The older we get, the faster time goes, so we need to enjoy it while it's here. I know that this piece of wisdom will stay with me forever, and that I will choose to find the positives in life. Each day is a gift.

When we would go shopping I would always pick out expensive things and Mom would tell me, "You have champagne tastes on a beer budget."

I would say, "I might as well spend it because I can't take it with me."

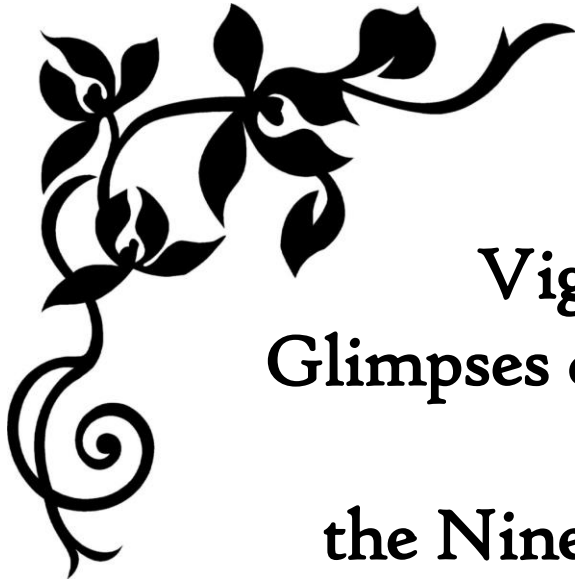
My memories of my mom help me to be happy and keep a good outlook on life. She always made me laugh when she said things like, "You can never tell from where you sit where the man in the balcony is going to spit!"

I think that I inherited many things from her, including her patience, her sense of humour, her kindness, and her generosity.

Looking back, I know for sure that my mom did an amazing job raising us and I will be forever grateful for her.

About the Author

My name is Vickie Iorio. I have lived in Brantford, Ontario since I was little. I am physically challenged and live in an independent living environment. I enjoy watercolour painting and going for walks. My favourite thing is spending time with my cat Sunny.



**Vignettes:
Glimpses of a Boy's Life
in
the Nineteen Fifties,
The Second Part**

By Wayne King

*I have never been able to see life as
anything but a vast complicated practical joke,
and it's better to laugh than cry.*

Robert A. Heinlein

The following three stories describe three memorable events that helped shape my life. The time frame is the nineteen fifties when I grew from a young lad of three to thirteen years old.

A Death In The Family

“Uncle Tom’s dead,” Mum quietly announced.

I gasped. “Oooh.”

Sister Janet looked horrified.

Great Uncle Tom was married to our Grandpa Crump’s youngest sister, Great Aunt Liz.

Janet and I were Canadian kids spending the summer of 1957 visiting Mum’s family in London, England, Westminster (SW1). Janet and I had never experienced a death of a family member, or anyone else for that matter. We were complete innocents; had no idea about the procedures to be followed. It was the world of adults of which Janet and I knew little.

Mum understood our ignorance and explained some of the mysteries of the funeral and specific English practice in the nineteen-fifties. She especially emphasized it was expected that family and friends would visit Uncle Tom, at home, to pay their last respects in person.

“Are we to view Uncle Tom too?” I queried.

“We’ll see.” Mum replied.

We set off from Page Street and soon arrived at Uncle Tom and Aunt Liz’s home.

As we entered, Cousin Alice took the adults aside and quietly warned, “She’s taking it very hard.”

Everyone was gathered in Aunt Liz’s kitchen. Most had brought a dish of food to share. Aunt Liz sat in her favourite chair sobbing and dabbing her handkerchief at the tears filling her eyes and rolling down her cheeks.



Hayling Island, July 1957.

Back row, from left: Great Aunt Sook, Great Aunt Liz, Great Uncle Tom, Grandpa, Mum, Grandma.

Front row, from left: Janet, Yours truly.

Aunt Liz and Uncle Tom were childless, but Aunt Liz was lucky to have a large family to help her mourn and offer support.

Some of the family had already arrived. Aunt Sook the oldest of the Crump family, and daughter Alice had travelled from Eastleigh to comfort Aunt Liz in her time of mourning. Aunt Maude was there too. Uncle George was on his way. There were other people I did not know.

“Where is Uncle Tom?” I inquired of Mum, after a look around..

She replied, “He’s in the parlour.”

“Do we really have to look? Janet asked. I detected a tremble in her voice.

“Well,” Mum informed us, “Aunt Liz wants you to pay your respects to Uncle Tom.”

He’s dead. How will he know if we don’t go in there?

“Right now?” I asked.

“Yes, right now.” Mum said gently.



*Great Aunt Liz and Grandma Crump,
some years later.*

I felt nervous, but also curious as Mum opened the parlour door.

Mum, Janet and I entered the darkened room or I should say we crept in rather tentatively behind Mum. Somewhere a clock slowly ticked off the seconds. Floral tributes had already arrived adding their perfume to the room. The pungent scent of the undertaker’s chemicals lingered in the background.....or was it my imagination?

We approached the coffin. Inquisitive, I grasped a brass handle and quietly moved it up and down. No squeaking. Then, I ran my fingers along the smooth, varnished wood finish. It glowed beautifully in the low light.

Now, the moment of truth. The viewing.

Janet and I were just tall enough to observe Uncle Tom. Unlike the adults our faces were within a foot or so of Uncle Tom’s, which was off putting. Uncle Tom’s face was waxy pale. It kind of looked like him, but not quite. He did not have his glasses on, which exaggerated the size of his nose. His head rested on a small, off white satin pillow. It matched the coffin’s lining. He wore what looked like a new, black suit with a flower in the lapel.

No one said anything. There was nothing to say. We stood quietly. I felt a mixture of awe and respect.

Time passed slowly. Finally Mum got our attention, "Time to leave."

Relieved we returned to the kitchen. The adults were engaged in deep conversation.

With their attention diverted from us kids, I whispered to Janet, "Let's have another look at Uncle Tom."

Janet hesitated, her face mildly shocked, then replied, "OK."

We avoided the kitchen entrance where we would be noticed and instead crept in through the front hallway. This time it was just the three of us, Janet, yours truly and Uncle Tom. No live adults.

"The room is darker." Janet observed.

The aromas seemed stronger. The clock ticked louder, emphasizing the eerie quiet.

Janet and I had to build up our courage until we were brave enough to steal another look at Uncle Tom. Quick glances revealed that he exhibited no change since the first time we viewed him. He continued to lay still in his casket.

Mere seconds went by I am sure, even though it seemed longer. Finally our childish curiosity satisfied, Janet murmured, "I wanna go back."

We returned to the kitchen. The adults were still talking and eating. Aunt Liz was being comforted as much as possible. No one noticed us kids.

Janet and I did not attend the funeral or internment.

Almost exactly a year later, back in St. Thomas, Canada, my Grandpa King passed away. There was no visitation at home. Janet and I were not allowed to view him at the funeral home or to attend the funeral service.

Note: All photos in this vignette were taken by Grandpa Crump or Uncle George Crump



Wayne (age 10) and Janet (age 9) holding small monkey. Enland. 1957.

Walking On Thin Ice

A cold, winter day, 1959. The air crisp and clear. The sun shines glaringly bright reflecting silver bolts from new, white snow. The sky glows cobalt blue. It's Saturday morning.

I arrive at Kerry's house and call for him, "Keerrrry."

Kerry answers the door. "What should we do today?" I query.

"Let's go to Three Shovels and watch for deer." Kerry replies.

Kerry's younger brother Kevin appears and asks, "What are you guys doing?"

"We're going to see if we can spot any deer. Are you coming?"

Kevin is up for it, "OK."

We quickly get organized. Then off we go.

One of the biggest advantages I had growing up on Barwick Street in St. Thomas was my proximity to the best playground going, the gulley. The gulley was actually the Kettle Creek valley and a number of small tributaries that flowed into it. Kettle Creek was not a large river, but it did contain small ponds of some depth scattered throughout the course of its meandering. My favourite part of the gulley was one of these ponds that everyone called Three Shovels. Don't ask me why it was called Three Shovels. No one I ever met knew the reason. Three Shovels was a small pond – actually a widening of the creek, but also sat at its junction with a tributary creek that had no name. Steep bluffs on two sides and thick woods shut Three Shovels off from the rest of the world.

I was eleven years old. Kerry, had just turned eleven. Kevin was four years younger than me, but well able to keep up with us. I was much bigger than Kerry and certainly Kevin.

Right: Much of the Gulley and Three Shovels was destroyed in the 1970s to make way for a highway bypass. The site of Three Shovels is dead centre in this photo, which was taken during construction. Photo by RW King.



We walked down the railroad tracks and then cut off into the gulley walking on the trail that led to Three Shovels. All was still and quiet, except for the rustlings of the occasional squirrel in its everlasting quest for food. The air was calm as we neared Kettle Creek.

We soon stood at the top of the bluff overlooking Three Shovels. We surveyed the valley. No deer in site. We descended to the edge of the pond.

Kerry said, "It's frozen over. It's thicker than when we were last here."

"It looks thick enough to walk on." Noted Kevin.

"Yeah," I replied, "Let's cross to the other side."

I led the way onto the ice. Just as I reached the middle a sharp crack sounded followed by the crash of ice torn to pieces all around me. My body hurtled through the ice into the freezing water below.

My feet just managed to touch bottom. After the initial shock I struggled to reach secure ice. When my hands touched the solid ice, it merely broke away in chunks. My Wellington boots filled with water, my wool coat weighed me down, my mitts were useless. Somehow I managed to tread water.

Thank goodness Kerry and Kevin were behind me. They stood back, safe, for the moment, on solid ice. They watched my struggle in horror, unable to speak. They knew if they came closer the ice would merely break and then they would be in the water too. There were no tree limbs in sight sturdy enough or long enough for Kerry and Kevin to pass to me. Even if they could reach me it was questionable whether they had the strength to pull me out.

The nearest houses were at least five minutes away. Any help would arrive too late. I struggled hopelessly. I attempted to find firm support but the ice merely broke off. Somehow I had to find shallow water and walk out.

It was obvious that I was getting nowhere. Somehow I had to get out before I became immobilized by the cold and slipped beneath the freezing water. The outlook was grim. What to do? There appeared to be no viable options. I was cold and getting even colder.

They say that it's always darkest before the dawn. That's when that strange occurrence called luck or fate or coincidence or whatever changes the situation completely. Incredibly, in this lonely spot, two teenage lads appeared on the bluff overlooking us. Even though they were well over a hundred feet away they immediately understood what was happening.

"Hold on, we're coming!" Shouted one of them.

They quickly negotiated the trail leading down the bluff. My relief turned to joy when I saw that both of them held good old CCM hockey sticks in their hands.

Quick as a wink they were on the ice.

“We’ll pass you a stick. Grab it.” The tallest one instructed.

With that he got down on his belly and stretched to pass the stick to me. I grasped it with all of my might. He stood and pulled me. As he rose up his buddy grabbed a hold of the back of his coat to help with the pulling. I was pulled none too gently as I crashed through the ice until finally I was able to find my footing on the creek bed. I then simply walked out, holding onto the hockey stick. I emerged from the creek dripping with water that was already turning to ice. I shivered with cold, soaked to the bone, happy to be alive.

“Thank you.” I stammered through frozen lips.

“You ok?” They inquired.

“Yes, I live about ten minutes away. I’m going home to dry off.” I replied.

But first, I emptied my Wellington boots of water and ice. Not much I could do about the rest of my clothing, but let it drip. I held my soaked hat in my hands.

My saviours bid us adieu and merely proceeded to do what they had originally planned to do. They disappeared into the woods and passed out of my life as quickly as they had appeared. Kerry and Kevin walked me home and kept me moving. To say I was cold would be an understatement. Walking was challenging when weighed down by ice and water. My skin was chaffed, rough and red. I kept moving as the water turned into ice.

After a long, miserable trek I finally arrived home. I don’t remember what my parents said, but I suppose it was plenty.

None of us made a big deal out of the rescue at the time. I never knew the names of my rescuers. I recognized one of them. I knew the house where he lived on nearby St. Catherine’s Street. From that day every time I pass his house I silently thank him and his friend for saving my life.



*1959. Sister Janet and I, posing on frozen Lake Erie ice, showing our winter costumes.
Photo by RW King.*

Saturday Afternoon At The Movies

“Well what’s playing?” Dad inquired.

I looked up from the Times-Journal’s movie page,
“Double Feature, Roxy, Fort Bowie...”

“Aah a horse opera.” Dad interjected.

“... and Attack of the Fifty Foot Woman.”

“Whoa, are you sure you can handle that?”

The unspoken answer was - *Of course I can.* I could handle anything to do with Saturday afternoon at the movies.



*The Roxy: not fancy, but good movies.
Photo courtesy of Elgin County Archives.*

Most Saturdays, around lunch time, in the nineteen fifties, you would hear some variation of the proceeding dialogue at my house: Movies were a big part of our lives. In fact going to “the show” on Saturday afternoon was an *almost* unbreakable weekly ritual for many kids, including yours truly.

“Well there is Paris Holiday at the Capitol or Laurel and Hardy at the Columbia,” sister Janet pointed out.

I responded, “Capitol’s only showing one movie and Bob Hope isn’t funny. Columbia has a Laurel and Hardy movie that’s really old... I think we saw Swiss Miss on TV. They have a western, but it’s old too.”

Yes, St. Thomas a small city of twenty-two thousand boasted three movie theatres, or shows as we called them, through most of the fifties. We chose the show we would patronize based not only on which movies were playing, but also on economic considerations. Janet and I received a quarter every Saturday for the show. The Roxy, formerly the Odeon and Capitol charged fifteen cents leaving us with ten cents for treats. However, the Columbia’s price of admission was ten cents, which meant we had fifteen cents left for treats. The nickel made a big difference because you could actually purchase a nice choice of candy with a lowly five cent piece.

The Columbia had major drawbacks that I didn’t have to emphasize to Janet. A movie’s sound could be interfered with by traffic noise on the busy streets outside. The Columbia featured mostly very old and always black and white, movies. The snack bar was tiny with few selections. Rumour had it the rats ran freely. Needless to say, despite the economics, we rarely patronized the Columbia. It eventually closed in the mid-fifties.



Advertising Sands of Iwo Jima (1949) in the Roxy lobby. Photo courtesy of Elgin County Archives.

The Capital was a palace compared to the other two theatres. It boasted an imposing entry way and spacious lobby, clean washrooms, a very nice interior décor and spacious, well-lit snack bar. The Capital showed top flight movies, such as Disney's. Many were in full colour and wide screen.

My choice, this Saturday, the Roxy was a popular choice. It too showed top flight movies with the newest wide screen capability. The Roxy was a nice, basic theatre, clean and modern, albeit in less luxurious surroundings than the Capitol, but still a far nicer choice than its run down cousin, the poor old Columbia.

Distance didn't matter. It was only a kilometer to each theatre. All three were located close together on Talbot Street, the main drag. Kids ran a lot freer than they do today. Janet and I and all our friends managed to find our own way to the show by simply walking, no matter what the weather. It was rare and uncool to be escorted by an adult. No one thought anything about the lack of supervision. Nor do I recall any untoward events, except once when some platinum haired, pale faced, horrible looking kid took a poke at me on the way home from the Capitol.

Parents never attended Saturday afternoon matinees. They were the domain of kids for one afternoon a week. A domain where a Kid could let off steam after a tough week at school. The wild west of my childhood.

"Here's your quarter. Don't spend it all in one place." Dad invariably joked.

Oh boy. A quarter was a big deal.

So off we went, on our merry way, strolling down Flora Street until we reached the corner at Talbot. From that vantage point we confirmed the movie by the details advertised on the marquee, which was quite visible only a block away. We checked out the length of the lineup. We still had time to change our minds. All we had to do was turn the other way and head west for three blocks to attend one of the other shows.



Lineup at the Roxy, at night. Adults never attended Saturday matinees. Photo courtesy of Elgin County Archives.

“Not too long a line. But, it’s not moving. The doors are still locked.” I noted.

Janet and I decided to stick with the Roxy. We joined the line with a hundred other kids.

The wait passed uneventfully unless you were with some of your buddies. Then it was time to wisecrack, trade insults and share indecent jokes.

If we considered we were in the lineup for too long someone would eventually grow impatient and exclaim, “The doors are supposed to open at one!”

“It’s ten after.” An older kid might add as he proudly showed off his wrist watch.

Our precious Saturday afternoon was being squandered. Mutterings of dissatisfaction began to run through the crowd. When the sound reached a feverish pitch someone at the back would begin to chant, “We want in! We want in! We want in!”

Excitement spread. More childish voices picked up the chant. Then the boot stomping began.

Voices and boots rang out in harmony, “We want in!” *Stomp*. “We want in!” *Stomp*. “We want in!” *Stomp*.

Chanting and stomping continued until finally a couple of voices at the front announced, “Here he comes.”

An usher, in his maroon with gold accented bell-boy costume ambled to the door. The usher was a teenager, but bigger than us pre-teens of course, so we had to show some respect. Our voices hushed in anticipation. If you were close you could hear the magic sound of the door bolt clicked back. The usher, agile as a cat, jumped out of the way as the savage horde surged forward into the reception area. The usher retreated and assumed the position of ticket taker at the lobby door. We kids lined up in front of the ticket window. Small and secure

the ticket booth was totally glassed in at the upper front except for two slots. One for talking, the other for sliding admission money inside and receiving change and your ticket back.



The ticket window: put down your fifteen cents, get the ticket. Photo courtesy of Elgin County Archives.

You still would not be admitted until your ticket was handed over to the ticket taker/usher guarding the lobby door. His job was to tear the ticket in half – keep half and hand you half. It

was important to preserve the ticket stub as there might be a draw for a valuable prize during intermission. Once I won a porcelain bird perched on a porcelain tree branch.

The lobby was the centre of all activity. You could proceed into the theatre to claim a seat, check out the snack bar, peruse the movie posters or use the washroom. The world was your oyster.

“Do you want to get some candy now or wait for intermission?”

Ah, that is the question.

I strolled over to check out the snack bar.

“Look, they got nougat this week.”

“I might go for a Scotch taffy.”

“No popcorn for me.”

“Go to the washroom now! Don’t wait until the show is underway.”



The lobby and snack bar - note the ticket taker position on the right hand side. Photo courtesy of Elgin County Archives.

In the evenings the usher would escort you to the seat of your choice, but this was a Saturday matinee where all the rules were chucked out the window. If possible I would try for an aisle seat to allow for ease of access and egress during the show.



The Roxy theatre interior. Photo courtesy of Elgin County Archives.

The lights were still on. The theatre’s background music could not compete with the laughing, whistling and shouting of a couple of hundred kids settling in. There was a lot of running around when you recognized friends in other parts of the theatre that you just had to visit and exchange pleasantries with.

The show’s offerings might include two short movies. There were still many movies such as the Bowery Boys and westerns that were only about an hour in length. Or there might be one longer movie, ranging from ninety minutes up to two hours. The theatre might show a ten minute short subject,

and/or a serial, but always a cartoon. There could be a Pathe Newsreel showing Princess Grace’s romantic wedding. Not to forget the coming attractions designed to stir up your ardour

for next week's Saturday matinee. During intermission there could be a draw from the stage offering everyone the chance to win tickets or trinkets.

In the fifties the movies introduced a number of innovations to compete with the rising domination of television. Black and white movies were in the majority, but colour was gaining ground. Gimmicks, such as 3-D or as in *Thirteen Ghosts* where you needed special glasses to see the ghosts were being experimented with. Also Cinemascope productions and even Smell-O-Rama were tried. Fortunately I never experienced the latter.

Finally the lights dimmed, the music stopped, the stage curtains were slowly drawn to the side. All was ready for the show. Suddenly, as if on cue, a multitude of flattened popcorn boxes took to the air, highlighted in the projector light as they skimmed high above. The occasional one landed nearby and bounced off the seats or someone's head. Of course they were harmless and I don't recall any injuries. No one had their eye put out that I know of.

My friend, Kerry, recalled one incident at the Capitol where someone threw an orange that burst on the screen. The movie went on, but not before Mr. Mills, the Manager mounted the stage and publicly pronounced his disapproval.

With the preliminary mayhem completed, the projector rolled out the coming attractions.

Hercules Unchained is on next week. I gotta see that.

Then the well-known Warner Brothers theme music blared out announcing a Bugs Bunny cartoon. Out of all of the cartoons I liked Bugs and Mr. Magoo the best. Who could forget Mel Blanc's stable of character voices or Jim Backus announcing, "Oh Magoo, you've done it again!"

Some kids paid attention. Others went wild. Some ran amuck in a self-induced sugar frenzy. More popcorn boxes were flattened and tossed.

Macintosh's Scotch taffy came in a small box that became a noise maker when you removed the taffy and blew in the open end, "Honk, honk, honk!"

But you had to be careful about breaking the bounds of propriety. The ushers were keeping their eyes open. If they caught you performing an unapproved caper you could be kicked out of the theatre. Luckily I was never caught in the act.

Finally the first movie. *Fort Bowie*. The credits roll. Yes, nice colour, lots of gun play. Unshaven faces and dusty cavalry uniforms. Looks like the real, rough west – not like the pretty boy Roy Rogers' westerns.

The mayhem continued for three hours with a fifteen minute intermission. The purpose of the intermission was to allow us to fill up on even more candy...if we had any remaining cash. Then

back to the seats for the dimming of the lights for the second movie. The seemingly endless supply of popcorn boxes took to the air once again.

Oh boy, the fifty foot woman.

“She’s huge. How do they do that?”

She’s gonna get her no-good, cheatin’ husband for sure.”

Too soon it seemed, the fifty foot woman roared and rampaged to a fatal finale.

It’s over. The house lights come on. Popcorn and taffy boxes litter the floor and seats. “God Save the Queen” plays loud and proud. Some kids stand still out of respect, others just walk out. The young Queen Elizabeth dominates the screen, mounted side saddle on her favourite horse. As the last strains of “The Queen” fade the curtains slowly close. Sunlight streams through the wide open exit doors. We shuffle out, among the last to leave. The empty theatre signals the end of Saturday Afternoon at the Movies for another week.

Afterwards

Great Uncle Tom remained the only dead person I had ever seen for a number of years more, thank goodness.



*September 1961:
Grade 9 photo of me.*

2017 marks sixty years since Mum, sister Janet and I travelled to England and stayed with my Grandparents for the summer. A memorable time recalled in last year’s anthology offering – “The Kit Kat Kaper” and this year’s “A Death In The Family.”

I became more wary about risking my life on unsafe ice, although the photo of sister Janet and myself on the ice at Port Stanley (see photo in this collection) may put the lie to that assertion.

As a fourteen year old I was too mature to attend Saturday Afternoon Matinees. Instead I went in the evening and through the week (see my story, “Behind The Screen,” in the 2015 Lifescapes anthology).

About the Author



I was born and raised in St. Thomas, but have lived in Brantford for over thirty-five years. I am married to Sharon and father to Amy, Aaron and Ian. My work career was in Sales/Marketing for a variety of businesses, both local and international. I have been retired for a number of years. My interests include gardening, cycling, history, photography, brewing and genealogy. Thanks to being retired I am able to devote more time to creative writing and reading.