



Life and Times of Terry Repol

November 4, 1949



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The Life and Times of Terry Repol

Where do you start when you want to just jot down a bit of your life's history? My dear brother did one of these a few years ago and I always said I should do one as well.

It wasn't until I got my death warrant diagnosis on Feb 7, 2022 that I decided to get on with it. I was diagnosed with bulbar ALS, can't speak anymore, I've lost 40 lbs. so far mostly in muscle and spend most of my day trying desperately to clear the phlegm in my mouth. Apparently it kills you when you can't clear your lungs. I have a coughing spell almost every day and you always feel this is the one but I still have the power to clear it. I still walk and cook and do things around the house but not speaking is the real horror.

Anyway, we'll get on with the health shit in a later chapter as that has bedeviled me throughout my life and I am just not sure how much of it is connected. Maybe they will discover the cure and its connections someday.

I am going to scatter pictures throughout this document as everyone has been sending pictures of my past along with some of the sweetest memories of my life via email in the last few weeks.

I'll start here but I will jump around through sports, childhood, general life and so on. Just for fun.

Childhood

Born November 4, 1949, we grew up on Patterson Avenue in Scarborough near Danforth Road and Danforth Avenue. We started in a little house at #101 and moved down the street around 1958, just after my younger brother Alan was born, to #49 where I stayed until I got married in 1970. Like most kids, I also lived on my bike.



This picture shows me around that age with my little brother, my dad, Handy Andy as he was known, in the background, building as usual. In the neighbour's backyard was an old carriage house that eventually became "The Shack" in my rock and roll days.

We certainly had a charmed life with the new train set in Christmas 1957. We lived well with Dad at the Post Office and Mom at home. I actually spent a lot of time with my mom in the kitchen as I loved food. I learned a lot and used to enter Boy Scout contests with my own, from scratch, made entirely on my own, chocolate cake and won a few years in a row. Always nice to earn one of those scout badges.



As every good Canadian kid, I spent huge amounts of the winter at the outdoor rink at Warden Avenue Public School where I went every year of my elementary schooling. More on my hockey

"career" later in sports where I spent a good portion of my life.



Childhood cont'd

We spent every summer at our grandparent's cottage probably from my first year until I was about 14. We would leave for the 5 or 6 hour drive to North Bay right after school ended and returned for labour day each year. Grandma and Grandpa were there off and on through the summer as they lived in town and the cottage was on Premier Road, right on Lake Nipissing. The road is now a hugely upscale area of lakefront properties with most of the old cottages torn down.

We spent all summer with our parents and different aunts and uncles and all of our cousins all shown here at the time around 1959. Grandpa was a WW1 war veteran with one leg missing but still yanked off his wooden leg and went swimming with us. My mother had two sisters each with 3 kids until my little sister came along much later (1965), hence only 9 of us for the picture here.



Here I am with Aunt Phyllis, looking pretty athletic at 9. We spent all summer swimming, chasing minnows, running the sand bars, catching frogs and walking to the park at the end of the street or the corner store at the other end of the street. Trips to Heyworth Island were every few days as it took what seemed like several hours to travel the one full kilometer in an 18' cedar boat with 9 kids and a few adults aboard and a 1 1/2 horse power motor. We probably could have rowed as fast.

Here's my Dad with older brother Dave and I in 1952 at the new Warden Avenue Public School. Dave got to start there in Kindergarten but I had to wait a couple of years before I could attend.

I spent my entire elementary school life at that school and I think I missed one or two days of school with the Chicken Pox. I always had decent grades but always had that "could do better" note.

Both Dave and I won track and field days every second year with usually 5 first and a second in 6 events. We were quick and could jump well. I think my 10 year old high jump record would still be there at 4'-3" but it seemed to disappear when they changed it all to metric. I saw that when I went to a school reunion years later.



High School Years

Everyone remembers their high school years, right? It is a time of growth and a time for new beginnings.

I started my high school years at W.A. Porter Collegiate, north of St. Clair Avenue off Warden. It seemed like a long way to go especially for kids as far away as Victoria Park and Kingston Road on the Scarborough side.

Grade 9 was a very uneventful year, getting to know what split classes were like, having a locker, so many new faces. Quite stressful for all of us who remember it.

I think the only thing I remember about grade 9 was the shock in the morning announcements when JFK was killed. I only entered a few track events on my own and otherwise simply got decent grades.

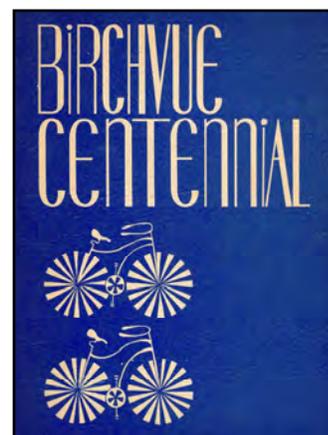
In grade 10, I moved to the newly built Birchmount Park Collegiate where half the students were from R.H. King and half from Porter as well as a new group of grade 9 students from elementary school. There were no grade 13's as they would remain at their prior schools to finish high school.

I met a lot of new friends there while working, the bands and sports dominated my life in this period. There were plenty of parties, dances, theater groups and more to remember. I had learned a lot in my father's work shop and had decided to take shop instead of art or music. I thought it would be easy, and it was, but I probably should have taken the music course. I remember clearly getting a wrong answer on my shop class test when the question dealt with measuring with a micrometer and I entered 3/1000 of an inch for the thickness of my own hair. It was marked wrong because normal human hair is thicker than that. I took the teacher a strand of my hair and got my mark changed. Never knew I had thin hair. Funny how these little things stick in your head the rest of your life.



Here's how I looked one year in the school year book attending a Sadie Hawkins dance. If you haven't got your old yearbook out of the closet for a while, do it and try to connect with some old friends. When my illness was announced to the curling club recently, I was contacted by a recent curling enthusiast who was the drummer in our first band. We will be connecting with Mark Denington, our guitarist back then, shortly.

I went to each and every high school reunion over the years that they had them, and the latest, 50 years, in 2013 was quite memorable meeting teachers and students from all aspects of our school years at BPCI.



I was a school prefect throughout my time at BPCI but don't remember much of doing anything other than ushering students into general assemblies every once in a while. I think I had near perfect attendance through high school and graduated with decent marks, always being told I could do better, something one guidance councillor told me was because my IQ was in the 160 range. I loved living life too much.

Great memories, great people and great life. Thank you

Music

I started in music very young. There's our family piano in the background of our family Christmas dinner in 1957. The piano was built around 1921 and my mother got it from her parents as the most studied musician in her family. She sang in the church choir most of her life and I even did the junior church choir thing for a while even doing a few solos. Talk about frightening.



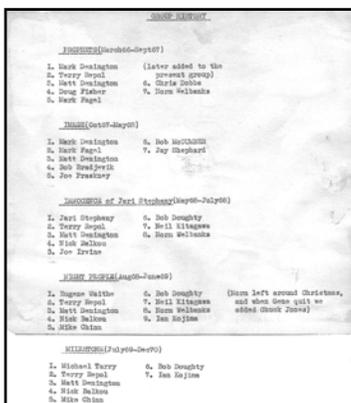
I inherited the piano from my mother around 1985 and refurbished and had it refinished in gloss black. I kept it until about 2018 when I handed it off to Meaghan who was the one with the furthest study in my family. She still does a mean Titanic rendition when I see her.

Here I am with my piano teacher who I walked or cycled to every week for quite a few years. I entered many piano recitals and ended up getting my grade two theory and grade 8 piano certificates from the Royal Conservatory. I found out after graduating that this was enough for a high school credit. Too late. Couldn't we all have used a spare all the way through high school.

Early in High School I met Mark Denington, a guitar player in grade 10 and formed a small band doing some old classics, Turtles and a few other tunes. As the Prophets, we played a couple of schools, summer concerts and other small gigs. I moved from organist to singer, to bass player in a matter of months when we couldn't find a singer and then Marks little brother Matt who owned a nicer organ than I, joined the band. I remain close to Mark and his wife Mary



to this day and Mark still plays old times Blues.



When R&B became the newest thing, we looked for a horn section and I ended up moving on with Matt, with this new trumpet player Bob Doughty who had a guitarist friend Nick Balkou, new drummer Mike Chin and including great high school friends Ian Kojima (sax) and Norm Welbanks (baritone sax) and others, Neil Kitigawa (sax) with Jari Stephanie singing. That lasted a few months and we kept moving on and became The Night People. Lots of Wilson Pickett, James Brown and the rest of R&B classics with Eugene Waithe as our new lead singer. Great custom suits.

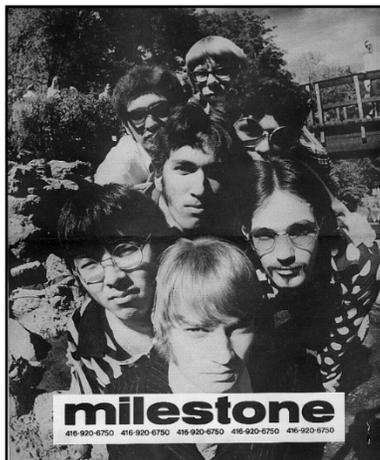


Lots of fun, plenty of gigs, and a bit of a following along the way. We actually had a manager and made next to nothing after expenses. We even had a couple of roadies to help us along.

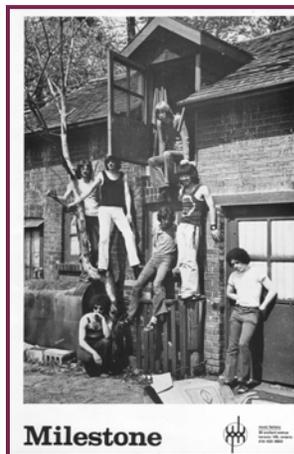


Music cont'd

We started to do better but Eugene moved along and we had another singer join us before moving in the direction of a progressive rock band doing original songs, along with Blood, Sweat and Tears, Chicago, Lighthouse and with new singer, Michael Tarry, famous for writing the old “add a little dream whip—add a little happiness” jingle as well as being a neighbour maybe 100 meters away. We became Milestone.



I look back at the time frame of this band and can't believe it was only 1 1/2 years full of tons of memories, great gigs, photo shoots, band competitions, 7 weeks at Quebec City's Cirque Electrique in the summer of '69, and more. This photo shoot on the right was done in front of “The Shack” where we practised and moved our equipment in and out every weekend. Same guys (clockwise from top left in left picture) Bob, Matt, Me, Michael, Ian, Chin, and Nic. We had Dave Scarff, our chauffeur, roadies Norm Welbanks, Paul Beatty and Mike Hodgson.



We did a couple of big outdoor concerts in Detroit and at Mosport and I think we did so many other gigs across the province in all it slowly disappears in the memory.



We recorded most of an album and released a single that went absolutely nowhere except the pick hit of the week in Belleville or something like that. Here's roadie Norm and my 2 Rickenbacker bass guitars on stage.



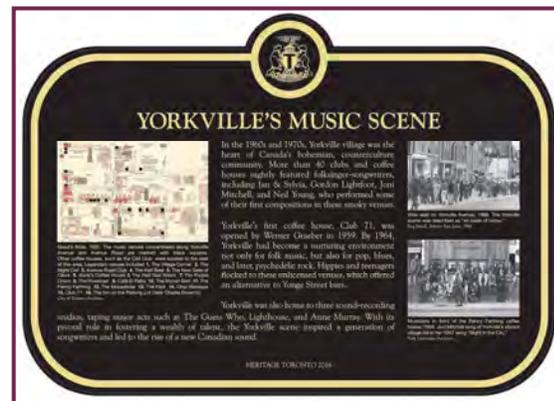
Me at a big Woodstock type event held in Orangeville in the summer of '69, I believe. Full beard as usual. I got married in the fall of 1970 and the band split up shortly after that with most of the guys moving on with Rick James and they moved to LA to become famous as White Cane, touring with B.B. King on his “Thrill is Gone” tour.



I had a few offers but since playing bass was not my original study or expertise, I decided to move along with a store I had just opened and work on my career in retail.



If you are ever at Cumberland just east of Avenue Road in Yorkville area, there is a historical plaque with our band and plenty of other bands celebrating Yorkville's music scene. Me, centre back row.



Family and Home Life

I spoke about our family back in the childhood portion at the beginning of this story but here we are in the full family group, me about 17, Alan about 11, Dave 19 or so and Janice about 2. Alan died in 1999 of Aids, Mom the same year of Alzheimer's and Dad a couple of years later, 5 years after a major stroke from which he never spoke after. I now understand his struggle and I have only been without speech for a few months.

We had some great times as a family, on trips within Canada as my Dad was not a big fan of Americans and the rest of the world for that matter, although he collected stamps his whole life. Mom an RN was a stay at home Mom until Janice got to school age when she went back to nursing at a local doctor's office.

Heritage wise, and my dear family history brother can always clarify and expand on this, but my mother, Esther Smith, was From North Bay of British heritage a couple of generations back and way back to the name Tijou a French Huguenot from early 1700's who designed the iron gates at St. Paul's Cathedral. Some designer history in the family.

My father, Handy Andy, was also from North Bay who's father was direct from Spain who married a French Canadian named Beaulieu from Corbeil Ontario. I think I have more French and Spanish in me, but Canadian through and through. We did the Ex every year like every Ontario/Canadian family and here is a picture of Dave and I and Al Boliska, CHUM AM disc jockey from the 50's and early 60's.



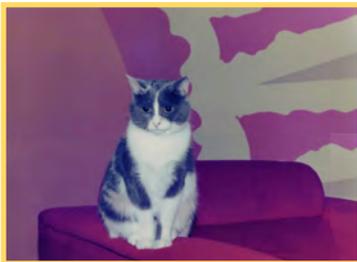
I enjoyed all my time in high school and only seriously dated 1 girl, Lynn Ball who was a year ahead of me and graduated after 4 years. We grew apart when she was out working and I was busy being an athlete and "rock star" back in school. Here I am in my grade 13 photo, very conservative for me back then as I was generally dressed in Mod/Carnaby Street clothing at the time.

More of that era later in my sports story as most of my time in high school was either sports or music. I did graduate comfortably doing well in maths and sciences.

I started my family life married October 10, 1970 to Lorraine, my high school sweetheart and lived in Crescent Town rental studio 1 bedroom for a couple of years before buying a condo in the same complex overlooking Taylor Creek valley on the 24th floor for \$17,600 on a rent to own basis. We sold it 17 months later for \$29,000 and bought a townhouse in Ajax. I finished the basement of the townhouse and decorated like crazy, then sold it a couple of years later for a minimal increase in property value before moving to Pickering, closer to work for both of us.



Family and Home Life-cont'd



Here is my cat, the first pet I owned when we lived in Ajax. With some fun wall graphics I loved to do.

We moved to Pickering in 1978 and purchased a lovely detached home, new build for about \$75,000 at the time. I finished and decorated all the rooms and even I look back at the modern style, and my style hasn't changed a bit. I had a very modern style that carried on into my years of design work as seen in the bedroom and basement here.



I have no idea where I found all the time, travelling Ontario at the time and working many long hours, but I built a wooden hot tub, deck, office and a full basement with wine rack, bar, custom fire place, sauna and full washroom with gold plated fixtures. Fun!



In my desire to have some kids, we couldn't agree on much anymore and although we had some marvelous hot tub, music and wine, and Halloween parties attended often by our good friends and travel buddies, Mike and Jean Hodgson, Lorraine and I decided to move apart. I lived in a small apartment for a few months while my new house was being built in West Hill where I decided to live and west of the 401 widening mess at the time.

In the following year I met Deirdre while on business in Ottawa who happened to have a 4 year old girl, Maire (pronounced Mara). Yipee, instant family. We moved into the house in West Hill along with a vacant half lot next door where I built a skating rink for a couple of years and when Meaghan was born in 1987, built a pool on that piece of property that became the pool for the neighbourhood and all the kids friends. We often had 40 kids in the pool at once and could sit upwards of 100 people around the pool decks and sitting areas. If anyone went to the early church golf tournaments, they would remember this pool as the gathering place after the tournament.



Deirdre unfortunately started to have difficulties with drugs, alcohol and I assume, self esteem issues. When she spent overnights elsewhere and took the kids to visit her secret friends, I had to move on once again. This time I bought out the house to give the kids some continuity in their young lives.

I spent 1995 or so with a good friend who had a girl the same age as Meaghan and we did dance lessons, trip to Disney World and actually curled together as I had been curling now for about 10 years already, mostly in the Honeywell league.

Family and Home Life-cont'd

I spent a bit of time alone and was the one dad that had to learn how to do curlers and fake eyelashes, as Meaghan wasn't going to miss any dance recitals which were all paid for in advance.

Then, life became perfect when I met Suzanne when we both worked for Cotton Ginny in the early 90's.

I have to first tell the story of how we first met. If you followed my storey early in this "life and times", you'll see that our family moved down the street just after my brother Alan was born and I remember to this day asking my father to take me to the hospital to meet this new little brother. Not allowed, I was told. When my little sister was born on February 3, 1965, I asked my father to take me to the hospital and he said it was OK. When we got there, I was not allowed to go to the room where my mother was in her room and told to wait in front of the glass partition and stare at the babies in the maternity ward. I'm guessing that my mother was probably breast feeding at the time and the reason I was not allowed in the room. Anyway, when I was standing there, I was wondering which kid was my new sister, but mom, dad and the new baby arrived in the room. You'll never guess who was in that room, born two days earlier in the same hospital. Yes, I am a cradle robber as Suzanne's mother and my mother both confirmed their 4 day stays at Toronto East General Hospital.



We got married June 26, 1999 and had a no suit/shorts requested wedding at our church and a huge pool party afterwards with about 90 adults and 40 kids taking turns in the pool. The food was all prepared by none other than the Tam Heather Curling Club's own Neil and Damiano.



Life with Suzanne finally became what I had hoped for throughout my life. Nice home, pets, nice kids and of course some sports and travel.

We had a glorious family home that I had worked on for years, finishing the basement with my office a 400 bottle wine rack, pool table, music and a spare craft room and washroom. Outdoors we had the backyard with no lawns, of course, and the fish pond that had up to 23 Koi at one point. Lots of work to maintain.



The girls had many a party in the rec room and it was often a battle to get it cleaned up afterwards but always worthwhile for the memories that the events always provided.

We certainly had a charmed life and many friends to enjoy.



Family and Home Life-cont'd

Suzanne and I with Meaghan and Maire spent many years together in our home, travelling and mostly doing girls baseball. More on the baseball in the sports.

We travelled together to California for Santa Barbera, Sea World and Disneyland and also to Disney World in Florida where the girls met Taz and dozens of other Disney characters.



We did lots of travel with friends and alone, even business trips.

We spent our actual "honeymoon" trip 8 months after we married at the Moon Palace Resort on the Mayan Riviera with Mike and Jean and also did trips to Myrtle Beach, Vegas and Nashville and a Caribbean cruise with these two. Some great times and great memories always. We always included golf where we could on these trips especially in Myrtle Beach where the golf courses are everywhere. Euchre was always something we did with our friends when we travelled. The boys ruled!

We travelled as well with our fabulous friends John and Debbie Murnaghan who we also curled with for, I think,

about 12 years in mixed at Tam Heather. We travelled to Tampa as well as Phoenix with them where we stayed in a home owned by Craig Sealy, a curler who I once taught in the club "Learn to Curl" clinic. Probably one of the best and most dedicated learners I've ever taught.

Home life was marvelous with more activities than you can imagine but mostly my slow pitch and the girls softball leagues and weekly golf with tournaments where we could all summer and curling all winter.

Looking back, I wonder now how I found time to work full time, or more, do these activities and still find time to build and continuously clean a pond, complete the "no grass" backyard, plant vegetables, clean the interior fish tank. Then you figure in shifting the pond fish to the indoor pond, the snow shovelling in the winter, car washes and on and on and you don't have to wonder where all the time went throughout your busy life.



Suzanne and I spent so much time golfing, shopping and keeping up with activities that we weren't just lovers and travel buddies but deep friends with interests, style and life very co-joined together. That included trips on our own including Atlantis where we swam with the dolphins. What a wonderful life Suzanne, thank you!!!

Family and Home Life-cont'd

Maire had moved on with her young daughter not long after we married and Meaghan had worked her way through school and was heading out in her studied field of physio therapy but changed tracks when she found her part time waitress job paid way more than the choppy hours in physio. She is now a successful manager at Jack Astor's in Barrie and seems to enjoy every minute of it. Maire now has 3 girls and lives in a wonderful home in the outskirts of Blackstock. Kayla (born 1999) Claire (born 2008) and Kristen (born 2013) my wonderful grandkids.

For years I had tried to talk whatever neighbour who lived behind my pool/half lot, to sell me a portion of their backyard and finally after years of discussions, I convinced my neighbour Mohammad Aziz to sell me about 40' off the back of his 155' lot which was, to him , a rental property anyway. After 2 years of building lot adjustments and home planning, we finally got a building permit to build our dream home, right next door to our existing home.



After lots of adjusting for the building department and codes, we started digging in September 2011 and moved into our new place in February 2012. The house was built entirely with ICF (Insulated Concrete Forms) which was very rare at the time but had insulation values and much more. I actually designed the house to have solar panels on the roof but the province cancelled the sweet deals before we finished. The house was built with a 8'x17' front window and we did it front and back with no lawns to cut and plenty of gardens for Suzanne.



We had custom designed staircases and what I called the "breakfast garden" at the front of the main floor. My office was upstairs for a change after spending years in the basement next door. We did special entrance drawers, custom cabinetry throughout and we had a clerestory built into the top stairwell area for spectacular daytime light. The main floor is completely wide open with 10' ceilings (8' in the kitchen) and slightly split levels upstairs. With a 400 sq. ft. ensuite and huge master suite.



We built the house of our dreams considering the size of the lot. We have loved living and entertaining here since.



The Apartment

When we built the new house, I had originally planned a lap pool for the basement but couldn't find anyone to build it how I envisioned it so I decided on an apartment instead. It had a pathway to it along the side of the house to a separate entrance at the rear. Note in the plan that the house wasn't square but followed the irregular



shape of the lot to maximize the size of the house. It is just shy of 3000 square feet .

The basement had its own laundry, storage area and two bedrooms, one extremely small, but a large foyer and quite comfortable living and study area. We thought targeting students would be good as we are quite close to U of T Scarborough.

Meaghan moved in with her boyfriend once it was completed and ended up staying most of one year before they bought their own place up in Bradford. We decided to try the student route and got 3 of the loveliest boys to move in for 2 years while in school. Two were from China but spoke better English than the other one from Markham and couldn't communicate with each other as one spoke Mandarin and the other Cantonese so they stuck to English. Great young kids who we still are in contact with occasionally. We had a couple of disasters after that, namely the Nigerian girls.



It was after that when AirBnB was becoming a big thing that we decided to give that a try. We had 3 years of 99% lovely people visiting from all over the world. We remember the people from Germany, South Africa, many places in South America, French but mostly Americans especially during Caribana. We also used to get many visitors from across Canada who would come with their children to enter swim competitions at the PanAM Centre, just across the back fields down the street. We were members there too and swam regularly during the times before Covid. The task of changing beds and cleaning the apartment sometimes twice a week was becoming a lot of work as I was still working full time at this point.



One of our last AirBnB tenants were John, Nina and Nathan, recent immigrants from Brazil who were with us for 6 weeks at the end of 2019. We had only one other tenant after they left and we shut down because of Covid.

When Covid settled down the following summer, they moved back in with us for several months and became quite close. I felt like their grandfather with all the advice I could give and always felt loved in return.

When they moved into the city, our new and current tenants Dan and Pam moved in and are still here.

Cars that I have owned

Cars were always a big part of life for many people and growing up, I spent a lot of time with my big brother who was an absolute car nut. Even before I could drive I spent plenty of time at Harvey's where the hot rods hung out and spent many days scraping paint off his 1935 Ford panel truck. Don't know how many years it took him but he spent lots of time working on it. It started blue and has seen at least 3 versions since.



First car I owned when I was 16, was a dull grey 1953 Dodge that I bought from Mr. Reed who owned the florist shop across the street. \$15 and I broke the "3 on the tree" shifter, then drove it for a while with a 3" stub. Few kids at school owned cars.

I followed that with a 1952 Chevrolet, bought from band member Bob's Dad. It was a Powerglide automatic. Rare back then.



I bought a 1956 Ford from my brother after that, which was red and white. It died one night on the way back from a gig in Kitchener. I must have been doing close to 100 mph on the 401 when the engine blew. Ford's didn't seem reliable to me.

I owned two VW Beetles, one dull pale green, back in the 60's and I wish I had a picture somewhere of the other one which we painted in hippie flowers and peace signs. I'll never forget driving up Markham Road one time when the hood latch broke and it flew up and blocked the view forward. Stopped safely and tied it down until I got rid of it. \$25 but froze in the winter and constantly scraped the windshield.



I think I bought this 1963 Austin Healey Sprite around 1969 when I was working full time and had it well into the 70's. Originally red, I fixed it up and had it painted. It was hell to maintain and hated the cold, being British and all. Great little car to drive and the roof was fully manual, Lots of fun if it started to rain suddenly.

By 1976, I had been working full time and lived near Victoria Park and Danforth and working at Square One. I needed something a little more reliable and bought my first new car a 1976 Chevy Vega. I remember that when I drove to work every day along the Gardiner Expressway, I watched the CN tower go up, day by day. That was quite something to see and I remember it well.



In 1980 when I became a District Manager for Jack Fraser, I had a car allowance, travelled a fair bit in Eastern Ontario and could afford something a little nicer. A classic Camaro, and I won a Chevette in a draw after Ontario Motor Sales 100, 000th vehicle sale. Still have the article from the Oshawa Times.

Cars I've owned—cont'd

After the Camaro, I owned a 1984 Buick Regal with the full turbo charged V6 engine, same as the Grand National but mine was in a darker Copper colour which I see in the photo back in the picture of my house in Pickering. Lots of power but I think the turbo blew 3 times. Luckily they warranted them at the time. I was travelling a lot then so it spent a fair bit of time sitting at Pearson Airport.



I had been watching this Fiero through its development stages and finally bought one in the second year of the release as the first year only had 4 cylinder engines and I wanted the V6.



Cute little car and fun to drive except in the winter of course with rear engine and rear drive.



In 1987, I bought a Ford Mustang 5.0 litre engine and I'm not sure I've had a car that could peel \$400 (at the time) tires in one outing before. I remember going 0 to 100kph on the 401 on ramps. Unfortunately I spent most of the time in this car driving to work at the bottom of the DVP in rush hour traffic. The car had rust spots within 3 months and after a year I was putting in a litre of oil every second fill-up. Swore I'd never buy another Ford again.

After the Ford fiasco, I switched to Pontiac and got a "Kit" car from the TV show, Night Rider. It did have the flip up headlights but that was about it. It lasted quite well and was comfortable to drive with room for the two kids in the back.



I stuck with Pontiacs for my next two cars including a white 1993 Grand Am which I had for quite a while.



I believe I loaned the car to Maire to drive to Ottawa one time and it apparently died on the way there.

In 1998, I moved to the larger Pontiac Grand Prix, in white as well, which while roomier, I really

didn't need the extra space as it usually took me to work and back.

It is kind of cool to go back and remember all these cars and remembering buying my first gas at the White Rose gas station for 21 cents per Canadian Gallon.

Gas is a bit more expensive these days.



Cars I've owned cont'd

I moved to Nissan after that and bought a 2004 Infiniti G35 Coupe. I'd never owned an actual upscale manufacturer before and the 8 way seat adjustments and all the toys and interior comforts were nice. Most of them I didn't use because I have always been a rather fast but "eyes on the road" kind of driver. It had a very distinct sound.



In 2010, working on the new house and the kids moved on to their own lives, I decided to buy a small car that I had always liked, a Nissan 370 Z, and that is Zed not Zee as the Americans say. I actually applied to get that license plate (ZEDNOTZEE) and the Department of Transport refused it saying it could be interpreted as "Zed Nazi" so I stuck with my original plates.

I remember leasing this car for 4 years and then did a buy back at the end of the lease and actually owned it outright for a couple of years before I sold it last year for close to what my buy back was 6 years prior. It only had 80,000 km on it when I finally sold it, most of those in the first few years. I sold it last spring because when I changed it back to summer tires from the winters, which were on the original rims, I had only put 80 km on the car from November to April. Who needs a car, insurance and maintenance when you do 80km



in half a year? Suzy and I now share her 2014 Nissan Rogue.

I remember using the car for golfing for many years as you could easily put two sets of clubs in the back trunk/hatch area over the 18" woofer.

This one as well, had plenty of power with 340 horsepower under the hood, handled like a dream and was a great looking car.

Suzy, knowing how much I loved driving great cars, bought me a day of exotic car driving, probably 10 years ago and I went out to Oakville to an exotic car dealer who had these half day trips around Oakville and up into Milton, some back roads, some curvy roads and some nice protected straight aways where you could wind the cars out for a bit. We had 2 drivers per car and you switched drivers about every 15 minutes and then



switched cars ever half hour or so at designated spots. We drove a Lamborghini, Ferrari, Nissan GTR, Maserati, Audi A8 and a couple of others.

What a great day of cars!!



Work

We have all spent a good chunk of our lives working and I officially retired when I got news of my illness in early January 2022 at 72. I enjoyed work so it was very hard to give it up

I started my working life as most young boys did back in the 50's and 60's helping my brother with his paper route and eventually taking over the route. We delivered the pink covered Toronto Telegram and had about 120 papers to deliver on two suburban streets and their smaller side streets. Certainly more households than read the paper today. I remember cover stories like the Cuban missile crisis, the cancelling of the Avro Arrow (still don't vote Conservative) and so many other stories of the time. I remain a cover to cover newspaper reader to this day.

I did baby sitting here and there, and I did lawn mowing for 15 cents that took me most of the day, picky old ladies mostly. Then I got a job doing work in a greenhouse across the street from our house where there were 22 beds of flowers mostly chrysanthemums and a few carnations. I learned how to turn the beds, plant the little things, about 1000 per hour, water, fertilize, stay cool in 140F degree heat, de-bud so there was one large one on top and eventually to actually do some arrangements. Great work for a kid about 12 to 14.

I worked at the post office at Christmas and eventually worked as a casual labourer almost every evening through high school and Saturday mornings. Busy teenage years but the money was good. I got a job after grade 13 as we were still in the band at the time, at an advertising agency on Bay Street. I started in the mail room, then print copy and in less than a year became print checking manager getting newspapers from all over Canada and checking all the ads that the agency ran. When I turned in my notice at the end of a year, they asked me to stay and become some sort of assistant media buyer but I turned that down to return to Centennial College where I studied business management. I remember my computer teacher telling me there were great openings ahead in computers. I was great at those logic patterns. I should have listened but this was only 1969 when computers were these huge machines running punch cards at the time.

I graduated after 2 years and decided to go into business with a classmate and we opened a small menswear store (Barleycorn-after the old English folklore) in Crescent town doing shirts, pants and custom suits and pants as well. I learned so much, running down to the garment district around Spadina, and hand picking shirts, delivering pant orders and such but the big learning curve was the expertise of the little old Jewish business owners who had run their shops for years. Rows and rows of sewing machines reminiscent of the sweat shops in the TV show "Marvelous Mrs. Maisel". I learned to sew myself even. After the first year with sales not so good and a lazy partner, I took over myself and ran it alone until he came back and demanded half the profit. I threw him the keys and said "You run it this year" and it never opened again.

I started a week later as a salesman at Elks menswear in Sherway Garden on commission. Pretty good money as I was quite good at it. I was promoted to Assistant manager of Square One store 7 weeks later and within 6 months had my own store in Pickering and after turning that one around got the Scarborough Town Centre store to manage. Within a year I had tripled the sales of that store and they came after me to change my pay structure. I was also given some assistant buyer duties, spreadsheets and counts all manual at the time. I was making something like \$200 plus 1% of store sales and 1% of personal and with sales skyrocketing, they didn't like paying me more than my boss. They'd never get away with that now and I left right away.

Work Cont'd

I started at Jack Fraser Men's wear about a week later (fall 1974) and was placed in the Oshawa Centre. With my knowledge and sales skill, the store took off. It was tidy and organized and customers seemed to love it. Right after the Christmas rush, about 8 weeks later, they promoted me to run the Pickering store where, guess what, sales took off again and I got the store repaired. I had actually got this store because they promoted the manager to district manager because he had kept sales up while he was there, probably not realizing that Pickering's population was exploding. When he was canned for some improprieties of some sort, just 7 months later, I got the District Manager job. Here I finally stayed for a while but all the time, head office kept stealing my assistant managers for stores out west and Atlantic provinces so my reputation was growing. A good sense of business, merchandising and sharing a workload seemed to work.



This store was one I actually worked on the design a few years later but time for a picture, no??



After about 4 years as an Eastern Ontario District Manager ('74 to '79) with ever increasing store responsibilities like Eaton Centre and the top stores in Toronto, I was promoted to something called Assistant to the VP of Operations because they also hired an Operations Manager at the same time. We split the duties and I was in charge of visual merchandising, wage costs, formalwear, tailoring, equipment and the closing of old and unprofitable stores as well as the opening of

new stores. There were dozens of those especially in Western Canada so I was travelling constantly. I once had two malls in Edmonton open within a week of each other. This group picture was with the executives at Jack Fraser who I reconnected with a few years ago for an annual Christmas lunch. Great memories with a great bunch of guys.

In 1985 I was promoted again, to the Director of Store Planning and Development and as was the big thing at the time, we started opening new concept stores where I guided external design teams to develop new stores. Some, if you're old enough, you may remember. I re-

worked Grafton and Co. stores as well as Jack Fraser, pic above, The Loft, Sideeffects, Elks, Dapper Dan and George Richards. We also worked on new concepts including Traffic,

Bimini, Baja Beach Club & Madison. These were great times of expansion until the great recession of 1989. I was lucky being the one with the big budget, I was let go before the company went bust within a year. I think I did over 400 total renovations and new stores in the 4 years.



Work Cont'd

I had a good severance after a combined almost 17 years at Grafton-Fraser. They had bought Elks along the way so my two years there added to my years.

I had an idea to open a consulting firm and spent many months organizing and developing a firm that would have consultants across the country to serve smaller retailers and chains with all their needs. I recruited people from all over the country and developed a plan to supply mannequins, hangers, identification badges, fixtures, project management, light bulbs and more. The idea was to make small commissions from all these consultants working their parts of Canada. I got very busy myself running big close-out sales for J. Michaels merchandise clear out for Eddie Bauer and Le Chateau and The Gap's original review of opportunity in Canada. I had hoped that my consultants would bring in sales but they were dismal at best.

When one of my clients, Cotton Ginny had a lot of questions about the price that they were paying for fixtures from a Texas contractor, they found some huge improprieties and when the President was canned for his involvement, they begged me to join their firm.

I took the job and guess what? New design concept, flip all Coconut Joe stores to Cotton Ginny Plus, new stores everywhere in Canada, the purchase of Tabi stores, another new concept and travelling the country from coast to coast. During this whole time I studied interior design with teachers brought directly into my office a couple of times a week.



After 4 years

at Cotton Ginny, I had renovated and built over 400 stores and spent huge amounts of time on the road, I had also moved into the realm of leasing and acquisitions while I was there but this was exhausting times. I met Suzanne at Cotton Ginny and when we decided to get together, the company decided it was time for me to go.

While I was still with Cotton Ginny, I had been approach by a head hunter to look at working for Bata, not Bata Canada who had a rather crappy reputation at the time but for Bata International. Bata Canada was letting their regular shoe business die and concentrating on their Athlete's World stores. I followed up on the contact and within a month or so I was hired at Bata International working at the head office on Wynford Drive where the new Aga Khan museum now stands.

Two weeks after I started there, I was on a 2 week trip to have a look at stores in Europe. Bata at the time had 5000 plus stores around the world and was still quite strong in most of Europe but had a confusing array of styles and price ranges of stores. In Italy, they were upper medium price while in France, they were mid to low family oriented. It was our new group at head office to develop a new direction and faith in the brand.



Work Cont'd

This was a long and arduous task for the 4 of us, design, procurement, marketing and computer. These regional and country groups had worked on their own for decades.

We got to work and I did a monthly newsletter with input from each member. I developed a new "city" store concept, where the product was displayed on the sales floor and stock was kept in the back. I had the opportunity to work with the renowned design firm Yabu-Pushelberg on this store and we built one in Scarborough Town Centre and Yorkdale before it was expanded around the world. Unfortunately the product in Canada couldn't match the store.



During this time I also developed details and design elements in a manual on how to design, layout and build Athletes World stores around the globe and we built many while I was there including France, Italy, Chile, Czech, Bolivia, Peru and Slovakia to name a few. I visited all these countries and helped put together initial plans to get them rolling.



The next project was developing a "Family" store where all the product was on the sales floor for easy access. I worked with another famous pair of interior designers, Burdi-Filek who were famous for their Telus look that they still use to this day. We built a prototype store in an Orangeville warehouse and when it was completed, reviewed and photographed, it was totally dismantled and packed and shipped to Italy to be installed in a city in Northern



Italy called Brescia. I spent 3 weeks there teaching 4 guys from Sicily how it went together. Quite the experience. The next place to build one was in Lebanon in a former theater site. Probably my most daunting trip anywhere in the world seeing Beirut, a city half destroyed by war being slowly rebuilt. Security was incredible. The city seemed happy while I was there as it was during the World

Cup of soccer. Flags galore.



We also developed a store, mostly used in South America called Bubblegummers which was obviously a kids shoe store and they were just getting underway in Chile when I left the company.

The individual country managers were very hard to change their ways and due to costs, the rebranding project was abandoned shortly after 9-11 happened and the world was in a bit of a tizzy.

Time to go back to working on my own.

Work Cont'd

It was time to get back to Total Retail Inc once again and I had some severance to help me to get rolling. Suzanne had kept the company running while I was at Bata and it was good to be home again.

I took what I had learned studying interior design while at Cotton Ginny and the skills I had learned in Auto-CAD and had become very efficient and experienced in store planning and design with a huge background in problem solving and site decision making.



I picked up a project through a friend of a friend doing a little renovation for Aren't We Naughty and that quickly turned into a quick expansion of the chain and about 10 full new store projects. The Pickering store that I did turned out to be a huge success and still their top performer.

I was able to do a few other small jobs around the city and got well known quite quickly

when I got a call from a contractor who was familiar with me from Cotton Ginny and he had landed Calvin Klein as a client but they had no one to do their drawings. It wasn't long before I was doing all Calvin Klein stores in Canada and then also picked up South and Central America. I did the exclusive design work on Calvin Klein



Underwear stores and did a semi copy of their outlet style stores.

That group of stores turned into a great sales tool for me and the rest is history as they say. I stayed busy with lots of Klein stores and also did a few other big clients in the same time



frame. Many of them had heard of me through different contractors and some knew me from my days at Cotton Ginny which in the early 90's had been one of the few retail chains that had been expanding.

I was doing all of the Ben and Jerry Ice Cream stores in Canada as well including this interesting one on Princess Street in downtown Kingston.

I spent a fair bit of time working with two store fixture manufacturers doing shop drawings and costing.

There is a full list of clients and lots of photos on the corporate website which is still up and running. www.totalretail.ca



Work-Cont'd

I stayed busy with these stores and countless, office layouts but also took on a part time job teaching visual merchandising at Sheridan College for 6 full years. Just once a week but certainly a fulfilling job. Spreading my knowledge to young aspiring people. In my high school graduation yearbook, it said I wanted to become a teacher. Little did I know that I would eventually be one.

When Calvin Klein was bought out by the parent US company, I lost that client but stayed quite busy with independents. Those independents included some very nice



stores like Ermanno on Yonge Street, Options for Her, 3 stores in the PATH area, The AGO retail store, Burlington Arts Centre, H.I.T Fitness, Arian Jewelers shown here to the right and Sandro an upscale women's fashion store in Bayview Village. Also offices for the Canadian Kennel Club, a parole office, Budget, Spinmaster, Holts & more.



I spent a fair bit of time working with Suzanne on StorageMaxx where she was Director of Operations laying out storage facilities and designing the retail sales offices throughout the country. We actually got to travel to sites a few times together which was a nice perk. I also did a lot of work for Reebok, Nike, Columbia Sportswear and FanZone, a well known sports jersey supplier.



I had also picked up a small kids hair salon through this recurring contact and did a bunch of stores called Melonhead. They were great little stores with exciting colours and fabulous décor.



The owner of Melonhead bought a chain of up and coming stores call Blo blow dry bars. No cut, colour or perms, just wash and style.

I probably did almost 150 new stores across Canada, but mostly in the USA and a couple in the Philippines, London England and one in Moscow, coincidentally the only one I never got paid for.



I would get rough landlord drawings or full AutoCAD drawings for new building and an address and go from there getting pictures of the spaces from the franchisee to see what could be reused and did all the construction and fixture details for each store.



Great client and great stores and incredible franchise partners.

When I semi retired in about 2015, they became my only clients and kept me quite busy until this past January when I was diagnosed with my ALS news.



Church

When Suzanne and I got together, we decided to go to church together and ended up going to the church that I often attended with my parents who were as choir singer and handyman, well known members at the church. We had great memorial services for them both at the church where they were remembered fondly.

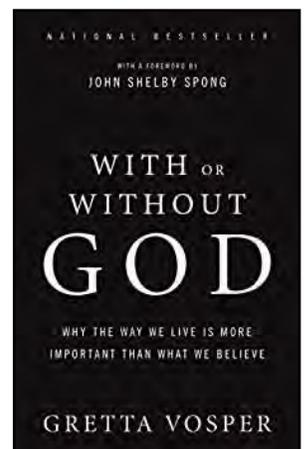
The church was in our neighbourhood at Kingston Road and Orchard Park a little east of Morningside.

We had a great group of people attending the church and the services were far from traditional with greetings of everyone at the beginning, their own prayer to replace the traditional Lord's Prayer and numerous other changes to the traditional service.

I got involved in the church, being on the board of directors and eventually became the board chair and then past chair. I can't remember how long I was on the board but probably close to ten years. It wasn't hugely demanding of my time, but with the difficulties of financing in a traditional church setting and declining members, it was always difficult.



Gretta Vosper, our minister through my time at the church was always bucking the norm and became quite controversial for her beliefs making the general news a few times and wrote a few books on the topic of life "With Or Without God". It was always interesting and unless you attended her services and listened to her logic, most wouldn't understand. I've always said that most people, especially those who don't attend church probably believe this way, just try to avoid religion in general. I also published the church newsletter, "The



Saltshaker" 5 times a year for about 5 years. It was a 24 page book with advertising, stories, church updates, calendar, photos, advertising and more and took many hours to put together on a regular basis.

It was here that we met our dentist Jim Hyland and his lovely wife who happened to attend the same high school as me. Small world as they say.

The Golf Tournament

During my time at the church and for years after, Mel Crossley and I ran a golf tournament to raise funds for the general church funds and community outreach programs. Thanks to Mel and her contacts in the church and throughout Tam Heather Curling Club we came close to selling out the whole of Winchester golf course each year for, I think, 10 years now, put on hold for Covid but hopefully returning soon.

We had plenty of prizes donated, 50/50 draws, winners and some who only ever golfed in this tournament along with some good golfers as well. Dinners afterwards were at my pool a few times, then Mel's and then in the church basement more recently. I just wish I could have had the opportunity to win it once again. Enjoy, please!!



Sports

For those who know me, they know me as a sports nut. From the time I was born to this day, I have enjoyed the world of sport. I have played just about every sport from football, hockey and lacrosse to curling, golf and crokinole.

In elementary school, I was the track star of the school always winning about 6 red ribbons and one blue. If I'd only known that by the end of the day, dehydration would be an issue, perhaps I wouldn't have come in second in my specialty, high jump. with a twisted ankle and burned out body.



I played soccer, softball, volleyball and just about any other sport there was at the school. When I was about 10, I played hockey at Clairlea Arena which was a pair of outdoor rinks at the time. I was a tall kid and could skate well but played defence. I remember leading the league in scoring one year even though I played defence. I tried rep hockey a couple of times but always felt uncomfortable with my Johnny Bucyk leather helmet and hockey pants that were too small. We all played

street hockey the rest of the year and "CAR" was regularly heard on our street.

I practised lacrosse for a couple of years against the school wall and played in a few organized games before the season ended and never went back after high school started. I used to go the Toronto Shooting Stars games and played ball hockey for a few years in the 70's with a couple of their players.

I mentioned elsewhere that I didn't do much sports, or anything for that matter, in grade 9 at Porter but it was a different thing at Birchmount. I was on the Boys Athletic Council and played Basketball, football (tight end on offence and cornerback on defence), and was the only member of the track team in our first year. Here's me with the two cross-country runners. I went on to the TDIAA finals and ended up all Ontario as a high jumper. I had a standing long jump of 10'-1" and jumped my height at the time of 5'-10 1/2" in the Scarborough finals. I was a hurdler and triple jumper (called the hop, skip and jump back then) as well, and in the pole vault, I'll never forget Craig Simpson showing up with a fiberglass pole and killed the rest of us. He went on to represent Canada at the Olympics.



I didn't do much other sports later in high school as the music, work and everything else kept me far too busy. Sports was never far from my sites as I was an avid Leafs fan from the time I was tiny and I can tell younger fans of today that I was lucky enough to watch the Leafs win the Stanley Cup in '62, '63, '64 and 1967. Those were the days and thought they would never end.

Sports cont'd

When I got married, I stayed active and used to ride my chrome bodied custom bike through the Taylor Creek Valley to Edwards Gardens at least once a week when the weather was nice. Living in Crescent Town, they had a nice recreation complex and I did some swimming but then took up racquetball and had some competitive matches with others learning the game and many with my good friend over the years, Cary Hyodo. I will never forget when the Canadian Champions visited from Vancouver and in a little exhibition game to see our skills, Cary and I throttled the two of them. We were better than we thought.

Both of us moved to squash where there was more competition and more available courts. We moved up the ladders quickly and I enjoyed the workout and competition immensely. Cary moved away around the time that I moved to Ajax in 1974 where I joined the Ajax club and played well from 24 to 30 years of age. I played in the Toronto A division men's league for a few years although my work travel often interfered. I was ordered by my knee doctor to give up the sport and only dabbled in it now and then after that.

I also dabbled in golf while in Crescent Town, egged on by Ian Kojima who was always pretty good. I owned a 2-4-6-8-PW set of clubs with a wooden shafted putter and never learned how to use them properly. We also played the old West Hill Golf Club a few times where my last two houses now stand.

While I lived in Ajax, I rode my bike quite a bit and then used to take my little brother Alan to his cycling competitions all around Southern Ontario. He didn't drive. That's him leading a race on the outside here. He was one of Ontario's top cyclists but never cracked the Canadian team. I used to enter some recreational level races and could ride with the up and coming young kids for a while, but these were active competitive cyclists. I always swam in hotel pools when I travelled due to my early mornings, wouldn't stay in hotels that didn't have a pool.



After I moved to Pickering, I joined, with a couple of neighbours, a local fastball league. I played with Tom Madge and Bill O'Connor from Jack Fraser off and on for a couple of years. We kept getting into more and more competitive leagues and the pitching got tougher and tougher while we got older and older. I played a few seasons with Bill Voss who I met years later at the curling club. Many of us also played hockey in the winter and I played usually once a week and a few tournaments here and there. I played organized hockey from the time I was about 30 until I finished while just doing pick-up hockey until I was 51 when the joints just couldn't do it anymore.

I switched to slo-pitch somewhere in the mid 80's and really enjoyed that. Here's a picture of me with the award, the name I cannot remember, but it was for the friendly/popular guy in the league. No idea how I won it with 32 men's teams and 12 masters teams (over 35) in the West Hill men's slo-pitch league. I think I ended up playing slow pitch into my early 50's as well. Our centre fielder at one point was Ron Larking and I asked him why he didn't play hockey in the winter with the rest of us and he explained that he was a curler. I showed some interest as I had watched it regularly on TV and loved every sport. He signed me up that fall. The rest, as they say, is history.



Sports Cont'd

In 1985, I had just adopted my new family and got Maire into the local softball league and of course got into coaching as well, It was practice once a week and a game once a week and I think I must have hit a kazillion grounders and fly balls at practice over the years with Maires team and then Meaghan's as well. Could hitting that many balls give you Lou Gehrig's disease? It wasn't long before I ended up on the executive as the uniform guy. I'd order all the uniforms and sort them by team with bats and balls and bases for each team. Next it was the VP of the league and then president. Still don't know where I found the time but it needed to be done. The league usually had 30+ teams and peaked out at 42 teams. Quite the job but certainly loved spending time with the girls. Work, baseball, pool (including maintenance), meetings repeat over and over for years.

Once I got the bug of curling and was getting close to the end of my hockey and baseball playing life, I got into it quite a bit curling 1 game in the Honeywell league for a while , then 2, and three and clinic and it was a career. In the Honeywell league, I got into running the Ivan McDonald bonspiel every year around St. Patrick's day, gathering prizes, organizing and being the MC on a great day. Many great years for that one.



We scored an 8 ender once in men's and I still have the hat and award kicking around the house.

Suzu and I really enjoyed our time curling mixed with some early success with Sam Sharkey and Anne Duff actually getting to the regionals one year as Tam champs. When Anne left, we curled with Rob and Kristy Gagen and went into some really fun bonspiels with them. After a few years and Kristy's ankle tragedy, we curled with John and Debbie Murnaghan for about 12 years together. We had some success bouncing around in the A and B divisions most years. I also curled in men's moving up and down with some serious curlers but quite often curling with guys coming in from the clinic. Always great times on Thursday Skip entry and a few years doing Rated which was great, mixing you with other curlers of all different levels. Amazing to see people come out of the clinic and move from lead to second, to Vice, then see them in the mixed as well. Closing bonspiels were always the most fun and lead directly into the golf season for most of us.



A lot of people from the club remember Harold, the mannequin that came to many 'spiels. He's been dressed as dozens of nationalities and many other things. His favourite time was being Scottish at a ladies 'spiel when someone finally looked under his kilt to discover the carefully stashed banana and plums underneath. So many great times. Harold was manufactured in 1947, a bit older than me, from what I can establish, and I found him retired in the basement of the old Elks store at Bayview Village outdoor mall around 1973. He's been in my bedroom holding my "not ready for wash" clothing for almost 50 years.

I also spent at least a dozen years on the Tam Heather Board of Directors. So many memories and so many wonderful people at the curling club. The outpouring of cards and emails when news of my illness spread was incredible. Thank you all so much, especially to Karen for bringing us gifts every week. Kind of odd to live one's own funeral. The golf season would be upon us.

Sports Cont'd

I had golfed a few times in my 20's, but never played after that until I was close to 50. Can't even remember how I got back into it but I got rid of my 2-4-6-8-PW set of clubs and actually bought a beginner set of clubs. It wasn't long before Suzy and I were golfing with friends, business associates and curlers of course. We golfed in Vegas, Nashville, Miami, Myrtle Beach, Arizona (shown), New Brunswick and The Laurentians while visiting Suzanne's mom. Mom was actually pretty good and golfed into her early 80's. So many gorgeous courses in so many varied topographies.

It was my first or second year when I got a hole in one at the old Brookside Club golfing with Suzanne's sister and brother in law. Lucky of course.



I golfed a fair bit with my old squash buddy Cary Hyodo & work associate Jon Holt when it was just boys out for a round but generally it was with our close friends Mike (band roadie from the 60's) and Jean Hodgson, The Murnaghans from curling days, Phil and Linda David plus so many tournaments both business and any-



thing we could find. We fondly remember going into a tournament which got very heavily rained out 2/3 of the way through, a fund raiser by Boston Pizza. Great prizes too.

The most memorable tournaments were the ones that I helped to organize for the church and MC'd the prizes and awards. Here's me with Jon Holt, Meaghan and her boyfriend Mike at the time. Suzy was probably the photographer as I don't ever remember not playing with her.

One of our favourite stories involved Suzy driving the cart up what used to be a very steep hill on the thirteenth hole at Winchester. We were going up the slope when Suzy screamed "it's not going to make it". I said "I'll jump out to reduce the weight." Well Suzy jumped out too and the cart rolled backwards across the fairway and into the trees down by the 15th tee box with us screaming at it all the way. It got stuck in the mud over a rotting log with everything still intact. A bit of a struggle getting it out but no damage.

I never really got that good at the game, starting way too late in life but eventually got my way down to a 15 handicap and once shot a 83 at Bushwood, up Reesor Road in Markham.

Great times, great courses and great people. Thank you all.

Sports is still one of the main things in my life and I am a great fan of the Leafs, as disappointing as that can be as well as the Raptors, TFC and even the Argos towards the end of the season. I watch the NFL as a Vikings fan since their success in the 70's and I love the World Cup of soccer as does most of the world. Both Olympics are always on my schedule.

Are there any sports that I haven't done? Sure, I've never played cricket, and skied only a few times, once at Dagmar on a school trip, once on the bunny hill at Blue Mountain when Meaghan was about 8 and flew down the hill and once on Silver Star in Vernon B.C. where my friend Mike Hodgson lived for a few years and I would visit them while on business trips through the Okanogan Valley, still one of my favourite places.

Hobbies

Since so much of my life was spent working, playing sports, building things around the house and so on, there was never much time for traditional hobbies. I never worked on cars like my brother, unless you count washing and detailing cars as a hobby. The work and maintenance around my homes was always where I spent most of my time. Winters were spent designing and building basements. My Pickering and first West Hill homes were huge projects and I mention them in my family section earlier. In the summer between mowing lawns and general home maintenance there was basement, deck and hot tub in Pickering and the front porch, gardens, fish pond, deck and pool in West Hill. I loved designing and building things like these stair railings at our first West Hill home with rings to string Xmas garland and lights, fabrics or other interesting seasonal displays.

It was when I decided that mowing lawns was too much work, that I built the pond in the back yard, just to give me something to do. Because I wanted to see the fish I built it only 2' deep but had to move the fish indoors in the winter. We had 23 large Koi at one point, which Oreo loved to tease and chase.



When we built the new house, no lawns front or back. This has been Suzy's great pleasure in life in her huge gardens which are spectacular when all the perennials come to life each spring.

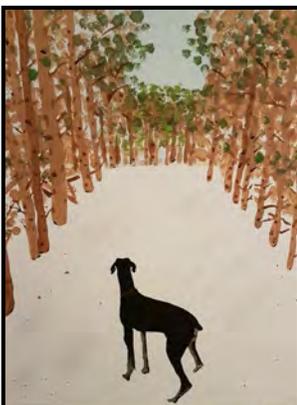
When I started to have back issues and other health issues I decided to paint rocks for fun to put around the gardens as little accents. Over two summers, we had collections of dogs, cats, owls, Canadiana, funny faces, polka dots and bunches of other characters. The whale tail I did for our neighbour, and it now resides in N.S.



The rest are generally spread around the garden and hopefully someone will volunteer to repaint and clear-coat them every couple of years because they fade outside slowly.

I did many relief walking stones and statues for friends and neighbours as well. Every time I got a statue from a neighbour they were grey, horribly faded and chipped

and I brought many of them back to life. Never much of a real painter, other than walls and decks, I did recently try my hand at a couple of paintings such as Meaghan's dog Raven in a clearing, my ghosts of sporting past (curling shown here, baseball and swimming) and a rendition of Maire's house near Blackstock. I love Candy, and had a terribly sweet tooth my whole life so I always enjoyed baking cakes for birthdays and special occasions. This one for Canada Day a couple of years ago. I always did Xmas Dinner and party food prep and we split most of our daily household cooking.



Pets

Just about all of us have had pets and what would be life without pets. My father was allergic to pet fur so as a kid we never had any pets, other than snakes, frogs and other creatures that we brought home from the forest. We did have our pet squirrels in the 5 huge Oak trees overhanging our backyard.

The first pet I ever owned was Sheba, the calico cat shown earlier in this story who used to chase the goldfish in the demijohn for fun. Then when I got together with Deirdre, I adopted a grumpy old grey cat who's name escapes me.

I got two pure white cats when Deirdre left and they were actually quite lovely to have around the house.

It wasn't until Suzy and I got dogs that I really started to enjoy pets in my life. We also had Gerbils, anoles, fish tanks and other creatures to keep me busy.

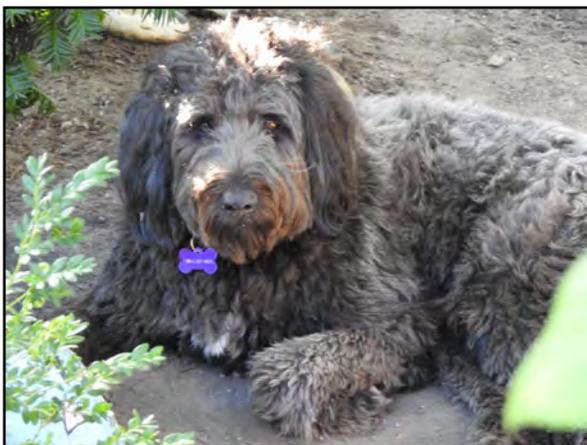


Licorice was an adorable Border Collie/Chow mix who could actually smile and was a kind and loving dog with a gentle attitude and well behaved. She passed at about 14 years. We also adopted a cat around the same time but she ran off while quite young.

We got Oreo, a pure Border Collie, from a breeder north of Port Perry and she turned out to be the darling of our neighbourhood.



She played basketball with the kids down the street and got well known for throwing buckets in the air and rolling them around the front lawn. We walked her often and never once with a leash as she was just that well behaved. She would never leave the boulevard and would sit before crossing the street. She could bounce a beach ball off her nose provided you threw it well. I believe the record was near 50 times in a row. She died suddenly of a brain tumour at about 9 years old.



Our newest dog Nibs, was from the same breeder but this time she was a Border Collie/Poodle mix. She was born just before Covid so never got to be close to visitors, neighbourhood kids or adults so life has been tough for her. She has best friends over the stile, a set of stairs that I built over the back fence and played endlessly with Gibby until his owner moved away to Nova Scotia. Happily Rodrigo and Ela moved in while the purchasers complete knock down and monster home plans. They happen to have a marvelous but timid Husky mix dog and they play constantly almost every day. We are in cleaning mode

when the snow melts and their world becomes a mud bucket. Such is the life of pets.

Lifetime Friends

Please excuse me if I miss anyone on this page or any other as my mind is slowly sinking as are we all.

My friends from the bands in my high school days are some of my longest time friends. **Bob, Dave, Mike Hodgson and Matt** are all still very close while **Ian, Nic, Mike Chin and Paul** all stay in touch and we all get together occasionally. Such great friends. Mark from my first band and his lovely wife Mary who we reconnected with near the beginning of Covid became our “Bubble” buddies, euchre partners and “quarantini time” pals over these demanding last two years that we have all endured. The stuff you can discuss over 2 years!

Jon Holt, I first met in the mid 80’s and we’ve remained close friends with golf and F1 talk. He wired my house just a few years ago. Everything is still working. **Rob Sanderson** was my flooring supplier in the 80’s as well and I remember all the business perks he was able to provide, back when these things were more common. Trips to Montreal F1 race, fishing for Salmon on Lake Ontario and a visit to Atlanta to see my carpets in production with a stay at the Callaway Cottage in the hills overlooking Atlanta and the fabulous iconic mid century furniture. **Rod Jordan**, my lighting contact over many years from the mid 80’s. Always stayed in touch, golfed together and help sponsor many events in which I was involved.

Cary Hyodo, from a school chum in elementary school to my racquetball and squash buddy to later year golf friend. A long time friend for sure. **Phil and Linda David** who we’ve travelled and partied with have been with me since the late 80’s and **Kemraj Narace (Sledge)** hold many memories and good friendships work and non-work over the years.

Curling has brought Suzanne and I close to some very good long time friends. **Rob and Kristy Gagen** bring back many great memories of bonspiels all over the city and a few parties that went a bit wild. They spent many a night at our house recovering from too many libations, eating breakfast and watching Coronation Street the next morning. We spent many years playing with the **Murnaghans**, travelled with them and spent many nights at the farm outside Brighton. Their kids weddings were very memorable. We curled with and against **Ken and Marion Oda and Val and Brian Nash**. Our competitors were always so friendly and gracious over the years, win or lose. The out-pouring from the curling club when my “ill health” was announced brought dozens of emails and a huge amount of get well cards with notes and memories galore. The one email from Doug Fisher, the drummer in my first band, who is now a Tam Venerable, surprised me, small world.



The curling clinic will always stand out as one of the most memorable times in my life and we seemed to bring a new group to the club every years, many who have stayed for many years. I have to thank all those who helped and who were the real teachers of curling. **Bill and Sue Voss, John Epping, Glenn Gabriel and Glenn Terry, Bernie, Jeanette, Bob Thompson, Brian and Val Nash** were many who did it every year. Thanks to those and all others who helped over the years.

So many people from the curling club attended the church golf tournament as well, making it extra special. Karen, our beautiful barmaid and organizer, we love you and thank you for organizing this exercise of memories for me and for all the work that you do at Tam. It has brought more joy to my later days than you can imagine. I hope that anyone in this position can write their own life full off memories and be allowed the time to remember how good life has been and all the people who you touch along the way.

Lifetime Friends Cont'd

My family of course, and Suzanne's family who have been with me for 25 years. Suzanne's mom is in the Laurentians but her 3 sisters are on the East Coast. I can't thank all of them enough for all they've done in supporting Suzanne and I through the years and at this difficult time. I have such fond memories of our times visiting the East Coast, times in the Laurentians, the two weddings of Carole's daughters and so much more.

Neighbours—I have lived on this same street now almost exactly half of my life and many of the neighbours have been here since the neighbourhood was built on the site of the old West Hill Golf Club back in the early 80's Angelo and Gina, the Bloodworth's, George, Reggie and his lovely family, Mike and Candy, Hien, Bob and Tracey and the basketball clan, the Parsons and the Hydes from kids baseball and more, the and the list goes on down the street and around the neighbourhood especially those people with dogs. Ron Brooks and his family have also been on our street since my time here began and we have grown quite close to son Andrew over the years. Our closest neighbours have been Walter and Shanty Fernandes since they moved next door close to 25 years ago. Family weddings, backyard chatter and plenty of wine and meals together make for great neighbours. When we sold our old house and moved next door, the new owners Menkir and Judy and their twins also joined this gang. Our very close friend, Alana over the back fence allowed me to build a stile over the fence so that our dogs could play together endlessly and we all became close as well.

Quirkiness, Health, Life and Beyond

Time and the Sun worship -During my life I was always an early riser. I was a pretty lonely teenager with this because most teens sleep until noon or beyond while I was up near sunrise looking for things to do. I never used an alarm clock unless it was required and then I would always wake up just before it would go off. You could ask me what time it was almost any time of any day and I could quite often tell you the time within minutes.

What most people hated about me was my complete lack of jet lag. I could fly to Europe overnight and for some reason couldn't sleep while in the air but would cat nap on any connecting flight, end up in Italy, work the whole day and fall asleep after the sun went down. When I got home, it was the same thing. No lack of sleep as long as the sun rose the next day, I was fine.

Bugaboos-My mother taught me many things, but as someone who always had a huge dictionary on her coffee table, I've always gotten a kick out of her biggest bugaboos in life. She always had a hate on for the word "up". We all know where up is and can point in that direction but can you point to up as in fix up the car, clean up the mess and the million other ways that up is overused. Her favourite one was always how do you "back up" a car when you really just want to reverse.

I've had fun lately myself, trying to determine how progress became prawgress and project became prawject but realized these are mostly American pronunciations that we are all falling for in time. I saw an interview on CNN recently where a Russian journalist (before the Ukraine disaster, in broken English (broken American) spoke about prawtesters. Before long we'll have prawfessional hockey players. I also cringe when I hear the word Impordant (Patrick Brown and Anderson Cooper) or reco_nize as opposed to recognize. I am sure everyone has these fun little things that grate them the wrong way. I just happen to have one last chance to put down a couple of the kazillion things that bugged me through my life.

Health has always been one of my difficulties in life. I was recently told I was a phenom. I had knee issues from my early 30's and back issues most of my life. I can't figure out how I got this latest disease. I had zapping in my body starting about 15 years ago. By 2016 they were so pervasive that I documented each hit, its intensity and location and noticed just a few months ago that I had trouble swallowing some grapes back then. I feel to this day, this disease was in me even then. In the spring of 2021 while COVID was rampant, I started having more difficulty swallowing followed that August with certain parts of my speech getting tough. By November, I was asking Suzy to speak on the phone with me and when our endocrinologist called for a regular follow-up, he sent me immediately to the ER where I was tested and put on medications for Myasthenia Gravis. When that had no effect I saw a neurologist, then another and another. On January 7, 2022 they assumed that it was bulbar ALS which was confirmed at Sunnybrook a month later. The ALS staff there have been phenomenal providing all sorts of support, machines, advice and testing. We all know it is terminal but they are trying to make me as comfortable as possible and I thank them kindly.

Dying was always some thing that I have never feared. When I was young, my mother was a volunteer for the Toronto Memorial Society and she spoke on the house phone one day a week to people who were dying, wanted to make arrangements, terminally ill or just lost a loved one. I only ever heard one side of the conversation, but Mom always knew what to say and how to explain death. When my grandfather died when I was about 10, it was with clear understanding. When my mother and father both died, my siblings and I understood and fulfilled their wishes.

MAiD, the latest assisted dying legislation in Canada has opened the opportunity to me to pass how I want and when I want. The forms are filled out and the process has begun. I will be testing a Bipap machine in the next week or days and if I have some success, I will be considering a feeding tube although if it means a week in the hospital versus day surgery, I may reconsider and let things take their course. I have the opportunity to select a date and revise it when I need.

I want to thank everyone who's reached out recently to bring such fond memories to me and allow me to relive a life that has been rather spectacular to relive in photos and written words. Unfortunately I've not been able to speak for a few months now but listening and seeing is plenty to remember. It has been extremely difficult for Suzanne and my family and I just wish I could express in words, how much everyone means to me.

I've been rather lucky to have this "funeral" time before I go so I could see once again how well life has treated me. Like everyone, sometimes up and sometimes down but overall, it's the people I've known and loved, played with and against, friendly neighbourhood chit chat and so much more that makes a life so fulfilling.

If you can find the time, you too, should spend some time reviewing and writing down your life's history and events to preserve for future generations. It has brought me great pleasure.

I love you and Thank you!!

Does it make much sense?

Does it make much sense to wake every day

To force down Cream of Wheat 'cause it's all you can eat

Does it make much sense to live every day

Waiting to choke on your phlegm night and day

Knowing I'm going, is knowing I've lived

Loving my family, my wife, and my kids

Knowing I'm going and made an impact is nice

The curling people I've taught to enjoy, it's just right

Does it make much sense to worry all day

About how you leave things, finances and wife

I know it will be so tough on Suzanne

She'll live on happy just learning from Mom

Does it make much sense to struggle at night

breathing, sleeping, shoulders and back

Living with no sense from my ankles to toes

Choking on anything save Ice Cream and Jello

I take Tylenol for pain, a relaxant for my throat

I take four heart pills for a ticker that's totally broke

Not one of these pills can I take with a sip

They need to be crushed and mixed in my food

I don't sleep well, wake every hour

Sciatic pain wakes me and screams back at me

The pain on the tip of my pelvis just aches

And no one can figure it out, just pain

Whatever these pains, they've been going on for years

Shocking pain in my legs have never disappeared

I spent two years, in the late 20teens

Being zapped from within, enough to just scream

They tested my prostate on my birthday last year

Cancer they said but it won't kill you yet

Hemorrhoids got, they bleed most days

Phooey, they say you've got more on your head

The toughest of all is my lack of speech

I can't talk with Suzy or yack on the phone

Answering questions about what going on

Totally impossible without having speech

A hell of a fight coming up with the cause

I've been tested and zapped from my head to my toes

Pricked and scanned and the big MRI

Last time I tried it I thought that I'd die

Now that I've found out just what I have

And the people from curling, friends, and my love

It's time to move on a let everyone know

How nice that it's been

I wrote this poem (#473 of the poems I've written for Suzanne) the week after I was diagnosed, Feb. 7, 2022 with Bulbar ALS and have decided that I will "pull the plug" once life gets to interfere with my loved ones.

I can still watch sports, bathe myself and still do a certain amount of things around the house but I feel my body rotting away, 40 lbs so far and haven't spoken in a few months which is extremely frustrating.

It was an immense pleasure reviewing my life while still alive and very cognizant of everything and everyone around me. It has been such a pleasure to receive such happy memories of an active and fulfilling life with all its ups and downs and absolutely glorious relationships with everyone I have ever met.

Thank you all for sharing your thoughts and lovely memories with me during this very trying time. Finished writing and editing April 1, 2022. April Fools day of all days. We'll see how long I can go. Love you!!