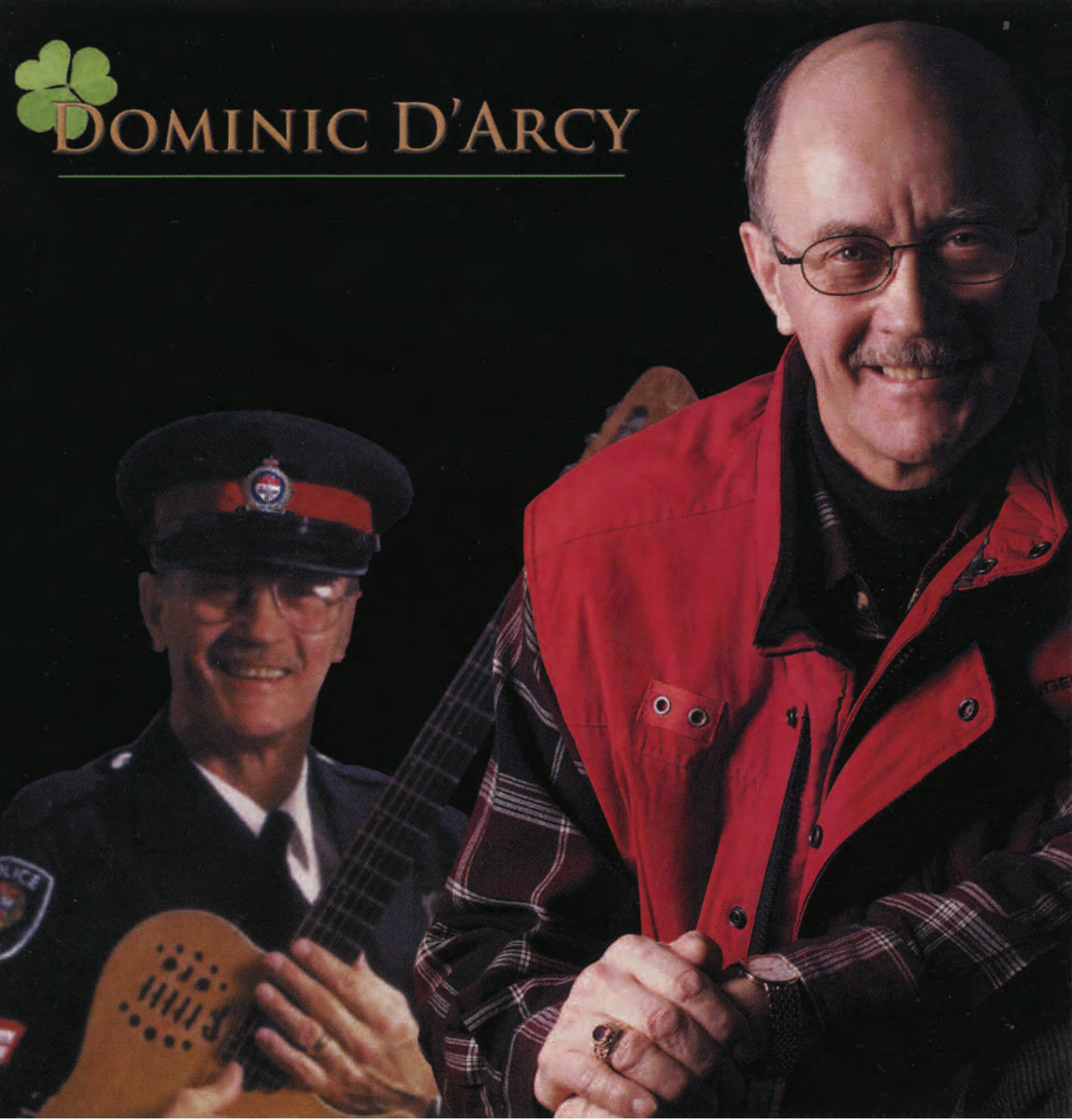




DOMINIC D'ARCY



# *Stop, Or I'll Sing!*

A MEMOIR BY

**Dominic W. D'Arcy**  
Ottawa's Singing Policeman

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*A Memoir*

*By*

*Dominic W. D'Arcy*

*Ottawa's Singing Policeman*

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*To my family, for instilling me with strong loving bonds, a sense of duty and responsibility, and a love for the joy of music*



*Especially to Noellie, for the gift of her love and support throughout*

## Author's Preface

I have asked myself many times as to why I should write this book. Quite frankly, I had little or no choice, as my inner voice (guides, helpers, angels?) made that decision for me: I must share what I have learned and the mistakes I have made. My motto has always been, "Each one, teach one." Quite a simple principle: No matter how small the lesson, we ought to teach others.

The impetus to finally begin writing was provided by my son Darren, who asked me to record my memories and life history for the family archives. I cherish the thought that I have in the process preserved moments that might otherwise have been forgotten and lost to future generations.

In the spirit of each one, teach one, this book springs out of both a desire to share and the hope that my experiences influence the reader positively. Whether the reader be a family member, or someone with an interest in police work, or someone interested in life in the Pontiac in the 1930s to 1950s, or someone interested in the experiences of an Ottawa-based singer and performer—my sincere hope is that there will be something worthwhile and meaningful in my book for them all. As painstaking as it has been to marshal all my memories and commit them to paper, it has been a labor of love that I offer to you, the reader, as my gift.

This book's narrative flow is a glimpse into the way my mind works. Rather than being presented in strictly chronological order or being grouped by theme (such as family, work, sports, community service, musical career) the memories and vignettes are related in roughly the order I recollected them, often with headings in italics to indicate where in the world I was when the particular memory came back to me. This is a good reflection of the way I experience my life, and I trust the reader will take this as an additional insight to how I function and the hurdles I often must overcome both to write this memoir and generally.

There is a saying in many cultures that perfection belongs only to God, and so deliberate imperfections are often put into creative works (like the so-called God knot in Persian carpets) to ensure they're imperfect. That said, I don't think I have to worry about this memoir being "perfect." I only did my best to recall events as accurately as I could and told my story from my own unique point of view without consulting others, who would of course have their own unique points of view. All memoirs are subjectively written, and I hope no one is offended by my candor in telling my tales!

On a practical note, I am part of the pre-metric generations, and I therefore instinctively think miles, pounds, inches, and feet. I have written the book using Imperial and Fahrenheit scales rather than metric and beg the reader's indulgence with do-it-yourself conversions into the metric system for those so inclined:

1 mile = 1.4 kilometer

2.2 pounds = 1 kilogram

32°F = 0°C

1 inch = 2.54 centimeters

3.3 feet = 1 meter

*D. W.D.  
Ottawa, Canada  
April, 2016*

## Editor's Preface

What you are about to read represents the author's recollections of his life just as they spontaneously occurred to him over the course of more than a decade. Often, the locations and dates wherein the recollections occurred are given in italics at the head of the vignette so as to give the reader a sense of the time and space the author was experiencing during his recollection of a given memory. This series of vignettes in itself serves to give the reader a glimpse into the multifaceted workings of the author's thinking processes—both his artistic creativity and his struggles with fitting a born performance artist's personality into a regimented world of police-work. Writing a memoir is a daunting enough task for anyone, but it is particularly challenging for someone diagnosed later in life with attention-deficit disorder. That the book has come to fruition is due in large part to the author's expressly stated hope that in the spirit of “each one, teach one” the reader gain some insight from the episodes and struggles described on these pages. Where some repetition was left in, the intent was to show the emphasis the author intended.

Aside from minimal grammatical corrections and slight “smoothings,” the life story is told just as it sprang forth from the author's memory in a stream of consciousness approach (not unlike that of his Irish compatriot James Joyce), rather than following the more typical chronological or thematic structure for memoirs. The intent was to let Dominic's authentic voice shine through in his stories of his life, a life that encompasses a childhood within a boisterous large family in the country on a working farm, his school years with their challenges, his series of a variety of jobs leading to a career as a policeman, his courtship and family life, his organized sports activities, his community and volunteer work, and his long musical career as the Singing Policeman. In short, an interesting life well lived!

*Christine Zerbinis  
Portland, Oregon*

**M**y life story starts on July 30, 1939, at 12:05 p.m. when I was born to Mary Walker D’Arcy at the Walker house, which had been my mother’s family home in Chichester, Québec. I likely didn’t come into this world the traditional way crying, wah, wah, wah!...I was probably singing “Danny Boy,” a preview of things to come. If I had indeed actually done such a thing, my father Patrick D’Arcy would just as probably have accompanied me on his fiddle.

Growing up as an Irish-Catholic country-boy in a family of fourteen children—seven boys and seven girls—eighteen miles from nowhere in northwestern Québec was certainly a challenge, to say the least. Upon looking back, however, I think we did not really understand the hardships that were ours; there were so many kids—Doreen, Dennis, Clarence, Joseph, Harold, Mary Claire [known as Claire], Cecil, Mary, Dominic, Theresa [whose twin, Patricia, died at age 3½], Arnold [died at birth], Leona, and Helen—in my family that my father had stretch marks! We were so far back in the bush we needed to come out to hunt and had to pipe in the sunshine! Growing up with six sisters and five brothers had its trials and tribulations.

By the time Poppa died on July 9, 1952, four of my brothers and two of my sisters had already left home; so when my brother Cecil left a year later, I became head boy around the farm. The many responsibilities that this presented were quite tasking; however, all was not serious work on the farm. I chose, as most people in our situation did, always to seize the opportunity to have a little fun, usually at the expense of someone else. Some of my fondest earlier memories are of good times with my older brothers, their friends, and our cousins.

I have been trying ever since I started writing this book to charm some memories out of the shadows and onto the dance floor for a spin with truth, and each memory kept amounts to a doorway into what I am writing about. Some of these memories reflect back to when I was growing up in Sheenboro, Québec. I realize *now* that my mother was showing me the world in the only way she knew how with a grade-5 education and a truckload of life experience and wisdom. When she used to sit on a bench on the verandah at the farm, I wondered what she was thinking as she watched the evening roll down the D’Arcy Line and explored the terrain of her life. I loved her so much; however, I did not tell her that with feeling and meaning until I left the farm. How sad is that?

As I wrote earlier, Poppa died in 1952 at 52 years of age, so I never really knew him. We sold the farm, and I took the last suit that Poppa wore. I now have it in a protection bag in my garage, and most days when I am in the garage, I open it up and feel the cloth and also feel that he is with me.

My memories of Christmas are with me still. I can remember getting onto the sleigh to drive to Midnight Mass. We were bundled up like mummies, with hot stones that had been heated



in the oven of the kitchen stove then wrapped with buffalo hides for the drive to the church. I loved the sound of the horses' hooves on the crisp snow and the clinking of the bells. But because we had to sit through three Masses, I always fell asleep during the service, leaning cozily against Mother's fur sleeve. I know it was a time when we were all supposed to feel good, but some of the worshippers would fall asleep, and I could hear them snoring at the back of the church. Most of my siblings were in the choir, and when we got home there was always music because I came from a family where music was very important. On Christmas Eve, we always had a big meal when we got home from church after Midnight Mass. I remember the pork pies especially. The table was laden with food that Mother made, but sometimes I was too tired to eat. I don't think we ever got to bed before three in the morning on such occasions, but I have wonderful warm memories of my childhood, especially Christmases, in Sheenboro, deep in the Ottawa Valley, a special place in my heart.

Other significant memories are of my parents. I recall the time when I was about eight or nine years old and my father took me on the wagon with him to collect the sap in the maple-sugar bush. While Poppa was collecting the sap from the trees and pouring it into large 40-gallon barrels on the wagon, I was off playing in the bushes. The horses saw me and I spooked them, so they started running back to the barn, which was a quarter of a mile away. My father was thrown off the wagon, and I started running as fast as I could, thinking my father was dead. Luckily, he was not injured.

As the horses named George and Pearl ran towards the barn, the wagon upended, spilling about 100 gallons of sap on the ground. The wagon broke, the horses kept going, straddling a birch tree, and broke the neck yoke and most of the harness. Poppa was shouting to my mother, "Mary! Mary, close the gates! Close the gates!" I don't recall my father ever raising his voice at me—however much he must have often wanted to and, no doubt, had the right to at this time.

Also, in the same vein, we always boiled our sap back in the bush near the sugar bush just east of the centre field or at the bottom of the large hill. My older brother Clarence, who was not one to work hard around the farm, was the practical joker in the family, and I must say I learned all my animal voices from listening to him. The animal imitations he excelled at were the black bear and elephant.

I recall one night, back at the spot where we had the big fire boiling down the sap at about 1:30 a.m., we (brothers Harold, Cecil, and I) heard what sounded like a bear. They had the 12-gauge shotgun ready, and we agreed that the sap was almost ready so they decided to put what was boiling into some pails and get the hell out of there. As we were walking and running to the house with four or five pails of hot maple syrup, the bear sound was heard just to our left from the bottom of the hill. So we all started running to the house and safety, but the bear kept getting closer and closer as we ran. I was only twelve years old so I had great difficulty keeping up.

When we got to the house with very little maple syrup left in our pails, we told Momma that

a bear had chased us (five hours of boiling and many more collecting the sap and making the fire—gone!). About half an hour later my brothers Clarence, Dennis, and Joe came into the house. These guys had been to the village for a few beers and on their way home had decided to do a number on we three young guys, and Clarence had provided the bear sound to set us up for the chase.

They ran on ahead about halfway home, and when we approached they started breaking branches and making the bear sound, which scared the living daylights out of us. I should mention that when you live so close to the mountains there was always some animal chasing you—although 90% of the time, it was imaginary.

We had two farms—the upper and lower one, with the lower farm being nearer to the mountains. The cattle roamed and pastured on the lower farm most of the time, so when we needed to round them up, whether it was at 6:00 a.m. or at 5:00 p.m. for milking, we had to listen for the cowbell. If the flies were not biting the cattle or if the cows were lying down, then you would not hear the bell, as the cow with the bell on would not shake its head (I will never know why we never put bells on more than one cow). So, therefore, we had to just go and try to find them—sometimes taking an hour—and consequently I would be late for school, because the cows had to be milked. If they were not, that was a serious problem.

I recall one evening when I was about fifteen years old, after looking for the cows and finally finding them in the lower field by the Perrault farm, I was driving the herd through the bush and swamp back to the barn when I heard a wolf off in the distance; it was getting closer and closer, howling. Your hair actually stands up on your body when you hear that howl! I shouted at the cows, and they started running through the bush. I was so scared that the wolves would catch me that I grabbed the tail of one of the cows, and she ran even faster with me in tow. We were going so fast that I couldn't let go, or I would fall on my face.

As we approached the muddy swamp, I became covered in mud, and to make matters worse, the cow relieved herself all over my clothes and face. A very scary time—I thought for sure the wolves were right behind me and ready to jump me. From then on, I always carried our 22-calibre repeater gun and mushroom long shells, as well as taking along my hound, Shep.



Ever since the new school was built in 1952, the D'Arcys, the Keons, and Jack Morris seemed to inherit most of the responsibility of flooding the rink down at the school. After my brothers Cecil and Harold left to work off the farm, I took up the task, along with Pat Keon who lived in the village, of flooding the rink. Sometimes (depending how cold it was: 0°F or colder was ideal for flooding but damn cold for us), we would not finish flooding until 1:30–2:00 a.m.

On one such bitterly cold night in mid-February, I was returning from the rink at about 2:00 a.m. I was crossing the Keon fields, and halfway across I heard the wolves at the dump behind the

Keon's old house about three city blocks away. I was so frightened that I started to run towards our farm shouting for my dog, Shep—my faithful friend.

However, it had been mild and had rained on the three feet of snow before turning cold, so there was about one inch of ice on top of the snow. It was great for walking, but if you ran, you went through and sank up to your waist. So, needless to say, I felt doomed—certain that the wolves were going to pounce on me! I continued to run, and every third step I would go through the crust of ice. Knowing full well that the still howling wolves could run on the crust of ice terrified me even more. Just as I approached the edge of the bush leading to the swamp and then the safety of our home, my eyes iced shut because of the cold and the freezing condensation of my breath, I felt this animal jump up on me. As I could not see what it was, I thought this is it for little Dom—you've had it—end of the road!

But, lucky for me, it was Shep who had “answered my call.” Thank God our dogs remained outside; I swear to God Almighty that I died that night for a brief moment. I still have the scars on my knees and legs from cutting through the ice each time I took a step to run forward. Shep and I went everywhere together. We were best friends and I used to confide in him—what brother at fourteen or fifteen would tell his deepest and darkest secrets to his four sisters?

That was the start of my lifetime love affair with dogs. I recall in the summer of 1956 that Shep was not looking so great. The sparkle was out of his eyes, and he was somewhat lethargic. My older brother Clarence was visiting us with his twin boys, Pat and John. I saw Shep lying on the grass up near the woodshed, which was unusual for him because, like most dogs, he liked to remain with his master and be where the action is, but he chose to be off by himself at this time. As it turned out, he had been caught in a bear trap that had been put on our property by some dastardly person.

We treated the wound as best we could, but the next day we noticed that the inside of his hind leg was blistered and looked terrible. We tried to medicate it, but it was too late. The next day, Sunday, Shep died in the same spot where he first went (animals do that, they go away by themselves to die).

I just had to give him an Irish funeral. I put him in the old wheelbarrow and wheeled him back to the edge of the center field with my three sisters Theresa, Leona, and little Helen, accompanied by Pat and John, in a procession and singing religious songs. I dug a shallow grave and buried him there, placing a large stone on top with a cross.

Now Old Shep is gone where the good doggies go  
 And no more with Old Shep will I roam  
 But if dogs have a heaven there's one thing I know  
 Old Shep has a wonderful home

(“Old Shep” lyrics by Red Foley, 1933)

The problem you had in my situation then was that you could only grieve in private and had no one to share the loss with. I cried myself to sleep for several nights in my room alone. It was a very sad time for Petit Dominic.



On warm summer Sundays, Bert Perrault and I would go to Hayes' Rock in the Laurentian Mountains about two miles from our farm and climb to the top of Brennan's Bluff (as it is now called) and throw large rocks down the face of the cliff. The noise could be heard several miles away. I can only imagine how worried my dear mother must have been—two fifteen-year-old boys climbing one of the highest peaks in the Laurentians! It took us at least two hours to climb up. I never see much of Bert anymore—he works for Ontario Northland Railway in North Bay.

When you grow up on a farm, you are taught responsibility at a very early age. By the time I was eight years old, I had chores to do, such as bringing in the wood, gathering eggs, milking the cows, and helping to weed the half-acre garden (which was the absolute worst chore on the farm), but we all had to share the work; a farmer's work is never done—there is always a chore staring you in the face every minute of every waking day.

When I was just about eight years old, I remember a Saturday in the middle of winter—far below freezing—and I recall my father and brothers were cutting logs in back of the house at the foot of the sliding hill. I wanted to go visit them and do some sliding. I ended up at the foot of the hill with our dogs Sport and Buster, and walked through the three-foot deep snow to visit my father. When my brother Joe, who was home for the weekend, observed me, he told my father that I should be collecting the brush and limbs from the fallen trees, taking them to the brush fire, and cleaning up to prevent accidents while tramping through the brush. Joe won; I lost. I recall having to spend the rest of the afternoon working up over my waist in snow and freezing. Welcome to reality!

I also recall when my brothers Harold, Cecil, and Joe were working at the hay in mid-July 80–90°F heat. Joe was a little more difficult to work with than my other brothers; he could become quite domineering. I was about fifteen years old then; it was extremely hot and I wanted to go to the spring, which was about one city block away, to get a drink of cool water. Joe observed me heading to the spring and started shouting at me, telling me to get back to work; I was not allowed to get a drink.

Still speaking of Joe, every time my parents went to Pembroke for shopping, they would stay for the day. There was no bridge then—only the ferry the SS *Pontiac*. That's when my sister Claire would take our sisters Mary, Theresa, and Leona, and me to the bush to stay out of his way until my parents came home. Claire would sneak up to the house and get some food—we were so intimidated by Joe. However, Joe also had some wonderful qualities, and he absolutely loved

his family. He bought me my first amplifier and electric guitar, took me back to Windsor with him after my car accident in 1958, took me to my first NHL hockey game in Detroit (Detroit *vs.* Montréal Canadiens) Rocket Richard *vs.* Gordie Howe—Wow! So exciting for a young lad from Sheenboro. Detroit lost 7–3.

Speaking of my sisters—my brothers and I would take every opportunity made available to us to frighten them. I learned well from my older brothers, especially the prankster, Clarence. Each night I would wait for the girls to go to the outhouse—they always traveled in pairs with the old coal-oil lantern. I would go out before them and hide in the bushes, and once they got settled on the throne seat, I would start breaking branches and making weird animal noises. (Great fun for me, but I ought not to have done those pranks.)

My Uncle James H. Sweeney (b. 1883 in Pembroke, ON), who was married to my father's sister, would visit us almost every autumn from Teaneck, New Jersey. We would come home from school and see that big green Cadillac in the yard, and that was so exciting for us. It made us feel like really important people when he drove us to school or church in that big Caddie. It was a 1949 model and is still one of the most beautiful cars I have ever seen, even to this day. Uncle Jim would stay a full month with us. He would rarely leave the farm—just sit all day with my mother and talk. He did like his drink of whisky, or was it rye? My brothers Cecil and Harold would get paid to go buy his alcohol.

Uncle Jim was a wealthy man; each night, when he went to bed he would hang his pants on the door and put his cigarettes on the dresser in the room downstairs. He was a deep sleeper, especially if he had been drinking. I would sneak into the room and steal some of his Camel cigarettes. They were so strong (How strong were they?... They were so strong it destroyed the hair in my nose!).

One time, I reached into his pants and stole 25¢. I was so scared he was going to wake up because he turned over in the bed and faced the door, but he did not awaken. In 1953, 25¢ was a lot of money, especially if you had none. A Coke was worth 7¢, and a chocolate bar cost 5¢. Uncle Jim was a great storyteller, and each night we would all gather in the summer kitchen where he would regale us with stories after dinner around the old wood stove. He told ghost and scary stories particularly well. That's when my older brothers would sneak outside, run a piece of lumber across the outside laths on the wall just at the punch line of the story so that objects would fall off the wall, and scare us so badly we were frightened out of our wits. Great way to go to bed and try to have a good night's sleep! No wonder we all had nightmares and convulsions and even howled at the moon!

My uncle Jim's true story, written in his own words, is one of my favorite family tales. Here is a summary of his story:

I was the eldest of twelve children, and at age seven was sent to live with my paternal

grandparents in Trout Lake, QC with the provision I attend school. [Trout Lake was settled by five Irish families who lived among the Indians.] At age fifteen I decided to apply for a job with the lumberman J.R. Booth who had a lumber camp 30 miles into the woods from Trout Lake. He hired me and paid me \$20/month salary, a lot of money at the time. Mail came on Friday and returned Monday via the postmaster on saddle horse. Two weeks after I was hired, the foreman named Mr. Crowden said his wife's illness was worsening, and he asked me to ride to get the doctor who lived in Chapeau forty miles away. It was very stormy, and two miles from the depot, the storm intensified with terrible lightning and wind blowing down trees. I was a scared boy and thought I could not go on, but as the lightning flashed, there was enough light to see the road and help me guide the horse. I recalled the words of my grandfather, "Stick to a hard job, never give it up. Anyone can do an easy job." So I kept on through the storm. I lost the fear of the dark as the storm subsided only the thought of the wolves that were plentiful in that county, gave me something else to worry about. The storm cleared with 18 miles yet to go until Chapeau when all at once I heard the howls of the wolves on the mountains. My heart jumped clear up to my neck! I thought this was the end. To make matters worse, I still had to cross the river in six miles onto the side the wolves were on. Those were the shortest six miles I ever traveled, and when I reached the bridge, I said a few prayers and left everything to God. Opposite Bass Lake, I could hear the wolves about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile behind me. Given the conditions, the horse couldn't trot to outrun them, and I knew I had to get up into a tree to be safe. I had a 45 Colt revolver, so I could stop them from killing and eating the tied horse. I just made it up into the tree when the wolves arrived, chasing a deer that had headed for the lake. Shortly, the howls stopped. Everything was calm at daybreak so I pushed on, knowing wolves didn't travel much during the day. I picked up speed and in two hours, I arrived at my surprised grandfather's yard. After a hearty breakfast, dry clothes, and a fresh horse, I continued on my journey and arrived at the doctor's house at noon. He read the foreman's note and told me to feed my horse. We ate dinner and left within an hour. We made good time and arrived at my grandfather's house at suppertime. He supplied us with matches, ammunition, and a gun for the doctor. We started off, trotting the horses as much as possible, but it was rocky country and we didn't want the horses to break a leg. We arrived at Spring Camp, used only during March and April by river drivers. Four miles—1½ hours' ride on saddle horses over these bad roads—turned out to be the most terrifying time of my life! Just a ½ mile from Spring Camp, the wolves' howling could be heard just behind us, getting louder and louder. We stopped; I exchanged horses with the doctor and sent him on his way to assist the sick woman. That four-square-mile region had been swept by fire the year before and hardly a tree was left standing that could be climbed now for safety. I thought this was the end of me. I tied up the horse and walked 50 feet off the road and got into a hole from an uprooted tree stump. My revolver was ready. There was a possibility of the wolves jumping on me in the hole, so I climbed up a 10-foot root sticking up in the air. I could hear them attack the horse and then the growling among them as they devoured the horse. Then another pack joined them, and they picked up my tracks to the tree. I fired two shots and dropped one. Three got

up on the log and came towards me. I fired three shots and felled one. The others jumped down and started eating the dead wolf. In the direction of the depot, I heard shots fired so I knew help was on the way. I fired my gun to let them know I was still alive. By daylight, the lumberjacks arrived and the wolves were gone. I welcomed these vicious-looking bearded armed men with open arms and rode back to camp on one of the lumberjack's horses. I was given food and a pill for my nerves and slept for 20 hours. When I awoke, I was told the foreman's wife had given birth to a healthy daughter. Her illness began as a cold, developed into pneumonia, and triggered labor. I never heard of the Crowden family again until 1920. We were living in Connecticut and my family was ill with the flu raging that winter. My wife was expecting the stork at any moment. The arranged nurse came but also caught the flu, returned home, and died. Despite the scarcity of nurses, a neighbor got us one from New London, and four days later our daughter was born. In conversation with my wife, the nurse related that she was born under similar conditions in a small place in Canada, in a lumber camp. After hearing the full story, my wife told the nurse to go into the next room and tell me the story. She did, saying her father had told her the young boy who fetched the doctor had drowned in the Dumond River. I smiled and looked at her. I said, "That boy did not die. I was *that boy!*" Everybody recuperated, and we had a big laugh at how history almost repeated itself.

Autumn was a beautiful time of year for us up in Sheenboro; however, we knew what was coming by mid- to late November—winter! The preparations for the cold northern winter included bringing in enough wood from the bush to last us through the winter and going to Tom Berrigan's lumber mill with the horses and wagon for several loads of sawdust to be used as banking around the house to keep the frost out of the basement. It was always a chore moving the damn stove out of the summer kitchen into the main house. That stove must have weighed 300 lbs. Then you had to clean the pipes and the chimney and remove the black soot—why Poppa did not buy another stove for the kitchen I'll never know.

Once winter did arrive, it was a cheerful time for us, especially the younger ones. The snow was so deep (sometimes as high as four feet) that at times you could hardly see us over the drifts (often five to seven feet high), but it was great for sliding. The older ones would walk ahead of the younger kids to make a track. Sometimes our neighbor, Remi Lapierre, would take our roller and roll the snow (pack it down), which made it much easier to walk on.

Once, when I was about fourteen or fifteen, I had to come home for lunch to water the cattle. We lived about one mile from the school, and it took around twenty-five minutes to get home, another fifteen to eat (soup, dumplings, potatoes, pork or beef, and home-made mustard pickles)—well worth the trip—then another fifteen to twenty minutes to chop out a hole in the ice with an axe to water the cattle. It seems the more of a hurry you were in, the more the cows drank. When you got back to school, the hockey game was almost over and the bell would ring, so no hockey! In the summer it was mostly the same, however, it did not take as long to go home and get back. We always ran and never stopped for a fence; we would just jump over it as all my brothers did. They were four feet high (the fences).



**October 25, 1997** *I am writing this chapter at my cabin situated at the foot of the Laurentian Mountains 30 miles from Ottawa at Luskville, Québec. I have since sold my cottages, which we had had for seventeen years, as my sons Darren and Anthony (known affectionately as “the Ant”) grew up and did not enjoy coming there any more. I kept the land behind (four acres) and built a small cabin, 14’ x 12’ with a screened-in porch, all made of cedar from nearby bush and from old beams and barnboard that I scrounged in the area. It was a wonderful get-away for me, especially in autumn and winter, when I would come up and stay a few days with the wood fire going—it was most relaxing. I get the most satisfaction just sitting and being quiet and observing nature in-your-face up close. There is a family of barn owls and great northern owls, as well as more species of birds than you will find anywhere else in Eastern Canada.*

*One day last fall when I was digging a trench for the water runoff, I heard a noise in the woods just off to my right about thirty feet away. I paid little attention to it for about a half-hour assuming it was squirrels collecting food for the winter. It became obvious to me after a while that this must be more than squirrels, and I decided to investigate. To my surprise, as I went to the top of the knoll, there was a black bear cub just rolling and playing in the leaves.*

*It was so incredible to be that close to such a part of nature. I spent all those years growing up where I did and never before observed a bear from that distance. I remained very still for about thirty seconds, and then it noticed me, ran to a tree and climbed up about four feet, and just looked at me. I still did not move; however, all my senses were awakened and working as I scanned the bushes around me for the mother or other adult bear. I was close enough to the cabin door that in the event they arrived on the scene, I could dash for cover. Then the cub came down and resumed its play and rolled in the leaves. At this point in time it was five feet from me!*

*I did not want to touch the cub, as the mother would smell my scent and possibly abandon the cub and not look after it. I then went back to my digging, being constantly vigilant in case Momma or Dad bear decided to have me for dinner, and the cub just kept playing between ten and fifteen feet away. I never spoke—just observed. Of all the wonderful and exciting things I have experienced in my life, that autumn day had to rank in the top five.*

*The reason for this explanation about my cabin and nature experiences is that in late August I received a call from my neighbor in the country Marc, a professor of law at the University of Ottawa, who informed me that my precious little cabin had been broken into and trashed. I came up a few days later, and I was just devastated when I saw the mess.*

*Boys who lived there year-round were seen by Marc, who had felt they were acting very suspiciously around my property. These were eleven-, twelve-, and thirteen-year-old brothers who live at the beach. They completely trashed the cabin, and whatever they didn't steal, they broke with my axe—all my beautiful pictures, etc. Then they broke all the windows and screens, and sprayed or scattered whatever*



*they could find inside, bug spray, dish detergent, oil, and Comet cleanser.*

*I came up the next day to investigate after receiving some leads from Marc. I did not come in full police uniform; however, I had kept my pants, boots, and dark t-shirt as well as a police ball cap. I spoke to a few people, and they informed me about the boys at the beach who were very troublesome and troubled youngsters; however, they told me to be careful because the father, who had spent time in the Kingston Penitentiary (and was out on parole), looked and acted like a tough guy.*

*So upon hearing this, I put my pepper spray in my pocket and proceeded to the house at the beach at 8:30 a.m. on a Sunday morning. I did not rap on the door but rather I banged on it, as I wanted to start this investigation in a serious manner. A twelve-year-old boy came to the door, and I identified myself as a police officer from Ottawa (out of my jurisdiction) and said I wished to speak to their father about a break-in. The boy only spoke French (as did his two brothers) so I repeated en français.*

*The father came to the door, and in a rather assertive tone I informed him who I was and the reason for my visit. He was about 5' 11", 180 lbs., with tattoos up and down his arms. He invited me in, and I informed him that I had received information and had reason to believe that his three sons were responsible for the break-and-enter and theft at my petite cabine. He got the other two boys out of bed, lined up the three of them on the couch, and we questioned them. They denied committing the crime but admitted they were there after the break and enter "just looking." He loaded them onto the back of his half-ton truck and went up the road, with the boys sitting on the tailgate just like in a Southern movie of sorts.*

*Upon arrival at the cabin I showed them the damage and again told them that I suspected them as being responsible, but they still denied any wrongdoing. They were told never to trespass on my property again (or any other private property). I pointed out the dangers and also the lack of respect for people's private property and belongings, and further stressed that it was illegal and that my Doberman would be let loose on them (he had been dead for ten years! However, they did not know that). Five weeks later, I uncovered information that they were, in fact, responsible and brought it to the attention of the Québec police, but nothing was ever done. I felt I taught them a valuable lesson in life and dropped the matter. They were three scared lads when they left!*



**August 23, 1998** *I am writing this portion on Via Rail, somewhere between Québec City and Montréal. My wife, Noellie, and I spent three lovely days in beautiful Québec City.*

I don't recall much between age ten and thirteen years other than we worked very hard all four seasons. Once school was out in mid-June, we would hardly have time to put away the school bag, as it was off to the sheds and barnyard to prepare for the haying season and help my brothers sharpen the mower and repair machinery and harnesses.

Then my bothers Harold and Cecil would cut the hay with the team of horses, named George

and Pearl. Pearl was not a happy camper, always cross and on guard. She used to wait for us to be positioned behind her, either hooking her up or taking the harness off her, then she would try to kick us.

I recall when I was about thirteen years old I was watering her and Big George up at the well, and she was drinking, and everything seemed peaceful in her world when all of a sudden she lunged at me with her head and tried to bite me, thus knocking me down. I fell under her, and then she tried to stomp on me and kick me. Thankfully, she missed, and my brother Harold was nearby and grabbed her by the halter. I learned a lesson for life—never trust animals completely. If she had kicked me, I may not be here sitting on a train relating this to you.

I would be delegated to rake the hay with a black horse named Mink. She was such a wonderful animal, like George. At night I would go up to the stable, and the pair of them would put their heads under my arms, and I would stroke them and speak softly to them; they really enjoyed that. It was a peaceful time. Once the hay was raked, I would either take Mink back to the stable at the upper farm, or, depending on the time of day, I would tie her up in the shade while I would go off to the field and stack or pile the hay.

That was very demanding work and labor intensive. We would take turns pitching the hay up on the wagon. When placing or building the load, it had to be well placed and balanced; otherwise, you would lose half the load going to the hay barn. On one occasion Cecil and I were coming from the lower farm with a load of hay (both of us up on top, which would be approximately twenty feet off the ground) when the team was spooked just as we were approaching the machine shed. They started to run, and the load upset throwing Cecil and me to the ground. Luckily, Cecil held on to the lines, and the horses did not run away out of control this time.

Once we reached the hay barn, we would unhook the horses and stop the wagon under the large hayfork beside the barn. Harold or Cecil would stay there to put the large fork with the clips (or hooks) on the bottom to hold the hay so it would not come loose, and one of them would go to the back of the barn with the horses and hook onto a large and long steel cable and pull the fork full of hay up to a track and into the hay loft. Guess who was always delegated to work in the hot loft—yes, Dominic! Once the fork would be tipped in the loft, it would fall fifteen to twenty feet to the floor, and you could not see anything for a minute because of the dust, etc. Then you would also see and hear field mice that were caught in the hay as they were pitched onto the wagon; and, on occasion, you would get the odd bee's nest. (Country wisdom: A bumblebee is faster than a team of horses.)

Not a pleasant place to be, especially when the temperature up there was close to 100°F in the loft because the roof was made of tin and absorbed heat. But I'm sure my brothers did the same task when they were younger like me. I would look like a raccoon after I finished, what with all the dust and grime, etc.

After the hay wagon was unloaded, we would then take the harness off the horses and put them in the fields for a well-deserved rest and grazing. We would then have to go fetch the cows and milk them, feed the calves and pigs, gather the eggs, and take the milk to the separator house to separate the cream from the milk, and then put the cream in a cream can for the creamery man who came once and sometimes twice per week. That is how mother raised a few dollars—yes, actual money—to help in a small way to keep the farm going.

I do recall when I was at that age, thirteen/fourteen years, going out behind the stable to the field where we would all play baseball. Brothers and sisters and, on rare occasions, Momma would come out back and watch us. Momma never really had time for play, not when you had that many children to fend for. This was always after the day's work and chores were finished.



July 9, 1952 is the day my father, Patrick D'Arcy, died. I was about to turn fourteen on July 30<sup>th</sup>, and Poppa would have been fifty-two on July 28<sup>th</sup>. The last time I saw my father he was building the new kitchen addition to the town hall in downtown Sheenboro. I was heading to Sudbury with my Aunt Nancy and Uncle Marty Callaghan, and we stopped at the hall to say goodbye. Poppa asked me, jokingly, if I was running away from home. That was about two weeks before his death. I was at my sister Doreen McGuire and her husband Sylvester's house at 76 Logan Avenue in Sudbury when my two brothers Dennis and Joe came by to say they were going home and that Poppa was ill. So we left Sudbury early evening.

The drive down was very exciting in my brother's big car, and I felt quite important to be with my brothers on a trip. I was in the back seat and was always leaning forward to hear all the stories and big-brother talk. I recall letting out some foul air (a fart), and it was a dandy! Joe blamed it on Dennis, and Dennis blamed it on Joe. They never suspected me.

We probably arrived at the Pembroke General Hospital between 9:30 and 10:00 p.m. I did not fully understand how ill my father was, but I'm quite sure my brothers knew and decided not to inform me. We walked into the hospital room on the second floor, south side of the building, and my mother was there to greet us (before we entered the room). There may also have been someone else, however, I can't recall.

Upon entering we saw Poppa to the right, and he was unconscious. I approached the bed where he lay, and my mother said, "Kiss your father; it may be the last time you see him alive." I bent over and kissed him, and he had a three-day-old beard. I can vividly remember that moment as if it were just last month. I cannot recall what my emotions were at that time; possibly I blocked them out. I just can't remember what I was feeling when I saw him lying there so still. Poppa was built like a quarterback: 5'10" or 11", 190–200 lbs. with very large bones, broad shoulders, and extremely large hands. I suppose we left the hospital for the farm close to midnight. I believe

Dennis stayed with Momma at the hospital, while Joe and I drove to the farm.

Cecil was still at home at that time, as were my sisters Mary, Theresa, Leona, and wee Helen, who was then only four years old. Of course, this was during hay season, and we were halfway through bringing in the hay. Harold was home on weekends to cut the hay, and Cecil and I would rake and collect it and bring it to the barn. Dennis and Momma, I believe, stayed at our cousin Bruce Donnelly's place in Pembroke; he owned a store where he sold washers, stoves, and other electrical appliances, as well as farm machinery and tractors. He and his wife, Hortie, were the most caring and generous people. They were just so kind to us. Poppa's sister, Sister Mary Eileen (Johanna) from New York was home to see Poppa as well.

Although Poppa was in the hospital for more than a week, they still had not diagnosed what the problem was. Even after he had fallen into a coma, they had not performed the necessary tests to determine what the problem was. That next day Dennis decided to abandon the doctor and take Poppa via ambulance to the Montréal Neurological Hospital. Momma, Aunt Johanna, and cousin Rose Donnelly (who was a nurse) accompanied Dennis and Poppa to Montréal. Dennis paid for the ambulance and I believe the lodgings as well. You see, Aunt Johanna never, I mean never, had any money when she came to visit us—even though she belonged to the Order of Grey Nuns who had more money than Ford and Chrysler put together. I believe Poppa died the next day or shortly after from a brain tumor, and the Montréal specialists said if it had been diagnosed even a week earlier my father may very well have survived. However, at this point the tumor was too large. Dennis contemplated suing the doctor in Pembroke, but that never happened.

Meanwhile, back at the farm Cecil and I were unloading the hay from the wagon; it was approximately 2:30 p.m. on July 9th, a date that will forever remain in my memory, when we heard a car coming down the D'Arcy Line. We stopped what we were doing and waited for the car to come into the area around the well, near the barns. It was Father Burke, our parish priest, and my mother's sister, Aunt Grace, who was my godmother and most favorite aunt. We knew something was wrong, but, being only thirteen years old, I did not fully understand what was happening. By that time my sisters came up from the house. I am sure Cecil, who was almost eighteen, and Mary fifteen years old, knew immediately that Poppa had passed away.

In all the years that I have reflected back on that sunny, bright, warm July afternoon, I still cannot understand why I reacted the way I did. After the priest left (Aunt Grace stayed with us for a few days), I went behind the barn to finish unloading the hay, and I cried and cried, but not for the reason you might expect. I was crying for my older sister Doreen (oldest member of the D'Arcy clan). I kept thinking how awfully sad she was going to feel when she got the news of Poppa's death.

If you have any Irish in you at all, you have heard of an Irish wake. Well, that is exactly what we had—a good old Irish wake. Much like the songs called, “Tim Finnegan's Wake” or “Paddy Murphy's Wake.” Poppa was brought home over gravel, washboard roads in the back of Bruce

Donnelly's truck, I believe. He was laid out beside the piano in the old parlor on the farm. They had performed an autopsy on him for medical research and had shaved his head and cut open his scalp and the side of his head. They promised Dennis and Momma that they would put a wig on my father, but they didn't, and I did not recognize him at all with his head bald.

We all took turns staying with Poppa so he would not be alone, which was customary at that time. I recall Joe kneeling down beside the casket, and, thinking he was alone, he was sobbing and crying quite audibly. Joe and Poppa usually got along well, but sometimes their strong Irish personalities clashed, at which times Joe left to stay at Aunt Grace's place.

Tom and Pat D'Arcy were Poppa's first cousins from Ottawa. My Grandpa Denis D'Arcy and Tom and Pat's dad were brothers. Tom owned a company called T. D'Arcy, Ltd., Moving and Storage, and Pat worked in the House of Commons. Tom and Pat were much like Abbott and Costello, the famous comedians. They were so funny. They kept the party going all night with their stories, laughter, and good humor. You see, we Irish seem to have developed the best way to mourn a death: laugh, eat, drink a little, sing, shout, cry, hug, drink some more, and tell stories about the deceased. There are cultures that do none of that—they either keep it inside or express their grief in an even more demonstrative manner.



My oldest brother, Dennis, adopted a son at birth whose name was David or "Doodle Doo," which were his first utterances. My brother had two daughters and after David also adopted another child at birth, called Colleen. Dennis and Doodle Doo were always together, especially at hunting season. David was always heard to say "my Dad...this" and "my Dad...that."

In January 1981, David was working as a forklift operator at Neelon Casting Ltd. in Sudbury. He was twenty years old, a gorgeous looking kid with a great personality. Our understanding was that when the red light was flashing, it meant danger, do not enter with the forklift, as there was melted steel (slag) 2,500–2,700°F. in large 400 lb. pots coming along the tracks. Well, someone must have fallen asleep at the switch. The light was green, and David was unaware of the imminent danger that lay ahead. He proceeded to enter the danger zone; his lift caught one of the pots; it tipped; and the molten iron fell on him. He was not wearing fire-resistant clothing, as he had only been on the job six months. Only employees who work regularly in the melt departments are issued such garments. He was taken to Sudbury Hospital with burns to 90% of his body and then rushed via air ambulance to Toronto Wellesley Hospital accompanied by his parents, Dennis and Audrey, and I believe his sister Christine, who was a nurse. His other sister Muriel Ann worked in Toronto as a nurse and met them at the hospital.

David's face was so swollen from second and third degree burns that I'm told he was unrecognizable; however, he lived long enough to tell his parents and sisters how much he loved

them and thanked Dennis and Audrey for the great life he had with them. He died in intensive care January 6th. How unspeakably sad! I arranged for the Ottawa members of the family go via train to Sudbury to attend the funeral. My son Darren, who was about fifteen years old, came with me for support. All the way up to Sudbury I kept rehearsing in my mind what I would say to my brother and his wife. What do you say in the face of such a tragedy?

We all entered the funeral home and approached the room where David lay, but I held back as long as I could and kept reminding myself not to completely break down. I approached Dennis and his family after passing the closed casket. What a pitiful sight it was. Everyone was crying, some quietly and others aloud. When I came to my brother, I just put my arms around him and hugged him and told him how sorry I was and that I loved him and expressed my sympathy to his wife, Audrey, as well. Poor little Darren did not know which way to turn he was so uncomfortable, as this was a very new emotion for him.

At the church service I sat in front of my cousin Billy Gray, and I turned around and told Billy we should have a Ceileigh (Irish party). Billy was well off and had this huge house up on the hill overlooking Sudbury. Billy agreed, and just the immediate family was invited. We all arrived, and there was food, Irish music playing, some drinks, songs, jokes, and stories.

We were there for about two hours, and finally Dennis and Audrey arrived. It was so painful for us to see them looking so lost. After a while Dennis joined in the music with his mouth organ, Harold on the fiddle, Cecil and Claire on the piano, and me, of course, on guitar with my sisters singing. We played all the old songs, and, after a while, I suggested the brothers and sisters all go to the master bedroom. We talked, cried, and hugged some more, and that seemed to help a great deal, dealing with the deep pain, especially for Dennis and Audrey. Birds sing after the storm, and with a new day, comes new thoughts.

At a subsequent two-day coroner's inquest following David's death, his family made an impassioned plea for improved worker safety at the steel plant. The jury agreed and issued recommendations calling for installation of warning devices, fire blankets, first-aid training for supervisors, improved job training for employees, and periodic reviews.



**Sept. 12, 2000**

*I am currently writing this portion from the Laurentian Mountains in a cottage on a private lake, and this is the only building on the lake. It is fifty miles north of Ottawa near the town of Poltimore, Québec. I performed at the Poltimore Fair with some of my Rising Stars: Pamela Murray, aged eleven, and Kara Ruter, aged ten, a duo called the Clearly Canadian Steppers; Breanne Lawrenson, singer, aged thirteen; Amanda Drolet, aged nine; and the identical twins, Jessica and Miranda Pessot, aged seventeen years. What a blast that was! The youngsters were fabulous and were really liked by the country folk.*

*I stayed in a guesthouse, as we were there for Saturday and Sunday, August 19–20, and the kids and their parents, plus my assistant, Russell Mason, and his girlfriend, Leslie, brought their tents and camped on the fairgrounds. Watch out for these young performers on the world stage in years to come? Move over Alanis! One of the directors of the fair's board asked me why didn't I stay at his cottage on the mountain, and I replied, "You should not say that to an Irishman like me 'cause I'll take you up on it," keeping in mind that I had to write another chapter for this book soon.*

*Raymond Cheslock of Paltimore and his father brought me up the winding road that climbs up the mountain, and as we came out of the bush, I saw the view and then the cottage! You would have to travel far and wide to observe something as secluded and beautiful and so very peaceful. You can only imagine the solitude I feel right now. This morning I used their pontoon boat and stopped in the middle of the lake, turned off the engine, and was still for about forty-five minutes. If you ever want to center yourself, that is what you do. Of course, you can do that almost anywhere if you truly desire it.*



Noellie and I flew to Vancouver to visit our son Darren and family. We decided to go to Darren's house first, to see Noëlie (our new granddaughter) and Alisa (our daughter-in-law) before going to our guesthouse down the street. The local time was approximately 9:30 a.m. We were so excited to see little Noëlie (and Darren and Alisa of course). What a beautiful child!

Straight after we entered their home, Alisa said there was a message from our house sitter Lorraine in Ottawa to call her the moment we arrived. Well, that stirred up all sorts of negative thoughts as to why she would call. I first thought it may have been our dog Chase, or possibly the house was broken into. I took the phone into the bedroom and I called. Lorraine answered and sounded really subdued; I knew something serious had occurred.

She informed me that my brother Dennis had suffered a massive heart attack and that he was at the Sudbury General Hospital. This was approximately 12:30 p.m. Sudbury time. So, I called my brother Harold who had just returned from the hospital. He stated that Dennis was in pretty bad shape—unconscious, and the doctor did not think he would live. What terrible news! Even now, I am shedding a tear and having a rough time writing this. You realize how fragile life is and how quickly it can be taken from us and that we all must strive to get along with each other, especially with family.



The wind is gently whispering through the trees here on the mountain, the water is quietly rippling against the shore, and I am so sure that Momma, Poppa, Joe, and Clarence are here to comfort me. Dennis had his heart attack about the same time that I was writing the chapter about Poppa. I immediately started writing. I felt compelled to do so. Meanwhile, my dearest Noellie just read

her book and let me do my thing. Quite incredible, is it not? Why did I put the scribbler in my carry-on bag, and why did I concentrate on my brother Dennis?

I was awakened about 2:00 a.m. by the sound of large bangs, the wind was howling, and I just lay still to try to analyze what was making such a racket. I finally got the nerve to slowly crawl out of bed and peered out all the windows. Just then, another large gust of wind came up, and it actually sounded like ten black bears, sixteen deer, and nine raccoons jumping on the tin roof. All four buildings had tin roofs, including the cottage. Guess what the sound was—acorns falling on the tin roof—back to sleep Dominic. Dennis has since recovered from his heart attack and is at his home with his wife Audrey and a caregiver, and for that, all the family is relieved. [Dennis died 19 November 2004.]



School was not always a pleasurable experience for me. There are many reasons for my saying this. I suppose the number one reason was that it was very hard to concentrate on school work, partially because of the workload we had at the farm, the long walk to school—rain, shine, or snow. I know other kids in Sheenboro were also confronted with similar situations, but, believe me, it was not easy.

Number two reason was that I was not good at academia and particularly struggled with mathematics and geometry. However, I might add, I excelled in English composition and literature, history, and geography, but I always liked the study of religion. I also could pinpoint most capital cities of the world by the time I was fifteen years old and knew most times who their leaders were, but don't ask me about  $\pi$   $r^2$ !

However, in recent years I have purchased videos, tapes, and literature on math anxiety with the message of “Math Can Be Fun” or *Turn on the Human Calculator in You!* (by Scott Flansburg). It certainly gives you mathematical empowerment. Far too many children leave school without acquiring the mathematical power necessary for productive lives. Everything is now done by electronic calculator, whether at the grocery store checkout or schoolwork. Many graduating from university these days cannot calculate in their heads the simplest equation, addition, multiplication, or subtraction. A small illustration: The square of 35 ( $35 \times 35$ ) can be worked out rather quickly using the strategy that because 35 ends in 5 we therefore know the answer will end in 25. Take 3 (the first digit) + 1 = (4), multiply them together ( $3 \times 4$ ) = 12 and affix 25 to the end. The answer is 1225; you can do that with any squaring of a digit that ends in 5. So, for another example, the answer to 45 squared is 2025 [ $4 + 1 = 5$  then  $4 \times 5 = 20$  + affix 25 at the end = 2025].

The third reason I disliked school was that I was constantly picked on from grade 5 to grade 10, and once my brother Cecil, my protector, left school, I was on my own at approximately aged fifteen. I was picked on also because we were poor and had to borrow machinery, etc. from the



neighbors. (I wore my brother's O.P.P. pants to school, and they were so big I had to wear two pairs to fill them out. My brother Joe was 6'2" and weighed 220 lbs., whereas, I was 5'7" and weighed 150 lbs. at the time. Those pants were so big that every time I wanted to blow my nose, I had to pull down the zipper!)

I never liked fighting and had not fought until I was about sixteen years old when, during a ballgame at noon hour, I was the umpire (we used to rotate players during the game so everyone could get a chance to play). A person two years older and much bigger was pitching. The count was three balls, two strikes, and his team was losing by one run. He wound up and threw the ball. I called it a ball, and the batter went to first base. The pitcher came charging in to home plate and punched me to the ground. I was humiliated to say the least and was in pain. Something happened inside me at that moment. All the frustration and ridicule and pushing I had taken finally caught up with me. I got up and went after him, and I kicked, scratched, and punched him. He was not a happy pitcher.

But it was not over for him. I had won the battle, but not the war. On our way over to the village from the school at day's end, he came at me again. He had a violent temper and was always a bully. I picked up a rather large rock and threw it at him striking his lunch bucket and breaking it. Then someone intervened and stopped the fight. I didn't feel good about my partial victory over a bully, but from that time on I stood up for myself and my rights and beliefs and those of others. It has served me well over the years as a police officer, where there is no shortage of bullies in our communities, workplaces, and schools. This person went on to become a successful individual, and we see each other from time to time and are friends.



### **Aug. 12, 2000**

*I am writing this portion sitting at the kitchen table on Pike Lake, still in the cottage in the Laurentians. Had a wonderful day yesterday. Cloudy and rained most of the day; I took the pontoon boat and slowly cruised the circumference of the lake and dropped anchor in a small bay and just listened to the incredible sounds of nature. Raymond Cheslock and his seven-year-old daughter, Veronica, came to visit me at 5:30. He brought his guitar, and we picked and grinned for a while, and his daughter sang "26c" by the Wilkinsons—not bad for a seven year old. Retired at 8:30, awake at 4:00; went outside and sat on the porch and looked at the moon and stars—very settling. I answered the call of the whippoorwill and the owl. Then in the distance, on a peak, I heard the screeching of what sounded like two lynx fighting. Over breakfast, watching the sun come up through the lake fog added another five years to my life.*

Getting back to reality and the tough days of growing up in Sheenboro, seventeen years old, no father, living on the farm with four and then three sisters and my mother and a farm to run. By the

time I was eighteen years old, I just could not keep up with school because of all the responsibilities of the farm; so I quit school just before Christmas 1956 in Grade 12. Up to that point I had no clear vision of what I had wanted to do with my life. The options were rather limited for me.

I thought about being a Catholic priest for several years. I used to lie awake at night picturing myself at my ordination with all the girls in the church crying! I did not think I had a chance with the ladies; however, years later I found out several were in love with me; I would never have believed that at the time.

When I was thirteen to fifteen, I wanted to be (or dreamed of being) an NHL hockey player, but reality soon sank in when I started playing hockey. I wasn't bad, but NHL caliber? NOT! (I had a friend in Sheenboro who was playing hockey in 1952 on Retty Lake, which feeds into the Ottawa River, just across from Chalk River; he got a breakaway, and we haven't seen him since—I hope he scored a goal!) But primarily we all just wanted to work somewhere to make some money, buy a car, and come back home to show it off.

Speaking of cars, the day my father bought a black 1947 Mercury, in 1950 was so exciting. We went home for lunch, and Poppa was there with the new car—Wow! We previously had a 1931 Plymouth four-door that had to back up the Primeau Hill in Sheen because it didn't have enough gas to drive up. Poppa drove me along with my sisters Mary, Theresa, and Leona back to school. Take that you kids who ridiculed us! We now have status and credibility.



**Summer of 1953** – Fifteen years old. It was July and hay time in the Valley, and the D'Arcys were hard at it. We had worked all day at the lower farm, Cecil, Mary, Harold, and I, cutting, raking the hay, piling it for pick-up the next day if it did not rain. It was 4:30 and time for me to head to the upper farm to do the chores. I unhitched old Mink (she looked the color of mink) from the rake, and halfway up the road I hooked on a few logs that had to be skidded up to the house. I stood on the logs to get a ride. Momma, Theresa, Leona, and Helen were there.

Momma prepared me a meal before my chores, which would take about 2½ hours. Momma and the girls went off up the road to pick some raspberries. She would make raspberry (and blackberry) pies, and there was no one, no one who could make them any better. I was sitting in the summer kitchen with my back to the verandah and screen door eating when I heard Momma screaming, “Dominic, there's a bear behind you on the verandah.”

I turned around, and there was the largest black bear I had ever seen looking in the screen door not more than three feet from me. I shouted at him and told my mother and sisters to run to the barn (they were returning from berry picking). Little Helen was probably only eight years old, but she learned real fast to run like hell. I did not panic; however, I wondered where the heck were our dogs when you needed them. (Just like cops—never around when you needed them!) I made

enough racket that he thought, “I don’t trust that lad,” so he sauntered off to the east end of the verandah. I thought for certain if he decided to come back he would surely break the door down or come through the screen and eat me for dinner. I had to make a decision very quickly—do I stay in the cookhouse, or try to make it into the main house, passing the bear.

At this point, he was just sniffing around, and it seemed he had a bead on some food. There were large baskets of apples on the table on the verandah. (We had an apple orchard nearby.) When he pulled over the bushel basket of apples, I thought the time was right to make my move. I would estimate that he was six feet from me, so I pulled open the screen door very slowly and made a beeline for the house. He didn’t even look at me—just kept eating. I made it into the house, locked the door, but I thought with an animal that size a door would not stop him if he so wished to sample how I tasted.

Bearing in mind I am very concerned at this point for my mother and sisters. If they were in the vicinity of the cubs and the bear decided she had had enough fun scaring me and had enough food to return to the cubs, then they are in deep trouble! We had a 303 British rifle in the bedroom downstairs. Wow, that is one powerful gun. I charged into the room, grabbed the gun but could only find one bullet. I did not wish to wait for the bear to crash through the door, so I took the gun, ran upstairs to my bedroom, which was facing the mountain and the lower farm. I looked down from my window and saw the bear looking back up at me. I tried to load the gun but I could not get the bullet in, so at this point my only chance to survive, I thought, was to call out to my big brave brother Cecil to save me. I started screaming, “Cecil, Help! Cecil, Help!” for about five minutes.

Then I thought the bear was going to climb up the side of the house to get me. He was halfway up the roof of the cellar, so I threw shoes, boots, and then the coal-oil lamp at him; and he didn’t even blink an eye. I kept calling, “Cecil, Help! Bear!” and repeated that over and over. My poor brother and sister Mary must have thought the worst when they first heard me call. They headed for the source of the screaming, and I could hear Cecil shouting as he was about 1/3 mile from me, and I knew I would be saved.

Meanwhile, I’m staring down at this huge black bear. Cecil and Mary finally arrived. It would have been normally a half-hour walk from the lower farm. They were there in 15–20 minutes running behind the horses. Mary probably took the horses to the stable, and Cecil came towards the house. Wow, what a brave guy.

I told him the bear was on the roof near the cellar. He came upstairs to get the gun, and now I was absolutely sure I was out of danger as my Big Brother had arrived. Cecil is three years older than I am. He took the gun, had no difficulty putting the bullet in, and I followed him downstairs and figured in my mind that I would be his backup (p.s.: I had never been taught how to use a gun of that magnitude).

I followed my hero to the verandah, and Cecil had to shoo the bear off the back steps so he could shoot him. The bear went down the stairs rather reluctantly, as he was having a great feast of D'Arcy apples. When he did get down and about 30 feet from the house, he was moving very slowly then and stopped and looked back at us, and that is when Cecil pulled the trigger and killed him instantly with a well-placed bullet to the left side of the head.

The word immediately spread about the big black bear that the D'Arcy boys killed, and by 5:30 that evening the cottagers vacationing along the Ottawa River, mostly people from the USA, came, along with some locals. They were all gathered around the bear, which was lying just down from the summer kitchen, and all were amazed as to how very large he was. Neighbors said they had never seen one so huge—probably 500 lbs. The cottagers, totaling about 15–20 people, wanted pictures of Cecil and me with the bear, to which we obliged. At one point the Keon twins, Lorna and Loretta, and their sister Mazie were standing near the head of the bear, and at that point while posing, I pushed on the stomach of the bear, and there was a loud growl from him that truly sounded as if he were still alive and was going to bite their legs off.

Well, I am sitting here to be telling you that the Keon twins and sister Mazie screamed so loudly that it scared the cottagers (as a matter of fact, they ran from the scene), and the sisters also ran from the area so fast it took twenty minutes for the dust and debris to settle! The reason for the growl was that there was still some air left inside his lungs. I didn't show it at the time; however, it scared me as well.

The Keon sisters got in their car and took off back to the village. Just a year or so ago, Loretta died of cancer. She suffered so long and so much. She was a wonderful person, as all the Keons were, and I would see her frequently while singing in the schools in Ottawa. She was a vice-principal when I last saw her.

Well, the fun was just beginning. You see, we waited almost a week before we decided to pull the bear away, as it became quite a tourist attraction, this large bear lying in the yard. When we did finally do it, it was just starting to decompose, as it was about 85–90°F at that time. Cecil and I harnessed the horses and brought them down to the bear, hitched them up, and started pulling this large, gorgeous, and very dead animal to his final resting place up beyond the pond at the edge of the bush.

We were headed up from the house, through the lawn, and everything was going quite well. We passed the upper well, heading west, and then turned to go in a northerly direction. The bear's last journey was uneventful to that point; however, as we were heading north, I had to drive the horses between the stable and the sheds on the left and the barns on the right that created a wind tunnel, and the winds were now coming from the southeast and from behind the horses.

Once the horses got a whiff of the dead bear, created by the tunnel effect, I felt them start to buck, jump on their hind legs, and then they just took off like race horses at the starting gate. I

attempted to hold on to the lines, however, with almost two tons of muscle, I gave up after 300 feet, as they were heading straight towards the approximately 100' long, 10' high, and 20' wide woodpile that had been cut in the winter, split, and now drying in the warm summer sun.

The dogs were barking and howling, jumping up and down as the horses were galloping out of control. As they approached the woodpile, Cecil and I were shouting like mad men and running after them and yelling, "Whoa! Whoa!" Momma and my sisters came running out of the house screaming, "What's wrong?" Poor Momma must have thought there was another disaster. God only knows she had seen many in her young life. At the last second, the team ran to the right of the woodpile thus throwing their haul onto the woodpile, still attached.

Picture this if you will: that bear had to have been thrown 30 feet up in the air, bouncing over the woodpile and landing at the north end of it, and they just kept running. Now, "bearing" in mind these were workhorses and the thunderous ground-shaking noise they made, along with my brother and I shouting, my mother and sisters screaming, and the dogs barking—that, my friends, is the making of a movie script! Not to mention the hens in the barnyard clucking and the rooster crowing. Those hens were so frightened by all of this that they laid so many eggs that day, we were giving them away the next Sunday at church; also, the rooster died of a stroke.

Once the horses got about 60 feet from the woodpile, the bear came loose from high in the air and dropped to the ground with a great audible thud. The horses kept going with Cecil and me after them. Well, unless you were Ben Johnson Olympic runner or Carl Lewis, you were just not going to catch them. We followed them for about a quarter of a mile and lost sight, but you could still hear the noise of them breaking tree branches and eventually the neck yoke and most of the harness. One horse ended up at Roy Perrault's farm three miles away to the west and the other at Remi Lapierre's—two farms northeast.

We then went back to check the condition of our bear. He was still very dead! The bear sat at the edge of the swamp for another week or so, and by this time you could smell him half a mile away. Even the buzzards wouldn't go near him. Being the poor person I was, and with an entrepreneurial spirit even at that young age, I thought of a way to make a few bucks out of this ordeal.

I phoned the Mayor of Sheenboro, Mr. Simon Downey, and asked him if there was a bounty on the bear. He said, yes, it was \$40.00. Wow, I could almost buy a used car with that. I inquired as to what I had to do to collect the bounty, and I understood him to say "cut off the head and bring it to me for confirmation." So I called Gene Perrault, my friend and neighbor on the next farm, and asked him if he would like to make \$10 to help me cut it off. He agreed and joined me that afternoon. I got my Poppa's carpenter saw and headed up to the deceased bear.

I started cutting the head off, and the smell was so bad (how bad was it?) it was sooooo bad that the bark was peeling off the maple trees and the leaves were changing colors! There were

maggots by the thousands once I opened the flesh. My friend Gene did not last too long—try one minute—and he started throwing up and went home. I desperately wanted that \$40 and was not about to give up on that soon—to-be—mine fortune.

I took a deep breath and got back to the task at hand. It was not bad sawing through the flesh part of the neck, however, when I got to the bone, it was tough going, but I persevered and the head fell off the body. My dogs were still, watching me from a distance. I went to the barn and got a large potato sack, placed the head in it, and carried it back to the house. I asked my mother and sisters to come out and have a look at it, and when I picked up the sack I held it upside down, and the head fell at their feet—needless to say, they were running off to the house in a hurry, and I still don't think they have forgiven me totally for that!

And there is more. I called the Keons in the village, as they ran a taxi service, and informed them I needed to go to Simon Downey's. The taxi arrived a half-hour later, with Mazie driving. I told her where I wished to go and said I have a bag so she told me to put it in the trunk, which I did. I sat in the front with Mazie for the three-mile trip. After we were in the car ten minutes or so, she asked if I smelled something? Of course, I said "no" for two reasons—one was that I was used to the smell by now that it didn't bother me anymore, and, two, I didn't want her to know that I had the head of a dead bear in her trunk, bearing in mind it was a hot day in July!

All the way there she kept complaining about the foul air, and I was hoping she did not think I was farting. All four windows were open. That was probably the fastest trip I ever made to Downey's Bay.

When we arrived, Mr. Downey met us in the yard. Their house was in front of a very pretty lake, by a creek that ran into our beloved Ottawa River where we used to go swimming after a day in the fields. Mr. Downey wanted to see what was in the sack, and when I opened the trunk, both he and Mazie were standing near it, the smell was concentrated and was even much stronger after having been locked in a hot trunk for the journey to the Bay. I opened the potato sack, and there was the bear's head looking up at them.

Both he and Mazie jumped back several feet after I shook the sack out and dropped the head on the ground. The mayor was not impressed, and he shouted at me that he only wanted the bloody ears and not the whole darned head! He began to gag, and although he did not throw up, he seemed close to it; while Mazie had removed herself completely from the situation by vacating the area.

Mr. Downey then barked at me and said, "Throw the darn thing in the creek," and I complied. Mazie did not speak to me all the way home. I believe the ride cost me 75¢, but—what the hell—I could afford it now! I had big money. The word of what I had done was all over Sheenboro by the following Sunday, and I sure was laughed at, but I was getting 40 big ones. About a month later, I received a check from the Québec Government Fish and Game Department for \$40.00 "clear." I

felt I owed Gene \$5.00 for at least attempting to assist me, and I gave my mother \$10.00, so I was left with a net profit of \$25.00.

*The preceding story about the bear was written January, 2001, while sitting out on the deck, 80°F and sunny on Treasure Island, Florida, where I stay each year literally just feet from the ocean. I also enjoy writing at night under the stars. Quite a beautiful place, with the sounds of the ocean and the sight of the dolphins silently swimming back and forth in front of my apartment on their endless journey for food.*



Cecil had left for Atomic Energy in Chalk River, to join my brother Harold, cousin Jim Fox, and other friends from Sheenboro, as Chalk River had good job opportunities and was just across the Ottawa River from our home. However, you had to go all the way around the world for a short cut to get there: down to the ferry and across to Pembroke and then drive to Chalk River up the Ontario side which was about 50 miles, as opposed to 2 miles across the river had there been a bridge or ferry. [You could not go ashore with a boat at Petawawa Military Base or Chalk River Nuclear Reactor.]



As all farmers are aware, summer leads into fall and necessary preparation for the long winter. The wood that was split and out to dry now had to be carried and piled in the woodshed, and that was hard and arduous work. The potatoes had to be harvested and placed in the cellar. They were planted in the lower farm, and we would sell some as well in Pembroke at the market. The garden had to be taken in, carrots, beets, onions, citrons, turnips, etc. Then when mid- to late September/October arrived, we would pick the apples, plums, cranberries, and gooseberries and would as well sell some of these to the cottagers who were still vacationing in the area. With the colder weather approaching, all our activities were amplified. That was also the time Momma had to make the trip to Pembroke for supplies and clothing for the winter.

There were no second-hand shops in those days, and we never could afford to purchase high-end clothing. I recall always having to wear those damned gum rubbers, which were cheap compared to the alternatives. They had absolutely no lining and were cold as hell (now that's an absolute contradiction). However, Momma and her mother would knit woolen stockings for us to wear inside those hard pieces of rubber. I had frozen my feet so many times that I lost track. You could put your hands in your pocket, but your feet?

In late October the older students were told to start assembling the boards for the ice rink and have them in place for flooding when the temperature went below freezing and, as I alluded

to previously, that was so time consuming, especially the first two or three floods. However, it was all worth it when we played our first hockey game, and on certain evenings of the week it was used just for skating, and I and my friends Frank Retty, George Sullivan (who went on to become an Ontario Provincial Police [OPP] Officer), Gene Perrault, Bert Perrault, and Joe Smith would go cruising around the rink girl scouting (I used to be a Boy Scout until I was sixteen, then I became a Girl Scout!), as we were the Senior guys—Grades 11 and 12.

Andrew Perrault was one year older than I and was a friend of Cecil's. Andrew went on to teach high-school history in Pembroke and was our goaltender for the Sheenboro Shamrocks, and a damn good one. He likely could have gone on further, however, he decided to become a teacher and was probably one of the finest persons to live in Sheenboro. Andrew's father Sidney would always accompany him to the games.

There was a great rivalry with Chapeau, as our parish priest and the parish priest in Chapeau were brothers. Fr. Gerry Harrington and Fr. Denis were fierce competitors. On numerous occasions, I recall their shouting and screaming at each other during a game.

Andrew was a big boy, 6', 200+ lbs., and very competitive. His father was no slouch either, and during a game in Sheenboro one bright sunny Sunday afternoon, against the team from St. Joseph's on the Island, a fight started, and soon all the players were involved. I think Andrew was taking on two of them. Sydney Perrault didn't appreciate that, so he joined the fracas, and I can still see this picture when he one-handedly grabbed the biggest one by the chest stretching his sweater about two feet and threw him against the boards, and, of course, Mr. Perrault had no skates on. He was a powerful man. The whole community would come out to support our teams, both hockey and baseball.



I believe that was about the time that a girl named Beverly McLaughlin from Toronto came to attend school in Sheenboro. She lived with her aunt, uncle, and cousin Andrew Perrault. On her first day at school, we were seated across from each other and I thought, "Wow, what a beauty!" She was tall and slender, extremely attractive, reserved, and quite bright. She had flaming red hair. I probably transmitted my extreme romantic desires to her after a few months and finally got around asking her for a date.

Bearing in mind my dates in those days (and even later with my wife) were not like today's typical dates. My dates would be picked up early because I would have to set up the sound system, etc. for the country dances, or sometimes the girls would meet me at the dance. Then they would sit alone all evening while everyone else was dancing; and, boy, was I some jealous when someone else occasionally took her for a dance, especially, a person we called "from away" who may have been staying at a cottage or visiting friends.



Those feelings of jealousy did not go away for many, many years. I guess it's called growing up and having confidence in oneself. When you have confidence, everything is possible. I usually went to the dances with my brother Harold, as Cecil was dating a girl from Chapeau, and Harold was dating one from Sheenboro, and he always had great cars. I remember the '49 Ford, '51 Meteor, '53 Chrysler, and then the queen of them all, a 1956 Dodge push-button drive, salmon/black/white with the fins on the back—what a gem!

The following summer my sister Mary got married, and I invited Beverly to the wedding. That's when I had the cast on my right hand after I struck the horse—an attempted knockout punch (frustration punch) and broke my knuckles, finger, and wrist. That was a special time for me, and I was proud to think that I had the prettiest girl in the Pontiac on my arm.

However, that changed in the autumn. I had asked Bev on Friday to come to the “Chute Inn” in Ft. Coulonge where I was playing on Saturday nights with a group called “Bryson Airs,” a six-member dance band. She said she could not go. I suspected she was not feeling well. I was on stage performing, and at approximately 10 p.m. in walked Beverly with my friend Gene Perrault, accompanying Andrew and his date Myrna Hearty, another girl from out of town attending school in Sheenboro and living at Andrew's uncle Roy Perrault's farm.

If this has ever happened to anyone reading this, you would know the sickly, weak, knee-buckling, almost fainting, can't-believe-it feeling that I was experiencing at that moment. I was heart-broken and devastated. I could not focus on my music; I was like a zombie. My life was shattered; all the positives in my life so far were instantaneously turned to negatives. My self-confidence was back to zero. I got through the night without making eye contact with Beverly and put on a brave front.

The next day, Sunday, I was on the altar as an altar boy and, for non-Catholics, the altar boy assists the priest during Mass and also is near the priest when he serves communion when the congregation members come to the railing at the altar, kneel down, and receive communion. I was looking out for Beverly, and as she approached the altar I don't think that if I lived three lives and came back as a poet, I could ever explain the feeling that came over me at that time. In retrospect it was petty jealousy.



I also could not then, as a practicing Catholic, comprehend the contradiction that virtually every Saturday night I would be on stage entertaining and would observe some of those very same people—albeit a minority of the townspeople—drinking excessively, fighting, (always a fight at those dances), cursing and swearing, and likely having their way with the women, drinking and driving, and on most nights, running cars into the ditch or causing accidents. I would see some of the same people go to confession and in all likelihood ask for forgiveness only to do a repeat

performance next weekend. That hypocritical behavior always disturbed me and still does, because it continues in our society. They say that a clear conscience is a sign of a poor memory.

“It takes a community to bring up a child.” By that, I mean if you see or are aware of someone you know, whether it be immediate family relative or a neighbor or friend, who does something wrong or anti-social, you are duty-bound to intercede or try to make that person see the error of their ways. But in the area where I grew up, it was usually a big joke and the topic of conversation: “Did you see so and so last night? Hell, he passed me on the gravel road on the curve, coming home from the dance; he must have been going 100 miles per hour. He hit the ditch at Birch Creek.” Or, “He was so drunk I don’t know how he made it home.” It was a common sight if you traveled the road the next day often to see someone’s car in the ditch up against a tree and the driver still sleeping it off, and it was not just people from Sheen.

Now there is something seriously wrong with that picture, and it is not unique to the Ottawa Valley. It occurs everywhere, and after thirty-five years as a police officer, you observe it firsthand. Rather than encourage such behavior, friends and relatives ought to have stepped in and taken the person’s keys away until he was sober enough to drive, or, most importantly, mention to that person that he should not have another drink. I keep referring to the male gender because it was the males back then in my area who were the biggest offenders. Unfortunately, a significant number of women have since joined these ranks. People have criticized the police in recent years for some of the preventative programs we had, like “The Ride Program.” We, the police, give people ample opportunities to police themselves, but if that doesn’t work, then we have to police you for your own sake and for public safety. That doesn’t just apply to drinking and driving.



The following Monday morning down in the basement of the school, Bev’s locker was close to mine. She was a very sensitive person and could see that I was upset. Her reason for going with Gene, Andrew’s cousin, was that Gene had just arrived from Toronto where he was working (Gene was one year older than I was), and she was asked to join Andrew and Myrna to attend the dance. She was so apologetic and was sincerely sorry for upsetting me and said she really cared for me. I don’t recall what I said to her, however, I could not in my time of despair and deep hurt forgive her, and from that time through the most part of the year, I was unkind to her.

The following April, some four to five months later, she waited for me by the church on the way to the village from school. She must have observed that my hurt had subsided and could see I still had feelings for her. We talked for a half-hour and became friends again, and I did apologize for being unkind to her. We probably had a few dates after that, bearing in mind that dating back in those days was not as permissive as today, which is the total opposite, and especially if you were a Catholic and you lived by the extremely strict teachings of the Church.

To mention a few strictures: you could not consume alcohol until you reached the legal age of 21 (until that the age was lowered in Québec to 19 years), and you could not have sex before marriage. By being up on stage since I was fifteen years old, it was absolutely sacrilegious to witness how many young people crossed that line—not only that they broke their pledge but also the degree to which they did.

After school was out in June, Beverly went home to complete her education in Toronto, and I did not see her for several years. Three years later, on my way back from visiting my brother Joe in Windsor, I stopped off in Toronto to visit my sister Claire, and I called Bev and went to her home to meet her family. We went out that night to dinner and a movie. It was a friendly encounter, and we parted as friends.

I did not see or have contact with her again until the Sheenboro School Reunion in 1985. I was there with my son Darren. I saw Beverly at the Town Hall that evening at the Reunion Dance. She still looked like a movie star—tall, slim, and very elegant. She was there with her eleven-year-old daughter and her husband. He was a really nice person and appeared to be very successful. We danced a square dance, which I had taught her years earlier. There were so many people to see and speak to that we did not have a lot of time to catch up. We were still friends. Darren had a great time. He really feels connected to the area and the old farm. He danced the night away with Andrew Perrault's daughter who was a real knockout! I spoke to Andrew, probably in 1996, and he informed me that Beverly had died of cancer. What a shame—such a nice person to die so young.



Halloween night was a big happening in Sheenboro. In the early days we would have our fun at home doing things like “bite the bobbing apple,” and hide-and-seek, which was fun, especially when my older brothers were at home. They would scare the bejesus out of us. But as we got older, we ventured off the farm to the village where we would throw apples on the tin roof at Keon's store. One night, Alvin Keon ran up the hill and almost caught us. That was the exciting part—being chased. Then when I was seventeen, Frank Retty would pick us up at the village, eight or ten of us, and drive around the lake, taking off gates and upsetting outhouses.

There's a story about brother Cecil and some of his friends upsetting the outhouse of Miss Annie Butler, who was an unmarried lady, approximately seventy years old, living by herself in the village. The fun was not that they upset her outhouse, but that Annie (unbeknownst to them) was in it at the time! You can well imagine their reaction when she started screaming and shouting, “Help, Help!”

Emmett Morris who lived across the street came running over to see what the yelling was all about and discovered poor old Annie face down in her outhouse. By that time, Cecil and his friends had taken off in a cloud of dust and a “Hi, Ho, Silver” up over the hill above the village.

Now we all thought that was really funny at the time, and it was an in-joke among his friends for several years, but, in retrospect, can you imagine the terror that poor woman had felt when the outhouse was tipped over, especially when they had approached in stealthy fashion?

On occasion, Pat Keon would get his father's car, and we would go roaming through the area, making animal noises. Bobby Miller, whose father owned the hotel, dance hall, and store at Fort William, would have his father's ½-ton truck (green International) and also travel through the area having fun. Bob had a sister, Jill, who was the same age as my sister Theresa, and she would come along with Bob. So that would be exciting as there were four of us in that little cab. Jill was very attractive and extremely well endowed, if you know what I mean.

On one Halloween, our favorite cousin, Joe McGuire who lived in St. Joseph Parish came up to pick up Theresa, Leona, and me with his father's 1952 Chevrolet. Cousin Joe suggested I put on my brother Joe's old police uniform and go to Chapeau to visit the "Chapeau Boys." Well, I was up to the challenge and put the uniform on. It was still a little big, but I was beginning to fill it out. I made a hat badge out of aluminum foil, and I looked like the real thing. Before we left the farm, my mother tried to talk me out of wearing the uniform but to no avail. Off to Chapeau to make some arrests.

The old OPP uniform looked very similar at night to the QPP (Québec Provincial Police) one. We arrived in Chapeau at approximately 8:30 p.m. and parked behind Meilleur's Hotel. I had not intended to get out of the car, however, after much prompting by Joe, who was also a great prankster, I obliged. I stood back away from the car with Joe and my sisters inside and observed several guys from St. Joseph's (all under twenty-one, the legal drinking age at that time in Québec) near the sidewalk drinking beer and carrying on. I was positioned behind them in the dark parking lot, and they could not see me at that point. They were silhouetted by the light from the street.

After about five minutes, I moved closer to the sidewalk and became slightly visible to them. One of them dropped his beer and was looking back into the darkened parking lot, prompting his friends to ask him what was wrong. Now these dudes were up to no good (I should talk!). I began slowly moving towards them, and I stated in a loud voice, "What's going on here?" and "I want to see some ID!"

Well, these guys were so alarmed and spooked that they could not understand where the hell I had come from and thought I looked rather mysterious approaching them. They reacted as if they were about to be shot. The one who dropped the beer was the driver and owner of the car they were leaning on. (I had been prompted by cousin Joe, as these were his friends, and he was beside himself in the car laughing.) I demanded to see his driver's license, registration, and insurance.

Now, bear in mind that these guys all knew me, and I was right in their faces, but they didn't recognize me. I was becoming a bit apprehensive and kept thinking how far am I prepared to push the envelope. I checked his license, returned it to him, and noted it on a piece of paper and

then asked to see his insurance and ownership, which he could not produce. He went through the motions of going through the glove compartment and under the seat but I knew, and he knew, he did not have any insurance.

Now a crowd was gathering, wondering what was going on, and I thought I'd better get the hell out of here before I get the crap beaten out of me when they find out it's a set-up. These guys have had more than enough to drink to do just that, and I had no backup except Joe and my sisters and my pen. I told him I would be right back and that I had to get something from my car. I told Joe to push over, and I took off, with no lights, down the hill behind the hotel's darkened parking lot and onto Highway 8 and headed to the safety of Sheenboro. Well, let me tell you, Joe and my sisters and everyone else he told about the event laughed at that for years. His friends never did find out it was me. Cousin Joe really added much to the story and embellished it.

Several years later, I was patrolling Centertown in Ottawa in Car 101 on a Friday evening, and guess what? I'm at the corner of Bank and Laurier Streets stopped behind a vehicle, and I recognized the driver—yes, you guessed it, it was the same guy. I informed my partner about the Halloween prank, and we pulled him over, red lights and siren and all. My partner did the talking, and he questioned him as to where he was from, etc. I then appeared on the passenger side and asked him if he had ever had dealings with the QPP, and he said he didn't think so. I informed him we had received information on our in-car computer that there was an incident in a hotel parking lot with a QPP officer named D'Arcy, and he was still waiting for him to produce his ownership. That was almost as much fun as on Halloween night.



**September 11, 2001, 9:05 a.m. – Gananoque (parked beside city hall).** *Just heard horrific news that planes had crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, and a field in Pennsylvania. I returned to Ottawa immediately. It was terrorism. How horrific, horrific! How dare they!*

Another winter approaching and time to prepare—bring split wood into the shed, as it had been outside drying all summer; complete the collecting of the vegetables, citrons, pumpkins, potatoes, onions, and plums; and store them in the cellar. Also time to go and spend the big bucks on winter clothing, gum rubber boots, and cheap mitts. With such a small budget for clothing, Momma purchased what she could afford and would also handknit socks and mitts for us. When I see the kids today and the prices they pay for school wear, it's mind-boggling. No Roots or Gap back then. The only roots we saw were in the ground.



High school was extremely difficult for me for several reasons. Primarily, it was hard because I had such heavy responsibility on the farm, but I also suffered from A.D.D. (Attention Deficit Disorder), which I still have. As well, after several tests, I found out in 1999 that as a result of having had multiple concussions, I have Post-Concussion Syndrome. I was masking symptoms and pretending most of my academic life as well as in later years.

I was one of the older students now and felt a little more comfortable in my new role with Frank Retty, George Sullivan, Pat Keon, Gene and Bert Perrault, Christie Gleason, and Eddy Jennings. For the first time I was not scared to go to school, always before I had been afraid of being spoken down to or bullied and pushed around, and I pride myself for not having ever been a bully myself at school. It scars you for life. I have instant recall, almost like pushing the display or recall button on a computer, of those situations that brought me much pent-up anger, lack of confidence, and just how truly awful it feels to remember.



One summer, Momma had gone to Pembroke to do some shopping, and I couldn't wait for her to leave with one of our neighbors so I could take the Mercury for a spin. The dust had hardly settled on the D'Arcy Line before I was up to the barn, where it was parked, with the keys in my hand. My sisters Leona, Theresa, and Mary warned me that they would tell Momma if I drove it, but my mind was set.

I jumped in with my sisters watching close by and attempted to put the key in the ignition; however, it would not go in, so I applied some pressure; still it would not go in, so then I really twisted it with force, and then it happened! The key broke in the ignition with my sisters saying in unison, "I told you so!" Now what to do? I tried every which way to get the broken key out, but that was just not going to happen.

I went down to the house to start calling anyone of the local lads who happened to be around, knowing full well I was in deep trouble if I could not get the damn key out, and knowing that all of Sheenboro was listening in on the party line. No one was home except Cecil's friend Jack Morris, who was about four years older than I was. I explained my grave situation and informed him Momma would be home by 6:00 p.m. and that it was now 2:00 p.m. Could he help? He said he would come up and give it a try. He lived three farms from us on the road to Fort William. I think he came by horse and buggy and was there by 3 o'clock.

I had faith in Jack—he was mechanically inclined. When he arrived, he immediately went to work on the task at hand. It didn't sound good for the first five/ten minutes as he attempted to get the key out. He then crawled under the dashboard and tried to get the ignition out so he could better work on it. After about a half-hour, it didn't look good at all, and Jack finally threw in the towel. My life was shattered. What was I going to tell Momma? I could not hide it from her for

long, as eventually she would find out, if the girls didn't tell her first.

When she got home, she wasn't even in the house when my sisters in chorus were heard saying to Momma in loud voices, "Dominic broke the key in the Mercury. We told him not to do it." I was a dead duck. To my great relief, Momma was not as upset as I thought she might well be. I couldn't be grounded, as I went nowhere anyway. No TV, well that wouldn't wash either because we had no electricity. No dating. Ditto. I was on my best behavior for the next few weeks. (Harold had it repaired later.)

On another occasion the following summer Momma again was off to Pembroke, leaving my sisters Helen, Leona, and Theresa at home. Mary had gone to the big city of Ottawa to work at the Bank of Montréal where Mr. Jack Rooney was manager. Jack had driven my parents in his big Hudson the day of their wedding. I found out in 1999 from his son that Jack first went up to Sheenboro (120 miles of gravel road) the week before the wedding because he got the dates mixed up.

However, while Momma was away, a very severe thunderstorm came calling, and I would use any excuse to drive the Mercury. This time I found the right keys, loaded my sisters in the car, and off we went to Aunt Mary's (Poppa's sister) who lived just east of the village. (No license, no insurance!) We arrived in the middle of the storm, and Aunt Mary welcomed us with open arms. She was really a great cook, especially her preserves like raspberry and strawberry jam. She gave us what she used to call "a cold snacksy."

After about two hours, the thunder and lightning subsided, and we all piled in the car like a bunch of hillbillies. As I was backing out of the laneway, I turned too sharply and caught the right-side bumper on Aunt Mary's gatepost and ripped it out of the ground—another catastrophe! There was very little damage to the car, just a slight scratch on the right front bumper. The vehicles in those days were made like tanks—very thick metal and strong bumpers. We made it home okay, and the girls felt they were in on this so they promised not to tell Momma and they didn't. But, that's not all the stories about the "Merk," as my cousin Kenny Walker would say.



Shortly after Poppa died, Cecil (who had a license and could drive) was out on a date with his girlfriend Helen Carroll (whom he married in 1961), and he was driving her home from a dance in Chapeau. At about 1:00 a.m., he failed to negotiate a turn at Marion's Corner on Alumette Island [L'Isle-aux-Allumettes] and went off the road, ripped out several cedar fence posts, and damaged the fence as well as causing minor body damage to the "Merk."

Now, as it was in the wee hours of the morning and no one had witnessed the accident, Cecil felt he was home free. Not so. I don't recall who it was, however, someone had in fact seen it and informed Mrs. Marion, and she was on the phone to Momma looking for that law-breaking son

of hers. Cecil owned up to it and as his punishment, he had to replace all the cedar fence posts. So he went to the bush on our farm with Momma's McCulloch/47 chainsaw and cut the three cedar posts and took them down to the scene of the crime and replaced them and repaired the fence—very embarrassing for Brother Cecil.



One summer evening in August when all the cows were milked, the milk separated, the calves and pigs fed, and the hens put to bed, I recall sitting on the steps of the verandah as we often did after the chores were done and supper ended, when sister Mary decided to teach Momma how to drive. Hell, Mary must have felt, it is your car so you should be able to drive it. Only problem was, Mary didn't know how to drive either, or had very limited knowledge and experience. So, with keys in hand the two of them walked out to the middle of the yard (my, oh my, how that old "Merk" must have been shaking!). Momma got behind the wheel, Mary in the passenger seat, bearing in mind this is a standard shift and Momma had never been in that position before, but she felt Mary knew what she was doing.

I could hear Mary tell Momma to put it in neutral, start the engine with the ignition key and then push the clutch in, put it in first gear then let out the clutch very gently and give it a little gas and start moving forward. Well, everything sounded good so far, but in reality it wasn't. You see, Momma had it in reverse gear, and when she let the clutch out, she pressed the pedal to the metal, and she took off backwards like a shot out of a cannon. The tires were spinning on the evening grass; the dogs, Sport and Buster, started barking; Cecil was shaving in the summer kitchen getting ready for a date with Helen Carroll; the other girls Helen, Leona, and Theresa all started running up the lawn towards the woodshed, which was where the car was headed and would arrive there in short order, pending a miracle or intervention of some kind by Cecil or me. Cecil and I were alongside the car in a flash and shouting directions along with those very audible screams of Mary telling Momma to take her foot off the gas and put it on the brake pedal.

Well, that didn't work as Momma's foot must have frozen on that gas pedal, and all the screaming or barking of orders would not change the outcome. Then, as suddenly as it started, it ended with a loud crash as the "Merk" took on the woodshed. Momma still had her foot on the gas and the rear tires were spinning in the air as the back end was hung up on the beams of the foundation of the shed. Momma finally took her foot off the gas, got out, visibly shaken and blaming Mary, and Mary blaming Momma. One can only imagine if the car had been in forward gear or if the gas tank had exploded upon impact at 20 mph in the August heat! By the way, Cecil did not go on his date that night, as some rear-spring levers were broken.

The dear old Mercury developed some terminal mechanical problems about 1956–57, and Harold, who was quite good with the mechanical side of things, gave up on it. It sat in our yard near



the pumphouse by the gooseberry bushes for about two months. Finally, someone from Chapeau gave us \$50 and took the dear old thing away leaving only all those great memories.



The time was slowly approaching the inevitable time in my life when I started looking beyond the farm in Sheenboro and getting a job outside the village. In the summer of '56 I got a job in Pembroke at Zadeau Motors. Mr. Zadeau's son came with his trucks that spring to haul the logs from our bush, which we had cut that winter, and took them to Berrigan's Mill; while he was in Sheenboro, I asked him if he had a job for me. I worked in the garage cleaning the floors and also as a "gofer." That lasted two weeks, and I made \$35.00—wow! What a thrill to have hard cash.

My brothers Cecil and Harold, who were working at Atomic Energy in Chalk River, spoke to the food provider Crawley & McCracken, and they gave me a job washing pots and pans in the kitchen for a salary of \$90 a month and all-you-can-eat with free room—what an experience that was, working out there with the big guys.



My brothers didn't pay much attention to me in Chalk River, as they had their own lives. I think every night they were in Pembroke with their girlfriends. I was given a room with my cousin who had been working there for one year and was later elevated to the front kitchen from the lowly pot-and-pan department.

I met two sisters from Brundenell, which is near Eganville, Ontario. They were quite nice ladies and very attractive. They worked as waitresses. I really liked the older one, however, she had a boyfriend who was about 6'6" and weighed about 230 lbs. who worked at the plant. She offered me a ride out to Chalk River, and I accepted, assuming she had a car. Instead, she showed up with this giant, driving a new Chevy. I thought at first he was her brother, but I was wrong. I think that she was using him and that she didn't really love him. Bottom line, I did not compete with the monster man from the Valley.

For fun, we would go out to Deep River with my cousin in his car and meet up with some friends and just hang out. On Halloween night we went to the "Deep" to a party at a girl's home with lots of great music, pretty girls, and dancing. We then went out on the town to have a little fun. I was at first apprehensive, as this little lad from Sheenboro had never been outside the bubble into the "real world" and was unaccustomed to swinging with these dudes and dudesses from the big city of Deep River (population 3,000!). We went to a garage on a hill in the town and located a wagon full of used tires. Then they started taking the tires off and rolling them down the street. I really didn't want to be part of that, however, I was part of the "team" that pulled a wagon full of pretty girls through the town. No damage reported, and we all had a good time.

So, “someone” had foolishly cut two holes in the wall of our room, which was adjacent to the girls’ quarters so that he could spy on the ladies of the kitchen. He showed me where the peepholes were and invited me to partake in the “View from the Room,” which (against my better judgment) I nervously did. I must say though I did appreciate the view.

Approximately twenty days after my arrival at the plant, I was summoned to the manager’s office. On my way there, I assumed they were going to elevate me and promote me to the kitchen—wrong. Someone brought to his attention that there were peepholes in the wall, and all fingers pointed to me. My cousin was interrogated, and he denied ever seeing the holes, let alone looking through them. I certainly denied it too; however, the manager did not believe me, and I was dismissed—what a shocker; my first real job, and I only lasted 20 days. What was I going to tell my brothers, my mother, and my friends? I took the A.E.C.L. bus to Pembroke and hitched a ride back to the farm, licking my wounds. My cousin never did own up to it.

Autumn 1956 was upon us, and I was back to normal on the farm, plenty of work and lots and lots of frustration. After a few weeks, I went up to Sudbury with my brother Dennis and tried to find work. I stayed with him and his wife, Audrey. I hitchhiked down to the unemployment office every day for a week. I finally found work with the YMCA on an island in Lake Ramsey, clearing brush and helping with painting. When that ended, I worked with Dennis painting houses, actually he painted, and I did the damn scraping. Momma really needed me back on the farm, so my place in the workforce was terminated yet again. The winter was harsh as it always was in Sheenboro, however, we all survived.

In the spring of ’57 I was really getting antsy and just had to get a way off the farm and find a job. So in June, I went to Ottawa with Donald Retty from Sheen in his new ’57 Oldsmobile—some kind of car, big and fast. The biggest town I had seen up until that time was Pembroke where the highest building was five/six stories high. Well, let me tell you, when I came over the crest of the hill on Carling Avenue West and saw all those lights, I thought I had died and gone to heaven.

I stayed at 511 Bay Street with my sister Mary and her husband, Tom Beggan, who was an Ottawa police officer, and started my search for a job again. My first stop was at my cousin Tom D’Arcy’s who owned T. D’Arcy, Ltd., (Mayflower) Moving and Storage. He gave me a job at \$3.00 per hour, assisting the movers move furniture and whatever else.

My first job was moving the filing cabinets from the old Hunter Building at O’Connor and Queen (now 55 Queen St. highrise). There had to be at least 1,000 old grey, four-drawer cabinets, fully loaded. I thought I would rather be back on the farm bringing in the hay than in the basement of a highrise moving filing cabinets. That job lasted for about a month, and I then got a job with D’Arcy’s competitor, Tippet & Richardson, Ltd., affiliated with Allied Van Lines. They gave me more hours, however, I knew that was not going to be my path in life.

During the hours I was not working, I would go down to the Unemployment Office to check

the bulletin board for help-wanted notices, fill out applications, and wait for “The Call.” After several weeks, they called saying there was a job available in the printing department of Crown Assets Disposal Corp (CADC), a Crown Corporation. The supervisor and manager interviewed me, and I got the job in July 1958. CADC, located at 88 Metcalfe Street, Ottawa, disposed of all used federal government equipment and material, from tanks to nuts and bolts and everything in between. The sales appraisal people traveled throughout Canada and visited federal government locations and priced the articles for sale.

As for me, well, my job description was not that glamorous. I was put to work on the Addressograph machine whereby I would be given the names and addresses of previous and potential buyers and send them the list of articles for sale (usually articles were bid on, and the highest bidder won). I would type the name and address on a soft tin plate, and it would be placed on a machine; then the envelopes were fed through and ink was applied to the rubber-matted plate and hence transferred to the envelope.

I started the job at \$45 per week, which was not a great deal of money; however, soda pop and chocolate bars were still 8¢ each, and a movie was a dollar. So, needless to say, that after I paid my room and board, there was not a lot left over for limousine service to pick up my dates!

I enjoyed my time there and still have some friends with whom I keep in touch. Our general manager, Mr. Price, was a very cultured professional man who retired several years after my tenure there ended in 1960. I became quite close with his executive assistant, who was about forty-five years old at the time—a very elegant lady, always so kind, and always well dressed in dark, classy clothes.

I then became an Ottawa police officer. Reporting for work one morning in the summer of 1967, I read a police report that Mr. Price’s former executive assistant had jumped off the Alexandria Bridge. I was so upset upon hearing the news! I could not help but think that if I had been the officer who received the call, I might have been able to talk her out of it, as I later did with another distraught woman in 1972.

I also met a girl there named Mary Lou who worked in the general office. I was really smitten with her. Just the perfect little lady, tall, slim, kind, and very generous and with the sweetest smile. I took her to one of the office picnics; however, I did not think I ever had a chance of becoming more intimate with her and did not have the nerve to ask her out again. I reflect back to those times and I believe I really loved her but never told her so. The moral of that little sidebar is that if you really care, love, or appreciate someone, then, damn it, tell them!

Several years later, I was performing in Prince Edward Island in 1999, and while there I stayed over at a friend’s place. I played hockey with him—he played in the American Hockey League (AHL) and a few games in the NHL I asked his wife where she grew up in Ottawa, and she said, “the Glebe” (where I live). I asked, “on Patterson Avenue?” She replied “yes.” Then I said the number,

and she was amazed I could guess that. It happens she was Mary Lou's sister! She informed me that I would not recognize Mary Lou now as she had completely changed and was not the person I once knew. She did say Mary Lou spoke of me often and was very fond of me.

In late 1957, I moved from my sister Mary's place at 511 Bay St. and lived at 147 Carling Avenue (now Glebe Avenue). I had room and board at Alderman Lionel O'Connor's place, a nice old brick house where I shared the second floor with Jack May and his younger brother from Eganville and Kevin Kruger from Killaloe, who died of cancer in 1988. The O'Connors had a cottage for years at Fort William (Sheenboro) on the Ottawa River. They were a wonderful family, and I still see many of them around, as some are schoolteachers in Ottawa.



Autumn 1958 my cousins, the Walker boys, arrived in Ottawa to work. First, Eddie, then Cecil, followed by Wally and Kenny. They stayed at a rooming house with room and board at 510–512 Laurier Avenue West (now a highrise). So, I left Carling and moved in with them. Ed was my roommate, and we stayed on the first floor by the main entrance. If someone came in late, you would always be awakened. Also the noise of the car and pedestrian traffic was very disturbing to our sleep, especially if it were very hot and we had to keep the windows open. I was only three blocks from work. Ed Walker took a job at Canadian Tire at Kent and Laurier Streets with Cecil, one of his brothers; and I worked there on Saturdays when I stayed in town, for some extra money (\$10 per day changing tires).

I recall in the summer of 1958 I asked an older man who lived at 512 Laurier and was from Shawville, if I could hitch a ride to Shawville where I could hitchhike from there to Fort William to play with Uncle Remi Walker, Mervin Slattery, Louis Miller, and Grace Gleason for a dance. He had a 1957 Chevy hardtop, still one of my favorite cars of the 1950s. He said he would do better than that; he would drive me all the way, 50 miles there, 50 miles back. People were like that back then.

As we approached the flashing lights at the gravel turnoff to Bristol at Shawville, a vehicle with American plates was in the left-turn lane with his signal on traveling at about 25 mph and slowing down, and we were going about 50 mph. At the last minute, this driver decided not to turn and pulled back into our lane. My friend did not have any time to react and crashed into him at 50 mph. What a crash! The noise still rings in my ears. I had a broken nose, cut lip from glass, cuts to my hands, face, and head; also my knees and shoulder were badly bruised. I was not knocked out but darn close to it. The driver had cuts to his hands and forehead, but otherwise was okay. I was taken to the Shawville Hospital, where they set my broken nose, stitched up my wounds, and released me.

Guess what, my friend borrowed his brother's car, and we continued on our journey to Fort

William. I arrived an hour late with one broken string on my guitar as the result of the crash (I did not carry a spare string in those days, could not afford it). I used to take the strings off and boil them for five minutes, then put them back on, and they were like new. What that did was remove the oils (from your fingers) from the strings.

I was very grateful to this kind man, whose helpfulness was the norm in the Ottawa Valley. Valley people always helped Valley people. I went home with \$20 from that gig. I am part of a long family tradition, including my grandfathers Jim Walker and Denis D'Arcy. My father played his violin at these dances and was sometimes accompanied by my older sister Doreen and followed by Claire, Cecil, and then me and sisters Leona and Theresa.

In August 1958, I worked at CADC with a person named David Saunders who later became the “Wizard of Ott,” a magician and illusionist. He and I, along with my trusty guitar, set off hitchhiking to Pembroke on a Friday evening after work. I had a gig in Fort Coulonge, Shoot Inn Dance Hall on Saturday, so we decided to go up Friday, and he would stay in Pembroke and I would hitch a ride to the farm.

We started hitchhiking on Carling Ave. (Highway 17, before the Queensway was built) at 6 p.m. We were given a ride to the west end of Renfrew, arriving at 10 p.m. It took us three hours to travel 50 miles. We were not very lucky in getting a ride. We were not wise enough to stay in the town. We started walking, and I was playing the guitar (no case—could not afford one) to keep the wild animals away.

We had walked about 4–6 miles and came to the railway crossing at Highway 60 at approximately 12:30 a.m. Very dark and getting downright scary. I had to pee, so I walked to the side of the road and out of view of any car that might come by, and promptly fell into the ditch filled with water and mud wearing the only suit I owned, a checkered dark blue and light blue. Dave started laughing hysterically when I got out of the ditch; my suit was just a mess. We finally got a ride to Pembroke and arrived there at 2 a.m. We were like two vagabonds.

The ride let us off in downtown Pembroke, and Dave suggested we stay at the Pembroke Hotel. I said I didn't have enough money, and he said he would pay. His father owned a jewelry store so he always had a few extra bucks in his pocket. Dave and I appeared together for many years at different functions entertaining. He was very good at what he did as a magician and illusionist. He later took over his father's jewelry store on Somerset Street near Percy but also continued with his magic show.



I recall going for a ride in an Ottawa police car with my brother-in-law Tom Beggan, and that was pretty exciting. He would drop by when he was on afternoon shift, and we would cruise Centertown. Tom was a big man, 6', 215 lbs. and very impressive in his uniform. He was promoted

to detective and was one of their premier crime busters until he retired after 16½ years with three other senior detectives (Andy Hannah, who went on to own a car dealership; Dave Clancy, Tom's good friend from Ireland, who went to law school and was head of Legal Aid in the Ottawa area; and Roger Pepper, who was a department head with the City of Ottawa). Tom went to university and received a B.A. degree and went on to a very good career in the federal government in the Combines Branch (anti-pricefixing, etc.) and had two more careers after that. So, needless to say, the police department and the citizens of Ottawa lost four great police officers, and nothing was done to try to keep them, but that's another story for another time.



Sunday, Thanksgiving weekend, October 12, 1958, 1 p.m., is the date and time that changed my life forever, as well as my brother Cecil's and cousin Eldon Fox's. I was truly not looking forward to writing this segment of this book. My fear being that as I start writing, I may recall the horrible accident on that day, which to this point I still have no memory of the collision that occurred at the crest of Gleason's Hill in Sheenboro.

October was such a kaleidoscope of color around Sheenboro and the Valley. The maple trees were in full color and the mountains were a sea of magnificent exploding colors. I went to church for the 9 a.m. Mass with my mother and sisters. Cecil and Harold were home for the weekend from their work in Chalk River as they usually were. They often got home late being out with their girlfriends, and they would sleep in and go to the 11 a.m. Mass.

I met my cousin Eldon Fox and invited him up to the farm for the day, saying one of my brothers could drive him home on their way back to Chalk River since he lived six miles east of the village, along the Highway 8 (now 148). He accepted, and we headed back to the farm after a bit of socializing at Keon's or Morris's store, as everyone did. I was happy to have someone help me with the chores, as my brothers were several years removed from that responsibility.

We finished the chores, and by that time, Cecil and Harold had come back from church. I asked Cecil if we could go for a drive around the lakes and take the 410/22-shotgun to hunt for partridge. So, at about noon we left the farm (for almost the last time), Eldon in the back and Cecil and I in the front. The loaded shotgun was on the floor in the backseat with Eldon.

As we got to the end of the D'Arcy Line, we turned right and headed out the highway to Meehan's Corner, past the thrill hill, and drove straight ahead off the highway, down the road to where my friend Joe Smith lived. We drove very slowly and stopped, looked and listened every few minutes, hoping to hear or catch sight of a poor partridge or two. They certainly saved the life of several of our hens over the years, and they were very tasteful to eat. We did not see any partridge so we turned around and headed back out the side road to the main road and turned left to continue our drive around the lakes.

That was the last I remember. I woke up in the Pembroke General Hospital about 2½ days later, and upon awakening, I looked over to my right and saw my brother Cecil with a body cast on and his legs up in the air in traction. At this point in time, I did not know I was injured—I was very groggy and weak. I called out to Cecil and asked him where we were and what had happened, but he did not respond. I shouted at him thinking he was asleep, but he still did not speak or move. I really thought he was dead. Wow!

I could hear someone screaming down the hall in another room. This was no ordinary scream; it was hair-raising. I too started shouting for someone to help me, and a nurse came running into the room. I tried to get up but at that point observed that I also was in a cast on my left leg. As I started to come to and become more aware, I could only then feel the pain in my body. I had stitches on both my hands, and my face was so sore. My upper lip was all stitched up just below my nose, and I could hardly speak because of the excruciating pain. I asked the nurse where I was and what happened. She informed me I had been in a terrible accident. I again shouted at my brother, and she said, "It's no use, he can't hear you. He is unconscious and has been since the accident." I then asked about Eldon and was informed that was his screaming down the hall.

I don't recall the time of day it was when I regained consciousness. I suppose it was around 2 p.m. or so on the 14th of October. Shortly after I came to, my mother, Harold, and several of my sisters were in the room. I vaguely remember their being there. I was crying a lot, as I thought my brother was going to die. What a horrible feeling! I can only compare it to the men in battle during the war, waking up not knowing who or where you are and looking around at all your fallen comrades dying, screaming.

I had numerous injuries, cuts, and bruises; however, the major ones were my head and left knee, which hit the dashboard on impact and twisted back under the seat, causing a compound fracture. My kneecap was wired together. Ironically, I did not lose any teeth. I hit the tin dashboard, mouth first, and my lip was cut below the fractured nose, and I was told by Pat Keon, who was one of the first on the scene, that my upper lip was hanging down over my mouth and that you could see all my upper teeth just below the nose.

My hands and wrists would have been cut much more had I not had on my work gloves; and to this day when I drive, I wear gloves. If I injure my fingers, I would not be able to play my guitar.

Cecil regained consciousness on the fourth day. I don't recall observing him awakening, as I must have been sedated, but when I woke up, he was looking over at me in my bed by the window. Cecil also had a very large cut under his chin from being hit by the steering wheel, which was pushed back and up upon impact. His leg was broken above the knee at the femur. But, as was usual with my brother Cecil, he never complained.

Cecil's girlfriend arrived to see him, and shortly after my friend and classmate Myrna Hearty came with her cousin Glenda Sloan. I was so happy to see her, however I felt somewhat embarrassed

as to the way I must have looked. She added some sunshine to my otherwise bleak outlook.

My brother Joe, who was an OPP Officer (Ontario Provincial Police), came to see us on Wednesday, the 15th, and we were really happy to see him. He came from the Windsor OPP Detachment, which was 600 miles from Pembroke. The QPP (Québec Provincial Police) had still not come to question us, and they were situated just thirty miles from Pembroke. My understanding is that they only came to the site of the accident the day after it occurred. Joe, who had investigated hundreds and hundreds of accidents on Highway 401 (the so-called Killer Strip), had gone to Gleason's Hill and done his own preliminary investigation, concluding that Cecil was on his side of the road and that the other vehicle was well over the center of the road when the crash occurred.

When the Québec Provincial Police arrived at the site to investigate, the cars had bounced far enough apart that other traffic on the gravel road drove between, thus destroying the evidence, tire marks and debris. The driver was not injured severely; however, his fourteen-year-old son was killed. He owned a car dealership (Ford) up in the Timmins, Ontario area, and he was driving a new '58 Ford top-of-the-line vehicle. The hood opened from the dash towards the front, and upon impact the hood snapped open and crashed through the windshield, practically severing the neck of his son. Cecil's car was a burgundy 1954 Plymouth four-door, beautiful little machine, and it was completely demolished.

The driver was known to drink alcohol very heavily, and friends had observed him, along with other locals after the 11 a.m. Mass go behind the store in Sheenboro in the stable and drink beer. He was there until about 1:55 p.m. and then got into his car with his son after drinking five or six beers and headed down around the lakes where he was staying. His relatives were at the scene of the accident shortly after it happened, and the full and empty beer bottles were removed from the vehicle. A local stated that he saw the driver speeding shortly before the accident.

It was later related to me that Elmer Hayes, a local business man and neighbor, was at the accident scene, and my brother and I were loaded onto the back of his ½-ton International truck and driven to the hospital on the gravel road through the washboards and dust. They had to wait for ¾-hour for the ferry at Desjardinville to arrive to transport us to the Ontario side. I can't remember the ride, but it must have looked like the scene from the *Beverly Hillbillies*.

My dear Mother was called at the farm with the horrific news about the accident, and she and my brother Harold and sisters were distraught. There was a doctor from Ohio who summered in Sheenboro each summer, and he came to the scene. My brother was pronounced dead by the doctor, and that information was relayed to our dear Mother Mary. She was also told that I was in critical condition and Eldon in serious condition. Momma called Aunt Grace Fox and picked her up with Harold and my sisters to go to the hospital.

The bottom line is that, after the investigators interviewed Cecil and upon examining the scene, lacking the physical evidence that was reportedly removed, the other driver was not charged,



in fact I don't think he was even interviewed as he left to go back home with the body of his son.

Cecil was home for Thanksgiving from his work as a pipe fitter for a uranium mining company in Elliot Lake, Ontario, approximately 400 miles northwest of Pembroke. He made very good money, as the employees received isolation pay, plus there weren't many places to spend it. He did not come home very often because of the distance and because he worked a lot of overtime and because the roadbed on Highway 17 was not in very good shape. Cecil had been working there for about a year. His insurance had run out on his car two weeks prior to the accident, and he had not received notification of such. Therefore, he was out the money he borrowed from the bank for the car, as well as his lost wages and any assistance he might have had from the insurance company to help with the rehab and aftercare medical expenses, as well as for suing the other driver.

I believe my sister Mary or Tom had notified CADC as to the accident, and I received many get-well cards from my friends there, Gerry Lacasse, Doug Richardson, Mary Lou, Mr. Price, and his secretary to mention a few. They were all concerned as to my well-being—we were like a 150-member family. Mary also cleaned out my room and brought my belongings to Sheenboro. Eldon left the hospital a few days prior to me, with a pin in his broken hip. I left the hospital after about two weeks—with a wired-up kneecap and too many stitches to count—and went home to the farm to lick my wounds and the loving care of my dear mother and sisters.

Cecil was released about a month later with a rod in his leg. It was a clean break and ought not to have been a problem, but complications developed yet again. Previously, he had fallen from a tree in the yard at the farm when he was seven years old—a clean break, yet complications developed, and he almost lost his left arm. Gangrene developed, and the doctor had to remove his wrist joint to save his arm. As a result, he ended up with one arm much shorter and smaller than the other. Yet Cec never complained about his misfortune.

He became one of (if not the best) piano players in the Upper Ottawa Valley and as well the best darn baseball catcher in the area. In 1999 he had serious problems with his left leg and hip as a result of the car accident injury. His left leg was an inch shorter than the right, and as a result, he had to have a hip replacement; yet, he seemed to accept his fate and moved on. Now there has got to be a lesson in there somewhere!

Two weeks after being released, I returned to the hospital and had all my stitches out. Man, did that hurt, especially the ones on my lip and nose. I have had two different operations on my nose since the accident to open up my nostril.

I did the best I could to help out around the farm. They called me Chester, a character from the TV show *Gunsmoke*, because I limped around like him. As the snow arrived, sometimes three to four feet by Christmas, it was extremely painful to get through the drifts just to get to the outbuildings to do the chores. The doctor did not give me a walking cast, so therefore the full weight of the upper part of the cast which went up to my crotch (hip) was resting on my injured

knee, as opposed to a walking cast which would have rested on the under part of the foot where it made contact with the floor. School was out of the question, as I could not walk through the snow—pretty bleak picture. Cecil came home at the end of November in a body cast. If I thought my leg cast was itchy and uncomfortable, I can only imagine how very uncomfortable he must have been. Yet, very rarely did you hear him complain.

Myrna Hearty, whom I had a major crush on, had returned the previous year to her parents' home in Sudbury, continuing her education there. I spoke to her at church after Christmas Mass in Sheenboro. She and her sister Bonnie were home to visit her aunt Mildred who lived there. I was so happy to see her. She asked if I wanted to go back to Sudbury with them where I could visit with my brothers and sister, and I jumped at the opportunity. We were to leave for Sudbury New Year's Day, and she was to come to the farm to pick me up. She said she wanted to come up early, as she wanted to visit with my sisters and my mother, whom she really liked.

At 8:00 a.m. I got out the old manure shovel and started shoveling a track for her to come in. It had snowed approximately two feet New Year's Eve, and it was blowing and drifting. Now, try and imagine a guy who could hardly walk and still well underweight, shoveling a track ¼-mile out to the top of the hill and ¼-mile back down the other side. I was completely exhausted, and my knee was numb and sore. She arrived about 12:30 p.m. just after I had completed the task. Now that must have been love, or I was mental!

She had her father's 1954 Pontiac, very high off the ground, and she had no trouble getting in. She remained at the farmhouse until about 2:00 p.m., and then we departed for our trip to Sudbury, which was approximately a 4½-hour drive. I was in the back seat, with my leg with the cast on, stretched out across the back seat.

When we arrived in Sudbury, she took me to my oldest brother Dennis's house where I stayed for two weeks. The next day Myrna invited me to go over to her parents' house for lunch and to hang out. Naturally, I jumped at the opportunity, and Dennis loaned me a pair of his dress pants and a great green jacket. When I arrived there, I felt I looked like a movie star.

We had lunch and danced to some music she had put on the Hi-Fi, hugged some, and then Dennis picked "Chester" up at 4:00 p.m. I was so nervous with Myrna and could not bring myself to tell her how I really felt about her. There goes that lack of confidence (I never thought I really had a chance with her). How wrong I was as I found out twenty-five years later. She had the same feelings for me... but that's life! You move on.

Dennis drove me back to Sheenboro. As I may have mentioned earlier, my older brothers and sisters were so kind and helpful with the younger children, and in big families like the D'Arcys it seemed the norm in our community. Upon returning to the farm in mid-January, the road was drifted over with three feet of snow, so we had to walk in from the main highway. Not an easy task, with a leg cast on to walk a ½-mile in the deep wind-blown snow. Dennis walked ahead of me,

creating a path. Everyone was happy to see us, even the dog and the animals

I was out to work immediately helping my Momma and sisters do the chores, like feeding the horses, cows, and pigs, bringing in the firewood from the shed, and on and on and on. Cecil was still in a great deal of pain but was coping.

Spring was in the air in late February. As the weather was a little more bearable and the sun was warming things up around the old farm, we all knew that the long, cold winter would be soon behind us for another year and that we would be welcoming spring and all its splendor and majesty. It never ceased to astound and amaze me that there would ever be a spring when the snowdrifts are five feet deep and -40° weather! When the snow does finally melt, the buds on the trees will be the first sign, then the mayflowers appear and the robins start singing—it is then we know that the dreaded winter is history, well at least for another eight months.

The first week of March, I accompanied Momma to the hospital with Joe Slattery who worked for Keon's Taxi. That cast had been on for almost four months, which by today's standards seemed a long time without being changed or the injured knee examined. You could smell it ¼-mile away and, boy, was it itchy, and you could not scratch it!

The doctor sat me down at the end of a table with my left leg hanging over the edge. He commenced to cut away the cast, and when he had it all cut open along the side (he had been holding my left leg in his hands while removing the cast), he just let my leg go and it fell towards the floor. It was so sudden and painful, I almost passed out. I had tears in my eyes. How could he do that, after it was in a cast for so long? Why not let it bend gradually. He lifted it back up, and it was then that he noticed my knee was really swollen. He asked the nurse to go fetch a syringe so he could draw the fluid out of the knee. He removed three vials, which would equal a half-glass approximately.

However, it did feel a little better after he removed the fluid and the wires. I was given a pair of crutches and told to slowly exercise the knee and not put any weight on it for about two weeks. It eventually got to the point where I could walk on it. However, it never did heal properly. For years later I could not completely bend it all the way and always had to improvise—I could not squat if you know what I mean. All the years of playing hockey caused some problems. If I fell and the knee bent beyond the halfway point, there was severe pain. My first several years walking the beat as a police officer in cold weather was extremely painful, especially in the cold and damp weather. Even today, if I don't exercise it by bending, it will seize up, and I have to receive physiotherapy.

Brother Joe came up for a visit without the family in early May and spent a week at the farm, and he took me back to Windsor with him. That was quite exciting, traveling through all the big cities like Toronto, which I really enjoyed seeing. We left the farm at 8:00 in the evening and arrived in Windsor the next morning at about 7:00 a.m. It was a very long journey, and my knee was still swollen and extremely painful. I still could not bend it even halfway. I really like the

Southern Ontario region—the people and the climate.

My first week there, Joe took me out on patrol with him, and if he got a call, he would drop me off close by and pick me up later. He was responsible for the Town of Essex, which is off Highway 3, approximately 19 miles from Windsor.

He was patrolling the town about 2 a.m. and checking the front door of a gas station when he heard, as I did, a loud noise at the back. Joe told me to stay put, and he ran around to the rear and saw the tail-end of a man who had just crashed through the door and was heading east. Man, this guy could really move, as I was in sight of the laneway and back area.

Joe shouted at him to stop; however, as I experienced over my police career, that sometimes makes them go faster. The bandit jumped over a fence, with Joe about 200ft. behind him in passing gear. He too jumped/pulled himself over the fence, and I lost sight of him. I was not much help, as it took me a couple of minutes to get out of the police cruiser because I had been sitting for quite some time, and my knee was extremely stiff.

Joe finally returned to the car after about fifteen minutes, out of breath, and called it in to the dispatcher and requested another unit to assist. The thief had an accomplice, waiting on the next street, and they took off in a Chevy or Acadian. The chase was on—man, was that exciting (until he let me out in front of a restaurant)! The Chevy had too much of a head start, as Joe had to run back to his car, through the yards, and over the fences. The other cruiser never showed up because those officers were sent to a double fatality on Highway 401, and the B & E boy got away, this time. The provincial police officer doesn't have the luxury, as the city cops do, of having another unit close by, whether it be another patrol officer, patrol sergeant, or a detective unit. The area where Joe worked was very dangerous, as it was across from what was then called "Murder City, U.S.A." However, Detroit, Michigan has come a long way in the past twenty years in crime prevention and rebuilding the inner city.

And, speaking of Detroit, Joe's brother-in-law, Chuck Chevrier was an executive in a large company in Detroit and had season's tickets to the Detroit Red Wings games at the Olympia Stadium, "the old red barn." Joe was given two tickets for a semi-final playoff game. Now Gordie Howe was not playing just any old team. It was the Montréal Canadiens and Maurice the Rocket Richard.

When we crossed the Ambassador Bridge, over the Detroit River, that was so darned exciting and then into the Olympia, a place I could only imagine as I listened to *Hockey Night in Canada* with Foster Hewitt on the radio. We needed to exchange seats, as I needed an aisle seat because I could not bend my knee. Fortunately, Joe had been in those seats on several occasions, and he knew the people in the surrounding seats so I got an aisle seat. They were excellent seats, about ten rows up and about fifteen to twenty seats to the right of the Montréal bench.

Howe and Richard were often on the ice at the same time, which was so exciting. Ted Lindsey

from Detroit was not too big, but man was he tough and a good fighter, and he beat up a player from Montréal (the name escapes me) right in front of us. Richard scored one goal, and the Canadiens defeated Detroit 7–2. Howe did not score, although he got an assist and played a solid game as he always did. I am forever grateful to Joe for the opportunity to see my first NHL hockey game and two of the greatest players ever to play the game.

A few days later Joe said he had some business in Detroit and took me along. We ended up in a music store and started looking at electric guitars and an amplifier with the owner. Joe kept asking me if I liked this one or that one, and I said I really liked a certain one. Before I knew it, he had paid for the guitar and the amp and, unbeknownst to me, walked out of the store with them, put them in the trunk, and when we arrived back at his house, he presented them to me. What excitement! My very own electric guitar and amp!

Joe worked pay duties on his days off from the OPP, whereby police officers are hired to attend school dances, work at construction sites and direct traffic, pick up prisoners in other jurisdictions, etc. He would quite often work on Bob-Lo Island, just across from Detroit near Amherstburg. Situated out on the Detroit River, the island had a very large amusement park.

He took me along on a few occasions to Bob-Lo Island. It was a very large park with plenty to do, and Joe was given as many passes to the rides, etc. as he wanted. It was lots of excitement. He would sometimes take the older kids with him for the day. I recall hearing music coming from out on the water, and I recognized the song and the voice. It was Del Shannon.



I hitched a ride with my cousin Pete Fox who had a rig and worked for Auto Haulaway Transport along with his brothers Mike and Tommy. We left Windsor at approximately 9 p.m. That was very exciting—heading down old Highway 2, which was the main highway between Windsor and Montréal prior to the building of Highway 401. He was hauling new Dodge vans and delivering them to Bell Canada up in Prescott and Cornwall, Ontario.

I recall we stopped in Port Hope at approximately 3:00 a.m., and he went into one of the Bell trucks, and I remained in the cab of the rig. We slept for two hours and hit the road again at 5:00 a.m. arriving at the junction of Highways 2 and 16 at 7:30 a.m. where Pete let me off to hitchhike to Ottawa on Highway 16 with my amp and guitar, for which I now at least had a case. I got a ride to Kemptville, 45 minutes from Ottawa and finally arrived in Ottawa at 11:30 a.m., tired, sore, and very hungry. My sister Mary and her husband, Tom, picked me up at Prince of Wales Drive and Baseline Road. I had been let off one mile from the city and walked to Baseline. I had fluid buildup in my knee again; however, the fluid and swelling subsided when I rested it and kept it elevated.

I went back to the farm the following week and got ready for the hay season and all the

preparation involved with that. Harold came home on weekends and started the process. Cecil and I had sharpened the mower blades and had oiled and greased the mower rake and wagons. Also, the harness for the horses had to be mended.

I went back to work at CADC in mid-July I believe, just in time for a move to the Trade and Commerce Building on Wellington Street at Lyon Street. That was a large and labor-intensive move. We worked for two days from 9:00 in the morning until 10:00 at night to get it completed. It was worth it—our new digs had 75% more space and were really comfortable. My recollections from that time in my life are sketchy. I certainly wanted to have an opportunity to make more money so I could eventually go back to school, and I knew I was not going to do it making \$37.00 per week, so I kept my options open and an ear to the ground for work opportunities.



For the last fifteen years of her life, Mary Theresa Walker, my mother's mother whom Aunt Grace and Uncle Remi moved, along with her daughter Angela, up to the Village of Sheenboro, rented an old wooden house owned by local businessman Elmer Hayes across from Keon's Store/Hotel. It had no insulation and only had a small woodstove to keep them warm during all those cold winter nights. That poor woman worked so hard all her life only to end up with a severely disabled daughter and living off her small old-age pension and Angela's disability pension. She bore thirteen children: Jimmy, Joe, Grace, Alex, Dominic, Mary (Momma), Marguerite, Alexine, Ella, Angela, Remi, and twins Cecil, and Loda. Jimmy died in a fire in Haileybury, Ontario, saving someone else's life.

She was such a soft and warm woman, as were all the Walker clan—very peaceful. Each time I went to visit her after church or school to sit awhile, she always greeted me with that nice warm smile. I feel troubled inside that I really didn't get to know her better and find out about her past, her childhood, and her desires and dreams, etc. before she died in the spring of 1960. However, it's like that in life, I suppose, we skim the surface especially when one is young. I was one of the pallbearers at her funeral, and it was sad to see her go.

The funeral was on a Saturday, I believe, so I asked my cousin Cecil Walker if he wanted to come to Sudbury with me to apply for a job at International Nickel Co. (INCO). He said he would come, so we left and went to Sudbury in my 1951 Torpedo-Back, Power-Glide Chevrolet. When we reached the eleven-mile stretch of Highway 17, just east of Sturgeon Falls, Cecil said, "try 'er out, Dom." Now if there were ever a place to "try 'er out," this would be the spot to do it. So I put the pedal to the metal and probably reached 75 mph when my sanity returned, and I slowed down. It really felt good. It was only a six-cylinder.

We both went for interviews and medicals Monday morning at INCO Employment Office on Frood Road. I passed both tests, but unfortunately Cecil did not. He had lost his sight in one

eye when he was young playing, and INCO would not accept him. Cec was one of my favorite cousins, and I had been looking forward to having him there with me. We stayed at my brother Dennis and Audrey's home, and, as usual we were always well received.

Cecil and I left for Sheenboro and Ottawa that afternoon, and I felt so badly that Cec was not hired. I was to report for work in Coniston Cindering Plant the following Monday. I would triple my salary—wow, I was beginning to feel like a millionaire, I could buy a new car, a suit, guitar strings, and have lots of women after the young, rich dude!

I quit my job at CADC, and I bid farewell to the people I worked with: Doug and Gerry, Ms. Bidgood, and sweet Mary Lou and not to forget Helen, to mention but a few. We all felt like family at CADC. Cecil went on to work at the Canada Post, Main Depot, and retired from there after thirty-eight years of service as the union representative, so he did very well.

I packed up my belongings, hardly enough to fill the car trunk, and my guitar and amp, said goodbye to my sister Mary, and headed northwest to the metropolis of Sudbury, Ontario, and a brand new life. I spent a few days with Momma and my other sisters at the farm on the way up. I didn't realize at that time the impact that move would have on Momma. I would not be home every weekend now to help out around the farm, as I was almost 300 miles away as opposed to 120 miles in Ottawa.

I arrived in Sudbury and went to my sister Doreen McGuire's home on Barrydowne Road, unloaded my belongings, and was shown my quarters. I would be sharing a room with three of my nephews, Pat, Kevin, and Michael, who were about ten, eight, and seven years old. She also had four other kids; so when I say my brothers and sisters were good to me, this is but just another example.

My first day at Coniston was mostly an orientation day getting to know the areas and the extreme danger involved with the workplace. INCO had a motto, "Safety First." If safety rules were not followed, you could be fired on the spot for breaching the safety code.

The lower level had three extremely large converters, where the earth would come down on a conveyor belt from the Cindering Plant and was baked in preparation for the meltdown. The temperature in these converters was very high, as they had to melt the soil. After meltdown, the minerals were separated into copper, nickel, and iron ore, etc. and then poured out onto large, long forms.

When they had cooled for a period of time, we would have to take 10-lb. sledgehammers and break them up. It was some hot, but hotter still was when I had to go under these converters to clean out the debris. It was so hot that if you stayed under more than one minute your shirt would burn. Because they were only three or four feet off the ground, you had to bend over to get under, and all the while two- to three-inch diameter sparks (melted rock) were flying all over the place like an active volcano. The old foreman Eddie Albert or other supervisors would be watching you

so you wouldn't stay under too long.

After the slag was loaded into the very large pots, they were taken out on the tracks pulled by an electric engine and dumped. Quite a sight after dark with all the red-hot slag sliding down the slag pile! They use it for road building now.

I lasted about three weeks there, and then I was moved up to the Cindering Plant—sort of a promotion, I suppose. After an INCO train moved earth in from the mines, it was dumped into these large bins where we used jackhammers to separate and loosen the earth at the bottom. Now a little boy from Sheenboro did not have much use for a jackhammer around the farm, and the first time I used it, I almost lost my foot. However, I got the hang of it.

Once that was done, we had to shovel the rock and earth onto the conveyor belt, which in turn took it along the route to the Cindering Plant where it was baked in preparation for the meltdown. The metallurgical people would constantly be checking the rock/earth as it came through at different stages, turning up or down the heat, and sometimes I had to assist them—quite an interesting process. Often when the material was being baked, some would fall off and obstruct the tracks; so we had to be vigilant of that, because if it built up, the process would have to be shut down causing delays for the converters along the way. These baking rocks were like three lbs. of butter and extremely hot, close to the melting point, and I had to take a large rake and reach up and under the conveyor and pull the hot rock off. Sometimes, some would land on your clothes and burn holes in them.

If you did not wear your gas mask for ten seconds, you would surely be in serious difficulty, as you could not breathe because of the sulfur. Old Mr. Albert was there thirty-five years, and sometimes I would observe him walking around with no mask on. I don't know how he could survive without it. I guess he was just being macho or ignorant of the dangers. I believe he died of lung cancer.

We also had to wear eye goggles as well because of all the dust particles in the air. After shift, we went down to the change room and showered. This is where we punched in and out, and were given our marching orders as well. We didn't have lockers; we had a bucket in the room where we changed when we arrived and again when the shift was finished. We worked three shifts: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 4 p.m. to midnight, or midnight to 8 a.m. You would place your valuables in the bucket and hang your clothes on the rope, pull it up on a pulley and lock it. All of us would be just filthy at the end of our shift. Some older men never showered at work. You would look like a raccoon after the glasses were removed. I really had to work at it sometimes to get all the soot off my face.

After working there for six months, I traded my Chevy for a 1955 black Volkswagen. It was the "in" car then. It had 60,000 miles on it. Never had any problems with it. Ran like a charm, and man was it easy on gas—35-40 miles per gallon—but damn it was hard to start in the winter and cold inside.



By this time I had moved in with Dennis and Audrey just two blocks over on Lincoln Rd. Poor Dennis had to use his car to push me every morning to get the VW started. I kept an old sleeping bag in the trunk for the push so as not to damage the vehicles. It started after a few feet. When I finally got my own place, just a block from Dennis, a room in the basement, room and board, Dennis still had to come and push me. Volkswagens were notorious for not starting in the winter unless you could park on a hill.

I recall my first trip to the farm with it, Christmas, 1960, and the road had not been plowed, of course. There was a foot or so of snow, and I started to drive in and got stuck on the D'Arcy Line. So the nice thing about a standard transmission on a VW was that you would put it in gear, pull the throttle, get out, and push it along. I made it into the farmhouse, I parked it overnight in the shed with the old sleeping bag around the motor, and it started the next morning.



I went to visit my cousins Eloise and Harmen Sweeney in Teaneck and Paramas, New Jersey, just across the bridge off Route 4 from New York City in the spring of 1961. I celebrated St. Patrick's weekend in NYC with my cousins. Three of them, all over 6'5", and we stayed at the old Hotel Astor, which has since burned down. I drove the VW down of course, with the big bug deflector on the front. We had a grand time, very exciting. Uncle Jim (Eloise Sweeney Koenig's father) owned a successful real estate company in Teaneck, and I stayed with him and my father's sister Cecilia. It was certainly a wonderful feeling.

My cousin Harmen was once a very successful Broadway actress, and when she would come up to visit us at the farm, she would recite some of the parts she played in the shows. I had always wanted to be an actor, so it is the main reason I went to New York City. Harmen was then teaching at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts on 42nd Street in New York City. She had worked with many actors who had gone on to be mega stars in movies: Shelley Winters, Jack Palance, and Jack Lemmon to name a few (I was lucky enough to meet Shelley Winters and Jack Lemmon).

She was so busy while I was there that she could not be with me as often as she wanted to, so she gave me a pile of money and told me to enjoy myself. After spending two weeks in New York City, I decided that was not the place I should be at that point in my life. I was scared to make the move; it's like trying to go for that first kiss! It's a long way from Sheenboro, Québec. I was like my father. Uncle Jim offered my father a job with him in real estate and construction in New Jersey. Thus, my father took the train to New Jersey on his honeymoon to check it out.

When he returned to the farm, he notified all his siblings that had had made the decision to move to New Jersey. The family was hysterical and begged him to stay on the farm. I'm guessing that the other members of the family did not want the chore and responsibility of looking after the farms and that my grandmother may have at the time already started her decline into Alzheimer's

disease, which she later died from.

Therefore, they all signed off on their stake in the farms, and Poppa had clear title and did not return to New Jersey. I understand that my mother was distraught, disappointed, and very angry about his decision, even though I don't think Poppa really had a choice. Just think, I could have been one of "the D'Arcy boys" in Jersey—or one of the Jersey Boys!

I spent a few days with my cousins in Paramas, NJ, just down the highway from Teaneck, and that was fun—one of them had a Corvette convertible. He was helping his parents, Eloise, and others, run the business; they owned a large horticultural business. He would spend a great deal of time in the South during the winter months, as the business was slow during that time of the year. He died at the age of 40 of cancer; all three of the cousins played varsity basketball.

The night before I left, I drove to New York City, and I wanted to park on Broadway to watch the theatres empty out on the sidewalks (which were larger than our streets). I was just off Broadway, stopped at a red light on Fifth Avenue, turned right, and was pulled over by a police officer. There is no right turn on a red light in New York City. It made no difference that I was a Canadian and extremely good looking and that I drove a very expensive car ('55 VW) and that I was Catholic—he gave me the ticket anyway. I received a summons, and every three or four months for ten years I received notification of an overdue \$15.00 ticket, stating I would be arrested in New York State and have to pay the ticket. I did not pay the fines, and I have not been arrested (yet).

I parked in the area of several theatres, and around midnight, the people started to pour out onto Broadway. Quite a sight, more people there than in the City of Sudbury, pop. 85,000—well, maybe not, but it sure looked like it. Many were looking at my VW with the big bug deflector, all shiny and sparkling under the thousands of lights. That's probably where owners of car lots got the idea from that cars look better under all those lights. Got back to New Jersey about 3:30 a.m. and left the next morning at 8:00 a.m. for Sudbury, 800 miles away.

I called Momma in June and asked her if she wanted to do a surprise visit to New Jersey. Of course she would never refuse a chance to travel. That's where I get it from, I guess. My birthstone is Asphalt; I was born to travel. We loaded the VW the next week, and we were headed down the highway to New Jersey. We had a grand trip, Momma was so easy to travel with; she was not labor-intensive like a lot of people. I called Eloise near Yonkers, NY and said I was coming to see her and that I had a surprise. Well I would never do that today. I would have the courtesy of calling before and informing that I was coming.

Driving through the Catskill Mountains that time of year was spectacular. Momma was really enjoying the voyage. She would talk from the time she got in the car until we arrived at our destination. I think she did that so I would stay alert and not fall asleep. As we approached Rochester, NY, we decided on the way back to visit Joe and Rita in Windsor. So we headed down I-90 to Buffalo, crossed the border at Niagara Falls, and headed onto the old Highway 2, which

was then the main roadway between Windsor and Québec. It was a very long ride in a '55 Volks. As we were approaching London at approximately 1:30 a.m., it was commencing to be foggy, and as we approached the Chatham area, I could not see six feet ahead of me, so I pulled in behind a transport truck and put my parking lights on, as you could see much better than with the headlights. The tractor-trailer had large fog lights; I drove for about twenty-five miles following him, and that's when I saw the police red lights behind me. He pulled up beside me and put on his fender light/police stop.

At this point we were on the new Highway 401, which they had started to build from Windsor. I pulled over, and when he came to my window he told me my parking lights were on instead of my headlights. I showed him my papers, driver's license, registration, and insurance. After looking at them, he asked me where I was going. I informed him where I was coming from and said my mother and I were going to visit my brother Joe in Windsor. He then inquired if my brother was an OPP officer, to which I responded yes. He said he worked in OPP District 1 with him, told me to be careful, and we were on our way.

We arrived at Joe's at 2:30 a.m., much to Joe's surprise. He was always so excited to see family since he lived about 600 miles of two-lane highway away from home. We had something to eat, went to bed, and slept until 7:00 a.m., when Joe came to my room and asked if I wanted (or should I say, told me) to go play hockey with the OPP Windsor Police *vs.* the Detroit police at 9:00 a.m. How could I refuse? He located some old equipment, skates, and a hockey stick, and we were off to the arena.

Joe and I were sitting next to each other when the same officer who had stopped me on the highway looked at me and asked, "Did you and your mother make it to Windsor safely?" I said, "Yes, we did." Now you see, I neglected to inform Joe of my little incident, and the officer pretended for Joe's sake that it was a very serious infraction; I was so embarrassed! He then told Joe the story, and I went out and scored a goal for the "good guys."

We had a good visit, but much too short for Joe's liking. He and Rita always treated family so well when we visited them. The first thing he would do was to take us out visiting all his friends and acquaintances, and he was so proud to introduce us as family. Thank you, Joe, for caring so deeply for each and every one of us.

I drove Momma back to Ottawa, and I headed back to Sudbury for the night shift—a long voyage. Of course you can do that when you're young, although in retrospect I would not recommend it.



Sudbury was a good city to be in, plenty of friends my age. Hung out a lot at Murray's Restaurant in Colson's Hotel that was owned by a friend of my brother Dennis, D'Arcy Colson. As I never

consumed alcohol, I never hung around the nightspots or with people who drank too much.

I traded my Volks for a '62 Volvo B18 sport black, stick-shift 18" long—nice car. By this time, I was dating Janet Timmins, a cousin of my sister-in-law Helen, Cecil's wife. She would visit her uncle in Chichester, at the Picard farm. I was immediately smitten with her. She was from Montréal, tall, brunette, and lived on the edge of Westmont in Notre Dame de Grace. We dated for about five or six months. That was a very long drive from Sudbury in those days on a two-lane highway. I would also see her in Chichester when she came up. I had been dating a girl in Sudbury whose first name was Dominique, from South America. One can only imagine the confusion if that relationship had continued: Mr. Dominic D'Arcy and his wife Dominique.

Janet went to nursing school, married a surgeon, and moved to Los Angeles. I have not seen her since 1962; however, I understand her husband died of cancer in his 50s.

In the summer of '62, Momma decided to vacate the farm, as she was alone there with Helen, and that was not a great existence. Meanwhile, my sister Mary and her husband, Tom Beggan, rented a large trailer and headed for Ottawa. Tom and Mary had found a three-bedroom apartment at 425 Daly Avenue for Momma. Leona moved in with Momma at first and then Theresa.

I knew that someday I would be going back to school. I enjoyed school a lot more once I left the farm, as I was not continuously frustrated and angry because of the pressures of working on the farm, consequently not always doing well in school and that, in itself, was very demeaning.

I visited Momma in her new digs, and while in Ottawa I read in the paper that Prime Minister John Diefenbaker was opening community colleges across the country for people on Unemployment Insurance. The government would pay you to go to school. It was called Canadian Vocational Training (CVT), the precursor to Algonquin College.

I applied and was accepted to begin September 1962. The courses I was taking were drafting, mathematics, and English composition/grammar. I was really interested in the drafting part, being a creative person, and as well, the composition and grammar would serve me well later on in my music and police career.

When I got back to work in Sudbury, there was more talk of layoffs at INCO. There had been rumors for several months, thus my application to the CVT program. In late July I was called into the foreman's office, and "Old Eddie Albert" gave me the news that many others and I had been expecting. As I had only worked for the company for twenty-seven months, I was chosen among many others to be laid off—so it worked out well in the end.

I really enjoyed my stay in Sudbury, lovely people, lots of fun; however, in those days you thought you were on planet Mars. Nothing grew within miles (they later sprayed something to make the grass grow on the rocks) until the company extended the stacks, so now the sulfur is carried miles away, exporting the pollution to other areas.

I drove to Ottawa for a weekend with the Volvo loaded and dropped everything off at Daly

Avenue at my mother's apartment, where I would be moving into when I returned. I headed back to Sudbury, completed my time at Coniston Smelting Plant, and said goodbye to all my co-workers. I felt sorry for some of the workers, as I knew they would be there for the rest of their working days, inhaling that poison (sulfur and other gasses).

The next day I headed for Ottawa again. The first order of business was to sell my car, as I was still making payments and really could not afford it being on Unemployment Insurance for a ten-month course. Our professor, Mr. Underwood (a British chap), was the architect who redesigned the plans intended originally for Vancouver that were purchased instead for the sports arena in Ottawa—The Civic Centre in Lansdowne Park, where the Ottawa 67s Junior-A hockey team played their games, as well as the CFL's Ottawa Roughriders and the NHL's Ottawa Senators, who played their first several seasons there awaiting the opening of the new Corel Centre (now called Canadian Tire Centre) in Kanata. I also enjoyed the drafting course, mostly because it was a subject in which I had a keen interest. I enjoyed the other courses as well but to a lesser degree. I had a former high school principal who was a math teacher, and he was great. A professor on sabbatical from the University of Ottawa taught the English composition/grammar course, and she was a fabulous teacher.

For my mid-term drafting exam, we had to design a bungalow house, three bedrooms with basement. I received 81% on the design. For our final exam, we were asked to design a small industrial building, which I found less complicated and easier to design. I received 83% on that design.

I did fairly well on the English composition; however, I had difficulty with the grammar. Growing up where I did in Sheenboro, Québec, we certainly bastardized the English language, took many shortcuts in pronunciation, and seemed to invent our own language. Visitors from away could not understand half of what we were saying.

I graduated in 1963 with a certificate—I was a Certified Draftsman. (We studied architecture and topographics as well.) Immediately after graduation, I sent out résumés and was called by a company that does topographical drafting, which is done from the air. I met with the personal department and was sent for a physical. I passed everything except for my eyesight. You needed 20–20 vision, and mine was somewhat lower so I did not get the job. I went to the UIC Office every day and applied in other places, however, none of those applications came to fruition.



In the meantime, I was still performing around Ottawa and the Valley with different country and folk groups. I was at a dance at the old Pineland Dance Hall on Riverside Drive near the airport—quite the place in those days! While there, I overheard a chap saying he was looking for another person for a folk group he was putting together. I went up to him, introduced myself, and said to

him, "I'm your man, when and where is the practice?" His name was David Britton, a great singer with a very powerful deep voice, and he had already had a degree of notoriety as he had written a song for the by then famous Gene Pitney, who left Halifax to perform in the USA.

David had also written another song called, "Man From Adano," for The Esquires, the band performing that night at Pineland. The Esquires recorded the song and it became quite popular in Canada and to a lesser degree in the USA. Their lead singer was Bob Harrington. The Esquires went on to be fairly well known across Canada. If they were American or British, they would have been world famous.

We had our first practice, and we hit it off straight away. There were four of us: David Britton (leader), me, Jay Fitzsimmons, and a singer named Helen. Helen was dating a friend of mine at the time, Bruce Hillary, who was in the dry-cleaning business. Helen was such a lady, so prim and proper. I met her again June 2013, and she looked great. We worked on several folk songs that were popular at the time, such as "Four Strong Winds," "Green, Green," "Tom Dooley," and "Walk Right In."

Our first appearance was at the Saturday night dance at Pineland as special guests of The Esquires. We were a hit! The next day I went to Lauzon Music on Wellington Street (the summer of '63) and wanted to buy a twelve-string guitar like the Roof-Top Singers' lead guitar player had, because I wanted to play the breaks in "Walk Right In." I bought the first twelve-string guitar in Ottawa—a Harmony. Man, did I attract attention with that sweetie! I played it until 1980. In 1999 when the City of Ottawa and Region of Ottawa-Carleton Municipality proclaimed Dominic D'Arcy Day, I presented it to the City of Ottawa Archives. Entertainer Wayne Rostad and I were the last to strum it before I sent her into retirement. It was a sad and moving moment for me. As anyone who plays an instrument can attest to, you become part of that instrument.

I should mention that at our first practice, Dave still didn't have a name for the group, so I suggested "The Claytons." All agreed, and that became our name. We played some gigs together over the years until Dave died suddenly in 2012.



In the meantime I had sort of given up on a drafting career and went back to my "original" dream, which was to become a police officer. I took a job with Myers Motors, a General Motors dealership in Ottawa, driving a parts truck because I thought this was a great way to get to know the city, delivering parts, as well as getting to know some of the business people in the area. I enjoyed it immensely, driving a new truck every six months. The dealership wanted to put me in new-car sales, but I was now determined to become a police officer. My brother Joe was an officer with the Ontario Provincial Police. Brother Dennis in Sudbury, brother-in-law Don Foley in Toronto, and brothers-in-law Tom Beggan in Ottawa and Sylvester McGuire were all policemen. When

my cousin Ed Walker, who grew up in Sheenboro (Chichester) walked by the front door at Myers Motors in uniform to take an accident report, I just had to become a police officer too.

Ed had joined the force approximately six months prior. I went out to say hello, and as we were speaking, one of the drivers who had been drinking, became abusive and disorderly. Cousin Ed had to arrest him. Ed has to be pound for pound one of the strongest men I know. He is 6'1", about 200 lbs., and when he grabbed you, you ain't going anywhere. I believe sometime within the next few months I submitted my application to the Ottawa Police Department.

I'm a strong believer that there is a reason for everything in this life and that everything happens for a reason. One day shortly after I started working at Myers, I made several passes through the service department going to and from the building where the parts were kept. I would be filling the orders for delivery, fenders, tailpipes, etc. to deliver to the other dealerships, garages, and service stations and would always say hello to the nice older woman who worked there.

On this particular day she was speaking to a girl, or should I say a princess? I was basically shy and aloof when it came to women. This girl was like a vision, so beautiful, with a big smile. As I had stopped to speak to Lee Freigen, she introduced me to her. Her name was Noellie Larose. I said hello, and I was eating an apple. (There was an apple orchard on our farm, and I ate a lot of apples.) I was spellbound and just kept right on eating the apple and continued on through Service and probably ran into a door or something (how come I had not seen her before?).

I was now living in an apartment at 649 Cummings Avenue with my friend Bob Leclair with whom I had worked in Sudbury. Bob had left Sudbury to take a bookkeeping job in Ottawa. I couldn't wait for Bob to come home. When he did finally arrive, I met him at the door and said, "Bob, I met the girl I'm going to marry today," and I proceeded to tell him about her, how beautiful she was, soft brown eyes, long legs, brunette, etc. Bob still remembers the moment quite vividly.

The next day I could hardly wait to get to work at 8:00 a.m. I immediately went to the service department and made some inquiries about her. Lee said she worked in the general office and was responsible for accounts receivable. Also, she was a model at Patricia Stevens Modeling Agency and Finishing School. Further, I learned that she was not dating anyone, as she had just broken off a lengthy relationship with a Canadian in the U.S. Marines. That afternoon I made sure I was in the service department when she was there collecting the cash and receipts. I said, "Hello Noellie," and in my clumsy awkward way said that it was nice to meet her yesterday. Although I wanted to ask her for a date, I didn't have enough nerve to do so.

There was a Myers Christmas party in early December, and I wanted so much to ask her to come with me; however, I had already asked the daughter of an employee to accompany me. She was a tall, attractive blonde whom I had never dated. The day of the party I called her to confirm, and she said she could not go—not a way to make friends by cancelling at the last minute. Another shot at the old male ego. I couldn't really ask Princess Noellie to come at the last moment—that

would not be gentlemanly! So I phoned Bob my roommate and asked him, and we went together. Bob said later that I was like a racehorse at the starting gate, just could not wait to get there.

As you may well imagine, my neck was like a giraffe's when I arrived, looking above the crowd to see her. There she was with some of the other girls from her office, she really stood out in her tasteful red dress with the fur collar and grey shoes. Wow! Bob kept saying, "Ask her to dance," and finally I did. It was an up-tempo jive song by Del Shannon, "Runaway." She didn't fare too well with the jive. After the song finished, it was time for Myers' President Neil MacDonald to speak (what a nice man he was), so therefore I did not get the chance to dance with her again that evening.

All the way home she was all I talked about; I was really smitten. She was not only extremely attractive but also such a lady, and she appeared to be a kind, caring person. I finally did get around to asking her if I could drive her home from work in my limo, a 1954 Pontiac with the driver's door almost all rusted out. I purchased it at Myers a month earlier. It ran great but looked sick and sore. When I picked her up and we started driving down Elgin Street, Noellie asked what the string was for, and I said it's attached to the gas pedal because it sticks, and I need to pull it back or the engine will rev. She probably was thinking, "This country bumpkin must still think he's back in them thar hills."

When I dropped her off in Wrightville (Hull), Québec, just across the river from Ottawa, I asked her if I could call her for a date, and much to my surprise she agreed. Well, needless to say, poor Bob was in for it again—she was all I talked about. There was only one problem: I had been dating a girl named Monique for about three months, and she really liked me. I was not sure if I should continue dating her or not, even before I met Noellie. I did see her again shortly after meeting Noellie, and I told her about Noellie. I had not yet dated Noellie, but I liked her a lot so I said, "We have to talk."

I would see Noellie almost every day at work, and still I had not asked her for a date. She had dated a lawyer and a doctor; however, they were not serious dates. She also dated a new-car salesman from Myers, and he took her to all the swanky places. Was I jealous? You're darn right I was. My poor Irish country-boy's heart was broken every time I saw any of the sales people speaking to her. They were handsome, had lots of money, and drove Cadillacs and Buicks.

I told my girlfriend Monique that I was going up to Sheenboro to the farm with my family for New Year's and that I would decide then if we were to continue our relationship. My mother and four sisters met me at the Bruce McDonald Hotel where I had been performing with the Claytons. We had been signed for a one-week gig that lasted eighteen weeks. We had our own band room, and the manager made a fuss over us. His name was Mr. Carl Dujay, a former teacher who was one of our biggest fans and supporters.

I called Noellie and told her I would like to ask her for a date but that I first had to tell Monique and that I would call her when I got back. My brother Joe and his kids joined us for New



Year's, and we all had a wonderful time. The weather was cold, and there had been a significant snowfall after Christmas so the sledding was excellent, but my mind was on the phone call to Monique. I knew well in advance of the call what the decision was going to be. I called her and informed her that I felt we should break it off. She was crying on the phone, and as it was a multi-party line on which *all* of Sheenboro could be listening. I told her I was sorry, but it would not be fair to her if we kept dating.

I would see her around from time to time after I joined the police force. Her mother owned several hair salons, and she eventually took them over. Her father was the manager of the Ottawa Airport, and I would see him occasionally as well. They were very good to me, and I really liked them. Monique married a good man and had children, so life goes on. *C'est la vie. Qué será, será.*

When I returned to Ottawa, I phoned Noellie at home and asked her for a date. Much to my pleasant surprise, she accepted. I was a happy fellow! Well, it was not really a date, sort of, but I was invited to her house (I went by bus because I did not want her parents to see my car). We were chaperoned by her parents and younger brother, Nelson.

I would drive her home from work, and each time, being a guy, I tried to go parking [if you know what I mean], but not with that lady! I was moving too fast. (As a matter of fact, I was fast and furious, and she was furious.) I got to meet her parents, Nelson and Noëlie Larose, great people. Her mother also looked like royalty. They were a little cautious and curious of this country boy who drove a parts truck and a broken-down Pontiac with the string attached to the gas pedal. Her mother worked for an insurance agency and was appalled that her daughter would ride in my car.

Eventually, we stopped at the old railway station on the way home from work and parked. I was like a clumsy klutz. I finally put my arm around her but no kissing, oh, no. It was probably two months before I was allowed to do that. She was brought up prim and proper, and she also was teaching at a finishing school and instructing young women how to behave like ladies.

I would call her and stay on the phone for two hours, sometimes talking into the wee hours of the morning. Bob was very annoyed with me, keeping him awake in the next room. Noellie would come with me later on to the Bruce McDonald Hotel and sit in the audience awhile and then go to the Band's room and read, press my clothes, or call her friends. She sometimes would wear this A-line, below-the-knee, hip-hugging, yellow dress. When she would walk into the club, she was so beautiful all heads would turn. When the guys at Myers saw that she was actually dating me, they were some jealous!

Each morning she would go to Al Saikley's Delmonico Restaurant next door and bring me my toast and coffee, and I made sure I would be downstairs so she would have to come down, and I sometimes could sneak a hug. This woman always had money, like always had coins. She managed her money well. She is still like that today.

The Claytons were really becoming well known. We had a manager named Sandy Gardner

who was the Arts & Entertainment section editor with the *Ottawa Journal*. He really took a fancy to us. Sandy was from England and was somehow involved with a few groups that made it big in the music world. He did a feature on us, a three-quarter-page photo spread in front of the Peace Tower.

But by then we had a new face in the group—Frank Cummings who had played lead guitar with Paul Anka and the Bobbysoxers. Great guy, loved his music, did not consume alcohol except socially, and played a mean Gibson electric. Jay had to leave, as he had been promoted in the government, and he could not continue with us. Helen left, as her boyfriend at the time was not keen on her singing with three guys. She opened her own hair salon and has just recently retired. I saw her at one of my performances the summer of 2003, and I could not believe my eyes. I still recognized her after all those years. She is still very beautiful, and the refined lady she was then. She agreed to come up and sing three songs, and that was exciting.

David had written four new songs and had arranged to have us record them in Nashville on July 7, 1963, using studio musicians who later became world famous: Chet Atkins on guitar, Floyd Cramer on piano, and the Anita Kerr Singers. The producer was to have been Jack Clement.

However, all that came to an end one night at the Bruce McDonald. Dave sometimes abused alcohol, especially if he drank with the audience, and he was doing that a little more often than Frank and I liked. On this particular night at about 11:30, Dave was feeling pretty good and introduced a song he was going to sing. He put the capo on the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret. Well, Frank knew and I knew that Dave could not sing it that high, as he had a bass voice. We both leaned over and told him it was on G 1<sup>st</sup> fret, but he ignored us and proceeded to sing the song.

Well, guess what—when he reached the chorus and the high note, his voice cracked and he could not reach the note. He backed away from the mike angrily; he dropped his guitar and left the stage, leaving Frank and me to finish the song with much embarrassment. David had gone upstairs to our room on the second floor.

After the song was over, I left the stage and met him in the stairway leading to our room and I was some annoyed. I had to hold myself back, so as not to strike him. We had a discussion, and he came back to finish the last set of the evening. He knew we were angry and that possibly this was the end of the Claytons. There were a few problems leading up to that encounter. This was a Saturday night, our last show after eighteen weeks, and we were scheduled to open the next Monday at the Riverside Hotel, which was several steps up from the much smaller venue at the Bruce McDonald.

Dave called Frank and me on Sunday and informed us he no longer would be part of the Claytons and that he had called the Riverside to cancel. Dave was a good person, but one could never really get close to him. He was also a prolific songwriter. He continued under the name of David James and performed in Canada and the USA. Frank, however, retired from music professionally,

but he still played and jammed with friends. He continued his job at Nichol Construction as a draftsman and eventually became a superintendent. He has since retired and is living in Canada and Austria where his wife inherited a winery and vineyard and several hundred acres of land. I kept playing and practicing and jamming with friends and local bands. Life without my music is not worth living.



One day while still at Myers Motors I was heading west on Catherine Street approaching Bank Street with a load of fenders, hoods, tailpipes, and mufflers. I stopped for the red light at Bank Street, and after being only stopped for approximately twenty seconds, the light turned green for me. I proceeded to go through the intersection on the green light, as did the vehicle in the lane to my right, when someone proceeding north on Bank Street came crashing into my truck. He struck my front left fender at the door. What a crash, what a noise! There were auto parts everywhere.

It's a wonder no-one was seriously injured by the flying fenders, tailpipes, etc.! A pipe came through my rear cab window and narrowly missed the back of my head. My truck came to rest across the intersection and the car that struck me, a new 1963 Buick Electra, came to rest at Lewis Motors, a Ford dealership a half-block away. The police were called, and the witness told the officer that the car ran a red light. I had just been given this new Chevy pickup. I was angry. The chap who struck me was a very well-known person, a wealthy engineer, who owned an engineering company, a multi-story building downtown, a hotel, and much more. It was a hidden intersection, and he thought he had time to make it if he sped up. Well, he was wrong. When I got back to the office, my boss Keith Rawson was already aware of the collision.

The other vehicle owner was charged with careless driving, and he pleaded not guilty, so therefore I had to attend court (no pay) and give evidence on behalf of the Crown. The accused had hired one of the best defence lawyers in town who later became a Supreme Court of Ontario Judge. He was found not guilty on account of a technicality, and I had to pay the bloody \$100 deductible. Didn't seem fair. I see that person around at different functions; however, I have never mentioned that I was the person he almost killed. The Myers truck was a total write off, and he still owes me \$100 plus interest (hah!). I take comfort in the saying that in life, as in the game of golf, you're only cheating yourself, and in time you will have to answer for your misdeed.



The Ottawa Police had not called me, as there was a long list of applicants, plus they only did the hiring once a year; but I was patient and getting to know the layout of the city. Today they hire officers from other parts of Canada and the British Empire and elsewhere who don't have a clue as to where certain streets are, but they do the ride-along with a Senior Patrol Officer (Coach Officer),

so therefore they get a good handle on the city and its make-up.

Noellie and I would meet each lunch hour across the street from Myers and sit on a park bench at the Museum of Nature, a wonderful old stone building much like a European castle. She would always bring the lunch. Those were special memories.



When I tried to enlist, the U.S. Army had said to go home and have a hernia repair operation done and then come back and see us. Well, a few years later, the time had arrived to go under the knife. I was not looking forward to that; however, the very large hernia was extremely painful and affecting my work. I could hardly lift ten pounds. I entered the old General Hospital on Bruyère Street, room 411, on the south side and awaited my destiny with Dr. Ewing (head of surgery) and *the knife*. Noellie came to see me that evening, before the operation the next morning, with some goodies.

At 7:00 a.m. next morning the Gestapo arrived to prep me, which meant they had to shave my privates...very humiliating. No one else except Momma had ever seen my body below the belt. They shaved me bald, looked like Yule Brenner's head. Then they gave me a mild sedative and watched as this poor little Irishman became drowsy.

By the time they started rolling me out to the O.R. I was feeling no pain. I do remember looking up at Dr. Ewing as well as seeing all the O.R. staff. They gave me the injection, and I was out like a light. It's never pleasant awakening after being anesthetized for an operation. My stomach was upset, ouch. Did that hurt the old gut! I was groggy most of the day, and when Noellie came to visit with her father, I was coherent, but just. Her father brought me some chocolates, and Noellie brought me the most beautiful book of inspirations, which I still have to this day and read from time to time. The poem below is an excerpt from the book Noellie gave me:

There is inside you  
 all of the potential to be whatever  
 you want to be—  
 all of the energy to do whatever  
 you want to do.  
 Imagine yourself as you would like to be,  
 doing what you want to do,  
 and each day, take one step towards  
 your dream.  
 And though at times it may seem too  
 difficult to continue,  
 hold on to your dream.

One morning you will awake to find

that you are the person you dreamed of—  
 doing what you wanted to do—  
 simply because you had the courage  
 to believe in your potential  
 and to hold on to your dream.

—Donna Levine

Chuck Collins, a friend of the Claytons who often came to watch us play, (and who visited before my surgery and told Dr. Ewing not to make a mistake and cut “IT” off) had his own radio show on CFRA. He mentioned on the air that Dominic D’Arcy from the famed group, the Claytons, was recovering at the General from an operation. He phoned the hospital to request that they bring a radio into my room. Then, dedicating it to me, he put on an L.P. record by the man of many voices, jokes, and sounds, Rex Harrison who was one of the funniest entertainers of the day. Chuck did not realize it I guess, but when you have had a hernia operation, one thing you cannot do comfortably is cough or laugh.

Well, when I heard the first joke, it made me laugh. It hurt so much that I screamed with the pain, and the fellow in the other bed rang for the nurse who came running in to ask what was wrong. He said, “I think that guy over by the window is dying.” I spoke to Chuck years later about that, and we both had a good laugh.

I was in the hospital for nine days and back on stage (on a stool) eleven days post-surgery entertaining; however, it’s not like that today—you are out of the hospital the same day. It was certainly difficult to straighten up after being cut open down there. My father had a hernia problem as long as I knew him, as did his father. They wore what they called a truss, which was a curved piece of steel that went around your back with two leather pieces pressing against the side of the groin, much like a pair of earmuffs. That must have been so uncomfortable.



My mother and sister finally got to meet Noellie. Momma had moved to a much larger and nicer apartment a few blocks up from Daly on Charlotte Street close to the Embassy of the Soviet Union. I took Noellie there one Sunday afternoon, and she met Momma and my sisters. My sisters took a fancy to Noellie immediately; however, Momma always had reservations about the potential new daughters-in-law. It was virtually the same with my five brothers when they presented their respective future wives.

One week when Noellie was on holiday, she asked my sister Helen, who was sixteen years old (Noellie was twenty) if she would like to spend the week with her at her parents’ cottage. Helen agreed, and away they went. Her father drove them up. I really missed seeing her at work; I didn’t want to go to work without her being there, poor Bob had to put up with me lamenting when I got home.

On Thursday night the weather turned horrific. There were 70 mph winds in Ottawa and plenty of rain. However, the worst hit area was north of the city in the Laurentian Mountains and continued on a path up to Gracefield and Maniwaki, Québec. The cottage where Noellie and Helen were staying was in the path of the storm. On Friday morning the radio station announced that there was considerable damage northeast of Ottawa and that power was out, etc.

I called Bob at work and asked him if he would come with me to check on the girls, as I was worried. He agreed, and right after work we left on the approximately 85-mile trip. As we drove up, we could see all the damage, and I was even more concerned. When I pulled off the main road at Blue Sea Lake and onto the long winding and hilly road to the cottage, there were several large trees across the road. I had brought an axe from work, and we got out and started chopping, chopping, and chopping until finally we had cut through the trees. Now we had to try and move them off the road so we could pass. Well, Bob was a world-class champion weightlifter, and I was lifting weights at the time, so we huffed and we puffed, and we mules moved the wood far enough apart that we could drive through.

When we finally arrived at Lac Edja, the girls were some happy to see us. They were two scared missies! They prepared some supper for their two heroes while Bob and I went for a swim, and then we retired for the night. We slept out in the living room/kitchen and the girls in the bedroom. Noellie came out to tuck me in, which was quite pleasant if you know what I mean. The girls came back to the city with us.

By this time Noellie and I were in a pretty serious relationship. Although we never discussed engagement or marriage, we were thinking about it. In early August, Noellie brought up the subject of commitment. We had been dating almost six months, and she wanted to see if I was committed to the relationship and if we should start thinking about our future together. I sort of hemmed and hawed, and skirted around the question, and could not give a definite answer right then and there. That was such a huge decision; I needed a little more time. In essence, I was scared, really scared. Dominic married? I knew she was the woman I wanted to spend the rest of my life with, but I was still driving a parts department truck and had no savings.

Noellie appeared quite upset because I could not give a definite answer. When I left her house that night, she was disappointed and deeply hurt. I surely did not like the way we parted. I was scared. Noellie decided to break it off and on Monday took holidays.

When I went to work that Monday morning, there was no visit in the parts department from her, no coffee, no toast and jam. I called her office, and her boss said she had taken a vacation. I was devastated to say the least; I was so weak I could hardly stand up. I came back to the parts department, and a co-worker, Paul Kelly, (who went on to become a well-known lawyer) asked me if I had seen a ghost. I never answered but went to the washroom as I thought I was going to faint or throw up.

I called Noellie's mother at work and asked her where she was, and her mother said she had gone to Rimouski, Québec by train to visit her sister Micheline. I was shaken, shattered, and a freaking mess. I couldn't even find the damn place on the map. I don't know how I got through the week without having an accident. Come Friday, I asked my boss, Herb Rawson, if I could leave around 4:00 p.m. instead of 6:00 p.m. as I wanted to go to Rimouski, and he agreed.

The Friday before I had bought another car, a 1954 Monarch, two-door hardtop and took possession on Monday. It was to be a surprise to Noellie. It was the nicest looking vehicle in Ottawa—V-8 engine, white leather seats, two-tone light/dark blue outside! It still, to this day, is the nicest looking vehicle I ever owned, well almost, anyway.

So, after finding Rimouski on the map (on the St. Lawrence River, south shore, almost 400 miles from Ottawa and 169 miles east of Québec City), I set off. Now, bearing in mind I had only been to Montréal twice as a passenger, trying to navigate through that maze in rush-hour traffic was no fun. It was getting dark when I finally got through Montréal. The directions I had been given were to take Highway 15 and follow it to Highway 20 and go east. That's what I thought I did; however, I ended up at the New York border heading for Plattsburgh, NY. I turned around at Customs and headed back. That error or misinformation took me 30 miles out of my way and of course, another 30 miles to return to Highway 20.

As some readers may remember, there once were two-lane major highways, and Highway 20 was no exception. It was approaching midnight when I arrived in Québec City, and the fog was starting to roll in off the St. Lawrence River. By this time I was tired and hungry, so I stopped for gas and picked up a sandwich and some fruit and a soda-pop.

I was back on the highway and it was getting worse; however, I was determined to continue as I only had another 2½ to 3 hours to go. Wrong! When I approached Rivière-du-Loup, I made a wrong turn and followed the Trans-Canada Highway, which I was on from Ottawa, and ended up in Edmunston, NB, 45 miles off-course.

So I headed back to Rivière-du-Loup and took Highway 132. As I was approaching the mouth of the St. Lawrence, the fog was so bad that I could not see beyond the hood of the Monarch. I hit the curb when I was turning onto 132 and broke the rear mainspring on the Monarch, but I had to press on. The lights on the right side were shining in the air as the back end had sagged, thus causing the lights to be out of whack, and if you have ever driven in the fog, that's the last thing you want, the light shining upward. But I must forge ahead, just another 20 miles. I kept telling myself, keep going. I sang every song I knew at the top of my lungs.

I finally arrived in Rimouski at 3:30 a.m. That was an 11½-hour trip that should normally take seven hours. My eyes were popping out of my head. I had trouble finding the address, as there was no one on the streets at that hour on Saturday morning and little traffic. The fog was so thick I could not see anything anyway.

I came to the door at approximate 4:00 a.m., rang the doorbell, and, after a few minutes, Noellie's sister, Micheline, answered and asked, in a stern voice to this ragged looking tall streak of misery, "What do you want?" I said, "My name is Dominic from Ottawa, and I want to see Noellie." Her jaw dropped, and she looked surprised and bewildered but replied, "Just a minute." I heard her say to Noellie, "There's someone named Dominic here to see you."

When Noellie came to the door, she appeared more surprised than her sister, didn't say anything, just looked at me confusedly, as if wondering how the hell did he find me, and what is he doing at my sister's door at that hour of the morning? She must have been so embarrassed. I didn't give her a chance to say anything. Spontaneously, I got down on one knee and asked, "Will you marry me?" She paused for a moment and said, "Yes." And with that, my life changed forever. I finally committed myself to someone, not just any someone but the most beautiful person I have ever known.

Noellie opened up the couch and prepared my bed, kissed me good night (good morning), and I fell fast asleep and did not awaken until 9:00 a.m. Poor Gerald, her brother-in-law, was wondering who is that strange man in our house. Gerald is a chartered accountant and like his wife, a rather reserved person, so I suppose he found this rather unusual.

We had breakfast with Mich and Gerry, and then Noellie and I went for a walk along the Fleuve and stopped to talk about what had just happened. We were apprehensive, but extremely excited about the road ahead.

Gerald and Mich took us out to a fancy restaurant that evening for dinner, and it was a wonderful evening; they were gracious hosts. The next day, Sunday, Noellie and I went to Mass at the Catholic church just down the road, and she wore a hat that just blew me away. She looked regal.

Recently, while returning from PEI where I had been performing, I stopped off in Rimouski and went to church and to the exact pew we had sat in and then to the house where I proposed—very emotional. The new owners graciously allowed me in to look around the house, and it brought good memories to the fore, memories that will last a lifetime.

Noellie telephoned her parents and informed them she was driving back home with me and not taking the train, as they were planning to meet her at the station. Now you can well imagine their anxiety as Noellie neglected to tell them that I had a new vehicle. They probably were thinking their daughter was going to be in an accident or something with the old Pontiac not knowing I had upgraded to a Monarch. Now it's worth mentioning here that it took me 11½ hours to get to Rimouski; however, her father knew it's a seven-hour drive so no hanky-panky on the way home—don't be overdue!

I thanked my gracious hosts, Gerald and Micheline, and departed Rimouski Sunday after church and lunch at approximately 11:00 a.m. I felt so proud, like a peacock, to have my future



bride all to myself, and all the way to Ottawa. Traffic was light, and we made good time, even on the bridges into and out of Montréal. I could not resist the chance to do a little smooching so I pulled the Monarch into the entrance to a farmer's field near Hudson, Québec and spent a half an hour with the princess. We arrived at her home around 6:30 p.m., and her parents were really happy to see her. The jury was still out on this Pontiac County Irishman parts-truck driver. We both decided to postpone any announcement until I asked her father's permission for her hand in marriage.

Well, as in all the stories and movies, I was scared out of my wits knowing I had to face her father. I would rather have a root canal. We decided to do it on Sunday, the Lord's Day, so therefore he wouldn't shout at me or ask me to leave. You see, I was not blessed with a great deal of self-confidence. I arrived at Noellie's house about 2:00 p.m. We had some lunch, and we all retired to the living room where I huffed and I puffed for a while but chickened out. A little while later, I said to myself, you just have to walk up to the plate and do it.

So here's how it went down: Noellie came over and sat down beside me, held my hand, and I told Mr. Larose I had something to ask him. The room became extremely quiet, and I almost backed out again, my mouth was dry, I felt like I was going to choke. Finally, I asked him, but before he said yes, he and Mrs. Larose had several questions, like do you have enough money saved up, where are you going to live, etc., and after I skirted around the appropriate answers, he said, "Yes." I thanked him, and we were on our way. We told them we would like to get married sometime in the fall. A week later we found out that the only date suitable for all was November 28, 1964, which could be disastrous due to the unpredictable weather conditions that late in the season, especially for our out-of-town guests. We did not have an engagement as I could not afford an engagement ring, and we really felt it was not important—we didn't need a ring to remind us we were engaged.

At work on Monday morning, we told a few people, and the word spread like wildfire. All the new-car sales team had me nicknamed "Dickless Dom," referring to my hernia operation, and were quoted as saying, "Dickless Dom's getting married." But they had great affection for Noellie and me.

At the time I was making about \$45.00 per week, and Noellie was making about the same. We had little money, however, I knew things would get better. As someone once told me, "If you want to have rainbows, you have to have rainy days."

In October 1964, I was called by the Ottawa Police Department and invited by the recruitment officer to write the Ottawa Police Test. I was totally excited at that great news. It was to be in a week, and I was told to be at #1 Station on Waller Street. The test was difficult at first, however, my OPP brother Joe had advised me that most of the primary stuff was general knowledge. He earlier advised me to read the newspapers every day to find out what's going on in Ottawa, Ontario,

and Canada, e.g., who is the Ontario Solicitor-General and Lt. Governor, the premier's name, the prime minister, different cases in the court system, judgments, etc. Well, I read the *Journal* and the *Citizen* every day in the parts truck and everywhere else I could find a place to do so. It paid off, as 60% of the questions were on general knowledge.

On November 5, 1964, twenty-three days before our wedding, I found out that I had passed the test and that the recruitment officer wanted to see me, whereby he asked more questions about me and about my life up to then. The next week I met Chief Reg Axel and Deputy-Chief Walter Hudson for an interview. It went really well, and he made mention of the information on my application about all the police personnel in my family, especially Det. Sgt. Tom Beggan, my brother-in-law, who was very popular with the rank-and-file as well as the brass at that time. The chief was also a drinking buddy of Tom D'Arcy of T. D'Arcy, Ltd., and before I was dismissed his final remarks were that it would be hard to fire me with all my connections and that I would be told when to report for basic (very basic) training.

In the meantime invitations to all the families and other invitees were prepared and sent out for a November 28th wedding. Some people were a little upset as to the date, especially the ones from out of town. As I mentioned earlier, the weather could turn nasty, but *c'est la vie*. Noellie's parents arranged to have the wedding reception at the Hotel Douverney in Hull, an illustrious place, very classy. It has since been torn down. As we both worked at a Cadillac-GM dealership, the president suggested we use a spanking new 1964 Cadillac, driven by one of Noellie's friends, David Smith, who also worked there in the broom closet (very small office). He teased the women at Myers a lot, and they would tell him to go back in his closet.

Noellie and I went shopping for our wedding bands, and after several days of searching for right rings at an affordable price, we settled with Peoples Jewelers on Sparks Street. The gold rings cost \$50 each and were what we wanted—wide and thick. I paid for them in installments of \$10 per month. We started the search for an apartment, and we were concentrating the search in the Glebe, which is a village-like community just south of Centretown. I had lived in the area at 147 Carling Avenue (later renamed Glebe Avenue) with teacher and Alderman Lionel O'Connor, so I was familiar with the area and really enjoyed the lifestyle there—a close-knit community familiar and reminiscent of growing up in Sheenboro.

We found a place on the second day at 612 Bank Street on beautiful Central Park. It was a one-bedroom apartment on the first floor—just perfect for newlyweds and close to our work, a ten-minute walk away for Noellie. As well, when I started working for the Ottawa Police, it was a seven-minute drive or twenty-minute walk for me, so we made a good choice. We moved in on December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Needless to say we were both getting very excited about the wedding. We were both mature—Noellie was twenty-one (June 26<sup>th</sup>); I was twenty-five (July 30<sup>th</sup>)—and I believe we were both

mature enough to make that commitment for life. Noellie and her mother made 95% of the arrangements and the little details her family does so well.

My music was taking a back seat during this time. I was still performing, but not very regularly. I enjoyed some jam sessions with my cousin Cecil Walker (my favorite uncle's son). Cec played the violin and was very good, much the same style and tone that his father had. We would gather at someone's house, and friends and relatives would be invited for an afternoon of fun and music. I miss that today—back then I (and everyone else) had the time—just sit and pick and grin!

I went to Classy Formal Wear for my tuxedo rental and was fitted with a black tuxedo, which cost me \$18.00, that was about half of my weekly salary. It's a danged good thing I didn't consume alcohol, or I could not have afforded to get married. I booked a seating at the Green Valley Restaurant on Prince of Wales Drive, a place where the rich and famous and blue-haired ladies went for tea, lunch, and dinner, and that has since burned down. At this point we were hoping people would give us money as a wedding gift!

My Monarch was starting to break down so, again, I'm back at the Myers used car lot looking for another vehicle. They always gave me a great deal. I had seen a '58 Chevrolet Bel Air, (two-door hardtop, with brown and white leather seats) on the lot, so I asked how much they would give it to me for if I took it off their hands! It had 40,000 miles on it and was in great shape, so I bought it for \$2,800 and traded in my Monarch. They put new brakes, tires, etc. on it. It sure was a classy looking vehicle.

The day was fast approaching, and I was a nervous wreck. Noellie was cool on the outside, but I know she was even more anxious than I was. However, everything was falling into place. All the invitations' RSVP cards had been returned, and 95% were attending. We were pleased and excited about that. We had our rehearsal at the now torn-down Our Lady of the Annunciation Church with Father Fogarty officiating. He was a rather crusty individual. My sister Doreen, her husband, Sylvester, and their two daughters were there as well. Doreen and Syl had a heck of a time finding Noellie's house. (It took me four days to find it.) Well, not really but, unless you knew the area, it was not easy to find.

I asked Doreen if her two daughters, Barbara and Betty (aged fifteen and seventeen), would sing at the wedding, and they agreed. They sang like angels. We chose "Ave Maria" during the wedding ceremony and a few other songs later.

I think Mr. and Mrs. Larose were thinking, "It's not too late to back away from this." They were still very anxious and quite concerned with the livelihood and well-being of their daughter. This country boy still did not have a solid well-paying job, and they did not think, I'm sure, that I was ready to settle down. There may have been some degree of truth to that frame of mind. In retrospect, I did have some doubts, and I'm sure most people would have before such a huge commitment and lifestyle change.

All those involved in the rehearsal were invited back to Noellie's parents' home for some food and refreshments, and my sister Doreen and my nieces Barb and Betty had a chance to get to know Noellie's family a little better. Doreen had only met Noellie once. All bid each other goodnight and "see you in the morning at the church," and even as I write this, I can still feel the same butterflies as tingling in my stomach.

I said good night as well to the future Mrs. Dominic D'Arcy and went to my apartment on Cummings Avenue. Poor Bob and I talked until well past midnight. He was to drive my Chevy and park it a distance from the church so my brothers, especially Joe, could not booby trap it and do things that only Joe could concoct. Bob was such a good friend, and we had shared so much together in our young lives. My family really liked him as well, as he fit right in like one of the D'Arcy boys.

"The Morning of Reckoning" I was out of the apartment at 8:00 a.m., as I needed to get a haircut across from my mother's apartment on Charlotte Street, at Pino's where I had been going for three years. My sisters and Momma were all excited for Brownie (my nickname, as I was a little darker than most of the family). My brother Harold had spent the night with them, and he too came for a haircut at Pino's. Pino and his assistant were excited about my impending event. Italians really celebrate ceremonies such as this. He did not charge me for the haircut and wished me well. The cost at that time would have been approximately \$5.00. He is still at that location, Charlotte and Rideau Streets at the time of this writing.

Bob joined me at Momma's, left his car there, and drove me in my car to Our Lady of the Annunciation Church on St. Joseph Blvd. in Hull. It was quite cold that morning, November 28, 1964 (probably, just below freezing but sunny). I watched as Bob drove off with my car to hide it and admired the shine. One thing you can say about the D'Arcy boys was that we always had shiny shoes and cars (now I even have a shiny head). After I watched him turn around the corner and out of sight, I entered the church for my Big Event.

My brother Joe had come to Myers Motors on Friday, the day before, for some touch-up paint and had also asked me for the shoes I would be wearing with my tuxedo, as he wanted to really shine them up for me. Now, there's a guy who could shine shoes. So, as I had my shoes in my car, I gave them to him. The morning of the wedding, I asked him if he had my black shoes, and he replied, "Yes, they are in the car."

Dennis showed up, as did Noellie's sister, Micheline. Dennis was my Best Man, and Micheline was Matron of Honor. We had a short run-through with Father Fogarty and all involved, and I went into the vestibule behind the altar to put on my tux. Joe had still not given me my shoes, and I ought to have become a little suspicious, knowing him and the prankster that he is. He did arrive with them twenty minutes before the wedding Mass. I was peeking out from behind the altar as the guests started arriving. (Harold in Niagara Falls on his honeymoon received similar treatment.

Joe had the OPP check his hotel room.)

Then I saw my mother getting into her seat at the front and most of my family behind her. I had a tear in my eye! I so wished my Poppa could have been there. Momma always dressed to the nines; she looked so good and wore all the right matching colors. Even back on the farm Momma was in my view usually a step above when it came to fashion. On occasions at the farm she would put on make-up and a nice dress, and we would always ask her where she was going and she would answer “nowhere.”

Dennis and Micheline went out and took their places at the altar, and all was set for the ceremony and awaiting the arrival of my future bride. Mrs. Larose always looked as if she had just walked out of a *Vogue* magazine—always in style and always current with fashion. I suppose some of that rubbed off on Noellie. Father Fogarty and the altar boys were behind the altar waiting. The Caddie transporting Noellie and her father arrived about ten minutes late. By that time I had already been standing at the altar, and was I nervous, anxious, and all the other adjectives thrown in there? You're darn right I was. My mind was really rambling, and I thought that possibly her parents had finally talked some sense in her and that she was backing out (I wonder what the average would be if one were to take a survey of all the grooms who were left standing at the altar for a few minutes or more)...very nerve wracking. (That's when I started to lose my hair, as the blood flow to the brain and scalp stopped circulating.)

But not to worry, they appeared at the entrance to the church, and as the organist began to play “Here Comes the Bride,” I turned around to face the rear of the church, and behold, there she was looking radiant and so beautiful in an A-line gown of white peau de soie with appliqué on the front. She wore a shoulder-length veil topped by a crown of flowers, and her bouquet had her grandmother's missal at its center, surrounded by trailing stephanotis and ribbons. As she walked up the aisle on her father's arm, you could hear the gasps, recognizing the beauty that she was. As they came closer to the altar, I felt weak, and my knees were shaking when I looked into her eyes as she approached the altar. Her father presented her to me, and he walked off to the right and took his place beside his wife, Noëlie. My bride, Noellie, in turn, placed her arm in mine, and we took our position at the altar.

I was wondering why there were people laughing as I knelt down at the beginning of the service. “Please Help” was written on the sole of my shoes! Now, I knew why Joe wanted my shoes and why he was so late giving them to me!

After the ceremony, we went behind the altar to sign the register with Dennis and Micheline accompanying us as witnesses. Father Fogarty (later Monseigneur) was certainly not a gregarious person, much like his brother, Ken, who was later the mayor of Ottawa—quite aloof.

What a heavy load taken off our shoulders! The decision was made that we would spend the rest of our lives together, now that's one heck of a major commitment in retrospect.

We walked out of the church, and all were waiting, and I mean all. Most invitees were from the D'Arcy side, starting with my immediate family: eleven brothers and sisters, their spouses, and numerous uncles and aunts. Rice was thrown at us and at the Caddie as we drove away. I had attended many weddings and had never put myself in the groom's shoes. I felt like the most important person in the universe, very proud, excited seeing everyone, especially my family at "MY WEDDING."

We drove around for a half an hour or so and then headed to Plessis Street where we were to change clothes, relax for a while, and then head back to the receiving line. Mr. and Mrs. Larose and Micheline came back as well. The girls assisted the bride to remove her wedding dress, etc. No one assisted me (poor me). I slipped out of my rented tuxedo and into my best slightly used "borrowed suit" and shoes. Actually, they were given to me by Bruce Innes, my good friend and also a great fan and friend of the Claytons.

Bruce was just a little bigger than I was, and he gave me the most expensive brown suit and vest I had ever worn. Bruce's dad owned a business on Wellington Street where they sold washers and dryers, etc. I felt like a million dollars—no one knew that I was wearing a borrowed suit and wore shoes I had worn for years before. We arrived back at the Douverney Hotel about 1½ hours later and formed a receiving line. My mother was used to that—she had a lot of previous experience. It was nice to see everyone, brothers, sisters, cousins, uncles, and aunts. Oh, did I mention that Noellie looked smashing in her going-away outfit? She wore a rose-colored Chanel-style suit, white gloves, and a brimmed grey hat with matching grey pumps. We were seated for dinner, and we felt like the King and Queen. That's the way it should be. It's a very special day, and you should feel special.

When it came time for a toast, you know the routine where the bride and groom raise their glasses and put their hands through the other's arm and toast. Well, I had said to myself and other members of my family that I would taste my first alcoholic beverage on the day I was married. I don't recall if there was a voice within me saying, "Don't do it," or if I just subconsciously decided not to toast with alcohol in a split-second. I gently placed the champagne glass down so as not to draw attention and instead picked up the glass of water and toasted with that. No one else in my family noticed, or at least did not mention it, except my brother Joe, who must have had his police detective apparatus on and observed the sleight of hand, and he (quietly) mentioned it to me later. To this day I still have not consumed alcohol.

We arrived at the restaurant at 7:50 p.m., and they took us to our reserved seating. What a wonderful place that was! The word got around that we had just tied the knot, and several people came to our table to congratulate us.

I wanted so badly to check our envelopes/cards to see how much money we were given; however, I was overruled. That would be the first of many times my wife's good judgment would

be used during our marriage.

The D'Arcy Clan do not need much of an excuse to party, and they were all having a great time when it was time for us to leave on our honeymoon. We planned to head to Watertown, NY, which was about 2½ hours away. After our reception dinner, we said our goodbyes, and right on cue Bob had my car at the front door—and there were no booby traps or tin cans or garbage cans or animals in the back seat. Joe went outside several times to look for my car, but obviously he did not find it. We left the Green Valley restaurant at 9:15 p.m., and when we got outside it was just starting to rain and, as it was just below zero, yes, freezing rain. I warmed the car up and waited in the parking lot for the windows to clear. Then I pulled onto Prince of Wales Drive, and it was extremely slippery, only to get worse as the temperature dropped and the rain intensified.

Plan A was not an option, so Plan B was worked on, and it was to take the first motel on the way out of town, and as there was only one, the next would be in Kemptville, thirty-five miles away. We arrived at the King Slumber Motel just at the city limits on Highway 16. We checked in and were given a room on the second floor, Room 202. It was a nice room, very clean.

I will obviously not go into details (Fifth Amendment) as to that night—only to say when Noellie came out of the bathroom in a glorious white three-layered nightgown, I thought, Now, what do I do? Was I apprehensive? Was I nervous? Yes, to both the aforementioned. I had never been this alone with a woman, so I had no one I could call for assistance. We watched *Hockey Night in Canada*—Toronto Maple Leafs vs. Detroit Red Wings, and Toronto won 4–2. When we counted the money we had received as gifts, it amounted to \$150.00. We were rich! The room cost us \$15.00.

We checked out of the King Slumber shortly before 9:00 a.m. The temperature had warmed up to above freezing, and the rain had stopped, so we headed for the USA. Whoopee! We crossed the border at Ogdensburg, NY and headed south down Highway 81 to Watertown. We did a little shopping, and then we found a nice motel, checked in around 1:00 p.m., probably did another bit of shopping and then had dinner.

I recall that night that I was still very nervous and realized it would take some time to become accustomed to being married and sharing a bed with a woman. That night we watched *Bonanza*, starring Ottawa-born Lorne Greene, whom I met much later in life. We headed back across the border on Monday morning and were anxious to start our life together at our apartment at 612 Bank Street and of course to examine all the treasures we had received as wedding gifts (hopefully, we would find some more money). We were not broke, but we were badly bent!

We arrived at the Ambassador Court Apartments in early afternoon and were as excited as two kids on Christmas morning going through our gifts. As we opened them, Noellie kept track of who had given which gift and indexed it on the gift card for thank you notes to be mailed out at a later time. Some very practical gifts were cash, a kitchen set, blankets, and small appliances like a toaster

and electric fry pan; other gifts were more formal like a Dresden figurine and pinwheel crystal.

The new-car sales department at Myers gave us a \$50.00 gift certificate for Loeb's Grocery Wholesaler, as they were aware of our depleted money reserves. We went to Loeb's later and picked up several cases of canned goods that saw us through well into late spring—e.g., peas, corn, green/yellow beans, etc.

Then we commenced putting the apartment in order, hanging up pictures, positioning furniture, etc. We spent what we thought was a fortune at Belanger Furniture in Hull on a chesterfield, chair, end table, dresser, bed, mattress, etc. It wasn't luxurious, but it was ours—well, not really, we still had to pay it off at \$20.00 per month, which took us many years to do. We then had our first meal in our little nest. Our dinner consisted of large portions of peas, beans, etc.

Wednesday morning we were back to work at Myers. Plenty of teasing directed at both of us when we walked in, all in good fun. What a great family they all were at Myers—still friends after all these years. We brought our lunch, and at noon on most days, if I was not out on the road, we would continue to have our lunch across the street next to the museum on a park bench. That bench is still there today in the park.

We started getting to know the neighborhood where we lived in the “village” of the Glebe. Quite a friendly place, much the same spirit and way of life like any other village. To this day we still shop in the Glebe; there are very few reasons to go elsewhere to shop. It has a grocery store, which had been owned by the McKeen family long before I arrived there in 1957. Also there are barbers, garages, fine restaurants (Italian, Indian, Mexican, Moroccan, and numerous others), schools from daycare to Montessori to Mutchmor (elementary) School, which is public, and Corpus Christi (elementary) School, which is under the Separate (Catholic) School Board, to the public Glebe Collegiate Institute (high school).

We would walk  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile to work together most days (rain, snow, or shine). I was still doing a few gigs with different groups and really enjoyed that. We entertained Bruce Innes (the suit man) and his gal, Pete Dowler and his lady friend, as well as the present owners of Lauzon Music on Wellington Street (Brian and Ken Lauzon) at our apartment. They are the people who sold me my first twelve-string guitar. We were both excited to show off our new apartment to our friends, and they really liked it. We jammed for a few hours, and then Noellie served tea and dessert. They were the first visitors outside of our family to visit us. Noellie's parents came, and her mother assisted us to decorate and place the furniture. It was quite pretty and cozy.

By mid-December we were preparing for Christmas and trying to figure out what to buy for all our families and friends for Christmas on such a small budget. If you are frugal and shop wisely, it usually works out for you. I believe we stayed in Ottawa that first Christmas and visited parents and family. We were still on cloud nine!

February 1st seemed to take forever to arrive. I had been waiting so many years to be a police



officer. On that cold February morning, I reported to the Ottawa Police Station at 60 Waller Street for basic training. The duration was one month, and I can honestly say that for 1½ weeks we, the rookies, assisted in numerous activities around the station such as moving filing cabinets from one floor to the other, helping out in the Property Room with unpacking boxes of boots and uniforms, etc.

But it was extremely exciting to be finally there. I also felt so proud to see my brother-in-law, Detective Tom Beggan. I felt I was one up on all the other rookies. Tom was a well-respected, very good police officer; more specifically, he was among the ranks of the department's top detectives that included Carl Soggy Norton, Dave Clancey, Tom G. Flanagan (who would later become chief of police), as well as Andy Hanna, Charlie Fagan, and a few others.

We took Judo lessons, which were really a waste of time, as I realized when I studied Jiu-Jitsu a few years later. I could never understand why they did not use a professional martial arts teacher like George Sylvain who was a police officer and who held several Black Belts in mixed martial arts.

We touched on the Powers of Arrest, Criminal Code, Highway Traffic Act (HTA), and Bylaw Offences, gun training (the old 38 Smith & Wesson) and when you are permitted under the Criminal Code and Police Act to use our weapon. Also did some gym training and marching. During our drills we would have to march around the gym and try to keep in step. I swore to God some of the recruits could not walk and chew gum at the same time, two left feet! It was extremely difficult to march behind someone who could not keep in step. About 98% of our class were really nice people, and I was sure most would become good police officers. However, there is always a show-off, smart aleck, and troublemaker.

One such guy would march behind me and constantly hit my arm or hand deliberately with his hand while marching and swinging his arms. He thought it was funny. Not! It really hurt, so I asked him to stop doing that, but he kept at it. Finally, I stopped, turned around, and kicked him in the shin where it really hurt. The sergeant saw me do the deed and had me step out of the line, and I thought he was going to dismiss me and have me leave the building. However, he just warned me that next time I would be sent home. I played sports with that officer later, and he never changed: still an agitator, but he could always backup what he started.

It was so cool to be inside the system and the workings of the police force and the justice system, especially when we went to the courtroom at the station and had a mock trial to see how the system works. Not quite the same as it is portrayed in the movies. These are real people and real criminals.

After our second week, we were all taken out to one of Ottawa's busiest intersections at Rideau Street and Sussex Drive to be taught how to handle traffic by Lt. Charlie Taylor, 6'7", 250 lbs., what a beautiful specimen. He stood straight up like a big pine tree...shoes gleaming with a shine you could see yourself in and neatly pressed pants and starched shirt. Wow! When he took his

key and turned off the traffic lights and took his position in the middle of the busy intersection at approximately 11:50 a.m., blew his whistle, put up his big long arm, and stopped the traffic with one wave of his hand with his white gloves, he was a master at it.

All the bright-eyed rookies were standing on the corner in awe of this giant of a man do his magic. A few of us were invited to the middle of the street with him and had a go at it. Very powerful feeling! We didn't stay out long as we were in shirt, tie, and suit because we had not yet received our uniforms. There were several intersections across the downtown area where we had to do rush-hour traffic: Rideau/Sussex, George/Sussex, St. Patrick/McKenzie, Queen/Elgin, Bay/Wellington, and more.

After we had a few more days' training with the service revolver and were approaching the end of our training, we were issued a gun and were ready to hit the streets with a training officer who was one of the senior officers, a ten- to thirty-year veteran. Unlike today whereby the officers receive much better training for fifteen weeks, come back from police college, are assigned to a coach officer, and are then sent back for more training.

I was told to report for duty on Parade (in civilian clothes) on Monday day-shift for 7:15 a.m. Guess what? I was late for my first day. I was so accustomed to reporting for 8:00 a.m. for training and so arrived for 8:00 a.m. The staff sergeant was not impressed. I was assigned to Lowertown, car 102, under the supervision of Big Bob Juneau, 6', 220 lbs., built like a football fullback. Really nice person, very laid back, and religious, so I lucked out. Car 102 was assigned an extremely busy area, especially on the afternoon shift (3:15–11:30 p.m.) and late watch what with all the drinking spots in the Byward Market area, there were lots of disturbances, always a fight or twenty, loud revelers, prostitution, damage to property, etc. However, within the past two decades, the combatants are not fighting with their fists: it's baseball bats, sticks with nails, kicking in the face and head, knives, and guns. After the revelers arrived home, then we would get the domestic violence.

Our first call on late watch was a fight at the Chez Lucien Hotel (now torn down), which for many years was the watering hole of choice for some of the heavy drinkers, crooks, and bad guys (and good guys). We arrived to find several people outside waiting for us and hurrying us on regarding the disturbance. Well, disturbance it was. All hell had broken loose, chairs and ashtrays were flying, tables were overturned, and about fifteen men fighting. When I saw this, I thought, This is what you wanted to do so there is no turning back now!

Big Bob told someone to call the station for assistance, and four other officers showed up and started barking out orders. Several men stopped fighting; however, four others continued and were taunting the ones who had complied. These four were the ones who started the ruckus. Big Bob slowly sauntered up beside the biggest one and grabbed him in a vise grip and hauled him out the door, handcuffed him, and placed him in the back of the police car. Three others were arrested as well by the other officers. I was trying to assist; however, my help was not needed. In those days

we had a great deal of respect from the public, and when we asked for assistance in those situations, we usually received it in one way or another. Several patrons helped them out to the street with the other three and put them in the cruisers.

As is the rule, you never put a prisoner in the back seat behind the driver. In those days we did not have Plexiglas screens dividing the front from the back (not like in some movies where they seat the prisoner behind the driver—a dangerous practice in real life, as the prisoner can grab the driver by the neck, head, etc.). I sat behind the driver. It would be a short ride to the station as we were only about seven minutes away. Everything was going according to plan until we stopped for a red light at Rideau and Dalhousie Streets, a few blocks from the station when this guy became belligerent and feisty again. He was told to shut up and quiet down. Then, out of the blue, he lifted his feet and kicked me in the chest and stomach (tore my only suit). He was twenty-four years old, 5'11", 200 lbs., and already a seasoned criminal; he was a tough hombre.

Big Bob got out of the front seat, opened the rear door, got in, sat on him, and really laid down the law. The bad guy thought he was going to choke him to death. He got back in the driver's seat and drove on to the station and booked him without further incident. Upon checking his name, we found he was wanted in Montréal for assaulting a police officer; so after we were finished with him, the Montréal police came to Ottawa and interviewed him. He pleaded guilty to Assault Police and causing a disturbance. The other three pleaded guilty to Damage to Property and Causing a Disturbance. That was a pretty exciting first shift on late watch. As the song goes, "Snakes Crawl at Night, That's What They Tell Me." When the sun goes down, the snakes come around.

About three days later, Bob and I were checking doors on property in the Cumberland Street/St. Patrick Street area. You have to get out and physically check the doors, check for broken windows and anything suspicious. It was about 2:30 a.m., and Bob pulled up to a laneway and told me to go check the rear door of a business down a long laneway. It was about 150' from the street. I got out and proceeded down the long, dark laneway with my flashlight while Bob remained in the car. I got to the end, checked the door, and was turning around to head back to the car when I heard this growl and snarling. I looked to my left and there, just a few feet from me, was a doghouse. I shined my light on it, and there was the nose of a snarling dog just looking out from behind a leather-stripped curtain. Then he really started making noises I did not appreciate.

Growing up on a farm as I did, one immediately recognizes that unfriendly sound. He neither wants to play with the ball, nor is he asking for a cookie. I started running out the laneway to the safety of the police car, and as soon as I started to run, out came the dog, which started to chase after me. Now, I was a fast runner so I figured I could out-run him to the end of the laneway. He was closing in on me as I approached the car, and he was barking that guttural sound, and, man, I knew he wanted a piece of my leg. I was wearing black leather shoes (which were not ideal for running on crushed stone) and tight-fitted suit and pants.

Bob had been watching me run out, and, just as I approached the curb, with the dog 10 feet behind me, he pulled the cruiser up with the passenger-door entrance blocked by a large elm tree. I woke up the neighborhood I'm sure with my shouting, "Let me in!" Bob was sitting behind the wheel laughing. Only when I heard this sound of the dog behind me did I realize what he was laughing at. The dog was on a long chain that only extended to the end of the laneway, and when he reached the end of the chain traveling at top speed, he made a different sound and came to a sudden halt. Only then did my heart come back to its original position in my body.

Bob knew the dog was on a chain as he had caught a few rookies before me with the same gag. He knew I could run really fast so I was not in danger of being caught. That's my claim to fame—I out-ran a large German Shepherd. The word, as I was later informed, was out on the street among the criminal element: "Don't try a B & E at that place." Big Bad Prankster Bob had many laughs on me at the station for years to come. As you will read later on, I too am a prankster. Bob retired as a S/Sgt Patrol Division.

I worked in civilian clothes with a Senior Officer for 2½ months, approximately five weeks longer than anyone else in my class. They did not have a uniform for me, and I didn't go begging for one, as it was still cold and damp, and I would much rather stay in the warm car—plus, I gained all the invaluable knowledge from the older officers.

I also worked with numerous other Coach Officers within those 2½ months and gained invaluable experience. Of course, every call and traffic stop was so exciting, especially as a new officer. Another Pontiac County boy, Jim Macklin, who retired as an Inspector, having worked in Identification and Detectives, was one of my earlier coaches. Jim had a fun side to him; however, he was more often serious.

I recall a traffic stop in front of the Château Laurier Hotel one afternoon shift about 9:00 p.m. A guy, about twenty-three years old, went through a red light, and we pulled him over. We both got out of the car, Jim told the driver why he had been stopped; and the guy went stupid on him—name-calling and yelling, "Don't you have anything better to do than to harass me?" Jim asked him to present his papers, and the guy couldn't find them. He was asked to step out of the car, which he did, but he was becoming more aggressive.

All of a sudden, Jim grabbed him, threw him over the trunk, and started to try to talk some sense into him in a very loud voice. Jim held him down on the trunk until he said he understood and that he would cooperate. I was impressed with the way Jim handled the situation. He found his papers, and he was given a ticket for running a red light, and he apologized. That was certainly a learning experience. You see, this lad had probably never been told that you don't behave like that, and then an older adult laid it out for him in a professional manner, much like a favorite uncle of sorts.

I also recall, while working late watch around 3:00 a.m. when my coach officer was Sylvio

Cleroux (he went on to become the chief of police in Alexandria, Ontario). We had done our rounds in Car 106, which was a floater car in the Centertown area. Lebreton Flats was then still a viable community (blue-collar, working class, and federal government employees). They demolished the entire community more than thirty years ago to make way for progress—all those homes and businesses were torn down and many lives uprooted. [It is still undeveloped, except that in 2003 construction began on the National War Museum along the banks of the beautiful Ottawa River. Signs were erected in 2012, proclaiming high-rise housing to be built on the Lebreton Flats site.] It was a Saturday night (early Sunday morning), and it was so busy that night that we hardly had time for lunch.

He put his dome light on and started making his reports in a quiet area when this ungodly sound startled us. As we later determined, there was a 6'5" man pounding on the car. What a freaking loud bashing, banging, shouting, racket! Neither of us could figure out what or who it was.

I jumped up so fast I hit my head on the roof of the car. Being a rookie cop, I thought the worst—we were under attack by thugs or the Mafia. I thought about drawing my service revolver; however, Sylvio didn't, so I negated that thought. As luck would have it, nearby Car 101 in Centertown received a call and, as the radio was turned up full, there was a great deal of noise. We were situated at the back area of the infamous Duke Hotel parking lot, and it was extremely dark. Then, this dark image appeared on the hood of the car lying down and facing us, lying on his belly looking in the window. As it was too dark to recognize who or what it was (maybe something or someone from outer space?), I was so frightened I'm lucky I didn't wet my pants.

Sylvio turned on the lights and his flashlight, and lo and behold, it was the officer from Car 103 who worked the Italian District, Bronson Avenue west to Preston Street. This 6'5" image was none other than Officer Neil McCormack. He had seen us pull into the parking lot earlier and waited for his chance to pull the prank.

I found out later on in my career that you must stay loose in this profession, have a little fun, as the next call could be, and sometimes is, the "Big One." Neil was one of my coaches as well—quite a pleasant, very gregarious fellow who smiled and laughed a lot. I really enjoyed all my time with him on old C Platoon. Neil left the Ottawa Police Force several years later and moved back to his home area near Alexandria. I saw him last as I was performing in the area with another singing policeman with the Cornwall Police, Sgt. Bob Bernie, who was an original member of the Brigadoons, a group similar to the Irish Rovers. He is an amazing singer and personality. Neil has hardly changed in the twenty or so years that have elapsed since I last saw him. He is still a warm and engaging person. I have not seen Sylvio since he left many years ago.

I was called in one day in early May by Sgt. Kettles, who was the quartermaster, and informed my uniform had arrived. I was excited about that and couldn't wait to go try it on and take it home to model it for my wife. I was given the uniform, hat, gun, belt, etc., and when Noellie arrived

home, I welcomed her at the door in full uniform. She also was very happy to finally see me in the full gear. All my classmates were a little envious of the fact that I had escaped the winter not having to walk the beat as they did. That's just the luck of the draw. Five of my classmates were on C Platoon with me, and we sort of stuck together for the first few months in the station until we became familiar with the routines and the senior guys.

My first time on parade with fifty or sixty other officers was quite a thrill. Staff Sgt. Gilmour, the officer in charge of C platoon, looked at me when he called my name and noticed that I finally had my uniform on. He was pleased as well because he now had another body to walk the beat. My first beat was 19 Beat, Crichton Street, which was one of the most dreaded beats in the city. It was in the area of the prime minister's residence and Government House; as well, it ran along the Ottawa side of St. Patrick Street.

My first shift for the five-day week was the late watch or graveyard shift. I was dropped off at the corner of St. Patrick and Crichton Streets, and thus I truly began my long and exciting career as an Ottawa police officer. On this beat they rolled up the sidewalks at 11:30 p.m. Nothing, absolutely nothing, was open after that time. I had to walk to the north end of Crichton St., about 20 minutes' walk, just to check one commercial property. There were quite a few businesses along St. Patrick Street. I don't think I ever saw a single police officer from Vanier, whose jurisdiction was on the south side of the street.

The only time you saw an Ottawa police vehicle was if the patrol officer needed an extra officer to attend at a particular call or if the patrol sergeant's "pegging" you (visiting you) three times at least per shift mainly to see if you were okay. However, if they wanted to try to catch you idling your time or off your beat, they would visit you more often. Thank God that beat and several like it were not walked on days or afternoons. I wanted to get to where the action was. I was picked up only once all that week and that was for a non-eventful domestic call.

We had what is called a "short change," late-watch to afternoons (finish shift at 7:30 a.m. and back in by 3:15 p.m. same day for afternoon shift and finish at 11:30 p.m. and back in at 7:30 a.m. for day shift). So I finished night shift and was back in for parade at 3:15 p.m. This time I was assigned to 23 Beat, which is Somerset Street West between Percy Street to Preston Street—Ottawa's Chinese and Italian Districts. I really enjoyed that.

Summers were wonderful in the Capital, especially walking the beat as a police officer. My first summer was spent walking around Centertown, which included Parliament Hill, the Château Laurier, the National Arts Centre, and just to the east, the Byward Market. So there was a great influx of tourists, which was good for me as an entertainer, and coming from a very large family, I liked to socialize. I met people from all over the world and would engage visitors.

I recall that on numerous occasions tourists would reluctantly or awkwardly approach me standing on a corner watching the world go by and keeping an eye open for crime or any sort of

anti-social behavior. They would ask for directions, and I would answer in very broken English with a French, Italian, Chinese, or whatever accent. I would respond like: “Hime sorre I don’t speaka la Hinglish,” and I would go on in some other language. Americans would invariably think I was speaking French, and they would repeat in the worst French, “*Je cerce purs la colis hill,*” translated, “*Je cherche pour la Colline du Parlement*” [I’m looking for Parliament Hill].

Again, I would make them believe that I was from another country, usually Italy on an exchange (all the while speaking half-Italian and half-Russian or whatever other language that would support my gag). The look of total confusion on their faces was always priceless. They would thank me, and I would say *Prego* or *harasho*, and they would walk away talking to each other with bewilderment. After all, this is Canada’s Capital where they speak English and French, and this Cop can’t speak either! I would allow them to go a few feet and as they were speaking to one another, shaking their heads, I would walk up behind them and speak to them in English.

At that point they realize they’ve just been had, and I’d introduce myself to them, shake hands, and, as I always carried Canadian and Ottawa lapel pins in my pocket, I would pin them, give them a card, and wish them a safe holiday, saying if they have any trouble to call the station and ask for me. I did that all throughout my career, and I have received letters from all over the world, thanking me for the hospitality. I was doing that for several reasons. I have traveled around the world and found that it’s very reassuring when you approach a police officer for information and are treated positively and don’t feel as if you are bothering them. Also, I did want tourists to be safe which involves being careful and not doing things or going to places you would not in your hometown. (Plus it’s more work for me if I have to take reports from tourists regarding theft, lost ID, etc.)

I remember, several years ago, some tourists from Italy were chatting with me by the War Memorial, and they asked me where it was not safe to go. I responded by telling them to just pay attention and be careful where you go after dark especially but that Ottawa is a fairly safe city comparatively speaking. I was working 3:15 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., and I was sent to the Château Laurier Hotel to take a complaint from a tourist about stolen property.

Upon my arrival, I was met at the front door by the same Italian people: father, mother, and two children. The man and his wife had gone for a walk at about 10:30 p.m. down by the locks near the Ottawa River. It was not at that time very well lit, and several homeless people were camping along the river. The tourists were stopped and their money and wallet demanded, to which they complied. The thieves then took their money, credit cards, and threw the empty wallet into the locks that ran into the river. Their passports and other personal information were lost. Moral of that story: next time, listen to my advice.

Walking the beat in very hot weather was extremely uncomfortable (now, Canadian officers wear no uniform hats just ball caps—like the Americans!). In those days we had to wear our tunic

and hat at all times when we were out in public. It was the rule that your hat must be worn, even in the police vehicle, which were then not air-conditioned. Those two combinations were very warm and uncomfortable.

We wore the tunic because they didn't want the public to see our guns. Americans, in particular American police officers, would stop and speak to me, and always asked why police officers don't wear guns up in Canada. My response varied, but I sometimes would respond by saying we use other methods, and we can always out-run the bank robbers. However, quite often, I would tell them it was under my tunic, which, in fact, was where we concealed it. They knew very little of our country and the geographics thereof.

I recall one Friday afternoon in July I was walking 2-Beat on Bank Street and I was approached by three young men in their mid-twenties from New Jersey with their skis on their roof-rack, inquiring where the ski hill was. I stated we had several within fifty miles, and they said it didn't matter, they just wanted to do some skiing. These boys looked like college students so I assumed they were teasing me. Not! They were serious. They wanted to go skiing in mid-July with the temperature in the high 80s. I felt like telling them to go up two blocks, turn left, and ask the Eskimo in the igloo. However, I did inform them that our skiing season generally starts in mid-November and ends in April, depending where you wish to ski.

I talked them into staying in Ottawa, got them a great deal at a local hotel, and then suggested they spend a day or two in Montréal. They were quite appreciative. I also told them I had an uncle and aunt and cousins in Teaneck and Paramas, NJ and have spent some time there. One person was from Hackensack, the next town to Paramas. Now, I'm not poking fun at Americans specifically; however, over the years I have found that they really don't have a general knowledge of what's beyond their borders and that's the responsibility of the parents, school system, and the community at large. My view is that if you are knowledgeable of other people, their culture, and a few phrases in their language, then consequently the world becomes a little smaller, and we become closer as human beings sharing this place we call Earth. This advice holds true for Canadians needing to be better informed about American and other cultures, as well.

When you are out there walking down the street in a police uniform, you become many things. First, you are a walking target for the bad guys. You always must not let it show, but your radar is working constantly without being too cynical or walking around with a stern look, thus putting up that invisible barrier that the general public notices and doesn't feel comfortable approaching you for information. What has worked for me over the years is to maintain a level of suspicion while still being approachable.

Second, you are thought to have a big invisible bullseye on your forehead and are approached for various reasons, questions pertaining to why this, why that, how come this, how come that, I heard this, and I heard that.



Third, would be that we are and should be a tourist information centre and tourist guide. If you are ever in a foreign country or a strange city, you will appreciate the fact that a police officer took the time to speak to you and made you feel comfortable. It doesn't just have to be a police officer. If you see people walking or driving and they appear to be unsure of where they are, or whatever, assist them, and you will find it's a good feeling.



I experienced that first-hand in my first trip to Ireland. I had landed in Dublin, rented a car, and was to meet the Canadian Ambassador, Mr. Edgar Ritchie, for lunch at 11 St. Stephen's Green (then the site of the Canadian embassy) and got lost. I did not even have to ask for directions, because a couple observed that I needed assistance as I was attempting to understand the city map of Dublin. They approached me at the curb and in their delightful Dublin accent inquired, "Do you need some assistance?" to which I responded by saying I was looking for the Canadian embassy on St. Stephen's Green. They said they were parked around the corner and that if I would just follow them they would take me there, which they did.

I told them that I was a Canadian police officer visiting Ireland for the first time to perform and visit some of my relatives. They inquired as to where I was staying, and I told them I didn't have a place yet, to which the gentleman immediately responded, "Look no further, you are staying with us," which I did. They lived on the road to Bray, which was near the ambassador's residence. That has happened to me so many times in my travels.

There's the story about the tourist approaching an Irish Garda (police) inquiring about the two white lines around St. Stephen's Green, and he responded by saying, "Do you see the first line?" The tourist said, "Yes." "Well," he said, "that means there's no parking 'at-tall'." The tourist asked about the other line, and he said, "That means there's no parking 'at-tall, at-tall'."

I was in downtown Dublin when I saw this man lying on the street between two cars. I asked if he was alright, and he replied, "Oh, yes, I found a parking spot, and me wife is gone home to get the car." The traffic is just horrendous in downtown Dublin. However, no one is in a hurry. They just stop anywhere and have a conversation with a friend. That's just magic. Slow down, relax, and enjoy each other and life. That's what I get out of that scenario.



In late June 1965 there was a retirement party for an officer (a sergeant I believe), and it was to be held at the Legion Hall in Vanier. I heard that there would be some police officers playing music so, needless to say, my interest was tweaked. I took my Harmony twelve-string guitar and went to the Legion. I inquired as to whom I should speak to if I wished to play guitar and sing with the group. I was directed to a table by the stage where I was to speak to S/Sgt. A.D. McConnell. As

I approached their table, I observed the largest man I had ever seen in uniform. I asked if he was A.D., and he said “Yes, and do you want to join us?” Naturally, without hesitation I said, “Yes, I would.” He was 6'3", 300 lbs., and he introduced me to the violin player, Sgt. Davis Hodgins from Shawville, which is up in Pontiac County, fifty miles below my hometown of Sheenboro. He was 6', 260 lbs. Then there were the Raymond brothers. Sgt. Gerry who was 6'1", 195 lbs. give or take, and his brother Vince who worked for the city. Both played violin.

We started playing music at about 9:30 p.m., and I fit right in like a glove. A.D. used to belong to the Three Sons Gospel Group, and he traveled to Europe and elsewhere performing. He played the upright bass and played extremely well. He was a very religious man and never swore or used profanity. He was very funny, and the group laughed a lot. Gerry Raymond often had to stop playing because A.D. and Davis made him laugh too much. Vince was much the same. All were very good musicians and entertainers. We had a great time at the Legion that night. I sang a few songs on my own, and I joined A.D. on several, one being “Just A Closer Walk with Thee,” an old Gospel standard. I did the harmony, and it sounded really good. That song would later become one of our signature songs.

As they had no other performance planned, “the rookie” Dominic asked if we could have a get-together for a practice. That we did the next week at the police station at 7:00 p.m. in #2 Courtroom after hours. I introduced some of my music into the mix, and it worked out very well. I also learned more of their style, and we were ready for the next gig, which I arranged at a local community hall in Little Italy, and it was a blast.

I should mention here that these guys had performed together for several years but had stopped playing as their job descriptions and promotions changed. This was their first public performance in a year or more, so I guess I was the catalyst in getting them back together.

A.D. was very busy with the underwater squad when he was in charge of it. This man swam like a fish. He would swim ten to fifteen pool-lengths nonstop at the Boys and Girls Club. He was an avid softball pitcher. (Imagine the terror of being a batter and having that giant looking in at you!) He also played goalie on the police hockey team. As I understand it, very few goals were scored against him. He had very quick reflexes.

As we got busier with the music, it became quite difficult for me to make it to a gig because of my shift work. In the earlier days all our gigs had to be after shift or on weekends or days off. A.D. was subsequently transferred to C Platoon and became my patrol sergeant.



On the home front, everything was falling into place. There was still so much to learn about each other. We still sometimes had difficulty understanding each other's ways. We were just running out of the canned goods we'd received as a wedding gift. Money was in short supply, however,

we managed, barely. I had difficulty comprehending how some police officers and others could manage on the same or similar income when they had bigger and newer cars, spent a lot of money socializing and dining out, and did not appear to be as frugal as Noellie and I were.



Night shift was always more pleasant in the summer, as it was cooler then and not as busy as days or afternoons, depending on which beat you were assigned. Rideau Street (15 Beat) and Bank Street (2A Beat) were usually crawling with the criminal element and those who liked to raise hell well into the early morning hours. 5A Beat had to be the longest. It was hilly and ran from Bank Street and Riverside Drive to Bank and Kitchener Streets, which was about three-quarters of a mile one-way and very lonely, especially at 3 a.m. Absolutely nothing open. There was a service station at Bank Street and Heron Road that would occasionally leave the bathroom unlocked for us to relax and use the facilities and get warmed up.

I recall one time walking the 5A Beat in January when it was around -20°F, and I went in to get warm and closed the washroom door for five to ten minutes. I was not expecting the sergeant to peg (visit, check on) me at that time, as he had just seen me forty-five minutes earlier. I had been out of the restroom for thirty minutes, and I saw the sergeant's car coming east on Bank Street at Walkley Road. At that time I was several blocks from the service station and had just come out from behind Laurentian Trading Post (now out of business) where I was checking the rear door for break-ins, etc., and the sergeant came back to visit me. He said, "Where were you? I just drove down your beat, and I could not find you." I said that I was checking back doors and guessed we missed each other.

Now, I found out later that he would drive up a parallel street and then come down your beat and he would ask, "Where were you?" This was a trick he used to get you to admit that you were off your beat, and if you were honest and admitted you were visiting with an officer at an adjacent beat, he could write you up for neglect of duty. We could often lose days off as punishment or get a warning, whereby you appeared before the chief (if you were written up again for the same thing you would lose days off).

This sergeant would on occasion pull up beside you and give you a time of the peg and stay there with his window slightly down. It could be extremely cold or raining, but he would never invite you into the vehicle to warm up. Not only that, he would put his head down and sleep right in front of you, and, being the Rookie, I would stand there for long periods of time, too courteous or whatever to walk away. Well, when I gained more confidence, I would walk away.

Once, on a very busy street, Bank Street at Laurier, the sergeant pegged me at about 6:30 a.m., put his head down, and fell asleep. I walked away from him after five minutes, and I observed from across the street that he slept for fifteen minutes at a bus stop while the people in the buses got off

and walking by on their way to work looked at him—not a very good example for officers to give the public.

I should mention here that many other sergeants would pick you up and drive up and down your beat to give you a break. The reason for the pegging in the earlier days was for the officer's safety. We had no radio on our person in those days, and we could be lying in a backyard, injured by a fall or assaulted while checking property, etc. I have walked into numerous Break and Enters in Progress over the years. You must check (twice per shift, only on the midnight shift) every door, back and front, and each window looking for anything out of the ordinary.

I recall finding an “Insecure” on 15 Beat, Rideau Street. The rear door to a department store was unlocked. There was no light in the laneway so it was very dark. I assumed it was just that someone had neglected to lock the door, which is the case 98% of the time. I didn't feel the need to get to a pay phone or flag someone down to call the station for backup.

I proceeded with caution and entered the premises. There did not appear to be forced entry. I entered via the delivery door and walked through into the main part of the store. I proceeded to the main shopping area and then turned around to go back to call the station and notify Dispatch that I was at an “insecure” and to give the location. The reason for that is two-fold: Primarily, so that they are aware where you are in case something happens to you; and secondarily, another officer, usually a patrol sergeant comes and checks on you. I had just hung up the phone when I heard this loud crash and smash, and I ran into the store from the shipping room and observed a male running across the street at a gallop. I had surprised him when he heard me on the phone, and he ran right through the glass doors and took off.

By the time I got through the very large store, out the door, and onto the street, I could not see him. I put it in high gear and took off in the direction he was traveling. However, he had just disappeared into thin air. Backup arrived; the sergeant had picked up another Beat officer, and they saw me running. We never did find him. The description was given to the dispatcher, and all units received it and searched the area, including the Byward Market area. I submitted my report with the description I had: black hair and clothing and that he was part deer—the lower part, his legs. The contact person at the store was called, and I waited for his arrival and told him what happened.

About a week later I was on the same Beat working afternoons, and I went to speak to the store manager. I gave him the description again, and he confided in me after hearing the description again that it was possibly one of his deliverymen. He gave me his name, address, and telephone number, and I submitted a supplementary report for the detectives. They went to his residence the next weekend in Hull, questioned him, and arrested him for break and enter, and damage to property. He pleaded not guilty; however, he was found guilty by the judge. I later asked him where he had hidden that night when he ran from the scene, and he informed me he ran to the Byward Market and hid under a vegetable stand covered with a tarp. Probably, the only place we didn't look.

Life was never dull for the foot-patrol Copper.

Having been the arresting officer, my heart started to pound when the accused pleaded not guilty, as I knew I was going to have to give evidence before the judge and a courtroom full of people for the first time. I was not coached except for the little training we had received at basic training and some words of wisdom from my brother-in-law Detective Tom Beggan with the underlying advice, Always tell the truth. If you don't know, say so; if you can't remember, say, "I don't remember your honor." Because once you start telling little white lies, they will follow you through your career. Many good officers have learned that lesson the hard way. Judges, crown attorneys, and defence counsels have long memories. Once your credibility is lost as a police witness, then you're doomed.

Sometimes it's very difficult: you know the individual is guilty and that by not telling the little white lie, they likely will go free and back to society to commit criminal acts again knowing they got away with another one. So much work is involved in the process of getting a person to trial and then that person is let go on a technicality or lack of sufficient evidence to obtain a conviction. Sometimes, I would lower my glasses and look at the judge or jury and say, "I'm not sure." If you tell the truth, you never have to lie.

November was approaching, and the dreaded winter was on its way—not the best time for a beat cop, especially a rookie. I was getting on quite well on the job and made so many good friends and acquaintances within the force and in the community. Our group was getting several performances in the city, and we were gelling as a group and were well received.



Noellie and I started looking for a new apartment in October 1965, and we certainly liked living in the Glebe and wished to remain there if we could afford it. Someone told us of an apartment for rent on the third floor at 95 Powell Avenue, just across Central Park from our present residence. We went to see it and immediately signed the lease. It was a very cozy place with parking at the rear, and the landlords were super nice people. Mr. George Church was a former principal at Glashan School and Glebe Collegiate. He and his wife lived on the first floor, and a senior widow named Mrs. Boland resided on the second floor.

Our new apartment had a large kitchen, living room, and a large bedroom. Noellie was still at Myers Motors. On November 15th, we moved to our new abode with the assistance of Noellie's parents and brother, Nelson. Once we moved in and Noellie put her mark on the apartment, it was a very special little nest. Powell Avenue was such a prestigious place with stately houses, embassies, etc., and we felt privileged to reside there. We spent our second Christmas together there, and invited Noellie's parents for Christmas dinner. I was working the night shift and got home at 8 a.m. and went to bed at 9:30 a.m. or so and got up at 5:00 p.m. for dinner.

I worked my first Christmas Eve shift, and I had to leave Noellie alone on Christmas Eve at 10:30 p.m. to go to work. However, it was very special to be walking the beat with the fresh falling snow, Christmas lights, and people still rushing around to prepare for Christmas Day. I started believing in Santa Claus again. Walking through the neighborhoods on the fresh fallen snow and knowing that all the kids were tucked in bed—I was expecting to see Santa—very quiet and peaceful after 2 a.m. It was usually very quiet on Christmas Eve and Day with very few calls for service.

I worked Christmases, New Year's Eves, and New Year's Days for the first few years. Junior guys in a platoon didn't have a hope in hell of getting holidays off, but that was okay because I knew my day would come when I would be senior to the rookies. Cousin Ed Walker was senior to me by eleven months.

It was really tough going that first year on the streets. I have always had a problem with circulation in my feet and hands, and they were constantly cold. We were well provided with fur-lined mitts; however, we just had regular boots, no lining. We wore rubber galoshes over them, so therefore my feet were always very cold. There were times when we would have to stand outside if there was a fire, and there were many during the cold winter months, or doing traffic at the scene of a major accident, and then there would always be the rush-hour traffic detail at certain intersections.

We wore those old coats called greatcoats when it was below the freezing point. They hung down just below your knees. They were very warm but extremely heavy and cumbersome. We kept our gun in a holster in the pocket. When the temperature rose, we wore the pea jacket, which was just below the hips. The greatcoat weighed about 10 lbs. without the gun, stick, ticket book, and duty book. I certainly would not blow away as I was well weighted down.

It was always exciting to feel spring on the horizon. Much like being back on the farm with the harsh winters we had. Off came the winter coats, making it much more comfortable to do the job, especially in a fight or even breaking up one.

But with the nicer weather approaching, the tempo picked up, and we had more action, especially on the beats. When you had an officer on the adjacent beat, you could address the problems with a little more assertiveness, as you knew you had backup nearby if you wanted to challenge a situation on the street—and there were many during an eight-hour shift. Not that I would not enforce the law even if the odds were not in my favor (an officer cannot run away), but there is less violence when there are two or three officers around. The situation seems to settle down much faster without violence.

One of my favorite patrol sergeants was Big Tom Glenn. I say big because he was 6'7", 250 lbs. He played professional football in the CFL, yet was such a mild-mannered man. Never raised his voice, and his demeanor was low-key, respectful, helpful; and he was always a welcome addition to

a street fight. He had nothing to prove, and being that size, things seemed to simmer down when he entered the scene. There were many huge guys from the old school on C Platoon. Officer Eric Hanson was 6'1", 250 lbs. for example. He played senior football and hockey—a gentle man unless you provoked him. Never have I seen him while he was on patrol on C Platoon cross the line and overact or use unjustified force.



I had joined the Ottawa Police Force (OPF) hockey team, and Eric played at center ice. He had a wicked slap shot—hard and usually high. It was not safe to play with him unless you really paid attention when he shot the puck because you could lose a limb if he struck you. We would practice after shift at the old Auditorium where the YMCA is today. All had to take turns cleaning the ice and then pulling 45-gallon drums of hot water around to flood the ice, as we used the ice at no cost. We played from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. because the ice was never rented that early so they would give it to us.

Some of the players played semi-professionally, and several attended NHL training camps. I had never really played much organized sports, so it was a good learning experience to play with this caliber of players. Each year at the old Auditorium, they played a “Building Fund Benefit” to a full house for the Crippled Children’s Treatment Center, as it was then called. This old building seated more than 3,000 people and is where the original NHL Ottawa Senators played their home games. Also the Ottawa Montagnards from the Senior Hockey League, Kingston Frontenacs, the North Bay Trappers, the Pembroke Lumberkings, the Sudbury Wolves, the Sault St. Marie Greyhounds, and the Whitby Dunlops, to name a few.

The idea for the Building Fund Benefit was conceived by two officers: Sgt. Jacques Murphy and Sgt. Ken Spratt. They both had children with Muscular Dystrophy who were placed in the Ontario Hospital in Smiths Falls, Ontario. They felt that a benefit was needed to serve the Ottawa area so thus the benefit game was born in 1956. I took over running the benefit game in 1970 and did so for seven years, and at the last Benefit game \$15,000 was raised. The game was played at the Civic Centre and was 90% full—7,800 people at \$1.00 each, plus the advertisements in the program booklet, and program sales helped raise funds. Originally, our opposition was the Ottawa Firefighters team, but in the later years it was the RCMP (Roman Catholic Mounted Police!). Our two teams were very competitive. We also played against them in the Bytown Commercial League, which I ran from the late 1960s until about 1974. About \$100,000 was raised for the building fund. The Ottawa police chief at that time recommended that we pull our team out of the league, as there was too much violence and injuries.

This, like the benefit games, was full-contact sport. Some of our officers had played in Junior and American League. Ron McPherson had an invitation to the Detroit Red Wings training camp

in Hamilton, where he played Junior, and on his way home to Ottawa from a training camp, he was involved in a serious accident and injured his back, so he had to give up his dream of playing in the NHL. He moved back to Ottawa and joined the OPE.

Big Al Dawson played Junior but decided he wanted also to be a police officer. Al skated, played, and walked much like NHL Hall of Famer Frank Mahovlich. Al Sarault attended Philadelphia training camp and played some exhibition games, and he too came back to Ottawa and joined our force. That was just some of the talent we had on our team, and then, there was me!

I should mention that because the treatment center had already been completed, after Lt. Ken Spratt died, we donated the money raised to Rev. Norm Johnston's project, Operation Go Home, whereby youth who ran away were given the chance to return to their homes. Operation Go Home would pay their bus fare and on occasion would fly them home. The youth as well as the parent or guardian would be counseled, and there would also be a mediator to help. Many kids would choose to return.

The benefit games are played now for the Special Olympics cause. This money is used to assist the Special Olympians to attend and participate at the Special Olympics. If you have never attended any of their events, you certainly are missing a wonderful experience. What joy they show when they cross the finish line, make that hoop, score that goal, or complete a jump in gymnastics.

I played in the summer hockey league where most of the players had played at least at the Junior-A level. Several were from college teams or the American League, and five or six from the Ottawa Police team who had played junior, semi-pro, or NHL hockey. I also started floor hockey at the station after the lunch-hour volleyball game seemed to fade away. We were very competitive and took no prisoners. We played from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. every day, and on occasion we would invite the Ottawa Boys and Girls Club or the University of Ottawa or Carleton University students to come in the evening to take on the "big bad coppers." Always a great time! They got to see inside our world at the station. On occasion, they would be taken on a tour.

The same officer who had blocked the house league hockey team wanted to cancel our lunch-hour hockey, as he believed the pucks might damage the interior of the gym. First of all, there are no gym windows, and there were cement floors and steel doors. Second, we used plastic pucks! We kept playing after bringing the matter to the Executive Command Officer, and years later Chief Vernon White would join us. I would feel so refreshed when I hit the streets after a game!

When I played with the old pros, I got to hear some great stories. One NHLer told me one about Maurice "Rocket" Richard (1921–2000) from the Montréal Canadiens team. He was called the Rocket because that's what he looked like coming down on a goalie, and he had an amazing hard shot. The Rocket was very serious, and he had these piercing, dark eyes. The story goes that when the Canadiens were on the train going to Chicago to play the Blackhawks the next day, the other players had been teasing him on the way. At around 2:00 a.m. when all the other players were



asleep, the Rocket went to their berths and removed one shoe from each player and threw them out the window somewhere near Milwaukie. It was in the middle of winter and very cold. When they got out of their berths just before arriving in Chicago, they all discovered they each had one shoe missing. Moral of the story: Don't mess with Rocket Richard. I never met him personally but would like to have.



I was involved with Help the Aged—Ottawa and Valley Chapter and assisted in arranging skate-a-thons on the Rideau Canal, a UNESCO world heritage site as the world's largest outdoor skating rink. There would usually be 10–12 teams from other police departments, teachers, firefighters, and others. I was responsible for the guest celebrity. One year I called Jean Béliveau, who had retired in 1971 from the Montréal Canadiens, and without hesitation he agreed to be our special guest. Jean Béliveau could be prime minister of the world, and within a year there would be no more wars, no more conflicts. He had an amazing presence about him! He was 6'4" and about 225 lbs. Very graceful and just a wonderful human being. In 1994 Prime Minister Jean Chrétien asked if he would accept the position of Governor-General of Canada, but he declined saying that after being on the road and away from family since he was a teenager, he wanted to spend his time with his family and grandchildren. That just shows the type of person he is.

On behalf of Help the Aged, I would also arrange to have the NHL Oldtimers tour Ottawa and the Valley (Ottawa, Pembroke, Brockville). That took a lot of time to arrange their schedule of appearances, accommodations, etc. However, it was always worth it in the end! Some of the former pros were Norm Ullman (Leafs), Gaston Gigras (Canadiens), Guy Lafleur (Canadiens), Eddie Shack (Leafs), Frank Mahovlich (Canadiens), and many more. Now, these guys had been in the NHL for years, and when they play exhibition fundraiser games, they don't want to take it too seriously. Once or twice during the game their opposition will put their best players out, and the Oldtimers take it up a notch for the fans.

We were playing the "Old Stars" at Civic Centre arena in Ottawa, and we fielded a pretty good team—several former Junior A players as well as college, American League, and NHL players. There was one dude who was a special constable in the jails, and he was a fairly good player; however, he thought this was the seventh game of the Stanley Cup Finals. He slashed Eddie Shack a few times and was making way too much contact on Shack and other players. So Eddie came to me on our bench and said I'd better tell that player if he does it again, he will flatten him, and I believed him. Shack was known as "Clear the track; here comes Shack." This guy could fight. So I told this want-to-be tough guy what Shack had said. I told him to lay off the stupid stuff; it's an exhibition game. He settled down.

One of my Rising Stars sang the national anthem to open the game, and Guy Lafleur came

over to me at the reception after the game and asked who that kid was. I told him she was Amanda Drolet, who was in my Rising Stars Talent Development Program and was only nine years old. He said he wouldn't play again on the tour unless she sang the anthem. Our next game was at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto, and he said he would pay her expenses to go to Toronto. Amanda went, and she sang. After the game, he had me bring her into the team dressing room to meet the players. She was so excited. That, I believe, was the last game played at the old Gardens before the Leafs moved into the arena at the new Air Canada Centre. The score was Old Stars 5–Toronto police 3.

The team was heading west for fundraising tour. Guy said if my Rising Star didn't come along, they would cancel. So off she went to the West—very exciting for a nine-year-old! I have the Rising Stars do many anthems at events. I always tell them to do it the way it was written, *not* (I'm sad to say) as some Canadians and many Americans do personal renditions. I usually have them dress in black or white tuxedos to perform.



I was assigned to numerous beats in the first few years, but one of my favorites in the early years was 2A Beat, which was on Bank Street. It was a major thoroughfare and very busy, especially the five blocks between Somerset Street and Gladstone Avenue. Included in that beat were the Alexander Hotel, the Somerset Hotel, Pandora's Box Strip Club, the Gilmour Hotel, Bud Draper's Place, and the Damascus Restaurant; and thrown into the mix was the Cue 'N Cushion Pool Hall. I will illustrate the ambiance with a little tale or two about a few of these establishments.

The Alexander Hotel was once *the* place to go in Ottawa. All the major artists of the day performed there, from Louis Armstrong to the Ink Spots to Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, and numerous other touring acts. The place had grace in the earlier days. The main room for the shows and concerts was the Leprechaun Room. However, shortly after I joined the force, one could see a steady decline after the original owners, the Colson family, sold it to a local doctor who was not on the premises to keep an eye on the running of the business. It soon became a drinking and meeting place for local hoods and other related bad guys.

One night I was summoned off the beat by the night manager and advised that there were a few guys causing some trouble in the old Leprechaun Room. I went into the room, and I saw several unsavory persons at one table. Once they saw me enter, their whole demeanor changed, and I knew I had interrupted something—a drug deal, or possibly, fencing stolen property? As I was approaching their table from the back of the room, I heard something that sounded metallic slide across the floor under the tables, and these guys were really acting suspiciously. I told the waiter to tell the manager to call the station to send backup. I retreated towards the entrance and awaited the arrival of my backup. This one guy kept looking at me, and it appeared as if he was going to attempt a fast getaway. About five minutes later Officer Richard Weber arrived, all 6'3", 215 lbs. of

him, and he immediately recognized the bad guys and walked in an assertive manner over to the table and started questioning them.

We had no proof that they were doing anything illegal; however, they were. The manager came in and told them to leave. They were very loud and had threatened some other patrons. All had criminal records according to Cst. Weber and were known to have dealt in stolen property (and indeed were arrested and charged numerous times during my career). Another officer arrived from the Preston Street area: Car 103 manned by the infamous Cst. Doc Ballard. He and I searched the area where the bad guys were seated and under tables for a gun, however to no avail. I was so sure we would find one. Richard had searched them, based on the information received, and indexed their names in his Duty Book, as I did as well to later make a police report.

Approximately two months later, I was assisting an investigation regarding a break and enter in the Alta Vista area, and I spoke to one of the people responsible. He informed me he was at the Alex Hotel when I was called about the disturbance, and he told me there were in fact guns being fenced that night and that the guns were passed from table to table. He had been cheated on a deal by one of the people at the table, and he wanted to have him charged. He also wanted to try to get some points with us by informing on the gun fencer. He was charged with B & E and attempted theft.

The Gilmour Hotel was, in the beginning, just a place for men only to go to have their beer and other liquid refreshments. They had the odd fistfight, etc. but there didn't appear to be much of a criminal element present. Upstairs, there usually was live music, mostly country. However, when ownership changed in the mid- to late '60s, the environment and the clientele gradually changed for the worse. It became a meeting place for small-time crooks and, on occasion, some graduates of our federal penal system (they got their degrees from the "Crowbar Academy").

The B & E crooks would go into the hotel, have a beer, and put the word out that they had stolen goods such as chainsaws, jewelry, lawn mowers, etc., and patrons would purchase these articles at a ridiculously low price. If they did not have what their "customers" wanted, then they would go out and steal it, be it by a B & E, or theft from cars, or even stolen cars and parts. I believe approximately 80% of the people purchasing the merchandise were aware that the item was obtained through the avails of crime. They were as guilty as the fencer was. I would sometimes position myself out of the way and out of sight in the laneway behind the hotel to observe the deals going down and often make an arrest. I also would gather information as to license numbers and names and associates, which would be submitted to Intelligence and detectives for their database.

I recall one evening on 2A Beat, working afternoons 3:15 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., and the Family Brown, friends of mine, were performing upstairs so I dropped in to say hello and check the place out. As I reached the top of the stairs, I stood out like a sore thumb. The bouncer immediately came over to me and wanted to know why I was up there. I told him I didn't need an excuse as

to why a police officer visits a licensed establishment. They had a lot of criminal activity there and were also serving minors. I became annoyed, and my dander was up. Like, why were they so concerned as to my presence?

Shortly after that, the owner who was known as “Bud” came right up to me and told me to leave. The bartender came over as well. Well, I am not a person to run from trouble, especially in uniform on duty. However, I felt the odds were against me at 3 to 1 and about 700 lbs. cumulatively to my 180 lbs., and there were about 35 steps to the bottom of the stairs, so I made the logical decision to depart, and they followed me down to the street. I was infuriated by what had just happened. How dare these SOBs do this to a police officer?

I immediately went across the street to a pay phone and asked for two patrol officers. They arrived soon after: one was my friend, Cst. Richard Weber, along with Csts. Butch Ackland and McCallum. I told them my story, and I said, “Let’s go in.” Richard took charge as the senior officer and by far the biggest, and we went up the stairs.

This time we were not backing down. Things got hot and heavy. Richard decided to call for detectives, and two arrived within minutes. They asked us to go downstairs to cool things off, and they spoke to Bud’s henchmen. About ten minutes later, they came down and told us to leave it alone and that they would look after it.

Well guess what, it wasn’t looked after, and I can only assume they were working on an investigation relative to Bud’s establishment and his criminal activities. He may have won the battle; however, he did not win the war. I worked Centertown for a long time after that incident and paid very close attention to Buddy Boy and his cronies, as did other officers. He eventually closed and sold.

Pandora’s Box (later became Barrymore’s) was not somewhere I would take my friends for a night out. It was opened most likely with financial assistance (drug money) from organized crime operating out of Montréal. On more than one occasion I observed the Montréal boss man entering and leaving the Box. Many, or most likely the majority of, patrons who attended Barrymore’s were oblivious to the goings on. An informant told me that they had observed on several occasions over \$100,000 changing hands in that place—drug money.

There was always plenty of action in the laneway that ran behind Barrymore’s, the pool hall arcade, and the Gilmour; and every chance I got, I would just appear from out of nowhere, and they would scatter like pigeons and run for cover. I have observed several prominent Ottawa residents, including lawyers and dentists, picking up their fixes. One had a \$5,000 a week addiction and was later charged and convicted, as were many others. Others, including local entertainers, just escaped the sting by a matter of hours. I should, in all fairness, say that many people just went to such places to relax, have a few beers, see the entertainment, and go home as they had been doing for years and as did their family and friends before them.

I recall one evening about 9:30 p.m. while I was walking 2A Beat when a bartender came rushing out of the Gilmour Tavern saying there was a huge fight between Satan's Choice motorcycle gang and the bartenders and bouncers. He said he had already called the station and that someone was on the way. I thought oh, boy, this could be the Big One. I delayed my entrance as long as I could, and the waiter kept shouting at me to go in. About two minutes had passed, and I felt I could not wait for backup.

Just as I was opening the door to enter, I saw the flashing red light slowly coming down Bank Street. He did not seem to be in much of a hurry, so when I entered the Tavern there was some pushing, shoving, kicking, etc. I always carried a whistle and did so until I retired. I blew that sucker as loud as I could, and they thought the whole platoon was coming. Most of the regulars paid no attention to the commotion, just kept drinking their beer. They had seen it all before; however, this one was a little different, with a motorcycle gang, some of whom usually carried knives, chains, and, on one occasion, guns. The gang was asked to leave the tavern by the staff, and they had refused. Just prior to my arrival, they had their feet up on the tables, throwing articles across the room, etc. One bouncer went behind the bar and got a baseball bat, came out swinging, and struck several gang members on the head and upper body, causing some serious bodily injury.

Finally my backup arrived, or should I say, a hindrance! It was a patrol sergeant who could not and would not fight his way out of a wet paper bag. I surely hoped more help was on the way. There was blood all over the floor and tables at this point.

I went for the one who appeared to be the leader and put what is called in Jiu-Jitsu a strangulation (come-along) hold on him and ran with him on my hip to the door and out to the street. The sergeant was still not actually involved. All the other gang members, once they became aware of a police presence, headed for the door and out. I got this guy to the street and was expecting to be jumped on and assaulted, but these people settle their own scores later. Once I dropped him, I noticed my shirtsleeve was all bloody, as was my hand and arm that I had around his neck and up to his skull. He was hit so hard with the baseball bat that it cracked his skull open, and I had my fingers inside his head. They all took off: no arrests, no complaints. Very disturbing.

Several weeks later, we received a call near midnight (graveyard shift—11:15 p.m. to 7:30 a.m.) about a disturbance on Rochester and Somerset Streets, outside the Vendome Hotel—another place of ill repute. When we arrived, there was a very large man on the ground in the parking lot, screaming in pain. Several motorcycles (Harley-Davidsons) ran over his knees and legs, fracturing them so badly he could not walk again for years without the assistance of two canes. Guess what, the score was tied: bouncer 1—Satan's Choice 1! It was the same bouncer who had struck the gang member with the bat who was now run over (and the same bouncer who had waltzed me down the stairs at the Gilmour)...the score was now settled. He was still walking with canes the last time I saw him about fifteen years ago. You may win the battle, but you never win the war with these individuals.



While walking a beat, officers are very visible to the public, and if you did not go into a shell behind the uniform, you could do wonderful deeds for the countless people you met on a daily basis. There were numerous events and situations that come to mind, and I will mention a few. First, I will tell you about a group of young tourists from Sweden. I was walking the afternoon shift at about 8:30 p.m. I was in at the Alex Hotel speaking to the staff when these young tourists in their twenties came in and proceeded to the front desk to inquire about their reservations. The desk clerk checked her reservation list but could not find their names. They were devastated. It was a long weekend in May—Queen Victoria Day—and the hotel was filled to capacity. They had come all the way from Sweden for the annual Tulip Festival. I was standing close enough to the desk that I could hear the conversation. I introduced myself and asked if I could be of assistance, and they told me of their dilemma. Meanwhile, the desk clerk was calling other hotels in Ottawa area but to no avail. The Tulip Festival attracts tourists from all over the world, and all the city hotels are full to capacity.

When the clerk was unsuccessful in obtaining lodging, I called some contacts I had, but again, to no avail. Now these people, all twenty-two of them, were all looking like rag dolls, exhausted and hungry. I had one more call to make and that was the YMCA, which was a relatively new building. I called the front desk and told the receptionist of their problem, and she also said they were full. I knew a prominent member of the board of directors at the Y, and I called him at home at 10:00 p.m. I asked him to make some calls to see if he could help them out. I was determined to find them lodging even if they slept in my basement. I had them walk with me to the Y, which was about six blocks from the Alex. I had phoned the station dispatch to inform the patrol sergeant that I would be off my beat and at the Y.

Upon arrival with these tired and haggard tourists, the clerk informed me of a call she had received from the board member and that possibly she could accommodate seven but not twenty. I said that was satisfactory. I got in touch with the caretaker, found some cots and beds, mattresses and cleaned out a storage area on the seventh floor, and all of them were accommodated. I then went up to the Party Palace restaurant on Elgin Street, about eight blocks away, informed the owner of the situation and asked if the restaurant could assist by preparing a platter of food that I could take to them. Easy! If you don't ever ask, then thou shalt not receive—that's quite a simple principle in life. I delivered it to them at about 11:45 p.m., wished them well, caught a bus to the police station and booked off, and went home feeling really good that I had been of some assistance.

Upon reporting for work the next afternoon, I was told by the staff sergeant to see my patrol sergeant after parade, which I did. He tore a strip off me for being off my beat for so long and idling my time! I received a warning; next time I would be written up and lose days off and have it on my record.

When these young people got home to Sweden, they related their story to a relative who was a police officer in Stockholm, who passed it on to my chief of police; and the chief wrote a letter to the mayor of Ottawa, who in turn, passed it on to the Ottawa-Hull Tourist and Convention Bureau, whose staff then sent it to the Noel Kerr Hospitality award committee. They subsequently contacted me, and two months later I was invited to attend an awards dinner whereby I was presented with the Noel Kerr Hospitality Award for 1985. I believe that was the first award I had ever received. I was honored to receive it; however, I figured that was an important part of the role I played as a police officer, and I just hoped that other people who became aware of this deed, as well as the tourists involved, would learn from it. I did receive Christmas cards from some of them for several years. I was never congratulated, nor did the Executive Command ever mention the incident to me.

There are other situations, too numerous to mention, whereby we can all assist the public on a daily basis. Something as small as assisting someone in finding their parked car when they cannot recall where they left it; car keys locked inside their vehicle—some people think we have some kind of magic when we open their car door. If you do that enough times, like a tow truck driver, you become proficient with a coat hanger, a screw driver, etc. You quite often meet people on the street who have various degrees of predicaments.

I recall one time this woman in her thirties, sitting in a doorway on Rideau Street at about 12:30 a.m., her head in her hands, crying. I approached her and asked her what was wrong, and she just kept on crying with deep sobbing. I told her I would like to help her, but that she had to tell me what was the problem. She was certainly not a street person by any stretch of the imagination, as she was very well dressed and appeared upper-middleclass.

When she finally stopped sobbing, she related to me that her husband had struck her and thrown her out the door in freezing weather. She had returned home about 11:00 p.m. from a meeting and found that he had been drinking quite heavily, although he had promised her that he had quit drinking. An argument ensued, and, as is frequently the case, he blamed her for his misfortunes (all she did was love him and try to help him). They had been married for seven years, no children. He was a professional and had his own business. He had been abusive before she informed me, and on several occasions he had pushed and slapped her. But the nature of women is to forgive and hope that men will see the error of their ways and that everything will be fine.

She was well known in the community but just did not know where to turn or to whom—she was so embarrassed and humiliated. Enter Constable D'Arcy! I had been assisting with raising funds to upgrade a women's shelter and told her we could drive her to the current shelter where she would be safe but that she had some very serious decisions to make and soon. A patrol officer and I drove her to the shelter and left her there.

I made a report and followed up with her the next day to ask her if she wished to press charges

of assault against her husband. I informed her then that maybe that would be the best thing that could happen to him, as it appeared from her statement that he was spinning out of control, so being charged and appearing before a judge may be exactly what he needed. She agreed to press charges, and I made a supplementary report indicating that she would testify. Often women will want the person charged, however, days or weeks later and, often at the trial itself, they change their minds and will refuse to testify or wish to have the charges withdrawn.

Her husband was arrested the next day, charged, and fingerprinted. He had his day in court, and his wife did give evidence. He was convicted of Assault, which was reduced from Assault Causing Bodily Harm. The charge was reduced because all concerned felt that he could and would be rehabilitated; he did not receive jail time but was given probation for one year and had to attend the Rideauwood Addiction Center, run by a former detective who was once an alcoholic and had himself received counseling.

To make a short story even longer, there is a moral to this tale. The victim subsequently became actively involved with women's issues and also is fundraising for shelters and similar causes. Her husband—the accused—completed all his rehabilitation, stopped drinking cold turkey, quit smoking, turned his life around, and is a successful businessman in town. They did reconcile about fifteen months later and are now the proud and happy parents of two boys and a girl. I am truly satisfied with the outcome of that situation.

It is sometimes as simple as flagging down a taxi and asking the driver to give a person a ride home (at no cost) for someone in need. That really worked well in the '60s, '70s, and '80s when driving or owning a taxi cab was an honorable profession when drivers wore hats, dressed presentably, maintained clean cabs, opened doors for their customers, were generally courteous, and usually knew the officers.

Then there was the time I was dispatched to a fire in Lowertown at 1:00 in the morning. The house was completely destroyed by fire and water. The family was just devastated. I told the mother of the four children to get in the police car after the fire was under control and drove to the Salvation Army Shelter, which was situated a few blocks away. I rang the buzzer at 3:30 a.m., and the night attendant opened the door for me. Now, that would not usually happen if I had not been a uniformed police officer. I relayed to him the problem, and he told the woman to help herself to what she needed. All were dressed in used clothing at no cost by 4:30 a.m.

Now that, to some people, may not sound like such a big deal; however, those of you who may have been in a similar situation, or know someone who has, will acknowledge how that felt. And it was not a big deal for me to do that. Police officers have a lot of authority and power, and if it is used the way it is intended to be, great things (or little things with great impact) can happen—translated that means many, many little deeds may all be significant in someone's life. And thank God for the Salvation Army. They are always there anywhere in the world to help those in need.



I was now starting to get car relief duty on a regular basis, relieving the regular patrol officers while they were at lunch. I would eat one hour before I had to relieve the first officer, patrol his area, take calls, etc. Sometimes that might be two hours if he had reports to make, then ditto for the second officer, and most times I would make it back to the beat just in time to give my commercial properties one last physical check, paying attention to possible B & E.



In the fall of 1966 I was assigned to Queen Street, 9 Beat, for several months on late watch. My friend George Sylvain was on 1 Beat, Sparks Street Mall, the next Beat over. We were usually assigned to 1 Beat as a punishment of sorts or if the boss and you had a personality conflict. George, who had been in the military police in the Korean War, was a martial arts expert. He stood 6', 220 lbs. of solid muscle. He would spend his vacations in Japan and Korea studying the different disciplines of the martial arts. He has written four books, is a tactical training officer, and held a 10<sup>th</sup> degree black belt in Jiu-Jitsu and a 4<sup>th</sup> degree belt in Karate, as well as being skilled in Western kick-boxing and Judo. He was the founder of Can-Ryu (a Canadian system of Jiu-Jitsu) and was teaching Karate at a club (Dojo) on Rideau Street and often invited me to join.

He and I would meet in the wee hours of the morning, and he would teach me some tricks of self-defence. Now this guy was built like a tank, fast and dangerous, but he never abused his position. Some of the techniques were as simple as taking off your police hat, or any hat for that matter, and in a flash, stick it right in your opponent's face—the “element of surprise,” or fingers in the eyes when the odds were against you. This happens so fast that the other person does not have time to react. Plus, never face an opponent face to face; always turn sideways so you are a much smaller target.

After I had been in several dustups (fights) while on duty and didn't fare as well as I would have liked, I joined the Dojo on Rideau Street where George was an instructor and took up Karate. We would study Tuesdays and Thursdays, and practice on Sundays. I could not always attend when I was on shift 3:15 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. unless I was on days off. I was enjoying the classes; however, from the beginning I felt that Karate was too offensive for me as a police officer. I felt Jiu-Jitsu would be more beneficial to me because you could defend yourself better and not always be attacking. Of course, there are defensive moves in Karate, but primarily I felt it was too offensive.

As luck would have it, George and a friend of his, Grey Johnston, who owned a furniture store and was an amateur boxer, invested in their own Jiu-Jitsu/kick-boxing club, which would be operated by George. It was upstairs where 240 Sparks now stands today; it was demolished several years ago. I really enjoyed the Johnston/Sylvain Club where there was structure and discipline.

One of the teachings of any Dojo is that one does not take martial arts to go out and lay a beating on someone. Furthermore, your whole attitude changes: you become less aggressive and

more confident; the chip you may have been carrying on your shoulder has been removed; and once you have attained a few belts, you realize you have nothing to prove to anyone in relation to your physical capabilities. There have been a few people who did not buy into that principle in George's Club, and they were asked to leave. When you are learning a new technique, you don't attack it as if you are in a bar fight.

One such person who joined their Dojo had attained his Blue Belt in Karate (later he received his Black) always continued after his partner would slap his leg/hip twice as a signal indicating he was hurting him and to stop; however, this guy would continue and had to be warned by the instructor on several occasions. Finally, George had enough of this behavior, and he was asked to leave. I recall that sometimes after we would leave the Dojo some of us would go up to the Sparks Street Mall and have a soda-pop or coffee. One of George's senior instructors was Harry Rhodes. Harry had his Black Belt in Karate and Jiu-Jitsu. This guy could be a dangerous individual, although Harry never flaunted his capabilities and his ability to handle himself in a tight situation. On a few occasions this individual who was later asked to leave the Club came with us.

He would look at guys passing by straight in the eye with an intimidating gaze, all the while cracking his knuckles. We observed this and made sure he didn't come with us again. Guess what? About one year later he appeared in an Ottawa police uniform on my platoon as a rookie, and I wondered, Wow, how did he ever pass the screening? This behavior was worrisome, and I ended up working with him off and on for several years before finally he was either asked to leave the Force, or he quit.

I spent three years with George and learned a great deal about the art of self-defence and discipline that has followed me through my life so far. When I am performing in or lecturing in the schools, I always advocate that students take some sort of self-defence classes. It not only gives you self-confidence, it also encourages you to stay in good physical condition, both of which go hand in hand. You must stay in shape. You need stamina in boxing and martial arts. I worked out before I reported for duty—lifted a few weights, did push-ups, stretches, and running, either outside or on the spot. There is nothing worse than shin splints. You may recall how you would have to walk flat-footed for a week after a sudden run to full speed with no warm-up. (Isn't flat-foots what they call Cops?)



This may be a great segue to some of the incidents I found myself in over my police career in which I used the skills I gained from the Dojo. There are many, however, I will just mention the first 500 (just joking). A few stand out.

Police officers are offered Pay Duties, which means you work on days off, paid for by the people or organization hiring you. I was working an Ottawa Rough Rider football game (the team

later became the Ottawa Renegades) on the south side. I had just received my green belt. We had three officers on the south side, and I was working the north end, so if I needed assistance, the nearest officer was quite a distance away if I could find him what with all the fans milling about.

During the first quarter I was approached by a fan regarding a person about twenty rows up on the second level causing a disturbance and spilling his beer on the people in front of him. I proceeded to the area to check him out, and when I got there I saw this large man, 27 years old, about 220 lbs., standing up and just making an ass of himself. I warned him to be quiet and stop disturbing the people around him. He told me to “f-off little man and go away.” Well, I made it quite clear that I was not about to do either. He was several seats in from the aisle. I assessed the situation and felt I could get him out. The people in the seats next to him did not cooperate with me in that they would not move so I could go in and get him, so the people in the seats behind moved out, and I went in behind him, and as I did, he stood up shouting facing the field.

I asked him several times to come with me down the stairs. He just laughed and turned his back to me, which presented me with a glorious opportunity to “preach what I had practiced!” at the Club and use the strangulation “come-along” technique. Most people in the area must have thought I was on drugs or something; however, none offered to assist me. I put him in the hold from behind and dragged him down the cement steps on my back and hip. There is absolutely nothing he could do but “come along.” I finally got him down to the second level, dropped him, put him face against the wall and handcuffed him, when one of his friends approached me and said if I would give him another chance, he would be responsible for him.

I played hockey with and against this friend in the Bytown Industrial League. I always called him “Gordie” because he looked and played like Gordie Howe. He played Senior A Hockey for the old Whitby Dunlops—6'2", 215 lbs. So, I felt it was reasonable to assume that he could look after him. I had a feeling that I ought not to have let the fellow go back to his seat, but he promised me he would behave. Somehow, the way he was looking at me, I didn't believe him, and I really should have followed my intuition and instincts. That would surely not happen today, as I will explain in another section.

The lights were out in the stands for a half-time show on the field, and they were using fire and lights as part of the show with only minimal emergency lighting in the stands. As is our custom and obligation when you are working an event like this, you don't watch the game or the show. You scan the audience for anything that could raise a red flag. This guy and I made eye contact a few times, and I guess in retrospect that he was getting all steamed up and building himself up to come and have a crack at me. I was speaking to some fans and was looking the other way from where he was seated.

When I finished with them, I turned back towards his aisle for a moment, and there he was, right beside me looking very angry, inches from my face, his friend was nowhere to be seen. He



*My father and mother, Patrick and Mary (Walker) D'Arcy*



*First Communion*



*Wreck in 1958 that severely injured me, my brother Cecil, and our cousin Eldon Fox*



*Wedding to Noellie Larose, 28 November 1964*



Front Row L-R - Cst. A. Brazeau - P. W. - J. Melanson - E. Jodoin - J. Best - L. Lavioeire  
 P. W. - D. Nichol - Cst. D. D'arcy  
 Rear Row L-R - Cadet H. Ramsay - Cst. B. Carvish - G. Charron - Cadet W. Cochrane -  
 Cst. M. Morris - A. Van Kralingen - D. McNeill - Cadet J. F. Kennedy  
 Cst. N. Delahunt - D/S/M R. Boudreau

*February 1965, Police Training Graduation (D. D'Arcy, front row, far right)*



*1970s Ottawa Police Hockey Team*



*Canada Day 1977, Sheenboro*



*Mom's final farewell to the farm 1992*



*1980s accident. Just another day's work for a police officer*



*With our Doberman, Pharough, by the Rideau River*

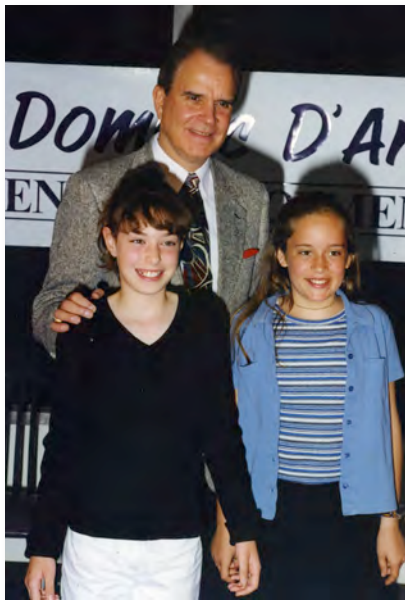


*The D'Arcy siblings at a family reunion circa 2000 (Helen, Leona, Theresa, Dominic, Mary, Cecil, Clair, Harold, and Doreen)*





*Ottawa Tulip Festival May, 1999, Dominic D'Arcy Day*



*Rich Little with two Rising Stars*



*Teaching Kandy and Pharough to sing "How Much Is That Doggie in the Window"*



*1999 Great Wall Festival, China performance*



*1999 Great Wall Festival, China performance*



*1999 Great Wall Festival, China performance*



*D'Arcy's Beat CTV (CHRO) with Jim McCreavy*



*With Maureen O'Hara, Glengariff, Ireland, 1994*



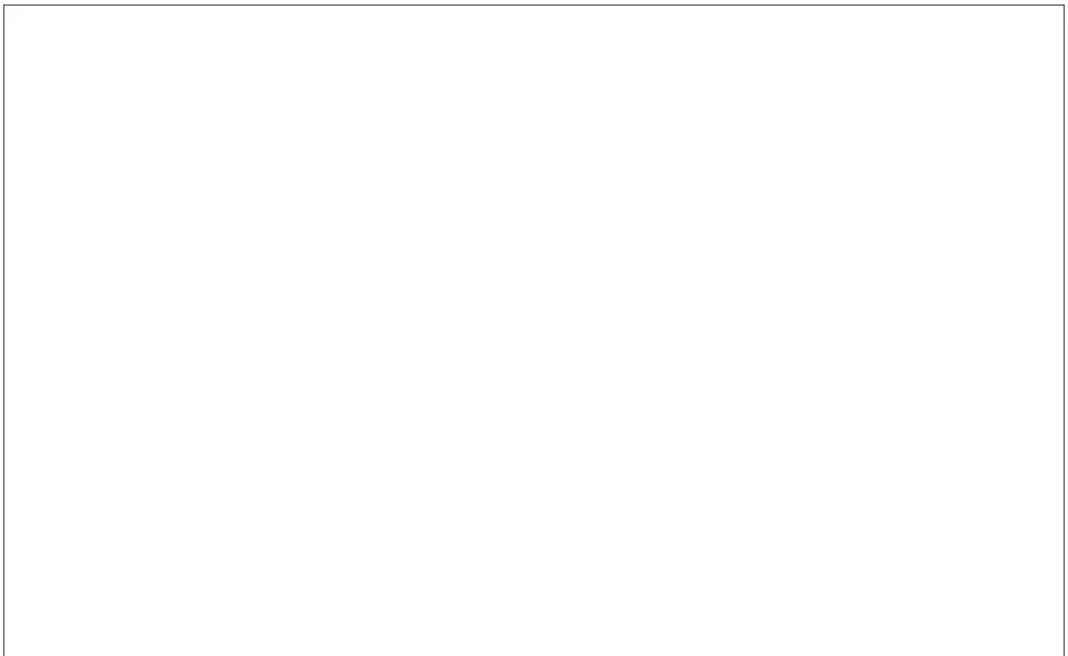
*Barbados Christmas morning*



*Ottawa City Hall 1994, with Mayor Bob Chiarelli,  
Governor-General Michaëlle Jean and Noellie*



*With then Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Police Week, May 24, 1975*



*With then Prime Minister Paul Martin*



*With the compliments of*  
*The Rt. Hon. John G. Diefenbaker, P.C., Q.C., M.P.*

*Acknowledgment from Prime Minister Diefenbaker*



*Before our final concert 2005. The Claytons*



*Dominic D'Arcy with Shania Twain*



*Dominic D'Arcy performing with a young Alanis Morissette*



suddenly reached out and grabbed the lapel of my tunic (we were still wearing them at that time), ripped it, tore it away from the shoulders, and I felt I better deal with this guy fast. I sent the security officer to get me some assistance from the other two officers (Cst. Carvish and Sgt. Don Devine). He was starting to choke me by pulling on my necktie (today we have clip-ons so we can't be dragged around by the necktie). I did a Jiu-Jitsu hand takedown, spun him around, and did the come-along hold on him again and started dragging him out on my hip again, but he came loose just at the top of the ramp.

Now this guy was big and was built like a freaking maple tree-stump, and he grabbed me and struck me several times in the ribs and tried to throw me over the railing and onto the cement below, which was a 20' drop. Not even my "break fall" technique that I learned in the Dojo could break that fall. I should mention here that his friend "Gordie" had arrived and was watching but did not or would not interfere. I thought, before he does throw me over, I had best pull out all stops. I was reluctant to appear to be using excessive force, for then the people around would jump me. Added to that threat, was the fact that many had been drinking. I managed to push him back and landed several front snap kicks to the groin and punches to the face.

At that point he must have felt I was gaining the upper hand so he left and started running down the ramp to escape. I tried to run after him but my ribs were so sore that this very sharp pain bent me over, and I was out of action. Just as he was approximately 15' from me, around the corner came Cst. Carvish in high gear. He took him down with a tackle against the cement wall (he drove him three feet to the wall)...end of escape. Brian had played serious football and was over 200 lbs., 6'1", so that guy never moved for five minutes. A large crowd had gathered to watch the event unfold. Sgt. Don Devine had also arrived by this time with another officer. Don had been at the extreme south end of the stadium when he was summoned.

This troublemaker was escorted to the parking lot at the back of the stadium, along the Queen Elizabeth Driveway and the Rideau Canal, and when I waddled my way to where he was lying, I was so tempted to kick the SOB in the ribs if I could. However, a gentleman standing by saw my anger and shouted, "Don't do it officer!" He was not privy to the scene upstairs; however, he brought me back to reality, and those words still resonate in my mind, a lesson well learned for life. Like ice, anger passes away in time.

It's tough not to cross that thin line in this business, and if you do, you have to face the consequences of your actions, and, on top of that, you bring discredit to police everywhere. He was charged with Causing a Disturbance and with Assaulting a Police Officer. He went to court and received a \$50.00 fine. Justice done? I don't think so. I had two cracked ribs, cut fingers, and a stiff neck for weeks and missed two weeks of work, while the accused, an aircraft mechanic at Bradley Air Services, was able to return to work.

While working afternoons in Car 109, southeast end of the city, I was dispatched a call

regarding a person smashing office furniture and assaulting people at a pre-Christmas office party at a trucking company at about 8:30 p.m. I was told to await my backup, which was Car 110 and Car 108, as the person responsible was very large and out of control. I arrived on Sheffield Road, which is a commercial, industrial district, and positioned myself slightly up the street from the trucking company awaiting my backup.

I was there several minutes when a security guard who had been looking out for me, saw me and came running out the door waving his arms and motioning for me to come, so I told the dispatcher that I was going in. When I entered, it was obvious that there had been a disturbance as there was broken glass and knocked-over furniture, even a desk was tipped on its side. The manager pointed out the individual to me, and I thought, "Oh my, what a challenge this was going to be!" especially if my backup doesn't arrive soon. The manager and other staff related their take on the situation. All were terrified of this guy. He was about 35 years old, 250 lbs., and had been drinking enough alcohol for him to be beyond reason!

I proceeded to the manager's office, and he told me the person used to be a transport driver; however, for the past year, he had been a dispatcher, which was a demotion for him, and he waited until the Christmas business party to let the manager know exactly how he felt. Several of the staff members were protecting the manager, who was held captive, so to speak, in his office. I asked if he wanted the person removed and charged, and he said he did, but cautioned me to wait for my backup, which still had not arrived.

I then went out to speak to the "big guy," introduced myself to him, and asked him if he knew my cousin whom I used to work for, Tom D'Arcy of T. D'Arcy, Ltd., Moving and Storage, and he said he did not. I was looking for some common ground to try to get him on side, but he had a bead on the manager whom he had already assaulted. I was attempting to appease him until my backup arrived, so I told him that if he takes me down, there will be fifty more like me arriving and joked that I'm not a lover, let alone a fighter, as I am on my fifth marriage and have never won a fight. So I invited him outside to talk about his situation. Well, this huge individual was not buying into my plan at all.

Finally, my backup arrived about fifteen minutes into the call. One was a chap who was an amateur boxer in Montréal and the other who later became a good friend was a former fullback with a high-school football team, so I figured I was in good shape to take this guy out. Both officers were junior in seniority and age to me.

I'm still attempting to get the bad guy to come peacefully with us but to no avail. I realized we were going to have to use some serious force to get this giant out and into my cruiser, so I went to an office and called the Staff Sergeant, Wilf O'Donnell, a Quyon, Québec Pontiac lad, to inform him of the volatile situation and that there would be a rumble and that I was looking for a little direction. Now Wilf had seen me operate at demonstrations and strikes, and he just said, "You can

handle it D'Arc, but be careful." So with that support and green light in my back pocket, I went back to the monster and stood in front of him and told him there were two options open to him. My way or your way: my way, you will come outside with us and we can discuss the matter down at the police station, or if your way, you are going to need an ambulance (I pretended to ask dispatch for an ambulance).

At this point I began preparing for battle by taking off my glasses, removed bottles and glassware in the immediate area, and put on my brown leather gloves. I then indicated, with body motions to the two officers, that I was going to take him, and they looked at me as if I was an escaped mental patient, but at that point the guy said he would come with us but before he did he wanted to shake hands with the manager and apologize. Well, I thought we'll give him the chance to do that. We walked into his office and the manager was behind his desk; I told him the guy wished to say he was sorry. He put his hand out rather reluctantly, and at that moment the giant took a swing at him, missed, and I immediately put the old reliable come-along hold on him, had him resting on my hip and started running with him, dragging him behind me to the door which was 40' away. The two officers just stood there and watched me go by. There was not much they could do at that point. The security guard, well, he was still looking out the door and down the street for more backup.

All was proceeding according to plan when I lost my grip on him, and he fell with a thud to the floor. Then I thought, "Hell, now I'm in trouble." I had neglected to take off my nylon jacket, and that's why he slipped out of my hold. He was lying there looking up at me, and I figured I had best not let him get a hold of me, as he would throw me around like a rag doll. I shouted to him, "You are going to get up and walk with me to the car; now that you see we mean business." He complied. When he got up, I grabbed his left hand and twisted it just enough to gain control and let him know that I was serious.

Everything seemed okay; however, at the top of the steps he broke loose and took a swing at me, so I again put him in a come-along hold and dragged him down the stairs to the police car and, in so doing, he hit his head against the roof. We tried to put the handcuffs on him, but they wouldn't fit. All three of us had great difficulty in getting him in the back seat behind the cage. Two of us pushed and the other went to the opposite side and pulled him, and we got him wedged in. He filled up most of the back seat, and an officer followed us to the Waller Street Station.

It must have been quite a sight—this 180 lb. police officer going down the road with this huge prisoner in the back. I talked to him on the way in and told him not to be angry with me. I said, "I gave you ample opportunity to settle this peacefully, and you chose your way. I don't enjoy using force like that, and I'm a good person, so don't go and tell all your friends about the bad policeman. You deserved what you got!"

When we arrived at the station, he promised he would behave himself, and I believed him this

time. We proceeded to the staff sergeant's desk for booking, and the staff sergeant, who incidentally was a boxer, quipped, "Another one gave himself up to you D'Arcy," half-joking I suppose when he saw me waltzing in with this huge man. The prisoner spoke up and said, "F... you, he took me fair and square, and he's a good man."

He was booked and taken to the cellblock, and I had another chat with him. He was from Hull, Québec and informed me he had been a professional wrestler (or wrassler as we called it "up the Valley") and fought out of Montréal. He apologized to me, and we shook hands before I left the cellblock.

Now I understood why everyone at the trucking company was so afraid of him. I phoned the manager and asked if he still wanted to have him charged with assault, and the manager said probably not. He was charged with being drunk and released in the morning. Hopefully, he will learn from the experience and pass it on.

One more incident to tell you about: I had been a police officer about five years at this time and was working afternoons in Car 101 in Centertown. At about 8:30 p.m. or so I received a call to proceed to the Alex Hotel regarding a disturbance. I went up to the front desk and the bouncer/waiter met me and told me he was assaulted, kicked in the eye, which appeared to be hanging out of his head, by an individual who was still in the tavern.

When I entered the tavern, the troublemaker was throwing a chair towards the bar. When he saw me, he sat down at a table and must have thought I didn't see him throw it. Several patrons had told me to get him out, he was really causing a lot of trouble, and he had assaulted the waiter. I walked over to his table, introduced myself, explained I was here on a call regarding an assault and causing a disturbance, and said I would like him to come out with me peacefully so we could discuss the situation. At that point he stood up and was quite a big puppy, approximately 6'2", 190 lbs., in his late twenties, and I thought I had better handle this one carefully, as my backup still had not arrived. He had a few friends at his table, and they were looking at me kind of funny, if you know what I mean. Furthermore, this was a Friday night, and the tavern was full. And you just know some of these people would like to get their hands on a lonewolf Copper.

I was delaying action as long as I could; however, I did not want this to escalate. So I took charge and asked him again in a very calm but stern manner to come outside with me and hopefully get a handle on this matter. Still no backup, so I told him I didn't want any trouble and that he must come now or else. With this he stood up and told me, "Screw off! Go away! I'm not going anywhere!" Then he dug his own grave by pushing me and was in the process of sitting back down. I grabbed him by the arm put a move on his wrist, and he went face down onto the table, and I did the old reliable come-along hold on him and dragged him running through the tavern, knocking over everything in our way, and there was absolutely nothing he could do but "come along."

All the while I was dragging him, I was talking to him and letting him know that when we

got out to the lobby, I would release the hold so we could talk. He seemed to agree, and when I got to the lobby area, I released him, and then he started to cooperate. However, two of his friends followed us out and were not too happy with what I had done to their friend. I told them not to get involved and that I would treat him fairly when we got to the station and that if they gave me a phone number I would call them to give them an update. Like, I did not want to get a kick to the head as well, so I was using all my survival skills to hold everyone off until the posse arrived, and I think I had them all convinced my way was the best and only way.

About fifteen minutes after the call was dispatched, Doc Ballard from Car 103 area (Preston St.) and a patrol sergeant came through the front door. The sergeant noticed me talking to these guys in a pleasant, calm manner and assumed I was just being a wimp. He was not privy to what had just occurred in that I had dragged this guy through enemy territory and out of the tavern and that I had the situation well under control and furthermore, in the blink of an eye, I would and could take this guy down again and cause a big scene, but there was no need to escalate or raise the temperature.

The sergeant walked up to me and, in front of all, he said in a very loud voice, "D'Arcy, why are you fraternizing with these punks?" Well, let me tell you that sergeant was damn lucky I was standing between him and the detainee, as he took a swing at the sergeant and just missed him.

Now, at this point I was really angry, not at the bad guy but at the sergeant for calling me out as what I (and all around) took as a coward. I grabbed the guy again with the come-along hold and took him towards my car, which was parked at the side on Gilmour Street. There were four steps leading to the double door at the street level, and I don't think we touched one of them. I was just furious, as any man should be when someone calls him a chicken or coward. I felt sorry for the guy when we got to my car. When I let him go to the ground, he was groggy from the door's bonk to the head. I turned him over, put the cuffs on him, put him into the car all in the space of thirty seconds. The sergeant and Doc just stood there with nothing to do. I got in my car, and the sergeant followed us to the station, with Doc in the backseat with the bad guy.

At that time, to book someone we had to go from the garage to the fourth floor, where the staff sergeant and the cells were. When we entered the freight elevator with the prisoner, there were three other officers in it as well. The same sergeant shouted at me again about fraternizing with the prisoner and said that he was going to write me up. I was so angry I can't find the adjective to describe my feelings, and I realize I should have kept my Irish temper under wraps, but I shouted right back at him that I had the freaking situation under control until he arrived. Well, he was now even angrier than I was, and he told me to see the lieutenant before I left the station.

The man was booked and charged with Assault Causing Bodily Harm and Damage to Property. I then proceeded to see the Platoon Commander, Lieutenant Panagapko, and he had been briefed by the sergeant and said that I was being written up for Neglect of Duty and Insubordination,

which are serious charges that could cost you your job. I attempted to explain what had happened, but he said, “You will have your say in front of the tribunal” (we called it a Kangaroo Court).

I had my day in Kangaroo Court finally about one month later in front of the chief of police, a lieutenant, and a sergeant, I believe. I told my story and explained why I reacted the way I did on the elevator. For the “Neglect of Duty” charge, I received a warning, and for the more serious charge of “Insubordination,” I received a sentence of two days’ loss of pay, and it would be on my history as long as I was an officer. Was justice done? In my view, no! I realize that I ought to have shut up and said nothing to the sergeant. You see, he was from the old school, knock ’em down and drag ’em out. He and I never had any problems before that incident. He was what everyone called a “policeman’s sergeant,” and a real nice person, but he had a wicked temper as I found out. As a matter of fact, he and another police officer had a business as carpenters and handymen on their off-duty time, and they repaired and built decks, verandahs, etc. I hired them to put a new front porch at 111 Powell Avenue, where I was living after I moved from 95 Powell Avenue.



My music career was slowly climbing up the steep hill of recognition and acceptance. I was out on days off presenting myself to local restaurants and to some pubs as well as community-event organizers looking for venues at which to perform. Yesterday’s Restaurant was one of my first gigs in a restaurant. I knew the owner. Yesterday’s had an elevated area at the back looking out onto the Mall—quite a nice place to perform with plenty of tourists from around the world, which was the perfect audience for me. The place seated about 120 people—good clean fun—jokes and Irish music. Many times there would be fifteen or twenty police officers from my platoon there to support me.



There was a tradition of initiating rookies. One rookie constable was walking the Sparks Street Mall on her third week out on the street. She was about twenty or twenty-one years old at the time. I had drawn a beat that ran parallel to her beat. This was her first late watch, and one she should remember for a long time. I had arranged with Gord, Mike, Randy, and Al who were walking surrounding beats to play a surprise prank on her. We set a time for the prank to happen, and they were to be my lookouts for citizens and sergeants.

I was on the rooftop of the five-story building overlooking Sparks Street, poised to drop noisemakers. Randy was to use his flashlight to give me an all clear, “ready to fire” signal to drop the ammo when the target of the prank was out of danger. She was walking very slowly in and out of doorways, checking the doors at about 1:30 a.m. when she passed below me, and I got the green light to drop the bombs [fluorescent tubes].

When she was about six doors from the intended drop zone, I dropped the noisemakers. What a bang—sounded like a grenade! She ran out to the center of the Mall, screaming, and was really surprised and frightened, thinking it was actually someone trying to injure her or possibly that part of the building was collapsing. Randy ran to her rescue and shouted, “What happened?” She could hardly talk to him she was so overcome. She only found out about the caper several months later. I would suggest very strongly that one should not do that with an older person, as they would probably have a heart attack. Quite honestly, upon looking back, I probably should not have pulled those capers either. She and I went on to walk the beat together in Centertown. She recently retired as a senior officer, so, needless to say, I absolutely would not do it to her again.



On August 10, 1966, I was working the day shift and walking 11 Beat, Elgin Street and was in front of Myers Motors, where I once worked, when I heard a police siren and saw the flashing red light coming down Elgin Street. Assuming that I may be needed, I stepped out to the edge of the sidewalk so that I would be visible for pickup if required. It was Corporal Gerry Gorman (who had just been promoted out of the Traffic Department where he worked on the Harley-Davidson motorcycles). He did indeed need me and shouted to “get in, get in!” There had been a disaster at the Heron Road Bridge construction site. Workers had been pouring cement, and the weight was too much, causing the bridge span across the Rideau River near Vincent Massey Park and Carleton University, to collapse trapping several workers in the still wet cement and debris. Listening to the car’s police radio, it sounded pretty devastating. There were reports of deaths and many injured.

The site was approximately three miles from Elgin and Catherine Streets where I was picked up, and it appeared we would be among the first units arriving. Corporal Gorman drove the police car like a motorcycle. It was a '67 Chevy V-8, and, man, did he open it up! We traveled down Colonel By Drive at speeds sometimes reaching seventy miles per hour. That particular stretch of the Driveway had several curves on it, but he was a great high-speed driver, and the traffic was minimal.

My heart was beating faster than the speed of the cruiser, and not knowing what lay waiting us was really nerve-wracking. We were in fact the first emergency vehicle there, but some people had already started gathering, and several vehicles were pulled over, mostly rubbernecking with a few attempting to assist with the wounded. Shortly after we arrived, Officer Bob Brennan arrived from #2 Station. It was a mess! People were shouting and screaming.

What had happened was that the east-lane span had completely collapsed, taking whoever and whatever was on it down to the riverbank and rocks below. Bob Brennan was a huge man at that time, 250 lbs., 6'1", and was not one to repeat himself. He “ordered” (not asked) people to leave the area in a very official manner. Most complied, but you always have the ones who like to

challenge and push the envelope. I should mention that, at this time, other emergency agencies were arriving: fire, ambulance, and other police, including the R.C.M.P.

I proceeded over to where Brennan was, and it became obvious that he did not need assistance. He had already dragged two guys away from the west side of the river where they were gathered under the bridge, and some were attempting to climb up on the pylons. That span could have collapsed as well and, further, we needed to keep the area clear for rescue operations and did not need the public getting in the way. In those situations, every second counts, literally. Bob appeared to have had his sector under control. [As a point of interest, Cst. Brennan later reduced his weight to 185 lbs. I played hockey with and against him and he was one competitive individual. He would, without stretching the truth, go through a brick wall to save or help someone or to make and arrest.]

Cpl. Gorman suggested I go down below, by the riverbed and assist there. When I descended the slippery slope, it was only then that I realized the magnitude of the situation. I saw several men covered in concrete, either lying in the river or on the rocks, screaming for help. Some had large pieces of lumber and steel re-enforcement rods on them as well as machinery and equipment, and at least three appeared to be dead. I observed a man covered in wet cement, shouting “Mamma mia!” When I went to him, I noticed he had what appeared to be a ½” steel rod that protruded out of his chest just below his heart. He was bleeding quite heavily and was in severe pain. He was Italian and could not understand English too well, but it appeared that he had a broken leg, and God knows what else. I got some water in a pail and washed off his face, as he could not see because of the cement.

I realized we had to get him to the hospital ASAP. I asked a few workers to assist in putting him on the back of a ½-ton company truck, which was at the bottom of the hill, and I would drive him to the hospital. We placed the injured worker on his side in the back of the truck and made two attempts at climbing up the embankment; however, we could not get beyond halfway, so we took him off and carried him up. The emergency units were arriving at the scene. I noticed a Buick station wagon parked along the roadway, and I shouted to the crowd, inquiring who owned it. This middle-aged man shouted that he did, and I commandeered his vehicle and instructed him to drive us to the Civic Hospital, which was approximately ten minutes away. We opened the tailgate and gently lifted in the victim. I stood up in the back, put my police hat on, and started blowing my whistle as we approached the red light at the Hog’s Back Bridge, and the driver kept his hand on the horn. The other motorists were very co-operative as we approached the intersection. I instructed the driver to always stop and wait for my okay before proceeding through any red lights. All the way there I tried to hold his hand to give him some comfort, and all the while he kept calling “Mamma, Mamma mia!” We were met at the emergency department and turned over the man to staff.



Nine people were killed that day. I went back to the scene and thanked the owner of the Buick station wagon, however, I neglected to get his name and phone number so that the police force could send him an official thank you. I was just too preoccupied with the situation. The worker whom we transported survived. The emergency room doctor surgically removed the steel rod. Eighteen years later, I met him at a function during Italian Week where I was master of ceremonies for the event, as well as entertaining, and he informed me that the rod was an eighth of an inch under the main artery and that he still had pain in his back, shoulder, etc. as result of the accident.

That disaster occurred while I was on day shift, and when I completed my week on that shift, I had my days off, and then started the graveyard shift. I was assigned to the Heron Bridge disaster site area to protect it, as there was a criminal investigation going on. My instructions from my sergeant when he dropped me off were that no one was to be on the site and that meant no one on both sides of the river. Now, what a scary assignment that was. The screams were still very fresh in my mind, and as well it was isolated and surrounded by brush, parks, and parkways.

The first and second nights were a little nerve-wracking. Every noise I heard, I assumed it was someone tampering with the evidence. The patrol cars in the area did not come to visit after the first night. Ah, but the good old sergeant (the “sleeping sergeant”) came by four times per shift—no coffee, no get in the car and sit for a while, oh no, that would be too kind for the lonely constable.

On my last shift at the site, I was standing by a pillar just observing the area at approximately 4:00 a.m. when I heard a faint noise in the distance coming from across the river, under the standing portion of the bridge. I kept out of sight, and I figured if it were someone attempting to steal or tamper with the evidence, they would not have seen me. Consequently, I went down the embankment in stealth fashion and had just crossed the river on the rocks and debris when I observed two males in their mid-twenties, and I shouted, “This is the police! What are you doing there? This area is off-limits, and I want to speak to you!”—or something of that nature.

At that point they both started running up the east-side embankment; I immediately gave chase but had no personal radio at that time. I knew I would not likely have had backup, especially at 4:30 a.m. I kept shouting at them, but they just kept climbing up the hill. One was faster than the other, so I felt I could capture the slower one even though they had a good head start. It’s like the story about the two guys out in the woods who came upon a big black bear. One said to the other, “Are you a fast runner?” And his friend answered, “I don’t have to be, I just have to out-run you.”

There was a very large aluminum drainage culvert coming from Vincent Massey Park. The culvert ended about fifteen feet from the riverbed, and then the water ran onto a cement slab. As I started crossing the cement slab, I lost my footing and slid down fifteen feet into the murky shoreline water. This slab was covered in moss and a build-up of slime, so I went for quite a ride. I tried to stop my fall with my hands by grasping at the cement, hoping I could latch onto something,

but could not. The suspect headed up the hill, and as the slower one reached the summit, he lay on the ground exhausted, and his friend was shouting at him, "Let's go!" I pulled myself together and ran up to the top, but the fugitives were nowhere to be seen. I looked like Freddie in *Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup>*. I was covered in muck, mud, and green goo; my uniform was a mess. Upon closer examination, I noticed that both of my hands were bleeding with some pretty large cuts, my shoulder was cut, and both knees were badly scraped.

I went down to the water and tried to clean myself up and then proceeded up the other side as it was about time for my good friend the sergeant to peg me, and I didn't want him to call in the army searching for me. I was at the top for about five minutes when he came slowly cruising down Colonel By Drive. When he saw me in his headlights, he thought I had been through a shredder. I informed him as to what had happened, and he requested a unit meet us at the bridge.

He took off, and left me there. When the patrol officer arrived, we searched the area, but these guys were nowhere to be seen. He then drove me to the hospital where I received a few stitches on my hand; I then went to the station just in time to book off. I was quite a sight standing on dismissal parade; I looked like a rubby from the Market.



I was really enjoying the police force. I truly felt this had to be one of the most important and amazing positions to be working in. The people were right in your face every time you stepped out of the station. If you wanted to make a difference, you could certainly do that. It doesn't have to always be the big things such as robberies, fights, etc. plus the fact that we had so much authority, and if it's used properly and not abused, the sky is the limit.



Life on the home front was still running smoothly. Noellie was still at Myers, I was still playing hockey and music, and, all in all, we were having a good life. A friend of mine had purchased some riverfront property near Kemptville, Ontario called Fairmile Acres on the Rideau River. He said that a one-acre lot was for sale across the road from him and that I ought to take a look at it. The next week I went with him to see it, liked it, and, after discussion with Noellie, bought it a few weeks later. It would be good collateral when we were in a position to purchase a house. I would spend several hours per week out at the property, which was 25 miles south of Ottawa, cutting the grass and just hanging out by the river and the adjacent provincial park. The summer I bought it, I decided to build a small shed to store the lawnmower, rakes, table, chairs, and the like. I spent two months building the darn thing, and over the winter it collapsed with the snow and the wind. I admit I was no carpenter, unlike my father and all my brothers. My father-in-law, Nelson, came out with a friend of his and rebuilt the shed, and it lasted for years after I sold it, which I did three

years later, tripling my investment.

We had settled in at 95 Powell Avenue. Mr. and Mrs. Church were such nice people and great landlords. We were very happy there; it was such a sweet little abode. Noellie was still doing some freelance modeling as well as hostess work, which she did very well if I must say so myself. It was nice to have the little extra cash coming in. I was still playing music with the police groups, and we were all getting a little more serious and practiced quite often. I also was playing and performing with musicians outside the police force.

In the early winter of 1966 I received a call at work from Noellie telling me that she had some news for me, which she would tell me when I got home. Well, needless to say, I was anxious to hear the news, and when I arrived home Noellie had a gleam in her eye and informed me she was pregnant! She was elated, and I waited for a few moments before I responded. I had wanted to be a father for years and was thinking, “Wow, is this really happening?” I’m going to be a *father!* We hugged and kissed and celebrated with a cup of tea. She said the doctor informed her she was due sometime in late October or early November. Well, did I have news for my family and friends and co-workers—I’m going to be a Dad! We spent many hours that night thinking of a name, where we would put the crib and other accoutrements, and how our life will change, and how it would be altered from that moment on.



On some weekends when I was not working I would go up to Sheenboro with Momma and work around the farm—cutting and splitting wood, doing minor repairs to the house and other buildings, and cutting the grass, which would take two hours if I did the orchard.

Momma was always so happy and content when we headed west to the farm. She always felt as if she were going home, which she was. She missed the farm and never really fit in or was content with living in the city, and every opportunity she had she would go up to the farm, hoping the one driving would agree to stay longer than the day or overnight. Many times nieces and nephews would stay up there with her. As soon as we stopped the vehicle in the yard, she was out like a flash and would immediately go to the house or summer kitchen, open up, light a fire, boil the water, and make a cup of tea and toast with homemade jam or tea biscuits. Then she would sit on the veranda or in her rocking chair and stare out the window, probably thinking, “This is where I belong.” It was a place that gave her deep peace and tranquility, which we all strive for in our busy lives. I can identify with that.

Noellie accompanied me on occasion. She never really enjoyed it there, and I fully understand. There was no running water, no electricity and no indoor toilet; you would have to spray the hole before you sat down to kill the bugs and bees so they wouldn’t sting you on the arse. Also, if a mosquito or a related bug would even think about landing on her skin, she would break out in

a rash; whereas, the rest of us could be in the middle of a mosquito convention, get bitten, and would never have a reaction. But she was a good sport, even though I know that she would often have much rather stayed within the comforts of home. (Sheenboro was so small when my great-grandparents settled there, my great-grandfather had to shoot someone just to start a cemetery.)

I recall the first time after we were married I took Noellie up to Sheenboro to the farm for a weekend in June 1965, the bugs and bees were in full battle mode. As soon as she got out of the car, she was a target. They attacked her with bug vengeance, and, with Noellie, the stings are immediately obvious. She must have thought, “What am I doing in these here backwoods?” A half-hour before we went to bed, Momma would get out the old faithful DDT bug-spray can and spray our room. Once we were in bed, she would come to ask if there were any mosquitoes. I would respond by saying, “No, not a one,” because I knew what was coming. Momma with “The Spray Can” would come in and spray the room again anyway, right over the bed. We would cover ourselves with the blankets; however. The scent was still very strong and would keep Noellie awake half the night. It never really did kill all the mosquitoes, so we had to keep our heads under the covers, which was very uncomfortable and hot.

On that first visit to the farm, I was very excited to be able to show off my beauty to the local folk at church on Sunday morning. As in any small community, when someone new and unknown is in their midst, that person is observed in great detail. When we arrived at the church, the locals always arrived a little early and stood around outside to share information with fellow farmers and friends. [It is exactly the same in Ireland. On my first visit there, I went to a small country church by Shannon International Airport, and people were gathered around outside talking and observing those from “far away” going into the church.]

Well, observe they did when Noellie and I got out of the car with Momma and my sisters. Noellie looked stunning as she always did, and she was certainly given the once-over, twice or three times over. I was very proud when the locals said, “That must be Domnek Dorsay’s wife,” Noellie always felt, when she was up in Sheenboro, that she was on display—in reality, she was. Guess what? I did the same thing when as a youngster I too would stand around outside the church before and after Mass to study the newcomers, especially in the summer when all those cottagers would come to Mass with their pretty American or Canadian daughters.

I was an altar boy as well and would sneak glances at the girls from the altar. When I wasn’t looking at them, I was hoping they were looking back at me. Myrna Laurie was about thirteen years old when she recorded the song, “I Was Looking Back to See If You Were Looking Back at Me.”



By spring 1967, I was relieving cars more often, and occasionally I would have a patrol car two

days at a time to relieve while the officer was on days off. It was just a matter of time before I had my very own patrol area, which would be quite a step up from the lowly beat. It gave you a little more status and indicated that the superior officers showed some trust in your ability to work alone. Today, officers rarely walk a beat and instead go from police college to a coach officer and then to their own patrol area. Personally, I (and many seasoned police officers) disagree with that. It places a great deal of responsibility on the young officers; however, it's a sign of the times. Beat cops are far and few between. When I joined, every beat in the city was covered 90% of the time. If I were a business owner or lived on a beat walked by an officer, I would be annoyed and would also feel rather vulnerable after having had the beat always covered only to have the police removed to work a patrol area in a patrol car. Now those areas are large and must be covered by police vehicle.

The community and society stood by and allowed that to happen to some degree. The best police work was done on the beats. You are in such close contact with the public; you are the eyes and ears of the communities; and intelligence gathering is so very important in what we do, plus the fact that when there is a group of youths or adults hanging around a corner or outside a pool hall or bar, the beat cop keeps an eye on that.

I recall when they took the beat cop out of a certain area downtown, the youths would congregate at the corner outside a hotel or bar and be shouting and causing a disturbance. There were several senior-citizen residences in the Centertown area, and those seniors had to go well out of their way to avoid walking through the gathering. The seniors were just plain scared, as many others were, just passing by those youth at the corner. If the beat cop were still there, they would be asked to break it up, and if you came back five or ten minutes later and they were still there when you returned, you could charge them with Causing a Disturbance by shouting or using profane language, etc. Furthermore, there is a by-law stating that if more than four people gather in one spot and cause a disturbance, it is an unlawful assembly, and the by-law could be enforced if all of the above conditions applied.

My first patrol area was Car 107, which was in the northeast end of Ottawa, in the area bounded by Rockcliffe Park and the City of Vanier. It also had two graveyards: Beechwood and Notre Dame. I never had much trouble with the cemeteries—"rather quiet...people are just dying to get in."

I could never understand why they put fences around graveyards—was that to keep people in or out? It was certainly a quiet place to go to do your reports or for just a few moments of peace and quiet on a busy shift. I would usually go into Beechwood around 6:30 a.m. when I was working late watch to prepare my log sheet and finish off reports. You would not expect to find people in there at that hour, however, just when you thought you were alone, along would come someone walking or jogging who called out, "Hi," and scare the living bejesus out of you.

Car 107 was usually not too busy and was used as a backup to Car 102 or 105, which worked

Lowertown, or to Car 108, which worked the Overbrook neighborhood, an area that had some good donnybrooks and domestics. I worked Car 107 for several months and felt very privileged to have my own cruiser. However, it was a little troubling being out there alone patrolling dark alleyways and checking front and back doors during the wee hours of the morning. Every noise you hear runs your antenna up, and your detective apparatus kicks into full gear. I would usually drive around with both front windows down halfway or all the way depending on the weather so I could hear noises or, for that matter, hear smart remarks from the smart alecks on the street as you drive by.

Some would be brazen enough to shout “Pig, Pig,” hold their noses, and make a snorting sound like a pig. I would always stop and challenge that, whether driving, or walking a beat. Put the red lights on, get out of the car, and walk right up to them and ask, “Are you talking to me?” Or, “Are you trying to get my attention? Well, you got it.” Most of them would deny it, saying they were just speaking to their friends. At that point, all others would be leaving the area. My response would be, “What’s the matter, are you afraid to say it to my face?” I would say PIG really means, “Pride, Integrity, and Guts—something you don’t have.” Then I’d tell them that they were not impressing anyone and that my name is D’Arcy, and the next time you have something intelligent to say to me, say, “Hi” or something to that effect.

Also, “This is the Queen’s uniform and it deserves respect and that I wear it very proudly.” Sometimes, trying to build up their self-esteem and confidence, I might add, “You probably just thought you were being funny or smart, and I can tell you seem like a pretty good guy (regardless of how they appeared) and didn’t mean any harm.” I have done that hundreds of times during my career, and seven times out of ten it really works. Many times later on these same people would cross the street to see you or wave at you. I belong to the Dominic D’Arcy Learning Institute, and my motto is “Each One, Teach One.” No matter how small or insignificant something may seem, the little things in life do make a difference. I, too, was taught the little things by older, wiser, more experienced officers.



In 1967 Queen Elizabeth II was visiting Ottawa as part of Canada’s 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Confederation, and I was taken off the patrol car by S/Sgt Gilmour to be the dispatcher for the two day-shifts while she was in the Capital. I had previously been in that chair about one prior year and had the experience to do the job. S/Sgt Gilmour lived in Ottawa East, and I resided in the Glebe and came to work at the old station on Waller St. (Waller Gate) and passed within a few blocks of his house on the way into work, so he had asked me if I would swing by and drive him in to work. I had done that for several months and was only too happy to do so. He was a tall (6’3”) elegant looking gentleman—always immaculate and always had the shiniest shoes on the Force (until I

joined). He appeared to always be in a lot of pain and was cranky most of the time, but one could tell he was a kind person.

We usually had two dispatchers: one at #2 Station (XJF83) and one at Waller Street, which was the Central Zone (XJF27). I had no briefing of any note to explain the different scenarios regarding the official visit. I sat in the dispatcher's chair at 7:30 a.m. the first day, and everything was going quite smoothly, the odd traffic accident, businesses opening up to find a Break and Enter or Damage to Property, the odd stolen car—same old, same old. Then at about 8:00 a.m., I heard a female voice come over the air: “Ello, 'Ello, this is Elizabeth speaking. All units stand by for a message from your dispatcher Cst. D'Arcy, and have a jolly good day my dear subjects.” Well, that's not really what I heard, but units started booking on with voices and car numbers that I did not recognize. I asked them to 10-9 (repeat). As it turned out, it was the RCMP, accompanied by an Ottawa Police detective and patrol sergeant. Now, that was out of left field. There were probably ten to twelve extra units, as well as our chief of police—all our days off were cancelled for the official visit, as they usually are for high-profile visitors such as presidents, heads of state, and royalty.

I was just dealing with this mess, when #2 Channel was moved over to #1. So, needless to say, I was one busy boy, as all personnel were out in the field. I have a great respect for our dispatchers today who have to deal with the likes of 9/11 and other major events.

I sat in that chair for three hours straight because as the motorcade was assembling and then moving on to Parliament Hill from the Governor-General's residence where the Queen and Prince Philip stayed, things get pretty tense, and it would not be a good move to have someone relieve me, as they would be coming in cold turkey, which could certainly cause some serious problems. I think I went to the bathroom around 11:30 a.m., and when things settled down while the Queen was having lunch, I took my lunch break. That was a challenging time for me, and I survived those two days without a foul-up. It felt empowering to have had that much control.



Car 808—Our shift started late watch (11:15 p.m.–7:30 a.m.), and we were assembled on Parade. At that time our platoon had approximately sixty officers. My name was called, and I responded, “Sir,” and the desk sergeant said, “Car 808,” which was the dark-blue International panel van used as the dog truck on days and afternoons. Needless to say, it smelled as if it were still full of dogs; but, what the hell, I had my own patrol car, albeit a dog truck. I was a floater in the east end, Car 107, 108, and 109 areas, used in a backup capacity.

One night, at about 4:00 a.m., I parked the van at the southwest corner of the St. Laurent Shopping Centre parking lot and decided to do some exercise, like stops and starts, and running in place. It was a very dark area, and I felt no one would see me, and of course we still did not have a radio on our person in those days. I would turn the in-car radio up full volume, roll down the

windows, and open the doors so I could hear it in case I got a call. I was exercising for about fifteen minutes when, out of the darkened parking lot came a loud voice saying, "Hey you, what's going on here?" It really startled me, like scared me so badly I could hardly breathe. It was two officers and the security guard shining their flashlights on me.

The security guard who worked at the shopping centre flagged down the officers in front of the shopping centre on St. Laurent Boulevard and related to them that there was a suspicious character in the lot who he thought was trying to jump the fence that runs along the Queensway, and it appeared to them that I was practicing in order to jump over the fence and into the path of a vehicle. They assumed I was going to commit suicide. You see, the parking lot was very dark in that area and also the old van looked very spooky. His partner was observing me for a while and decided they had better do something before this nut killed himself.

When the officers saw it was me, they were totally confused as to what I was doing. I played a lot of hockey, and I told them I had a game that morning and that I was just trying to keep loose. These two officers did not play sports, so the explanation was wasted on the pair of them. One officer booked 10-8 (clear) and stated it was only D'Arcy chasing the wind. I was teased for months after that event.



I probably should mention at this point some of the strikes and picket-line duties and demonstrations at which I was called upon to work. That had to be the worst duty I was called upon to do. I was always in conflict with some of the other officers as well as my sergeants. I could not and would not stand by and simply observe all the infractions. If I had officers and sergeants with like minds, I was okay; however, many times that was not the case.

Usually, it is the sergeant who sets the pace and the rules at these events. For example, at the post office strikes back in the late '70s and early '80s, the picketers were militant, very militant, under their union boss, Jean-Claude Parrot. I could not stand by and watch them push people around on the picket line when some wished to cross the line to go to work or to conduct business, be it fellow employees, bosses, or the general public. Strikers would spit on those cars, spit on the person crossing the picket line, utter threats, and use foul language, etc. Often they would break radio antennas or have a nail or keys in their hands to scrape against cars as they drove by, thus causing damage to the vehicle usually undetected until later by the driver.

If I were there on my own or with a partner and without a sergeant, I would go to the strike captain and inform him of the improper behavior of the individual and have the captain warn the individual that if he did it again, he (and it was usually a male) would be arrested. Many of these people would be drinking on the line and had the nerve to do some stupid and irresponsible acts.

If the person persisted with the illegal actions, then I would make the arrest. Sometimes, such



an arrest would cause the bees to come out of the sticky nest to threaten me, etc., and I would call for backup.

I recall on one occasion I stopped a fellow for throwing eggs at people crossing the picket line, and he was warned to behave. He did the same thing a few minutes later, and I had to arrest him. He was a violent one. There were two of us there; however, the other officer stood by and did nothing, as several other picketers tried to rescue the bad guy. They took my hat and stomped on it, etc. The dude was put in my cruiser and, on the way to the station he was screaming and yelling in the backseat that I was going to be sued, etc. (same old tune). I informed him that I had warned him several times and that he ought to have heeded my warning and that I was not the bad guy.

After he was booked, I had another chat with him, and once he settled down, he realized the error of his ways. His strike captain came and bailed him out a few hours later; and when both of them later showed up at the picket line at the post office, they came over to me, and the captain had the fellow apologize to me. What I had done was to set the tone early on in the strike that we police would be firm but fair and that if we used violence, it was not initiated by us but rather by the picketers themselves.

If I were sent out to a picket line or demonstration on my own, I would always try to find the captain or person in charge of the line, introduce myself, and tell him to have the picketers police themselves. If they didn't, we would arrest them, plain and simple. What has always been so incredibly frustrating was that, if I was sent out as part of the Riot Squad (now called Crowd Control) or with a group of officers, we would be told to stand by as the demonstrators/pickers broke every law in the book, and we did nothing if the officer in charge told us to stand down.

Why does it seem okay to break the law if you are in a group, but if one person from the general public were to treat any one of those officers or any other citizen as the protesters were doing, they would receive a ticket or be arrested? That has *always* disturbed me during my career. If the officer in charge enforced discipline and dealt with offenders, we would not have as many problems as we had on the line or for that matter, anywhere—**Enforce the law!**

I have been to many demonstrations and hated being at almost every one of them, simply because of what I have just related. I'm not saying I was the only one who felt that way. I had many, many officers I worked with who approached situations like these very professionally and who would enforce the law as well, and I certainly enjoyed working on the line, on patrol, or walking the beat with these officers.

I recall the days of the Maoist demonstrations in Strathcona Park in Ottawa, just below the Soviet Union Embassy. I remember one demonstration in the month of June where we had an estimated 2,000 demonstrators. Most were (as is usually the case) peaceful at first. However, there are agitators who get the ball rolling, and then all hell breaks loose. I was positioned in front of the embassy as part of the Riot Squad. Our sergeant was a person who should never have been a police

officer. He was extremely passive and always had a permanent smile (even at wakes and funerals). So, needless to say, he was not much of a leader and not one you would follow into battle, but he was a very good person.

It became obvious to most of us that the demonstrators were moving inch by inch, foot by foot, up the embankment from the park to Laurier Avenue and closer to the embassy. Most of us realized that they were planning to surprise us and attempt to break into the embassy by climbing over the fence and gaining access to the embassy proper. We knew full well that if they did gain access, the armed Russian guards inside would not allow the incursion and would probably open fire.

I broke ranks and approached the sergeant in charge and told him of my concern and that RCMP intelligence sources had sort of whispered to us on the line that there very well may be an attempt to gain entry and throw rocks, Molotov cocktails, etc. and that perhaps we should get some reinforcements from below in the park to prevent that from happening—possibly, the OPP (Ontario Provincial Police) who were also called in to assist along with the RCMP. The sergeant didn't even seem concerned and walked away smiling. All of us on the line could not believe that he didn't appear to be concerned. A few moments later, an OPP officer walked by, and I told him of our concern and suggested he mention it to his sergeant. He did, the OPP moved up from the park, and shortly afterward it began to happen.

The crowd was now moving up the hill by the hundreds, screaming and shouting and waving placards. The OPP arrived just in the nick of time to help ward off most of them. The arrest vans were called to the front of the embassy, and a few dozen demonstrators were arrested and photographed for ID then taken to the station. That was a close call. One can only imagine the situation if they had succeeded in getting through the police line. We stayed until all the demonstrators had left the area, and we found two Molotov cocktails (and there were probably more than the two we located) in the park, along with pipes, spikes, and the like. If they had moved close enough to the embassy with those, it would have escalated the situation, I am sure.

As for other foreign embassy demonstrations, I believe the ones by the Armenians against the Turkish Embassy were the most violent and dangerous. The Armenians were demonstrating with respect to the genocide that began April 24, 1915 by the Ottoman Empire, the precursor to the Turkish government, whereby 1.5 million Armenians were killed. [It should be noted that Turkey has never officially agreed to the word *genocide* to describe the event.] The hatred and anger has been there for those 100 years; however, it was only in recent years that the anger and frustration became more visible in Canada (especially in Ottawa). They had previously been focusing this anger against the Turks and their embassies mostly in Europe. However, their numbers were growing here in Canada, and they would come by buses from Montréal and Toronto fairly easily, thus having a stronger voice because of that.

I don't recall the precise date of the first anti-Turk demonstration I worked at, probably it was around 1977 or 1978. They were noisy, very noisy, shouting, chanting, banging cans, and garbage-can lids, etc. However, it became more evident over the next few years that their anger was going beyond the shouting and banging of cans. They demonstrated each year on the April 24th anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide, and it was the worst assignment we had to attend. In the early years, our officers would line up three deep and about twenty across in front of the embassy. Of course, we would have a full complement of CID officers (Criminal Investigation Detectives) as well as traffic officers, and patrol sergeants standing by out of sight in case they were needed. The platoon working day shift would be called to action as added support if the situation escalated.

The demonstrators were told to stay on the opposite side of the street on Wurtemberg Street. Behind them was Macdonald Gardens Park, a city park. They would come by the thousands from all parts of the Ottawa region, Ontario, Québec, and the USA, but mainly from Montréal and Toronto. They had bullhorns to blow and would be screaming and shouting in Armenian, directing their anger towards the embassy. Then as their tempers rose, the occasional egg would come flying over our heads, striking the embassy's stained-glass windows. The occasional stone would also fly, and we would continue to stand by and do nothing. If one of us could identify the person(s) responsible, then we would go into the crowd and arrest that person; however, that did not happen often in the early years. "Enforce the law!" As the demonstrations grew larger in numbers and became more violent, it was becoming really dangerous for us, as well as for the safety of the ambassador and his staff.

Inspector Judd Rutherford, who looked like a cross between John Wayne and Henry Fonda, was the inspector in charge of a demonstration there the following year. I was part of the Riot Squad, and we were dispatched to the demonstration. Insp. Rutherford's first order of business was to call the City of Ottawa to place barricades in the park approximately 400 feet from the embassy. Now that was the decision of a true leader! The demonstrators were very angry in that they were kept so far away. In full riot gear, I was at the fence, face-to-face with demonstrators. They were conversing in Arabic and Armenian, and after a while I spoke to one chap in Arabic. I can't speak it very well, however, well enough to get their attention. The look on his face was priceless. He was probably planning a strategy, and he assumed I understood everything that they were saying to each other.

We had directions to arrest anyone we observed breaking the law. A few rocks made it to the embassy windows, and the culprits were identified; and other officers and I charged into the crowd and made the arrest—rather violent.

People tend to blame everyone but themselves. The leaders were clearly informed and warned by Insp. Rutherford that any demonstrators who broke the law would be arrested. Quite simple

isn't it? Yet, people who gather in large numbers erroneously believe they have some right to break the law, whether it's the four punks on the corner or students partying on the street at 2:00 a.m.

### **Enforce the law!**

Inspector Rutherford passed away several years ago. I had a great deal of respect for him and his leadership and personality, as did most officers under his command. He worked in the morality squad as a detective for many years before coming back to Patrol Division.



### ***October Crisis 1972***

Probably the most fear I have ever experienced, both as a police officer or at anytime during my long life, has to be the October Crisis in 1972 when Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, acting upon the wishes of Québec Premier Robert Bourassa, declared the War Measures Act. I had of course been watching the television reports with great concern, reading the newspaper, and listening to the news on radio leading up to the FLQ (Front de libération du Québec) kidnappings of Pierre Laporte, a cabinet minister in the Québec government, and James Cross, a British diplomat.

We still did our regular patrol duties; however, we were all given the names and addresses of Canadian government cabinet ministers as well as a list of diplomats and were told to pay special attention to them, their families, and their homes. When we checked their residences, we would have to log the time we checked it onto our log sheet to be handed in at the completion of duty.

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, I was working the afternoon shift in the community car (7:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.), and at about 10:30 p.m. the dispatcher put out an APB (All-Points Bulletin) to all units to 10-19 (Immediately Return to the Station). I knew something *big* was happening and was extremely concerned and apprehensive. My first thoughts were that we had intelligence reports regarding a bomb to go off in the Parliament Buildings or that they had kidnapped our prime minister, or even worse, they had executed him.

All units arrived at #1 Station and reported to the platoon inspector, staff sergeants, and sergeants in the Parade Room. They all looked very serious, and I knew then that something truly big had in fact happened. Once we were all there, the inspector related to us that Pierre Laporte had been assassinated by the FLQ and his body found in the trunk of a car in Montréal. There was such complete silence in the room you could hear a pin drop.

As police officers, we were now in a different mode, a different gear, and everything changed in those few seconds when we heard the news. I was thinking, "You bastards, you rotten bastards; how could you do this to my beloved Canada?" They certainly took away our innocence. We were all assuming that James Cross would also be executed for sure.

We were given our orders and left to check all embassies and VIPs in our respective areas. I was assigned the Glebe and Ottawa South and Ottawa East, where many of those addresses were

located. I was given an unmarked patrol car and left the station at about 11:30 p.m. heading out Colonel By Drive. As I approached the red light at Pretoria Bridge, a car pulled up behind me, so close I couldn't see his headlights in my rear-view mirror. I thought, oh, oh, he's a terrorist, so I drove through the red light, went down about two blocks, turned left, hid behind a building, waiting for him to pass, and then followed him, checked his license number with the dispatcher, and pulled him over at Bank Street and Riverside Drive, where there was plenty of light. As it turned out, he was a Chinese chef coming home from his restaurant in Hull. I warned him about following too close, and he was on his way. It's quite amazing how your mind can play tricks on you. I was very paranoid the first few days after that.

After two days on my own, I was teamed up with Const. Bob Wright who was built like Popeye, only three times his size. We were checking and patrolling property at about 10:30 p.m. The dispatcher came over the airwaves to say that there had been a shooting and that a soldier had been shot and killed. Well, our adrenaline was just pumping now, and everyone was suspect—pedestrians, vehicles, etc. The public does not pay us to be placid and trust everyone—that's not the nature of our role. It wasn't until several hours after that initial report that we were asked to call the station and were informed that the soldier in fact accidentally shot himself in the throat while jumping out of an army truck that had carried troops to Cartier Square in Ottawa. When he jumped out of the truck, the butt of his rifle struck the pavement, thus causing it to discharge accidentally.



November 4, 1966 was the day the “King” was born, our son Darren Patrick Nelson D’Arcy. Poor Noellie had gained 40 lbs. and kept working at Myers Motors until just a few days before the birth. What a trooper! She was absolutely huge! Her normal weight was 110 lbs. on her 5'5½" frame, so now she looked like a sumo wrestler. At 11:00 p.m. Thursday evening Noellie declared we had to go to the hospital *now!* Her water had broken, and she was in labor. I was on days off and lucky for that. So we loaded her, and the bag of girlie stuff that women take, into the Rambler and drove off to the Grace Hospital. We arrived there at 11:30 p.m. and a nurse from the maternity floor came down to meet us.

I was fully expecting to go to her room with her; however, the nurse said I could not because the hospital was under quarantine. I was absolutely stunned and bewildered as they led my wife away, and I could not go with her. I was just devastated to watch her go through the doors and out of sight. That also meant that all hopes were dashed as to my being present at the birth of our baby. Noellie was scared as well, however, she really would not admit as to what degree. She must have felt so all alone, no hubby, no mother or family. Noellie had had rheumatic fever when she was very young and also had a pinhole in her mitral valve and a heart murmur; so we had been made fully

aware of those complicating factors by her doctor.

I left the hospital in tears and went home very worried. I don't think I slept one hour that night. I phoned the hospital at least three times during the night asking, "Any news?" "No Mr. D'Arcy, we will call you," they said. I had a House League hockey game Friday morning at 9:00 a.m., so I called the hospital again at about 7:30 a.m. and gave them the phone number of the arena. I figured I was going to lose my mind waiting at home. For anyone who plays competitive sports or even a friendly game, especially hockey, you know it's normal to forget your problems or whatever is troubling you as soon as you walk through the dressing-room door. You lose yourself in the dressing room banter and for sure when you step onto the ice and the game starts. The world could be coming to an end, but your mind is lost to the game at hand.

Very rarely when you are sitting on the bench do your problems or whatever outside activity enter your mind. Well, my mind was rarely on the game that day but rather on my dear wife who must have been in such pain—the level of pain that a man will never know or wish to feel. I kept asking the rink attendant if there was any news, but he kept saying, "I'll let you know D'Arc." I had a good game, and we won.

I called the hospital before I left the rink and inquired if there was any news for me—no! So I decided that, rather than go home and walk the floor, I'll go with the team for breakfast, which was what we usually did. When we arrived at the restaurant on Bank Street at Pretoria, I called and gave them the phone number there. That was at about 10:30 a.m., and Noellie had been in labor since 11:00 p.m. the night before, so now I'm really starting to become more concerned. You see, my mother had fourteen children and not one problem; as well, my sister Doreen had seven babies, and all my sisters-in-law too, no problems—in and out of hospital! So I thought, "What gives?" I didn't enjoy my breakfast, left the restaurant, and drove the few blocks to our home at 95 Powell Avenue.

I was home at 11:30 a.m., and at 12:15 p.m. the Grace Hospital called. When I answered, the caller identified herself and asked if my name was Dominic D'Arcy. There was silence on the line for several seconds. I was hoping for good news, but I had to be realistic—was the birth successful, was the baby okay, was my wife okay? Wow, what a moment in time! The nurse asked in a rather loud voice, "Mr. D'Arcy, are you there? We have good news for you. You are the father of a healthy baby boy born at 12:00 p.m., and both mother and baby are doing well." Oh, my God I couldn't believe it—Noellie's okay, and I'm a father!

Even as I recall and write this important chapter in my life, I am feeling all the same anxiety and excitement that I was feeling at that time. I immediately called Noellie's mother, Mrs. Larose, because she was so worried and troubled, and then my Momma and she, in turn, called the D'Arcy family (which took her two days because I had so many siblings and other relatives). I told her she can now call me "Father D'Arcy," and I then ran downstairs and told Mrs. Boland on the second

floor, and then to the landlord/landlady, Mr. and Mrs. Church on the ground floor. I even called the desk sergeant at the station. I wanted to run out onto Bank Street in traffic and shout, "I'm a Father!" [That is a good segue into this little Irish joke: "Clancy and Flannigan from Ireland had been fighting in Normandy during the Second World War. When one day Clancy came running out of the field tent shouting and jumping up and down with a letter in his hand. When Flannigan asked him why he was shouting and jumping around, he said, "I'm going to be a father!" Flannigan replied, "How in God's name can you be a father when you have been over here for 4½ years?" To which Clancy replied, "Don't be daft, sure, there's three years between me brother and me."]

They told me to go to the hospital after 3:00 p.m. I arrived at the hospital at 3:15 and presented myself at the front desk and told the receptionist I wanted to see my wife and new son. She said the quarantine was still in effect; however, it was to be lifted soon and that she would accompany me to her room. When I walked in the room and saw Noellie lying in the bed, I became very emotional, and it became obvious that she was not out of the woods yet. The nurses were still attending to her as she was still bleeding quite heavily as she had had a breech birth (feet first) and had needed forty-seven stitches—ouch! That hurts! I hope I never get pregnant!

The baby weighed 8 lbs. 4 oz. I'd like the men reading this book try expelling that sometime. Just thinking about such pain and discomfort makes me shiver. I went to her bed, kissed her, gave her a hug, and started crying, as I was so moved by the big event and also so relieved that she and the baby were all right.

Our son was in the nursery so, with the nurse's assistance, we went to the window, and a nurse brought our "King" in a little bassinet to the window, and he was the only one not crying. Now for all fathers who have experienced this incredible moment, you can understand and relate to that wonderful feeling when your eyes look upon your child for the first time. I don't have the words in my vocabulary to explain the feeling (but I'm working on it). I said goodbye to my son and told him to be good for the nurses and Mummy; he nodded his head and said, "Well, of course Dad," and I walked my dear Noellie back to her room, said goodbye and congratulations, and went back to our empty home.

Noellie remained in the hospital for eleven days due to the aforementioned complications. She called me on the evening of November 14th and said I could bring them home the next day after 10:00 a.m. November 15th was a cold, snowy day. When I got up and saw the snow and slippery roads, I became very nervous because of the conditions, as I would be transporting precious cargo. (I thought of calling the station and requesting that one of my friends give us a police escort, however, I didn't think that would go over well at the station.)

I arrived at the Grace Hospital about 9:30 a.m. and left the car at the rear entrance with the motor running to keep it warm for the King and my Princess. I had the pleasure of carrying Darren out to the car, and that in itself was special. Noellie and the nurses had him all wrapped up as if he

were going on an arctic tour. Noellie needed assistance from the nurses because she was still quite weak. They were both placed in the front seat [those were the days before child carseats and the law that children must ride in the back], all bundled up, and the journey began to bring them home, finally. I went up Parkdale Avenue and zigzagged my way through all the side streets to avoid traffic and the faster speeds on the main streets.

When we arrived home, Noellie's parents were there waiting for us, and her mother had everything in order for the new baby. Noellie was really excited to be home in her familiar surroundings and anxious to get on with the role of being a mother. I did not get much of a chance to enjoy the homecoming, as I started work at midnight, worked all night, and slept most of the day. But that was the lifestyle I chose. Our lives had certainly changed from the moment our son was born, given the major changes and commitments and different responsibilities that go along with being a parent. Nearly four years later, on December 18, 1970, our second son arrived. We named him Anthony. What a beautiful child! We felt the same excitement as with our first child. What a welcome addition to our family!



In the summer of 1966, I completed my late-watch shifts and moved onto afternoons, working Centertown, which I really liked because it was always busy with bad guys and tourists. I was paired with Neil McCormack in Car 106 (which was a floater), and we were sent to a call on Laurier Avenue West regarding a suspected murder call.

We arrived and observed a female lying on the sidewalk with blood all over the place. It appeared she was dead, as she had no pulse. Detectives and an ambulance were called, and an investigation commenced. The coroner arrived shortly after and pronounced her dead. Detectives found out from a witness that the woman lived on the second floor, and the witness pointed out the apartment just above where the body was lying. Witnesses also related to us that they saw someone running from the building shortly before we arrived. [I recently spoke to an Ottawa police officer who remembered the murder. He was then a seventeen-year old friend of the victim and was the one who called police.]

I stayed with the body on the sidewalk until the ambulance arrived to take her to the Civic Hospital for an autopsy. After the ambulance left, I was told by my patrol sergeant to go up to the apartment and guard the scene for the detectives and the Identification Unit. When I entered the apartment, it was a mess, furniture was upset, lamps were broken (evidence of a major struggle), and there were pools of blood ¼" thick on the wood floor, and I could smell the blood since it was very hot in the apartment. I was told not to let anyone in except authorized personnel. It was about 6:30 p.m. when the sergeant left, and he told me I would be relieved later on. It appeared someone had been in the apartment with the deceased and that this person tried to kill her. She attempted



to escape by going to the balcony, and he must have come out to try to finish her off, and she either jumped or was thrown off onto the street below. Not a pleasant way to die, poor woman.

I called Noellie from there after several hours and told her where I was and informed her of the murder. I tried to keep her on the line as long as I could to keep me company. These scenes are very damaging to the psyche. Identification personnel finally arrived about 3½ hours later. They had had two other major crime scenes to attend to that evening.

I was certainly a happy cop to be out of there. Try eating an Italian dinner after that! Such a traumatic image remains in the conscious mind for quite some time then moves to the subconscious; however, for many years after, there is instant recall, especially when you smell a certain scent or see something similar on TV and are constantly reminded just listening to other officers speak of similar events. But we develop a mechanism to deal with it, as do others who are subjected to similar circumstances—doctors, nurses, firefighters, ambulance paramedics, soldiers—some may not be as fortunate as I am in dealing with it. In retrospect, I really ought not to have called Noellie at that point in time, with a new baby.



I recall my singing at my first school performance in police uniform probably in 1978 at St. Martin de Porres Catholic School in Nepean. The teacher who contacted me was Ruth Dempsey, who grew up in Dublin, Ireland. She had heard me sing and entertain children at a community event. The hoops I had to go through with my police supervisor for permission were incredible. All I wanted was to sing in uniform on my day off at a school. I knew I was pushing the proverbial police envelope at that time; however, I felt it was a worthwhile effort. The deputy chief finally gave me the green light. However, as it came down the chain of command from deputy chief to superintendent to staff inspector to inspector to staff sergeant and finally to my duty staff sergeant and patrol sergeant, I felt honored that this “huge decision” deserved so much attention on my behalf. It had some restrictions however: first, it had to be on my day off; and second, I could not be paid.

Once that feat was accomplished, I thought I would go back at them with another request. I was working with a police officer, Darrell Parle, whose child attended that school, and we both thought it would be valuable if he attended with me in uniform. So, therefore, another memo to my sergeant and up the chain of command and back down again. I failed to comprehend as to why they did not jump at the opportunity to see the value in such a deed. I suppose that system worked for them for many years, so why change?

I did the performance for approximately 400 students, grades 1 to 6, and it was very successful. Those kids saw police officers in a different dimension. Of course, I did not just sing. When you have the opportunity with that many children assembled in front of you, you must impart a

message, such as: Be kind to other students, no bullying, listen to your teachers and parents, and do your homework, eat the right food, choose your friends carefully, etc. As well, I saw fit to include some talk on the role of a police officer in our society. Ruth went on to teach at the University of Ottawa, and I was invited there several times to her classes and lectures, and performed and spoke about the life skills needed to be successful. [When I performed in Ireland I stayed at her brother's home in Dublin. He was an engineer with the Corporation of the City of Dublin.]

From that performance at St. Martin de Porres, teachers and the principal spread the word about me, and there was no turning back. For several years, I performed in schools and in the community while off duty. I was even allowed to perform on duty after being transferred to Youth Services and later to Community Services. I performed for an estimated 100,000 kids per year.

The year 1973 was a very exciting time for me. I was told to 10-19 (return to station) to my inspector's office one afternoon and see the inspector. We always think the worst, especially in my situation. I thought, "This is it. They are going to charge me for singing off duty, having two jobs—contrary to Sec. 222 of the Police Services Act." I put on a brave face and entered his office, and he pointed to a chair and told me to be seated. He then informed me that I had been recommended for transfer to the Detective Office by the powers that be.

I felt very privileged, as I had only been on the force for just over seven years, and usually it takes longer in uniform before you are elevated to detective. That was November, and the transfer was to be effective January 1st. I thought that my plan was working. First detective, then detective sergeant, staff sergeant, and before I knew it I would be chief!

The transfer list came out a few weeks later, and my name was on it. I felt very honored, especially to be up there working alongside the big guys: Soggy Norton, Biff Gavan, Tom Flanagan, Dave Clancy, Roger Pepper, Andy Hanna, and my brother-in-law Detective Tom Beggan, who was probably part of the reason I was transferred there. I really respected those guys, especially Tom Beggan.

January 1st arrived, and I showed up in my new tweed suit (which I still have and wear occasionally). I could only afford to buy one and later, with the plainclothes allowance, I bought another one. Some guys wore their expensive suits, and they looked fabulous; however, when you are investigating a B & E or other crimes, it doesn't seem appropriate or money-wise to go in with your best clothing and rip your pants or get your clothes stained. Most of us purchased our clothing at a reduced price at the Ottawa Police Association boutique, which we called the Meryle Cameron's Haberdashery—he was our Association President. On occasion, a few detectives would report for work wearing the same suit and tie. (I used to buy the occasional suit from a funeral home—the price was right.)

My first partner was a seasoned veteran (who shall remain anonymous). All we seemed to do was visit bars looking for bad guys and obtaining information, at least that's what I thought. He

was a heavy drinker, which I quickly realized, and presented a very uncomfortable situation for me. First, I never consumed alcohol and couldn't relate well to the problem; and, second, to see a detective that I really respected drinking while on duty under the guise of obtaining information was appalling to me.

However, we did have some exciting cases to work on. There was an Ottawa duo safe-cracking in the city, and we received information through a patrol officer that the grocery store on Russell Road was going to be broken into and the safe cracked on a specific date. We did surveillance that evening, and two detectives were placed inside in the basement waiting for them. My partner and I were parked out of sight behind some trees. Sure enough they drove up to the building, slowed down and cased the place, then kept going and out onto St. Laurent Blvd. We alerted Detective Hubert Sullivan and his partner Goldie Leeson, and we waited. At about 10:15 p.m. the suspects came back, parked their vehicle at the rear near a basement window, got out, broke the window, and entered.

This was now getting very exciting. Once they were inside we approached the window. My partner could not fit through the window, so I was delegated to go in. As I was halfway inside, I heard a lot of noise and Leeson and Sullivan shouting, "Police! Lie down on the floor!" At about that time I hit my knee while entering the 2' x 3' window at the exact same time I heard a shot being fired, and I thought, "Jesus, I've been shot!" What a relief it was to know that it was Detective Sullivan who had fired at the crook instead, as I believe he overheard another detective saying, "Shoot the bastard," meaning that Detective Sullivan missed. The safecrackers were captured, taken to court, and convicted (one of them did have a gun).

It's rather ironic that I would be performing at St. Patrick's Home for seniors and Parkinson's and Alzheimer's patients in September, 2005, when after a few songs the coordinator approached me and said there is a former Ottawa police officer here who would like to speak to you. I looked around the room and did not recognize any former officer. He took me to a man in a wheelchair whom I vaguely recognized and whom he introduced as Goldie Leeson. I was absolutely shocked. I could not believe my eyes. I had not seen him for several years, as he had retired as an inspector ten or so years back. He was about seventy years old. He looked at me and said hello, and the nurse said he had advanced Parkinson's disease. We had a great chat and spoke about the incident on Russell Road we had worked together. He could not lift his head up so I had to kneel down to look into his eyes. I came very close to crying. This man had an incredible body, very muscular 6'1", 220 lbs.; he always worked out and stayed in shape. He looked like the quintessential all-American quarterback. I was probably guided through divine intervention to be there on that day.

Not only was Goldie there but also there sat Inspector Claude Vickers, all 6'7" of him also in a wheelchair. He was 96 years old; he too I had not seen in many years. He was such a nice man. We spoke for a few minutes and, as I was leaving Inspector Vickers, I turned to my right to

go back to perform, there was yet another retired officer, Constable Ken Walker. We had a chat before I resumed my singing. My last number is usually a song I wrote for Canada Day in 1982 on Parliament Hill called “My Canada.” I would have several people come up on stage from the audience, waving Canadian flags and dancing to the beat. I invited the three officers to come up, gave them a flag each, and made a big fuss over them.



### **Ottawa, June 1983**

Britain’s Prince Charles and Lady Diana were in Canada on an official tour. They were to ceremonially open the new Ottawa police headquarters in the morning, and our 35-member Ottawa Police Male Chorus, of which I was one of the founding members, was asked to perform for them. What a privilege that was! They arrived in a motorcade and entered the building only a few feet from us. My wife and sons Darren and Anthony were also there—all dressed to the nines. We sang a few songs, including the Welsh national song, “Men of Harlech,” and Charles came over and shook some hands.

The couple then left to attend a luncheon hosted by the Ottawa Kiwanis Club (of which I was and am a member) at the Château Laurier Hotel. They had just sat down at the head table when the power went out. Immediately all the security detail went into high alert, not knowing what caused the blackout. It was only an electrical malfunction; however, police and security personnel cannot take anything for granted.



I was still working Car 110 in the Walkley Road/Heatherington Crescent/Ledbury Avenue area, which was a very busy area, and I liked that—plenty of gun violence, knife fights, etc. The gangs were just forming back then and were the precursors to the Bloods and Crips and biker gangs, which became notorious in later years for killings, robberies, drug trafficking, you name it.

I received a call around 10:30 p.m. on my MDT (Mobile Data Terminal, an in-car computer) regarding a man with a gun on Ledbury, and dispatch said that Car 109 would assist. One person was believed to be an escapee from a penitentiary and the other was on a day-pass from prison. I arrived at the scene and stopped down the street to await my backup. I was there for five or ten minutes and still no backup. I asked Car 109 his 10-20, and he was not aware he had been given a call to assist. Dispatch had sent it to him on his computer but should have tried his radio as well. He had been out of his car and did not retrieve the computer message. Further, dispatch did not say that a gun had been fired. That could have caused a very dangerous situation. Car 109 arrived and we proceeded into the apartment building with caution. The gun, a 12-gauge, had been fired through a bedroom wall in an attempt to kill the person who was on a day-pass. The shooter was

heading to the stairwell, and we had our guns drawn and ordered him to stop, and he surrendered.



In early September our Police Association has an annual reunion dinner to which all retired and active officers are invited. I attended and as per usual made the rounds and said hello to the retirees. I stopped at Detective Sullivan's table, and we had a conversation. I told him he was going to be world famous, he was going to be mentioned in my book regarding the Russell Road incident. He laughed and said that was great. He was also my patrol sergeant as well as our Police House League hockey team coach. He as well coached football in his community. "Sullie" was always fit, and he looked really healthy that evening. We said goodbye, and I wished him luck commenting that he really looked good. Two days later, he died of a heart attack. Inspector Vickers died two weeks after I saw him at St. Pat's Home. I will miss and respect them forever. Ken Walker died two years later. His request was that I sing at his funeral, which I did in dress uniform. I sang "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" and "Amazing Grace." Inspector Gary (Goldie) Leeson died in 2010.



My second partner was also a nice fellow; he was at least twice my size. He was called Cannon (like in the detective in the TV show by the same name) at 6'2" and 250 lbs., and I was called Twiggy (the skinny British model) at 6' and 185 lbs. He must have taken his training from my first partner: he liked to hang around the bars looking for bad guys, and he received many tips and information. This "partnership" lasted two months as well, and I was on my way to my third partner, Detective Len Tremblay. Len was also a seasoned investigator, very easy going and a good teacher; we did some good work together.

One case involved the local organized crime. A businessperson would not comply with the demands of the mob, so they sent some people to take care of it and bring him on board. His house was shot up in the suburbs of Ottawa West by a rifle and several shotgun blasts to the door and windows while his family was watching TV. We probed and found a few suspects and went to interview one of them at his place of business in Centertown. We arrived there at 6:30 p.m. and met with the owner/suspect. He wanted to speak to us in the basement, and both my partner and I became a little suspicious and asked him if he was alone, and he said he was. Leonard did all the talking, and I took some notes in my little black book.

The owner was in the import/export business. He also had a basement full of suits and, as we made that observation, he offered us two new suits for free. I thought I would string Len along by indicating that I would take three suits, and his face turned four shades of red. I then jokingly said I have so many suits that I am giving some away—as a matter of fact Detective Tremblay is wearing one of them.

There was another shooting a few weeks later. Someone shot out the front tires of the car of one of the complainants on Preston Street, and two arrests were made. Detective Tremblay prepared the Brief for the Crown, and I observed. The Brief is a very integral part of the court process. There were two individuals charged, and it did not go to trial, as the crown and prosecution made a plea bargain. Shortly after that, Detective Tremblay was off with another partner, and I was on my own. Leonard died in 2010.

I was working afternoon shift, and dispatch sent me on a Break and Enter call to a school out in the south end on Prince of Wales Drive to meet a patrol officer. The burglars entered through the window on the southeast side, as it was out of sight from passersby. Not much was stolen except some small change in the lunchroom. They damaged the vending machine attempting to get the money out, but they were unsuccessful. It became obvious to me and the patrol officer that the culprits likely must have been youths from the neighborhood because they wrote profanity on all the blackboards, such as F\*\*k teachers and homework, etc.; threw books around; and emptied cleaning fluid on the floor. I put my "Detective Apparatus" hat on, and when I came to work the next afternoon, I went to the school and spoke to teachers and students, most of whom knew me, as I had performed in the neighborhood the summer before at some community events and schools. This recognition helped me with the investigation. Upon further probing, I arrested two people a week later: one seventeen year old and an eighteen year old, and they were charged with Break and Enter, Theft, and Damage to Property.

Now for my first Brief to the Crown, I had to do this on my own as I did not have a senior detective to guide me, so I asked my brother-in-law, Detective Beggan to assist me with the principles of submitting the Brief.



The court date arrived for the eighteen year old (tried as an adult), and as I went in to the old courtroom #1 at the Central Police Station at 60 Waller St., which I nicknamed "Waller Gate," I took my position beside the Crown Attorney. The defence lawyer was Rick Addelman whom I had known since I joined the Force. He was a very good defence lawyer. The Crown called its first witness; the officer who took the call was questioned by the Crown and then by Addelman; and then he was dismissed.

The Defence asked for a five-minute recess during which he met with the Crown and me. I was witnessing my first plea-bargain in a trial. The Court was resumed, and Addelman informed the judge that his client would plead guilty to Break and Enter and that the Crown had agreed that the charges of Damage to Property and Theft be withdrawn and would ask that he receive probation for three months. He was sentenced to one month in jail and placed on probation for six months. After getting to know the accused during the investigation and trial process, I felt that was

appropriate. The other youth pleaded guilty and was placed in the custody of the Youth Services Bureau on Riverside Drive under strict supervision. It must have worked, as I never saw them on my radar screen again. I won my first case!



After about seven months in Detectives Unit, my wife's brother, Nelson Larose, Jr. was transferred into the unit, so I had two brothers-in-law with me. I really had to behave myself. Nelson made a name for himself very early on in his career and caught the eye of his supervisors. He was a good cop, all 5'11", 210 lbs of him, very athletic. [He was in the premier Ottawa/Hull area softball league and one of the best pitchers around. His competition was a chap named Champ Champagne. Nelson also played organized high-level hockey before joining the force.] Nel and I worked on the same platoon (C) for about three years; he was three years junior to me. He played on our softball team, and I believe we won almost every game the first year he pitched for us. Just in practice he scared the living bejeebus out of you to see that freaking ball coming at you. In softball, unlike baseball, the pitcher is much closer to home plate. He also played platoon hockey with us and was one of our better players.

Nelson became known as "Eagle Eye" Larose after he had made some spectacular arrests on Canada-wide warrants shortly before he was transferred to Detectives. Our first shift together (12:00–8:00 a.m.) was one to remember. Patrol received a call to the Mill Restaurant on the Ottawa River Parkway at approximately 1:00 a.m. (this was a local upscale establishment, now out of business) regarding a holdup at closing time. The only detectives working night shift were Nel and I, two rookie dicks. We arrived and assessed the situation, took statements, descriptions, etc., searched the premises for some clues, and left. We were a few miles from the restaurant when Nelson decided we should go back to have another look. We returned and searched the place again, and as we were about to leave for the second time, he decided to go back into the kitchen for another look. He opened the large freezer door, and there was one of the employees locked in and almost frozen to death. Wow, what instinct the Eagle Eye had!

Nelson was born and brought up in Hull and had many contacts there, so we went over to meet *avec la police de Hull* and see what we could find. We visited a few nightclubs, and through conversation with a bartender we were informed that two guys were in earlier and spending very heavily. They were regulars, and he knew them as local hoods. He gave us their names, and we found that they lived in a house on Riverside Drive at Mooney's Bay. We went there and staked the place out until approximately 3:30 a.m. We then decided we should call the day-shift inspector for direction and guidance. We called him at home at 5:00 a.m. and informed him of the situation, and his orders were to sit tight and await the day-shift detectives. Both Nelson and I felt that as junior detectives we had done the right thing.

Two senior detectives arrived at 7:30 a.m. and assessed the situation from a distance and called for two uniformed officers. When they knocked on the door, one of the suspects answered and was still half-drunk. He was arrested immediately, and we arrested the other in a bedroom. We obtained a conviction on all charges, and they were sentenced to two years less a day. The witnesses were all great, which is not always the case.

After about seven months on the second floor (Detectives), I was put in Auto Theft and worked under a staff sergeant named Vic Rawlins, whom they called "Hot Wheels." I don't believe this man had ever missed a day of work; he was one hard-working dick, "Vic the Dick." Very easy to work with and for. He gave 100% each and every day. He had two brothers who were on our Force, Dick (Richard), who was a detective most of his career and Doug, who worked Traffic and Detectives after Platoon. All had a similar work ethic. [They had another brother, Bruce, who was an acclaimed graphic arts designer and songwriter. He co-wrote songs with local country-music star Terry Carisse and had many major hits in Canada on the Country charts and numerous Juno and CCMA awards.] I worked alone for Vic on stolen cars. It wasn't always pleasant crawling in and out of cars in the snow and cold in towing company lots looking for VINs, hidden serial numbers, and other pieces of evidence. I really enjoyed working by myself, and I enjoyed the contact with all the other area police forces, as well as the FBI at the U.S. Embassy.

I recall a case I was to work on which involved a stolen car ring out of Montréal. After working on the case for a few days, some of the serial and hidden numbers were traced to New York City. I called my FBI contact, and he put me in touch with a detective in NYC in the Auto Theft Squad.

When I called the squad office, this detective answered, and I identified myself as Detective Dominic D'Arcy from Ottawa Police. He immediately said to me that I had better work on my shot for next year's International Police Hockey Tournament. He was a goalie for the NYC hockey team whom we played against in the tournaments. I was the tournament coordinator for our team for a few years. Now what are the odds of that happening? That was one of the numerous occasions whereby I had often used my contacts made through the International Tournament or through the Male Chorus, which made it much easier and simpler than cold calls to other police forces. It was much better if you are recognized, or you have some common ground as a starter. Two arrests were made in New York City and one in Montréal.

It's worth mentioning here that Lt. Flanagan took me out of Auto Theft and had me work undercover gathering intelligence on a gang of safecrackers who were very active from Kingston through to Pembroke. We had reason to believe it was certain individuals; however, we needed hard evidence in order to obtain a conviction. This gang had a distinctive MO (modus operandi) or method of operating. It seemed that when they did the job (safecracking), they always left a large, thick crowbar behind at the scene. We knew that the crowbars were always purchased at a hardware store in the west end (Nepean) because of the Pascal's Hardware store stickers on them; so Flanagan



had me go undercover and arranged for me to be at the store posing as an efficiency expert from head office so as to observe them make the purchase. This was the only Pascal's store in the region.

The plan was for me to hang out at the store in a red smock (jacket) like all the other employees and engrave my initials on all the crowbars and pry bars, big and small. While I was doing that I raised a few eyebrows, like what is this guy doing. I must have engraved fifty. The only people who knew my true identity were the manager and the head cashier. I knew most of these bad guys and had mug shots of them. The deal was to actually see them enter the store, pick up the crowbar, go to the cashier, pay for it, and leave.

I was there for three days from noon to 10:00 p.m. Well, on the third day persistence paid off. I was sort of hanging around near the front window, close to the bar bin, and at about 9:30 p.m. while I was looking towards the parking lot, in drives the green Plymouth. All three suspects got out and entered the building. I immediately indicated to the head cashier that they were here and pointed them out to her. The plan was for her to serve them because as head cashier, she could float from cash to cash.

I stood back a bit with my big black writing pad and pretended to be writing, and they all approached the crowbar bin, and the leader picked up the largest crowbar, examined it, and just before they started moving towards the cash, I headed to the general area. I waited to see which cash they were going to go to. They headed to the cash at the end near the exit, and I observed the head cashier start to move into position to serve them. At that point I thought, what the heck, I might as well go and serve them. They were laughing and joking as he handed me the money, and I gave it to the cashier, and they left. I went outside as if to straighten out some boxes at the entrance and placed myself in a position to get the license plate number. You must have continuity, or the defence lawyers will jump on you for that. I called Lt. Flanagan (later Chief Flanagan) at home, and he said, "Job well done." The gang was convicted and served jail time.



I was enjoying my stay in Detectives; however, I felt this beckoning to go back to the uniform and patrol. It's a whole other side of police work, yet I was happy to have been chosen to be there in Detectives Division. The deal back then was that, if they kept you more than one year, they would have to pay you Detective-Sergeant salary or send you back to Patrol or wherever you came from. Most do get sent back after a year, and another crop of officers replaces them.

I was called into the inspector's office one day-shift, and five minutes into my meeting he informed me that he would like to keep me up there and that I had done a good job; however, if he did, I would have to stop playing music, as it wasn't acceptable. I said I would think about it and left his office. When I got home and informed my wife of the conditions, I was so upset. Giving up my music was like taking a part of my body, spirit, and soul from me. I was in tears and just could not comprehend the rationale behind that decision. It seemed to be okay to do all the other things

that some police officers do, but heaven forbid, don't sing, especially in schools and senior-citizen homes. Don't be different. I say, dare to be different and make a difference!

I went to work the next day and attended at Lt. Flanagan's office and informed him that my decision was to be transferred back to uniform and that a voice inside me would not allow me to give up my music. Flanagan said that he would pass it along to the inspector and that he personally would assist in my transfer. On January 1, 1974 I was transferred to the Youth Services section, which Lt. Flanagan was responsible for, so he kept me under his wing so to speak, as I was still under C.I.D. (Criminal Investigation Division) Command. I was happy with that new position, as I always was drawn to helping youth, and furthermore, I really enjoyed being in uniform.

My Staff/Sgt. in Youth was Don MacDonald, a wonderful man. Built and looked a little like John Wayne, the actor—6'4", 225 lbs, he was extremely mild for a man of his stature. His son Chuck later joined our department. He was mild and mellow like his father—unless provoked! Chuck was 6'5" and 225 lbs., really a good cop. We were not a large section then, we had about six or seven police officers in Youth at that time.

My first partner was Fred Gorman who grew up in Northern Ontario. Fred was senior to me by three to four years, and an extremely bright man, with a laid-back approach to life, a thinker, especially before he would speak. "Fred would put his brain in motion before he put his mouth in gear." He was also a very good athlete who played hockey in a Junior B Hockey League (one level below Junior A), and it was always a joy to be on his team. Fred played Center in northern Ontario; if he had lived in central Ontario, he probably would have been drafted by an NHL team.

Fred was transferred to Youth Liaison Section for the same reason that I was there, we wanted to work with the youth of our community. If one can change the attitude of our youth while they are still young, then it's almost a given we (the police) will not see them on our radar screen later on down the road. That seems to be such a simple principle in life; however we, as a society, tend to wait until the anti-social behavior becomes malignant somewhat like a cancer. We seem to try to deal with the problem rather than take a preventative approach. Better to be proactive!

Fred and I would visit all the community centers in the city where the teenagers and younger kids congregate, to introduce them to the other side of a police officer, not the one portrayed on TV or at school or at home. I attempted to get other youth officers involved with this concept, whereby we would drop in and play sports with the youngsters, speak to them as a group, or, as I often did, play music and sing or talk to them on a one-on-one basis.

The other officers were not heavily into the singing. Actually, I was warned by Constables Wayne Cochrane (who joined the force with me), Kay McKabe (from Dublin, Ireland), Phil Risto, and several others never to ask them to sing. I took that warning very seriously. In retrospect, it was just as well that I did not because they were rather shy and really could not sing. I have yet to meet another Irish person, who could not sing or play music—Kay was unique. Wayne had a heart

attack and died at his cottage July 2009, at age 63. Fred died in 2010 on Victoria Island, British Columbia, where he and his wife owned a bed and breakfast inn.



***February 1984, Youth/Community Patrol, 7pm–3am***

Very busy, especially during summer months with bush/park/out-of-the-way parties. One particular shift I did not have a partner and was patrolling in the Alta Vista area checking out the youth. I came upon several broken beer bottles on Pleasant Park Road. I narrowly missed driving over them. I figured there was a bush party going on just opposite where I was, so I booted out of my vehicle. As soon as I got out, I could hear shouting and laughing in the distance, and so I started walking into the woods. I observed a bonfire in the distance and kept walking towards it. I was about 200' from the fire and observed about a dozen teenagers drinking around the fire. I requested that dispatch send another car. It was a Saturday night, meaning most patrol units are kept very busy. I waited for ten minutes and then proceeded to walk to the teenagers. When they saw me coming out of the darkness, some started to run away. I told them to stop and that another ten officers were on their way (not!). Most did come back. There are always a few pretend tough guys. One was a youth named Anthony whom I had dealt with as a juvenile delinquent in primary and high school. He told me very loudly three times to F\*\*k-Off Pig! I approached him and told him I wanted to speak to him, and he resumed screaming curses at me. I told this 17-year-old tough guy to come with me to my vehicle and told the rest to stay put as the other officers were here and would need their information. He kept up his bravado. Like all the other underage partiers, Anthony had been drinking, and he had drunk a lot. As the other two officers arrived, I put Anthony in a come-along Jiu-Jitsu hold and started walking towards my vehicle. He broke loose and pulled a 3" knife on me. Well, that certainly changed things! I threw him to the ground and put cuffs on him and waltzed him to my vehicle. He was a big kid and very strong. I placed him in the backseat behind the glass and tried to talk some sense into him. He started to mellow once he was away from his friends. He was booked at 1:30 a.m. for carrying a concealed weapon, drinking under age, causing a disturbance, and resisting arrest. I called his parents, and once again they came to the station and bailed him out. Now folks, this is what baffles me and other officers: The park is in a middle/upper class area. Surely, someone must have heard the noise coming from the woods. I could hear it six blocks away. Also where were your kids? Who were they with? When did they come home? They must have appeared to have been drinking or doing drugs and/or had alcohol on their breath.



I had a good contact with a reporter at the *Ottawa Citizen* newspaper named Kitty McKittrick, and when I approached her and requested her to come with us as a ride-along and do a story on

what we were trying to achieve, she agreed. I then received the approval of the chief. She enjoyed it so much that she had the story appear in two Saturday specials. The other officers came along reluctantly, as they really did not want to have their names and faces in the newspaper. Therefore, I was left to do most of the talking.

I actually recruited Kitty to come to my cottages several times in the winter when I would arrange to have two vans courtesy of Myers Motors at my disposal and take vanloads of kids from the Ottawa Boys & Girls Club up to spend the day there. My cottages were twenty-two miles from Ottawa in Luskville, Québec near the Laurentian Mountains. I had two cottages on four acres and access to another thirty acres owned by farmer friend, Gerald Belisle, with huge pine trees, small cliffs, and a hill for sliding.

We cooked hot dogs and marshmallows, which I would buy or have donated by local businesses. I could not interest other officers to come and assist. They did not wish to give up their weekends off. My sons, Darren and Anthony, would usually come along. The youth ranged in age from nine to fifteen years. Many of these kids came from poor or broken families, and I felt it was important that someone teach them good habits and show them that we care. I knew that I had a great day in my life if I had made a difference in the life of a child. "Give them a voice and direction." They are crying out for direction!



### **Derek Moise, An Example of Positive Youth–Police Relations**

I first met Derek about a dozen years ago when he was six and a half years old, riding on Wiggins Private in Ottawa South in his electric wheelchair. I was on patrol in the area with my partner, Constable Bruce Watts. Derek was waving at us, and I turned on the patrol car's outside loudspeaker and told him he was not wearing his seatbelt and to stop. We got out of the cruiser and spoke with him. He pretended he was looking for his license. He had a very serious health problem, cancer, and his face was swollen to twice its normal size due to medications, yet he was so jolly, smiling and waving to all. I asked what his name was, and he told us it was Derek Moise. Then Bruce and I shook hands with him. His mother was with him, and I asked her if we could take her son for a ride in their area. She enthusiastically agreed.

I lifted him from the wheelchair, strapped him in the patrol car, and let him wear my police hat. Then I gave him the microphone for the loudspeaker [with the cruiser's red lights flashing] and instructed him to tell everyone to wear their seatbelts and not to throw garbage on the street, or he would arrest them. The kids were just home from school, so there may have been fifty students in the area. They were all chanting his name.

Memorable! I would take him along "in my mind" every day. He was so joyful even during his last days on earth suffering from advanced cancer. I have tried very hard not to complain about

the little things in life ever since I met him. I shall never forget him. I would have his mom bring him to the schools and shopping centers where I was performing so I could put him on the stage with me, and he would speak to the audience. I prompted him with questions. He passed away several months later. His very dear mother called me a few hours before he passed on, because he had been asking if I were coming over. I spent a few hours with him while off duty, and we had a good conversation.

So very sad to see him leave us at such a young age! I have a friend Brian McGarry, who at that time owned a funeral home and who is a fellow member in the Kiwanis Club of Ottawa. A few weeks prior to Derek's passing, I was sitting with Brian at a Kiwanis luncheon at the Chateau Laurier when I told him the boy's story and asked him if he could help with the imminent funeral, as Derek's mother was on her own. He immediately most generously agreed to provide his assistance. Wow! I love you, little Derek, and thanks for all you have taught us in your short time with us!



***Time for some humor***

*Given the, at times, harrowing nature of police work, humor is a necessity to keep one's sense of perspective. To give readers an idea of the culture and experience of police work at the time I served, I include some anecdotes of my own and some supplied by several of my fellow officers as representative of the humorous episodes we shared.*

I was working traffic in Car 702, a Ford V-8, on a Friday afternoon rush hour. I was merging onto the Queensway (Hwy. 417) from St. Laurent Boulevard when this car passed me driving well above the 60 mph speed limit. I immediately informed dispatch and gave chase. Now this was a long weekend in August and traffic was heavy. I pursued him for about a mile then felt it was too dangerous to continue. The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) were notified, as the car was heading west into their jurisdiction. I kept going west with red lights and siren on but not chasing him at that time. I lost sight of the vehicle. About five miles west of where I initially spotted him, I saw that the OPP had stopped him out past Bayshore. An officer with a radar gun atop an overpass clocked him as going 88mph, and another officer stopped the driver. I took the suspect out of the OPP cruiser and placed him in the backseat of mine. The first question I asked him was why the hell was he driving so erratically. His response really floored me. He stated he ran over a skunk near Orleans seven miles east, and he was trying to keep ahead of the smell!!

***Joke #2***

I was performing in Florida, as I do each winter for a month, and I always inquire if there are any police officers, teachers, or undertakers in the audience. This show was in Sarasota, and a police

officer identified himself. I asked him to come up on stage and talk a little bit about his career. He was an Illinois state trooper and was working the interstate just south of Chicago. He stopped this big Lincoln a few years back, and the driver and his wife were in their 70s. The officer requested the driver's license, insurance, and registration. The officer looked at the documents and said, "I see you're from Minnesota." The wife was hard of hearing and asked, "What did he say? What did he say?" The husband told her, "He wants to see my registration." Then the officer stated that the worst loving he ever had was with a woman from Minnesota. The wife again asked, "What did he say? What did he say?" The husband replied in a loud voice, "He thinks he knows you."

### *Joke #3*

I pulled over this car for misuse of a caution light just to give her a warning. The elderly female driver presented me with her registration, and I noticed she had a concealed-carry gun permit. I asked her if she had a weapon on her at this time, and she said she had .45 automatic in the glove compartment. I asked if she had any other firearms, and she replied that she had a 9mm Glock in the center console. "Is that all?" I asked. She said she also had a .38 special in her purse. I smiled and asked, "What are you afraid of?" Looking me straight in the eye, she said, "Not a damn thing, sir."

I should mention at this point a prank that was pulled on me when I was a young officer by Cst. Windsor Picard, nicknamed "Pic." Windsor was from Gaspé, Québec, very straightforward, and spoke with a heavy French accent. We were working Lowertown on afternoon shift, and Windsor decided to go check out Nepean Point, situated above the Interprovincial Bridge, which crosses to Hull, Québec. This was an area where youth (and others) would gather to drink and throw rocks at the vehicles crossing the bridge. I had checked it many times myself while driving a patrol car (you could just drive right up to the top).

Well, as we approached the entrance off St. Patrick Street, I observed black steel posts now blocking the entrance. It was apparent to me that there was no way the police car could go in between them because the posts were about 3½' apart. I assumed Pic had seen them and that he was going to park and we would walk up. He was not even looking ahead but rather looking to his left. I yelled "Pic, watch the steel posts!" and with that he put the pedal to the metal and drove straight at them. I shouted again, "Pic watch the posts!" and, as we were just a few feet from them, I thought he had gone mad, as he was going to try and go between them, the car was absolutely not going to fit.

I screamed again and thought the freaking guy is going to drive over the posts, go to the top, and drive off the cliff and commit suicide. I stood up on the seat so that the rods would not hit me as they came through the floor and door. "Crash!" What a noise as we drove over them! I was ready

to jump out of the car and looked over at Picard and noticed he did not have that far-away look anymore. He broke out laughing, out of control. The NCC (National Capital Commission) had put rubber posts in a few weeks prior. I could not speak for a few moments. I said, “You SOB, you really got me.” You see, most every officer in my platoon knew I was a prankster. I really thought he was going to drive off the cliff, which, if you did, you would not survive. He got me!

Pic had earlier stopped a car for a stop-sign infraction. The driver said he was the coroner going on a call and was in a hurry. Pic asked if the person was deceased and the coroner said that he was. So Pic said there is no hurry is there, he's dead; and he gave the coroner a ticket.



Well, dear sweet little Irish “Colleen” Kay McKabe was my partner one evening shift (7 p.m. to 3 a.m.), and I thought, What's good for the gander is good for the goose. Shortly after dark “on that warm summer evening” (hmm—that sounds like a song) I told Kay that we should check out Nepean Point. We headed down Sussex Drive, left on St. Patrick (yes, you guessed it) and right into the entrance of Nepean Point. As we approached the posts, I said, “Dammit, they put up these steel posts; how in hell do they expect us to check the area?” I pretended to be really agitated and angry, and was calling the NCC names, etc.

Then I led her to believe that I was going to attempt to go between them. She became quite concerned, thinking I was really going to try it. In her lovely Irish accent she said, “Dominic, you can't fit in between there.” I kept cursing the NCC, paid no attention to her, pressed the gas pedal to the floor, and went for it. Kay kept shouting “Dominic, it won't fit!” and just as she was sure I'd lost my mind she, just as I had, jumped up on the seat. She was not as forgiving as I was when Pic had done the same thing to me. She was upset at me for several weeks. Kay was transferred from Youth after a year, promoted to Sergeant on Patrol. She had never married and lived alone. She retired early, and none of us knew why until a few years later she died of cancer. She was such a pretty, caring, and compassionate human being. I miss her.



*Damien Coakley, S/Sgt (retired)*  
*Ottawa Police Force*

I want to share with you my just about funniest story from work. Funnier still that I had no idea it was a funny story until at least ten years after it happened. Funnier still that it ultimately involves Jim Oakes and myself, and we've been through more manure together than a pig farmer and his pigs!

So the story starts with me, when I was working the south end, back in the old Ottawa

days. Throughout the courses of our careers we all ultimately learn the tricks of the trade that we realize have been there for eons...but we all have to learn them at some point. So it was that, at that point in my career, perhaps the late '80s, I had yet to hear of tinfoil being the cure-all for everything MHA (Mental Health Act).

So, I was sent to a domestic involving an Asian couple, on Walkley Rd., across from Kelly Funeral Home, just east of Bank St. When I got there, the wife was outside, almost hysterical, claiming that her husband was crazy. After being assured that there were no weapons, I went to see her husband. He was pacing around inside the living room, talking about this, that, and the other, including being zapped by laser beams from his neighbor. Well, of course, I was pretty sure he was borderline loony, but needed something to really put him over the edge, so that I could send him to the Royal Ottawa Hospital. He kept going on about the laser beams, and not really making any sense about it, but saying that he knew it was lasers, because it made him all hot down whichever side he presented to the wall separating him from his neighbor. So, I started to look around and without a word of a lie (of course this being one of the reasons I thought he was borderline loony), there was tinfoil everywhere! On the floors, on the walls, falling from the ceiling. So I asked him about the tinfoil, and what it was for.

He replied, "Oooohhh...po-rice officer tell me to do that!"

Well, that's it, thought I. I don't know of any copper who would tell you to do that...you're nuts, dispatcher send me a 52, this guy's going to the ROH! And so he did...and I never heard another thing...until 1997.

Jim Oakes and I were both seconded to Ontario Police College (yeah, I know, whose stupid idea was that?). One evening we were all out doing some evening exercises with recruits and were waiting in a vehicle for our turn to participate. So the recruits asked us for strange call stories. Being the fine officer, mentor, and example that I was, I deferred to the senior sergeant to tell his story first. Of course, by now, I am well aware of the beauty of tinfoil for MHA cases.

So Jim related how he and his partner were dispatched to a domestic at an address on Walkley Rd., involving an Asian couple. Now, it's so long ago, that I had forgotten about what I have just related to you above. But Jim goes on about this woman who hysterically insists that her husband is "Ca-zy!!" So Jim and his partner, Byron Smith, head up to see the husband. The husband is inside, pacing all about, complaining of being zapped by his neighbor with a laser beam! How do you know, asked Jim? Because when I up near wall, I get all hotdownthisside. Being the ass that he can be, Jim asked, what happens when you turn around? Oooohhh, says Mr. (insert Asian name of choice here!) I get all hotdownthisside!

By now, things are starting to come back to me, but I am still a little confused, so the story continues...Jim went on with this guy, and told him that the Ottawa Police takes these things very seriously, and we will conduct a complete investigation. So, of course, he went around the house,



feeling the walls to confirm that, yes, indeed, they were hot, etc. etc. etc. He took himself into the kitchen, found the tinfoil, and came back to the living room with it, and started fashioning a largish piece into a dome. He explained to Mr. Wong that the investigation, considering it involved laser beams, would be an in-depth one, requiring search warrants for hydro usage records, billing records, banking records etc. In the meantime, this thing here that I am building you is a “cosmic ray deflector,” and you should aim this at the wall, to make the beams bounce right back at your neighbor.

“Oooohhh, sank-you very much officer. That is good idea,” says Mr. Wong.

“BUT!!!” says, Jim, “if you really want to make sure nothing gets through, you should paper your walls with tinfoil, top to bottom, side to side”...and bbbbaaaahhhhaaaahhhhaaaahhhhaaaaa... he and Byron leave. 10-8, no report! All in order here, dispatcher!!!

“SHUT THE FRONT DOOR,” says me, suddenly realizing who the hell he is talking about!!! “DO NOT TELL ME YOU TOLD HIM TO PUT TINFOIL ON HIS WALLS!!!”

“Sure I did,” says Jim.

“Well HO-LY F\*\*K,” says I, “I must have gone to his place a couple of days later, and he had put tinfoil all over the house...floors, walls, ceilings...and although I thought he was nuts, I had no idea why he had done that...until he told me that Po-rice officer told me to do that, at which point I knew he was nuts, cause no copper I know would ever have told him to do that.” ...Except Jim Oakes!

Enjoy that one, my friend, and you can use both our names, because we love that story and tell it every chance we get, now!!!



*Tim Halderson, S/Sgt (retired)*

*Ottawa Police Force*

### **The Lighter Side of Policing**

What do you think of when I say the word *policing*—a popular TV series like *CSI* or *Criminal Minds*? Ottawa police officer Cst. Eric Czapnik, who was murdered so brutally at the Civic Hospital in 2009? Or, a police officer you know personally?

I was a police officer for 34½ years, so I can assure you that policing is a serious business. But it does have its lighter moments. I’d like to tell you about several of such moments, and each story involves the grumpy, old-school sergeant who was my first supervisor, Sgt. Sam Way. As I got to know him better, I found out that deep down he also had a sense of humor.

Rookie officers were usually the targets of a practical joke during their orientation training. The first time Sgt. Way assigned me to get a cruiser ready for patrol, he had sent a veteran officer out before me to set up the cruiser so that all the emergency lights, the horn, and the siren would go off

as soon as I turned on the engine. Of course, I did this when all the other officers on the platoon were watching, which maximized my embarrassment. But it also taught me a valuable lesson: To always check my cruiser before starting it up!

A few months later, I got him back when I returned to the office after a busy night shift. Before I entered the office where Sgt. Way was reviewing the overnight reports, I changed into pajamas and marched into the office with a pillow under my arm, wishing Sgt. Way a cheery and bright-eyed good morning! After he had calmed down, he actually chuckled!

Early in my career, I was assigned to patrol the Trans-Canada Highway, investigating accidents and looking for speeders. One day in March, I signaled a motorist to stop for speeding. It had been raining on and off for several days, including freezing rain, so the highway shoulders were slippery. The driver did manage to stop on the shoulder, however, and as I walked up to his car and bent over to speak to him at the driver's window to explain why I had stopped him, I put my arm on the roof of the car. Unfortunately, that caused the car to slide sideways ever so slowly into the ditch!

What could I say to the driver after that happened? "Are you ok, sir? Stay there and I'll go call the police?" (Wait a minute; I am the police!) "You know that speeding ticket I was telling you about? Forget about it! And if you promise not to tell Sgt. Way about what I just did, I'll even pay for the tow truck."

Later that year, after I got out of Sgt. Way's doghouse, he assigned me to escort a large mobile home from the Navan area north on Trim Road to Orleans. This mobile home was quite wide, almost the width of the entire two-lane roadway, so I had to drive ahead with my emergency lights flashing to warn other drivers. The escort went really well until I stopped in the middle of the St. Joseph Boulevard intersection to stop cross-traffic. When I got out of my cruiser quickly, I inadvertently locked myself out of the car! There I was in the middle of the intersection with emergency lights and traffic stopped in all four directions. I thought of unlocking the door with a coat hanger, but I didn't have one on me! I didn't have a portable radio, and cell phones did not exist then, so I had to ask a bystander to find a phone nearby and ask a very grumpy Sgt. Way at the detachment office in Rockland to please send me a spare set of keys as soon as possible. Of course, it took me quite a while to get out of his doghouse this time, and again my colleagues at work never let me forget this!



***Ontario Police College, Aylmer, Ontario***

***Written at Lowney Lake, July 12, 2007***

I spent several more years in Youth Division before subsequently transferring next door to Crime Prevention. I really enjoyed that new role, for the first two years anyway. I was sent to Police College in Aylmer, Ontario to take a crime prevention course for three weeks, with classmates who

came from all across Ontario.

We were expected to report at the college before 10:00 p.m.; however, I was four hours late due to bad weather and a major accident tying traffic on the busy Highway 401 east of Toronto. When I arrived just after 2:00 a.m., the commissionaire, a former police sergeant-major, admonished me. I explained my reasons for being late, and he informed me there were no private rooms left and that I'd have to room with a sergeant from Thunder Bay. He wished me good luck, and I inquired why. He then told me no one had been able to sleep near the fellow, a very large man who snored prodigiously. Forewarned, I asked for the key.

I entered the room and saw my roommate lying on his bed with a newspaper covering his chest. He sounded like a herd of buffalo! When I came down for breakfast the next morning, the commissionaire asked with a smirk, "How did you sleep last night, D'Arcy?" I surprised him by replying, "Like a log." I explained that when I got to the room, I planted a big wet kiss on my roommate's cheek, and he stayed up all night watching me. "I slept very well, thank you." Have to admire my problem-solving skills, don't you?

I enjoyed the course very much, and all the other officers seemed to as well. They chose me as the class leader (probably because I talked so much). As the leader of the pack, I got to organize the final party in St. Thomas, was the class spokesperson to approach the instructor about any problems or questions, and arranged the sports games, class photo, and the like.

Neighborhood Watch was still in its infancy stage, and the Police College was promoting the program to police departments. We were strongly encouraged to take the program back to our respective communities.

I seldom accompanied my classmates on nights out to St. Thomas or London for drinks. Rather, I would stay and play sports. I especially enjoyed the water volleyball played in an Olympic-sized pool. I also liked to work on my projects in the evenings or visit the bird sanctuary approximately ¼ mile from the college. One could sit there for hours watching what seemed like a million birds of many species in a cove-like marshy bay off Lake Erie.

I would on occasion go down the road a mile or so to the Town of Aylmer, just to watch the Mennonites in their horse-drawn buggies. It was quite peaceful and pleasant—no pollution and little noise, except for the occasional squeaky buggy axle (or the pleasant clomp of hooves or the unpleasant plop of horse poop).

Spending time just sitting around observing Mennonites going about their everyday activities certainly settles you down and takes you back to centre (and back a century). Very peaceful. There are many lessons to be learned from the Mennonite Community, and *community* is the operative word, much as it was in Sheenboro where I grew up. If there were ever a farmer in need, almost everyone pitched in and did what they could to help.

I returned to work after three weeks at the college, having learned a great deal from courses.

Now, it was time to put into practice what I had been taught. Neighborhood Watch was just being recognized across Canada as a tremendously effective tool in the arena of crime prevention. It had always been of concern to me that upon investigating a break and enter call, we would question the neighbors as to whether they had seen anything suspicious, and 90% of the time the answer was no.

In one such case in Elmvale Acres in southeast Ottawa, someone broke into a house and cleaned it out—furniture, washing machine, dryer, everything! I questioned a few neighbors who had been home at the time, and they didn't recall seeing or hearing anything suspicious. Now, the robbers would have had to use a rather large truck to accommodate everything they took. The robbery happened in broad daylight, mid-morning after most homeowners left for work. I made the report, and after I got back on the road about 5:30 p.m. after my lunch break, I revisited a house where neighbors had earlier been unavailable for questioning.

I informed one woman who answered the door what had taken place and asked her if she had seen anything out of the ordinary. She replied that her kitchen window faced the neighbor's backyard driveway, and while she was washing her dishes, she did in fact see a large white truck with movers loading the furniture into the truck and assumed the neighbors were moving. She had lived there for twenty-five years, and the neighbors for more than twenty years. There's something seriously wrong with this picture.

Bottom line is: Get to know your neighbors! That doesn't mean you have to invite them in every week for tea or dinner, but it does mean getting involved and paying attention and always being a little suspicious. If the neighbor had called the owners at work to check with them, or if she had called police because her neighbors hadn't spoken of plans to move, a crime might have been prevented.

For meetings in the community, our crime prevention section had at our disposal a thirty-five foot motor home, which I used extensively. When all the tables etc. were removed, it could comfortably seat approximately twenty people. It had a generator, so we could park anywhere in a community, and people would come in to watch videos on a variety of crime prevention tools and methods. We typically served coffee and light desserts after the meeting.

I was pushing hard to start the first Neighborhood Watch program in Ottawa. It was difficult to find Block Captains, which is a responsibility most did not wish to commit to. After numerous meetings, I finally was able to set up the first Neighborhood Watch program in the city. It was in the middle-class area, in Riverside Park near the Ottawa Hospital Riverside campus. A wonderful woman named Mrs. Kettles organized a meeting at her home, and I think at least half the neighborhood attended. The Block Captain came forward, and he was a professional man who lived on her street. I was very pleased to get this program finally started.

As a point of interest, approximately a month later one of the residents called the station and indicated there were three youths acting suspiciously on her street. A patrol car was sent in time to

apprehend them attempting to steal a car. The program has proven many times over that it really does work.



I was coming home from Greenville, South Carolina, where I had attended a Crime Prevention International Conference with two other officers from Ottawa Police force. [I drove the Ottawa Police 24' motor home to a crime prevention international conference in Greenville, South Carolina several years ago with two other officers from the Ottawa Police Force, and along the way I counted ninety-four deer lying dead on the side of Interstate 81 between Binghamton, NY and partway through Pennsylvania. Now that's one observer on one route on one day. Imagine the cumulative toll of deer and other animals struck and killed on highways across North America!] About 50 miles south of Binghamton, NY, and guess what! I was caught again by a flash blizzard, just like the white-out conditions on the drive from Ottawa to NYC in March with my sons. Never saw it coming. I put my four-way flashers on and awakened the other officers. Same as before, I could not see five feet in front of me! It was very icy and on the downhill I kept pumping the brakes. Mark said, "D'Arc, you are stopped." I suppose blowing snow created an optical illusion. Another close call.



Shortly after I joined the force, I began to play hockey on the Ottawa Police team. I really did not get a lot of ice time when we played the big games. We only had an A-team, and therefore only about twenty players could play. There were many good players, some of whom played Junior A, and a few tried out for NHL teams. (I wanted to play with the Toronto Maple Leafs, but my father could not afford the \$20,000 we would have had to pay the team to take me!!)

One evening Fred Gorman and I were doubled up, and I told him I had this idea of an Ottawa Police House League and asked if he would work with me to get it off the ground, to which he agreed. We made a proposal to our inspector, and he, in turn, took it to the chief and he, in turn, sent it back down the chain and back up to a staff superintendent who had never really played organized sports in his life. He called Fred and me into his office and said something to the effect that it will not happen. Some of the reasons being: injuries, fighting, missed work days, etc. We left the meeting and thought the police force is missing the boat. Cops get injured every which way on and off duty. Did he think that police officers off duty are not involved in activities that could injure them? I think not.

I would not accept that response so I phoned our Association President, Sgt. Meryle Cameron and informed him of our plan and the official response from the station. First, I asked him if he would take this request to the Executive Committee of the Association and, second, requested

\$4,000 to get the league up and running. Meryle said he would submit our request at the next General Meeting, which was to be held in one month. I then asked Meryle to call Chief Leo Seguin, who incidentally had been a star CFL football player with the Ottawa Rough Riders. I had reason to believe that the superintendent did not go back to the chief and consult with him. I was right. The chief informed Meryle that, as long as the Association was supplying the funding, that it was all right. So the league was given a green light.

However, he said that I would have to submit a personal report to him on this matter, which I did. I mentioned in my report the positives derived from 80–100 police officers playing hockey, getting in and staying in good physical condition, as well as the socializing before, during, and after the games whereby each team would meet at a local restaurant and have breakfast and get to know each other better and share information on family and police work—all of which is very important in our subculture. Also we could take any one of our teams (or pick from each team) out into the community and play hockey with the public such as NHL Old-Timers and high-school teams. Today, our police service has fourteen teams and just celebrated twenty-seven years. Our A-team tournament team is equivalent to most Junior A teams.



***Written July 18, 2007, Lowney Lake***

I gathered together some musicians and singers, some of whom were in the Ottawa Police Male Chorus, to form a band. For about three weeks, we practiced evenings, after-hours in the station's courtroom. Staff-Sergeant A.D. McConnell and Sergeant Davis Hodgins were on board playing upright bass and fiddle respectively. Then we added Cst. Mike Fahey who sang country and played guitar. Cst. Chuck Lowell was lead guitar, Cst. Bob Cleary on electric bass, and Cst. Paul Maher on drums.

We had our first performance at a seniors' home, and we were really well received and were encouraged to continue. The police force soon became aware of the band. We at first called ourselves the Ottawa Police Show Band. However, after several months, I decided to split the group and called it the Ottawa Police Folk and Country Music Show. A.D., Davis, and I became the folk half; and Mike and his pickers and players were the country half. This really worked well and elicited a great response.

Later, Inspector Gerry Raymond and his brother Vince, who both played fiddle, were added to the country show. Also added was a singer named Helen Smith, who sang country. As well, I recruited a female pop/folk singer to perform with us. Her name was Cathy Stanford, who was a teacher and sang very well. Both the singers and the fiddlers added greatly to our show.

We were at this point representing the police force while we were off duty. On behalf of the group, I had submitted a proposal to the chief, requesting permission to perform in uniform. We

were given that permission, and I was the band's unelected spokesperson and leader.

I then submitted another personal proposal that we be allowed to perform while on duty, duty permitting. Most times we performed on our lunch hours or took time off against overtime owed us. I was pleasantly surprised that the chief approved the request, stipulating that a phone number be left with the dispatcher so that we could be reached by phone (or radio) if necessary.

This arrangement worked well for a while until middle management got involved and kept throwing wrenches into the works. The first crack came when I requested the presence of the three officers (who were on duty on my shift at the time, working afternoon shift) to do a performance. The staff-sergeant shouted at me and asked, "Are you a real policeman, or a canary, D'Arcy?" He then refused my request. I requested overtime, and he refused that too. This was a very quiet evening, and if he needed any one of us, we would probably been on the scene just as quickly as the patrol car.

Personally, I received a great deal of that type of reaction over my career, and it always stung, hurting me deeply. It came not only from superiors but also from some of my peers. What they did not realize was that deep down inside I had joined the police force to try to make a difference in our community and world any way that I could, and in the process I would use any and whatever vehicle needed to do so.

When I had all those roadblocks over the years, I would always think that where there's a will, there's a way (also the title of a song I recorded), and I would create a mental image of being stuck in the mud. I would put my truck in four-wheel drive; and if that didn't work, I would put on the chains. If I were still stuck, I'd get the bulldozer: I was not doing this on my own. I had someone much more powerful (call it what you will) on my side. When this powerful presence is with you, you just cannot fail.

One of my former supervisors, Staff Sgt. Vic Rawlins whom I worked with when I was a detective in auto theft and crime prevention, said I was twenty years before my time. I had a great deal of respect for him. He too was many years ahead of his time with his vision and concepts for policing communities. Vic introduced the "Lock it and pocket the key" campaign that was used across Canada.

We had many wonderful years with the show, and I believe that through music we did make a difference and broke down some of those invisible barriers that we the police and the community erected. However, change demands work, and we must be willing to make the effort.

We disbanded in 1983. A.D. McConnell passed away in 2007, and Davis Hodgins passed away several years ago, as did Gerry Raymond and his brother Vince. I miss them all a lot—their personalities, the laughs, and of course the music. Gary Thompson, who was with our group for a few years as a singer, retired from Patrol Division. Paul Maher, our drummer, left the force many years ago. Bob Cleary (bass) retired a sergeant in Detective Division and is still playing some music.

Chuck Lowell, our guitarist, took early retirement out of the Detective office, as well. Chuck had Type 1 diabetes and has since had both legs amputated. I have visited him on occasion, and we have done a little pickin' and a grinnin'. Just being there, seeing the positive way he is coping makes me much stronger, and I do less complaining about my own problems. Chuck died in 2013.

Chuck and I were on duty when rookie Constable David Kirkwood, aged twenty-one, was shot and killed in a backyard on Gladstone Avenue in 1977. He had only been on the force for three weeks. Chuck is also a songwriter. He wrote a song called, "Do You Care?" pertaining to that fatal evening and which I recently recorded on my CD entitled, *Cop with a Good Record*. I recorded the song "Do You Care?" in 1993.

My Crime Prevention supervisor had an idea that as a result of the tragedy we ought to have an annual national day of mourning on Parliament Hill for all slain officers across Canada. I was part of a team along with a few other officers in our Crime Prevention section that organized it. The first year was a great success. I was still with the Ottawa Police Male Chorus, and it was arranged that we'd assemble other police male choruses from Hamilton, Toronto, Brockville, and Halton Region to be on stage that mid-September day on Parliament Hill. There were approximately 100 voices. Quite spectacular! Our team was responsible for setting up the seating, sound system, and other such arrangements.

On occasion, the prime minister would attend, as well as numerous high-ranking politicians and community leaders. In recent years, there is regularly police representation from all over North America, all marching from the Supreme Court Building, up Wellington Street to Parliament Hill. Again, quite impressive! I have attempted to get permission from the organizers to sing that song by Chuck at the ceremony; however, they did not choose to honor my request. I think it would be fitting, as the song is about Cst. Kirkwood, and the ceremony was inaugurated as a direct result of his murder.



Sgt. Mike Fahey and I have been friends since he joined my platoon. He joined as a cadet when he was just eighteen years old. I was several years his senior; however, we had a connection, as both of us were from Pontiac County, and he too had played music when he was young.

Since he joined the force at such a young age, Mike was in a position to retire at a young age. He is still playing music at senior residences and shows for adults around the Ottawa Valley and in a band opening for Nashville stars. I had the occasion to join him and his trio on stage in 2007, and after I left the stage, I had a smile that lasted for several days. It was good to relive the past, even for a little while.

There was another officer, Sgt. Danny Dunlop who was in the band for a short while.





I was playing music in and around Ottawa (both off-duty and on-duty) and was starting to be increasingly recognized after I released my 1978 single, “Come On, Listen” (with “Will You Walk Away” on the flip side) to the radio stations across Canada and the United States. Some of the stations began to play the song and would occasionally call for an interview. CKBY, a huge country-music station in Ottawa was the first station to play the song. I was sitting in my backyard just before I left for the afternoon shift when I heard Doug Anderson play the interview we did earlier and then introduce the song. That was a magical moment in my life, hearing my music for the first time on the radio. The song made the Top 30 Playlist in an industry magazine called *RPM*.

As a result of the mild success of that song, I began receiving more calls for performances. I had been doing gigs in restaurants and family-oriented entertainment. However, I started being booked by agents for country fairs and conventions. I was becoming quite involved in the schools, performing and speaking to the no-bullying program through my music. Halfway through my show, I would stop and tell of some incidents that I was involved in with people who were bullied.

I would start by telling them that I was bullied myself as a youth and that the memory never goes away from receiving unkind words with respect to one’s clothing, being poor, often accompanied by physical abuse. I relate to them that the recall is “instant” like pushing the on button of a computer. As the song goes, “If you have nothing nice to say, say nothing.” Say something pleasant, or it’s best to say nothing at all!

I also talk about this when I have an adult audience. For example, I discuss office bullying. Frequently, such bullies are unaware of the damage being inflicted. I have responded to calls where people attempt suicide rather than return to their workplace. One twenty-seven-year-old woman actually succeeded in killing herself. I also have been privy to bullying on the police force itself. It’s everywhere; however, we collectively choose not to address it. I was part of the first No Bullying Program in the Ottawa Catholic School Board.

It was in recognition of such initiatives that I was presented with the Community Service Award (1990) from the Ottawa Board of Commissioners of Police; the Retired Teachers of Ontario’s Celebrity of the Year Award (2006); the Lifetime Achievement Award (2006) from the Ottawa Valley Roundup radio show; the Community Builder’s Award (2007) from the United Way; the Governor General’s Canada 125 Award (1993) and the Governor General’s Caring Canadian Award (1999), which is presented to individuals whose unpaid, selfless and voluntary contributions of their time and energy provide extraordinary help or care to people in their community. I was also bestowed with the Governor General’s Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal (2002), which is awarded to Canadians who have made outstanding and exemplary contributions to their communities or to Canada as a whole.

In 2006, in tribute to contributions to local community service, I was presented with the Key to the City of Ottawa. At the ceremony honoring me, former Ottawa Mayor Bob Chiarelli explained that “the longtime police officer has played a pivotal role in making the nation’s capital the kind of place it is: He has a special something about him where people immediately trust him, whether it’s seniors or youth.”

In addition to my being the Grand Marshal of the Canadian Tulip Festival’s Flotilla on the Rideau Canal in May 2000, the city has also celebrated two “Dominic D’Arcy Days” in Ottawa (May 21, 1999 and November 5, 2006) as a token from the city to show its appreciation for contributing to life in Canada’s capital. [November 5, 2006 coincidentally also marked my 50th anniversary as a performer who championed community service.] I certainly didn’t embark on community service with awards in mind, but they were certainly appreciated as affirmations that my contributions indeed made a difference and helped to improve police-community relations.



I received a call from Larry Glick (1922–2009), program director of radio station WBZ-Boston. He had heard the song on another radio station and wanted to do an interview with me. I of course agreed, and he set up a time for the following day. It was a 35-minute interview, and then he played the song at the end of the interview. At the time, Edward (Ted) Kennedy was running for election, and each time we took a commercial break I got to hear Kennedy and all the information on his position.

As a result of this interview, I received a letter from Jim Morgan, who was a deep-sea fisherman from Menemsha, an old fishing port on Martha’s Vineyard. He owned a few large fishing boats, and he was out at sea when he heard the interview. His letter was written on boat’s navigational papers. He said he really liked the interview and the song and wanted to purchase a copy. I mailed it to him the next day. A few weeks later, he called to invite me to visit Martha’s Vineyard and to stay with him and his wife. How could I refuse such a great invitation!

I sent some promotional material to several larger Irish pubs in Boston. One of those pubs in East Boston responded and booked me. I then called Jim and Bertha Morgan and gave the dates that coincided with my holidays and the gig in Boston. We confirmed plans for a July visit to Menemsha. I was speaking about my Boston gig to my brother-in-law, who said he’d pass on the information to his late brother’s family who lived in the area and who’d want to attend the performance, as well as giving me the phone number of a friend in Boston named Tom Fallon, who was born in Dublin and who would likely offer me hospitality while I was there. I called Tom and he indeed invited me to stay at his home.

I drove to Boston a week later and really enjoyed the trip, as I had never been there before. I checked in with Tom and his wife, and then I went to see the pub where I was to perform. I was

amazed to see the size of it—it held 200 people! There was a duo from Ireland who opened for me and who were very good and extremely funny. I asked the bass player what part of Ireland he was from, and he replied Cork. I told him I performed at Cork University, and he said he went to Cork U. for two years, to which I responded, “Did you now?” He said, yes, he was working on the roof. The performance was fun. Bostonians come to Irish pubs to have fun, and that certainly makes it easy for the entertainer.

My host was part of the uppercrust Bostonians and was involved in that part of society. He was going to a function at Bunker Hill, and George H.W. Bush was nearby to be at the opening of the house (173 Adams Street, Milton, MA) where he (Bush) was born in 1924. I was invited to attend with the other celebrities. It was very exciting for me because George H. W. Bush was one of my favorite presidents—of course I didn’t know Presidents Washington or Lincoln. I was in the front row with Tom, and as President Bush came out of the house, he went along the line from right to left shaking hands with all the people. The lady before me in the line kept talking and talking, and therefore security took the president by the arm and led him off, so I was disappointed in not getting to shake his hand.

I left Boston for Wood’s Hole to catch the ferry for Martha’s Vineyard. Jim suggested I leave my van and said he would look after my transportation on the island. He and his wife met me at the dock, and we drove to their house—absolutely beautiful place and location just above the bay and fishing village and all the fishing vessels. Jim owned a few houses in the beach area. There were such nice people! I was walking with Jim down to the beach, and we met a man and his little dog. Jim informed me that this was where they filmed the first movie *Jaws* and that this was the famous man and dog who appeared in the film (well, the dog was famous anyway).

I would go for a daily morning run out of town along the road overlooking the ocean. Quite beautiful! Each morning around 7:00 a.m., I would be up the hill and would observe a long lineup of wild turkeys waiting to cross the road. All vehicle owners from the area knew this point was where the turkeys always crossed. I would watch them and thought the one directing them across would have made a great “traffic turkey police officer.” It was quite interesting to see the way they would all start crossing once the (silent) command was given.

Jim took me on a tour of the Vineyard, and there was so much history there. Many famous people lived there in the summer months, including newscaster Walter Cronkite and singer Billy Joel, who had a house (later sold to singer Carly Simon) above the bay where I ran past daily. One morning while running I caught up to a woman and ran with her for a few minutes exchanging pleasantries but didn’t recognize her. I later realized it was Carly Simon.

Jim took me on a tour to see the Kennedy vacation compound on the island and to the Chappaquiddick Island bridge, where Senator Edward (Ted) Kennedy survived a July 18, 1969 accident that left his passenger Mary Jo Kopechne dead from drowning in the tidal channel after

he drove his car off the bridge. Jim also pointed out the house where the party took place before the accident that fateful night. Jim knew the owners of the house. I stayed with Jim and his wife for a week and a half—it was a perfect time! I left on the ferry for Wood's Hole and then drove straight back to Ottawa.

Without any explanation, I was put back on the beat upon my return, and I didn't ask for an explanation, as that just opens a can of worms. I knew that the likely reason was that the powers-that-be felt I was becoming too well known, rather than fitting into the more normal "police mold" as "one of the guys."

Three years later, Jim invited me to the Vineyard to do a few performances. I agreed to go in July, and my son Anthony accompanied me. He was twelve years old then. I rented a Boler Travel Trailer and pulled it with my Chevy Suburban. We stopped at a trailer park about two hours from Wood's Hole, and we had a great time! Anthony made several new friends that evening in the play area.

I took the trailer and vehicle across on the ferry and drove to Menemsha where we were greeted by Jim and his wife. Anthony and I were given our own rooms. Next morning we walked along the dock and saw all the fishing boats as well as had a tour of Jim's. There was a boat that had just returned from several days of fishing for swordfish. I arranged to have Anthony's picture taken holding a massive swordfish. The boat captain then gave a sword from another fish to a very pleased Anthony.

I was supposed to do a performance at a restaurant called The Hot Tin Roof, which was owned by James Taylor. However, they had to cancel. I did a concert at a hall in Chilmark. The place held approximately 300 people, and it was almost filled to capacity. [I didn't even have to put up a roadblock to get them to enter.] I had bought Anthony a swordfisher's hat with the very long peak, and he wore it that night. He looked fantastic, and he came up and sang the song, "Smurfin' Cowboy." He stole my show!

After the show, he was given the job of selling my albums and tapes, and he did a great job. People were asking him to autograph the albums. Carly Simon's mother, Andrea Heinemann Simon, was there, and he signed one for her. I was very proud of him—and still am. When we returned, I went into the Isle of Skye Recording Studio and recorded a song called "No Smoking" that I co-wrote with E. W. Smith. It was done to a funk rap beat, and Anthony "The Ant" sang with me on that CD. He did the rap part much, much better than I ever could have.

I purchased a new van the following spring, and after school was out I decided to take both sons on another road trip to upstate New York. We stayed three days at a resort that offered rooms decorated in the style of several states or countries of the world. The boys chose Hawaii, and the room was actually like being in Hawaii—it was incredible! Of course, I wanted Ireland, but I was outvoted.

The resort had a very nice dining room, nightclub, and bowling alley. We went bowling. The boys had never bowled before. It was quite an adventure, hoping that they would not throw the ball through the wall or window. We toured around in the area, attended a few garage sales along the highway, and then headed home. We had a great time!

A few years later, our Ottawa Police Male Chorus was invited to Bermuda to do some performances during March Break. I took Darren with me. There were several senior police officials, judges, and Ottawa Mayor Marion Dewar. She was at a conference in Toronto many years later where she fell and died several days after the fall. She was always an advocate for what I was doing regarding my work with music in the schools and community. She was probably responsible for my being able to continue.

There was a hurricane one evening with violent winds. We were in lockdown in our rooms, very scary! The winds were still quite heavy in the morning, and Darren and I tried to go for a walk/run on the beach. It was virtually impossible to walk into the wind. Being from the Ottawa Valley, we are not accustomed to that. Darren had a very good time, the weather notwithstanding, and I was very happy to have him with me.

We went to a Baptist church with several members of the tour. The minister was preaching, and everything appeared normal. Being a Catholic, I am accustomed to everything being quiet except when the congregants respond to a prayer. However, the minister was revving it up a bit, and right behind us a native Bermudan gave out a scream in response to what the minister had just said, and I thought Darren was going to run like hell out of the church. It really scared the bejesus out of him. It startled me as well, however, I have been in many different denominations of churches and have heard such things before.

The next year I was off to perform in Barbados, which I have done for several years, and I told Anthony that if he could save some money (\$200) I would take him with me for two weeks during Christmas Break. He did, and off we went. As I was doing three shows at the Ross Trevor Resorts in St. Lawrence Gap, we were offered lodging there by the owner, Tyrone Clarke. Anthony really hit it off with a boy named John who was the son of the housekeeper at the home of Canadian Deputy Commissioner Brian McAdam and his wife, Mary who is from Dublin. Ant and John would spend their days around the pool or in the “warm” ocean.

On Christmas morning around 9:00, Ant and I were in our room, which was on the ground floor by the pool, when we heard voices and excitement. We went outside, and there was a Barbadian Santa Claus in a white Rolls Royce convertible. What a scene! Unbelievable! I grabbed my Ovation 12-string and came back out and sang, “We Wish You a Merry Christmas” and “Jingle Bells” to a calypso beat. People were coming in off the beach to see what all the excitement was, and they joined in. What a great moment that was!

We departed Barbados on January 2nd and due to bad weather we were held overnight in

Toronto and stayed in a hotel near the airport. We had to be up at 5:00 a.m. for a 7:00 a.m. flight. We made the flight and made it home. Anthony was a very good traveling companion, plus he assisted me setting up and tearing down. He had some good stories to tell his schoolmates.



That's not the end of the Traveling D'Arcy Boys. I am of the opinion that everyone ought to see the Big Apple—New York City. So, I decided to take the boys to New York City during the March Break. Darren was probably 16 and Anthony 12. I had a friend in Binghamton, New York who was an optometrist and who had offered me lodging any time I was passing through. I called him and set it up to stay with him and his wife. So we loaded up my Suburban, and we D'Arcy Boys were on the road again. We left Ottawa around 8:30 a.m. and headed out on our 550-mile trip.

Everything was going according to plan until we were about 25 miles south of Syracuse, NY. We were blindsided by a blizzard—lake-effect snowstorms to which that area is notoriously prone. It began in an instant, just appeared out of nowhere. You cannot stop or pullover under these conditions. If you did, you would likely be rear-ended. I absolutely could not see anything beyond my hood. I was traveling about 20mph. I told the boys to not say a word and not to distract me, and I was totally concentrating on my driving. They never said a word. I had just put four new winter tires on my truck a month earlier, and I was so glad I did. I was so worried and concerned regarding my precious cargo and if anything should happen, especially as Noellie was not happy about our driving in the winter to NYC.

Everything was moving along, no accidents. I looked in my side mirror, and there was a Camaro coming up on my left intending to pass me. I let the vehicle ahead of me take the lead, and I was following them. I assumed we were in the right lane. I suddenly realized we were in the left lane and that the Camaro was driving on the shoulder. He was a car length behind me when I saw his lights go up in the air as he had struck a rock. I reported the accident, but I cannot imagine that person surviving, as he had been going about 30 mph faster than I was. The storm cleared up as quickly as it began, and we continued on our way.



The Ottawa police called a news conference at the police station, and I was speaking to a CBC-Ottawa cameraman named John Sharina. He asked me if I was busy with my music, and I told him I was very busy and commenced to tell him of some of my upcoming performances, including my annual shows in Barbados. I usually opened the Holetown Festival and performed with Barbados police assistance at other venues, such as local elementary and high schools.

He went back to the CBC office and mentioned the Barbados trip to the executive producer Jack Gemmel. Jack had had me on many CBC specials and other performances. He called my

office straight away and left a message. I called him back later, and he said he would like to speak to me about my performances in Barbados. I set up a meeting in my office at the station. He was very interested in the idea, and said CBC would like to send a crew with him producing. I was certainly interested, but said I would have to run it by the chief. (Now that I am retired, it is nice as an entertainer to just accept without worrying about permission.) It made sense though for Ottawa police officers and any other police agencies to get approval from superiors because what they do on their own time reflects on the profession. One wrong inappropriate decision like performing at a bar where criminal elements hang out reflects poorly on all police departments.

I received a call from the chief's office and went up to meet with him. I gave him more details on the trip, and he gave his blessings. I then called Jack, and he started to put it into motion. A date was set in mid-February for a two-week tour of Barbados. I then called my contact who was an inspector in the Barbados police force. He was very excited and was very happy to assist with the school tour. I called my contact with Air Canada and asked if they could assist with transportation. The answer was an immediate yes and an offer of four first-class seats in the upper deck of a Boeing 747. My friend was Hugh Riopelle, Air Canada's government-relations officer. Hugh was very well known across Canada. He was also a very funny man and singer. We have shared the stage many, many times over the years. [The former Transport Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Don Mazankowski also performed with me playing fiddle and singing at private government functions.] I would do shows for them and would in turn be offered tickets to wherever I traveled—99% would be benefits and good publicity for Air Canada. They sent me along with my band to the 1986 Summer Olympics in Vancouver, as well as to Ireland. I would always display a sign "Supported by Air Canada" and place it on stage or in the TV studio when doing interviews. This was very much like growing up on the farm in Sheenboro. We bartered. You assist us with the hay, and we'll help you with the harvest, etc. I still do that today.

I called the show "Calypso Beat." The crew and I arrived in Barbados in peak season. When we arrived, we were met at the terminal by a Barbados police inspector and a sergeant. We called the hotel to confirm our reservations and were told they had no vacancy. They had messed up. So I called my Irish friend from Dublin Mary McAdam (who was the wife of Brian McAdam, the immigration officer and who had a government house at St Lawrence Gap) and told her of our predicament. She said, "Come up and stay with us." Wow! That was very calming and great to hear. So kind of them to do so.

My first performance was in a junior high school just outside of Bridgetown and had approximately 350 students. It was a blast, especially when I did the Irish version of calypso/reggae. The teachers and students were all involved. Of course, I always have messages in my show pertaining to the life skills needed to be successful in life, like choosing your friends very carefully (like attracts like), and the dangers of drugs and alcohol. That was a wonderful day, very uplifting.

The next day we toured around the countryside with the camera crew visiting with the locals. They are very happy islanders. You just have to smile when in their presence. We ended our day on the east coast of the island in Bathsheba. Absolutely fabulous! Many tourists from all over the world, especially Germany. Had a wonderful time that evening at Brian and Mary's, ending with a delicious dinner on the deck overlooking the ocean.

I did several more school performances and a boat cruise. Too soon our two weeks were evaporating, and we were preparing to depart that wonderful spot in the universe. We had a final lunch with Mary and Brian and the Barbados Tourist Bureau before bidding farewell. I will always have great memories of Barbados. I suggest you go visit!

I arrived home to -20° weather, put on the snuggies, hats, scarves, and mittens and headed back to a different Beat. "Calypso Beat" was seen nationally across Canada twice and can be downloaded at <[www.cbc.ca.CalypsoBeat](http://www.cbc.ca.CalypsoBeat)>.

When I went back to work a few days later and strapped on my gun, I realized how very fortunate I am to be able to do the things I do. I can't imagine doing anything else in my life, so fulfilling making a difference through my music and the uniform. I have several colleagues in the department who are absolutely enjoying what they do, and that's the way it ought to be when dealing with the public, even if it doesn't always smell like roses. Everyone can make a difference in other people's lives when they choose to do so. It isn't the grandiose deeds that one does, however. It's all the little things we can do daily, the cashier with the smile, the taxi driver, or bus driver or just someone walking down the street. Be pleasant and smile or just a nod will suffice.



I had an idea (a dream) of one day having my own TV show called "D'Arcy's Beat," a children's/family show. I was aware of the fact that would take a great deal of effort to sell the idea to a network, and as well many weeks and months to prepare, etc., etc. I was ready for the challenge, so I drew up a concept document and set up an interview with Larry Gavin, program director at CHRO/MCTV in Ottawa. We had a very good meeting, and he seemed really interested. It was a novel idea in that I was a police officer who entertained in the schools (kindergarten to high school to universities) and community. He suggested I put together estimated costs, a timeline, etc., and he would run the proposal by the powers that be.

So I contacted lawyer Gordon Henderson at Gowling & Henderson, and he put me in touch with one of the lawyers in his firm to draw up a work-in-progress contract pro bono. Then I wrote a personal request to the chief for permission to use my off-duty time (days-off and holidays) to prepare supporting information for my proposed show. Within a few days, I was told to see my inspector, and we discussed the request. At this time, I was working day-shift only and weekends off. He gave the green light, and I was really surprised, as the requests would usually go down



and up the chain of command. He probably received the green light from the top pending more clarification.

So now that I had the green light, I put my efforts into second gear. Larry called a few days later and stated that Gary Janz, the network manager was on board and that they would require a detailed proposal from me, including sample names of musicians and guests, plus their schedule of times and songs, and that I had to get this proposal to him in time for the fall meeting of the CRTC (Canadian Radio and Television Commission) the body that governs what goes on the air in Canada.

They submitted my proposal along with several other proposed new programs, and in three weeks I received a call saying my proposal had been accepted, so now I'm going to be a TV star. But first some hard work: We agreed that the show would be produced in Pembroke in the newly revamped studios on weekends (8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays). My co-anchor was to be a Chinese-Canadian, Janny Mills from Ottawa. She had performed with me for a few years, and we blended very well together. My guests and I would stay at the Best Western Hotel near the studio, and our expenses would be covered. But first we would travel with the TV crew, producer Dan Fonda, cameraman, lighting technician, and associate producer on the road.

I had confirmed with my guitar player James McCreavy for all studio music. He and I would backup the guests. Jim's dad was born in Ireland and left when he was very young. Jim played all styles and types of music, and we always had a fun time when we performed together. Jim is an amazing, joyful player. He has since moved to West Palm Beach in South Florida and is one of, if not *the* premier jazz players there. Ninety percent of his performances are in Palm Beach. He plays with Clarence Clements from Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band and does gigs for Donald Trump and other wealthy people in Palm Beach.

Our first tour was in early September for two weeks, and we headed west. The first stop was at an elementary school in North Bay. The format was that I would arrive with the TV vehicle and go to the desk and ask for the principal, spend a few minutes with him or her, then go into the gym and do a general assembly, as I had done for years in the Ottawa area. We would always have the teachers identify talent, and I would have them perform with me then interview them, which made them "famous" in their school and community.

We left North Bay and headed north on good old Highway 11 to Haileybury, New Liskeard, and Timmins. Then to Sudbury, Espanola, Blind River, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario before crossing Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan then south to Mackinac Island, which was absolutely incredible. Takes you back in time 150 years. No cars, just buggies and bicycles. I was assisted and escorted while in Michigan by a lieutenant from Michigan State Patrol. He is famous now too. The show was seen deep into Michigan. After three days in the Sault, we were off west towards Wawa and Thunder Bay. If I were ever (not) to go on another honeymoon, I would spend it at the lakehead on Lake

Superior. It is absolutely so beautiful there. My son Anthony came with me on this trip, and he enjoyed it up there too. [All of North America is magnificent!] Peter Fonda, with whom I had done a TV show in Vancouver, informed me that his father, Henry Fonda, had purchased an island in Lake Superior on the Canadian side of the border and that he too agreed with my observations of the lakehead. He spent many summers there.

We arrived back in Ottawa. Parked the CHRO van at the station in Ottawa, and I went back to work chasing (and catching some) bad guys. I worked dayshift all week, and Saturday was to be my first show on set. I was extremely nervous and anxious, as this was it, don't screw it up! I had written out my lines for all the shows that weekend, the songs I would sing, etc. I didn't have a teleprompter the first year, so I had to git 'er right, and git 'er done, D'Arc. Sink or swim!

Janny and Jim met me Friday evening at the TV station in Ottawa, and we drove up to Pembroke, checked in at the hotel, and awaited the arrival of my "Rising Stars" who were to be my first guests and who were also staying at the hotel with their mothers. They were fiddle players and step dancers (at the same time) and had been with my program for two and a half years. Stephanie Cadman has gone onto the world stage. She went off to Dresden, Germany to compete in the international tap dance competition a few years later when she was about sixteen and came back as World Champion. She formed a group, "Bowfire," and has since toured the world several times over. Her mother, Gwen Cadman, taught step and tap dancing, and I took several lessons from her. I put clickers (taps) on a pair of old police shoes, and I still do a little dancing during my shows.

When the Rising Stars arrived, we had a production meeting with them and with the producer and James. We all said our goodnights and went to our respective rooms. I suffered from severe migraines, and my head and eyes started to ache. I took a Fioranal capsule and went to bed at about 11:30 p.m. but could not sleep because I was so anxious. I probably slept only two hours that night. I was a sad-looking dude at breakfast. Jim asked what was wrong. I looked as if I had been drinking all night.

Made it to the studio, did the shows, and everything was fine. Did three more the next day, and all guests showed up, and all in all I had nothing to worry about. I did 26 one-hour shows each year for five seasons (1994–1999). After the first year, the station was purchased by CTV, and I was given a contract extension of another four years—nice retirement package. "D'Arcy's Beat" won the Can-Pro Award from the Canadian Television Programming Association in 2001. However, it occupied a great deal of my time and meant a lot of time away from family. I would not have been able to do all the things I wanted to do had I not been married to the greatest supporter any husband could have. She is sooooo organized and makes fulfilling all her responsibilities look easy. Noellie knows that I appreciate all that she does; however, I just wish to pass this public acknowledgment on to my readers. She is a role model for all other wives. Thanks to her for keeping the home fires burning and for keeping a light on in the window for when I arrive home

in the wee hours of the morning!

I had a live audience of elementary school children who were so easy for me to entertain because of my school performances over many years. I also had special guests from the surrounding area such as police officers, mayors, politicians, musicians, teachers, and so on. We had a veterinarian on one morning, and he brought a lamb with him and was informing the audience about his role as a vet. As he was talking to the kids and camera, the lamb felt it was a good time to relieve itself. The vet knew what was about to occur, but he kept looking at me and the camera, all the while very quietly placing his hand under the lamb's tail to catch the poop, which he kept in his hands for the remainder of the interview. When he is performing on stage or on set with me, Jim and I laughed a lot. Sometimes when it was not even that funny on the set, he would begin to laugh, and then he got me giggling so that I didn't know how I was going to end the interview. However, producer Bob saw what was happening and went to a commercial before I asked the next question.

I set up the Dominic D'Arcy Talent Development Foundation [Rising Stars Program] to assist young people to progress to a career in the entertainment world. The kids perform with me and use my stage as a springboard to the next level. Many have gone on to the world stage of professional entertainment. My show was a great springboard for the Rising Stars in my talent development program to get to the next level. Especially when I interview them on camera, it was important that they not look at their parent; that they instead look for the red light on the camera that is filming them; that they answer the question without saying "yah"; that they wear proper dress and maintain eye contact, etc. We certainly did a great deal of traveling to so many schools that I have lost count. If any reader of this book is interested, episodes of my program "D'Arcy's Beat" and related photographs will be posted on my website <[www.dominicdarcy.com](http://www.dominicdarcy.com)> for downloading for a minimal fee to support the foundation.



### *Arizona*

I attended the Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA) gala in Toronto where I performed. After my performance, the owner-founder of Comstock Records approached me and said he was interested in signing me to his company. We had a lengthy discussion, and I was to call him and meet him at the record company in Scottsdale, Arizona. Well, police work and life got in the way, and I finally called him thirteen years later. He invited me to Arizona to sign the contract. I left Ottawa and flew to Phoenix. He met me at the airport and took me to his office. We socialized for a while, and I did the deed. He offered me worldwide distribution (heavy in Europe) to country radio stations. When we shook hands after I signed, he looked at the video camera and remarked that this police officer does not rush into signing deals; it only took him thirteen years to do so. I eventually started getting playlists from stations all over Europe, Australia, and even Poland, where

my music was being played, and I even received some royalty checks.

I thought that while I was in Arizona I might as well tour around, so I rented a vehicle and drove to Tucson where I spent the night before driving down to El Paso, Texas and then thought what the heck and drove across the Rio Grande (which is now nothing more than a large creek) to meet the chief of police in Juarez, Mexico.

I drove across the border, located the police station, and parked my vehicle in a spot I assumed was legal. I was just walking away from the car when I was approached by a police officer who said that if I parked there, it would cost me. I responded that the sign said it was legal, and what do you mean by “it would cost me”? I knew very well what he meant. I informed him that I was a Canadian police officer and that I had a meeting with the chief. His demeanor changed, and he said I could leave it there. I did get a chance to meet the chief and exchanged pins and told him I was also a singer and presented him with a CD of the Ottawa Police Male Chorus. I also told him about the officer and my parked car. He locked his office and came out to look where I had parked. He confirmed it was legal to park there. [The officer must have seen us coming and gone on to greener parking pastures in search of \$\$\$.]

I returned to my hotel in El Paso at about 4:30 p.m. and went to my room, which was on the second floor facing the main street. I was looking out the window that overlooked the street and witnessed an accident. A male driver ran a red light and struck the driver's side of a vehicle driven by a female. Both drivers got out, and he was screaming at her that it was *she* who had gone through a red light. They argued, and he pushed her. No one came to her assistance even though crowds of people were going home from work. I ran downstairs to the front desk and reported the situation, identifying myself as a Canadian police officer and told him to call the police. I then went out to the scene of the accident and shouted to the male (who appeared to have been drinking and was becoming increasingly violent) that I was a police officer—I did say Canadian but not too loudly—but he didn't stop his aggression, instead he struck the female in the face. I grabbed him and pushed him back against his car, and then I heard the sirens approaching. I took off back to my room. I didn't want to be a witness and have to come all the way back from Canada to testify. I left a note in a sealed envelope with the front desk addressed to the police department stating that I was a Canadian police officer and that the guy had run a red light causing the accident and that I had seen him strike the female driver. I did not say which city I was from. I left the following morning to drive back to Scottsdale.

I was taking the long way back to Scottsdale and going up through New Mexico, and I thought that since I have another 15 days, why not go up to Montana and visit my uncle in Missoula and Peter Fonda in Livingston. So I headed back to my hotel in Scottsdale and packed my things to take with me. I asked the manager if I could store some of my belongings at the hotel for ten days or so, and he agreed. I headed north and spent the first night and next day at the

Grand Canyon—absolutely magnificent! I stayed at the canyon until sunset and thought I might as well see sunrise, so I headed back towards Flagstaff but could not find a place to stay. I kept going for a hundred miles or so and stayed in Flagstaff. I was up at 3:30 a.m. and headed back to the canyon in time to see the sunrise there. Again magnificent!

At 7:30 a.m. I departed and drove to Salt Lake City, Utah and stayed there that night. Terrific view of the Rockies in the distance. Next morning I headed out on the road that led to Yellowstone National Park. I drove through the entrance with its welcome sign and kept driving up and up and up for two hours. Now the weather was changing drastically: much colder and starting to snow quite heavily. I had rented a Pontiac Grand Am, and it was very high off the ground, which helped with the snow. I drove upwards for another two hours or so, and now the weather was really bad. I could hardly see beyond the hood, and no other vehicles were on the road. I had plenty of food and water, my walking boots, winter pants, and gloves. However, I was becoming a little alarmed. I was now pushing snow with my bumper. Just as I thought I was going to be forced to stop, up to my right was a park ranger station. I pulled into the lot, got out, and two rangers (one male, one female) met me at the door and asked where the hell I had come from. The park had been closed for four hours and hadn't I seen the flashing lights? If the lights are flashing you need tire chains, and if it's really bad, the entrance to the park is blocked. I said I had seen nothing of the kind. They asked where I was going, and I replied Montana but first had wanted to see Old Faithful in Wyoming gushing. He said that road was closed and I'd have to go left towards Madison and follow the river down to Livingston, Montana.

I left and drove west for 2½ hours before coming to a sign that says Continental Divide—meaning water to the left flows to the Pacific Ocean, and water to the right flows to the Atlantic Ocean. I turned right and followed the river for some distance through Madison County and finally arrived in Livingston. I took a motel room for the night and in the morning called Peter Fonda from a GM dealership, coincidentally where he buys his vehicles, and we had a wonderful talk. When we had done a TV show in Vancouver together, he played my 12-string guitar in the Green Room, and he really liked it. I told him he could have it if he arranged for me to spend an evening with his sister Jane Fonda. At the time, he had said if I were ever up his way to please call him and come for a visit, and he wrote his address and phone number in my agenda book. I told him I was in town and if it were convenient that I'd like to drop by for a bit. He said I could try, but he was snowed in. He was located about a mile from the side road and about ½-mile up the mountain. I did try, but the snow was too deep and still drifting.

He was writing his memoir at that time. I congratulated him regarding his daughter Bridget Fonda's burgeoning success in the movie world. We also spoke of Alanis, one of my Rising Stars, who had just released her hit song, "Jagged Little Pill." I had a lifelong fascination with the movies and was privileged to have some personal experience with several movie productions: I played

the part of the singing sheriff (Higgins) in an unreleased movie starring Dolly Parton titled, *The Wishing Well* (2000), and appeared in the TV-movie *The Perfect Neighbor* (2005), starring Barbara Niven and Perry King. I also appeared as a British NATO General in the CBC movie *H2O* (2005), starring Paul Gross and again as a police officer in *Light Years Away* (2006), which starred Eric Roberts and Christopher Knight.



I departed Livingston and headed for Missoula, Montana to visit Uncle Earl and his kids. His wife, Ella, was my mother's sister who had passed away a few years earlier. I had given him a head's up from Livingston that I was going to visit him. He was a chemical engineer who left the Sudbury-Espanola area several years ago to work in Montana. It was so nice to see him after all those years! We had lunch, and his kids came over to visit. One of his granddaughters was singing in a school concert that evening and invited me to come. She was only twelve years old, but man could she sing! It's in the genes. I told her that if she were back in Ottawa, she could be the next Alanis Morissette. I never did hear if his granddaughter pursued a singing career.

I had a nice dinner with Uncle Earl and his son, and then we went to bed at about 10:30 p.m. I was to stay with him for four or five days. At 11:30pm I was lying in bed thinking that my son Darren is living in Vancouver, and it's about 1,200 miles away. I'm going to Vancouver. The calling was too strong not to go. So I rapped on Uncle Earl's door and told him what I had to do. He understood. Up next morning at 7:00am, and Uncle Earl and his son took me for breakfast on the way to the interstate.

I left about 10:30 a.m. and headed north on the interstate. Cloudy day, but not too cold. At about 4:30 p.m. it became very cloudy and gray, and I thought, oh no, not another storm. It was getting quite dark, and about 6:00 p.m. it became really dark and much colder. In Montana, there was then no speed limit after dark. I was driving about 60 mph most of the time, and people were whizzing by me so fast I thought they had wings. The rain turned to freezing rain, and it was extremely dangerous—you had to keep going. I was so focused that my eyes were glued to the pavement, yet there were still idiots who were passing me at high speeds. I was following the transport trucks going 40 mph or so. As I got farther into the freezing rain, I must have seen 20 to 30 vehicles in the ditch with their rear ends up in the air. But “me and my transport boys” just kept moving along.

Finally, we started to descend from the mountain, and it was much milder. As I drove into Seattle, it was pouring rain, and I was at the tail end of rush hour, so traffic moved slowly. Finally, the traffic cleared and the rain stopped, and I was on my way to the Canadian border. As I crossed the border, I pulled over and called Darren's house, and Alisa, his wife, answered. I told her not to tell him, but I'd be there in a couple of hours. I told her that when she answered the buzzer to

tell Darren if he asks that it's the paperboy. I rang, and she buzzed me in. I had my video camera on and ready when he answered the door. She told him to get the door, and when he opened it, there was dad (tired dad) with my camera in his face. His first words were, "Where the f\*\*k did you come from?" What a nice moment. As we live so far away from one another, it was just so nice to see him! And out comes Missie Noëlie, his daughter. She was as confused as he was. Where did you come from, Grandpa? I came up the mountain and leveled off in Vancouver. It was so worth the drive and the weather conditions! Little Noëlie spends three weeks with us in Ottawa every summer. We cherish her visits.

Stayed three days and was very emotional looking in the rearview mirror and seeing Vancouver and my precious son, daughter-in-law, and granddaughter fading away in the distance. Darren's wife, Alisa, is always so inviting when we visit!

Back on the road again, heading south out of Seattle and on to Oregon. Weather has finally settled down for a while at least. I'm approaching Fresno, California, when I hear this long emergency beeping tone on the radio. The governor of California comes on the air to warn of an approaching tornado that is heading straight for me! I drove another 10–12 miles looking for a safe place to pull over. I entered the city limits of Fresno, and as I turned off the highway, I found a great spot. I saw an old stone church, and I pulled in beside it so close that my side mirror was touching the stone. This was a very solid old building, so I figured it was relatively safe there. The radio was still warning people to take immediate cover, as the storm was coming from the south leaving plenty of damage in its wake.

I said to myself, "Self, what am I, a storm magnet?" The winds were really picking up, and then in an instant, it hit. There were garbage cans, bicycles, and all sorts of things flying by and over me. Now, I am not used to storms like this. The wind speed kept at the max for about seven or eight minutes, and then it passed and everything was calm after about another five minutes. I escaped another disaster. The radio said that the storm hit Hwy. 20, which ran parallel to the interstate I had been on, 15 miles to the south and had left plenty of damage.

I stopped for lunch and tried to reach Alanis again in Los Angeles but no answer. Her mother had said that Alanis would not be back from touring by the time I reached LA. So I pulled a left turn and went to Vegas and spent four hours there just to see the sights. Gambled \$20 at Caesar's Palace, drove across the Hoover Dam, and headed down Rte. 66 towards Scottsdale. Could not find lodging under \$500/night in Vegas. Found a truckers' motel on Rt. 66 and stayed the night.

Headed out the next morning to Scottsdale. The landscape was just as it is in the movies. I don't know why the state doesn't burn up it's so danged hot. Made it to my hotel, checked in, and called my Irish friend Allan Cranny from Bray, Ireland. He had been in Scottsdale doing animation for Fox Studios (he moved to Canada several years ago). He too is a musician and has performed with me. He played mandolin and guitar on several of my CDs. He took me for a ride up in the

desert rock in his Jeep. Went back to the hotel and had just gotten in the door when my wife called to say the Chinese Embassy had called asking me to perform in China in two weeks at an international televised conference in Beijing. I called the cultural official back to say I would go and that I would be back in Ottawa in two days.



I had been invited to China several times before; however, the timing was not always convenient. Being an honorary member of the Canada-China Friendship Society, I had the opportunity to meet officials at the Chinese Embassy in Ottawa. I had learned several Chinese songs and spoke a little Mandarin. I went to the embassy to have the counselor prepare a request to the chief for me to travel to China. I picked it up and delivered it to the chief. He called me to his office for some clarification and more detail. He then called me about two hours later and gave the okay “on duty.” The chief and his executive officers felt it would be great for the police and Canada. I met the following day with Mr. Liu, and he gave me more information on the visit and had a member of his staff prepare my visa. The 1997 event was called “Rainbow Around the World” and would be held in Beijing. Most countries throughout Asia, Europe, and North America would be represented. I got together with the person who was the director of the Chinese Children’s Choir and who had taught me some songs to sing with the kids. I took another crash course and felt I was capable enough not to embarrass Canada. One of the songs I learned from another Chinese speaker was called, “In That Place Far Away.” I learn other languages phonetically. This one looked like this: ZAI NA YAO YUAN-DE DE FONG/YO WAY HAO GU, NIANG.

Arrangements were completed, and I was ready to fly. I left Ottawa and flew to Vancouver where we had a 1½-hour stopover. I called Darren and Noëlie before reboarding the plane. I was assigned a seat at the very back of the plane on China Air. I thought I would see if I could get a better seat, so I got the attention of the flight attendant and asked her if she could upgrade me. She said there were no other seats available. I took out a picture of Dr. Norman Bethune and showed it to her, informing her that I was his grandson. She looked at the picture and then at me and said she’d be right back. She came back with the lead flight attendant and told me they’d found an empty seat in first class. So up I go to first class and had a row all to myself. Dr. Bethune was so well known, he was like a saint in China. He was famous as a hero in the People’s Republic of China for his impact on Sino-Canadian relations. He went to China in 1938 and won immortality for his service as a battlefield surgeon in the war against Japanese invaders.

We arrived in Beijing, and in the arrivals area of the airport I saw a Chinese woman holding a sign, “Dominic Darchey.” I approached her and identified myself. They placed my bags and guitar case in the trunk of the limo and said we had to go to the TV station to meet with Mrs. Ru, who had initially requested that I come to China. She was the executive producer of the show in which



I was to participate. She worked for Beijing TV. I thought, wow, after being in the air for so long that I would have been taken to my hotel first. We had the meeting and were leaving the studio, and I thought Great, now I can get some sleep. Wrong! She said we were going out for dinner. I was so tired at this point (it had been a 28-hour journey) that I didn't care. We had a wonderful time with dinner guests and fine-tasting authentic Chinese food. After dinner was over, I asked if she was taking me to my hotel, and she said yes.

I slept for twelve hours and then was met downstairs at the restaurant by Mrs. Ru and a guide, who was also a very nice woman, very professional. We discussed the show, and they took me to the 2,000-seat theater where the show was being held. Absolutely beautiful! I waited for my turn and had my run through, then they showed me to my private dressing room, and then they took me back to my hotel for a little rest. My guide, who was a former major in the army, arrived with a driver, and they took me to the Forbidden City. Everything in Beijing is so very old. Back to the hotel for a rest.

I came downstairs and sat in the lobby for about ten minutes before deciding to check out my shadow. I noticed that since I had arrived there were two men sort of glancing at me. One was dressed as a bellboy. So I decided to take a stroll outside the hotel, as it was a very large property to walk around. I then went to the edge of the sidewalk and sort of looked around and saw one of the shadows pretending he was walking to the flowerbed. I expected to be watched. It's quite fascinating to observe the traffic, bikes and cars. The boulevard out front had twelve lanes with a boulevard in between, and it was filled, constantly on the move. Then inside those vehicular lanes there were two lanes for bike traffic, and inside that, there is a very wide sidewalk for pedestrians. There is a rhythm to all that traffic, and it seems to work.

That evening, I was invited with my guide to the Canadian Embassy for dinner. It was lovely. I did a few songs a cappella.

Another night I had dinner on my own at the hotel and was entertained by two young musicians playing classical music on the violin and piano. I was on the thirteenth floor, and when I looked out the window, I could not see the street because of the air pollution. I had to keep my windows closed; and, for exercise, I would run down and up thirteen flights of stairs several times a day. The hotel staff must have thought this white boy must be crazy, but it was a good workout.

The big night had arrived! I was taken to the theater at 5:30 p.m. and went to my dressing room to hang up my uniform. There was a sound check, and all was ready to go. A great deal of activity, as there were probably fifty people in the show. Five minutes before I was to go on, I changed my mind on wearing my dress uniform and quickly changed back into my white shirt, bowtie, dark navy blazer with the police crest, slacks, and shiny black shoes. It was a snap decision. My inners were saying they might not receive you as well if you're wearing a police uniform because the police are not as well respected in China as they are in North America.

They introduced me as Canada's Singing Policeman (加拿大的歌声警察 Jiānádà de gēshēng jǐngchá). I spoke in Mandarin for a bit and introduced myself further in English and explained what I was all about. A translator translated for the audience.

Accompanied by thirty choreographed female dancers in lovely gowns, I started my song "In That Place Wholly Far Away" (在那遥远的地方, first line: *Zai na yaoyuan de difang*), and the place just erupted. Just writing this gives me shivers. The audience stayed on their feet for most of the song. (That was okay with me—in case I made a mistake they wouldn't hear it.) I was so overcome by that reception! After the show, Beijing TV and other media representatives interviewed me and asked why I had chosen that particular song. I answered that when I was with the Chinese person in Ottawa who taught me the song, I asked him to present me with several songs and explain their meanings for me to choose from among them. I certainly did not wish to offend 1.3 billion people, and the first song that was presented to me is the one I sang. I kept coming back to that song. I must have listened to thirty others. The reason the audience were applauding and shouting (and some crying) was that the man who had written the poem that became the song's lyrics was an aristocrat in a famous, wealthy Peking (now Beijing) family. He left all his wealth and power, moved to Mongolia, and fell in love with a shepherdess, never to return to Beijing. Two years before I arrived in China, Wang Luobin from Taipei put music to the poem, and it became a major hit. The old poet had just died a few months before I arrived. I'm a big believer in listening to my instincts as a human being, entertainer, and police officer. I am seldom wrong. Sometimes I am told no, but I go ahead anyway. Some people say it's the promptings of instincts, God, your angels, your guides, helpers or the universe. It's all of the above.

I attended the conference and met some people I knew from the CBC. It was a huge event. My guide wanted to show me the sights and sounds of Beijing, so we went to Tiananmen Square and hired a rickshaw. We drove around for ninety minutes. That was a great day!

The morning of my departure, my guide and the BTV people came to my hotel room to thank me for my participation in their event. Mrs. Ru asked me the question as to how many people saw the TV show. I estimated that Beijing's population was about 20 million and that probably at least 2 million saw the show. She informed me that it was also fed to China Central Television (CCTV) with an estimated audience of 350 million. It was broadcast across China. Wow! She brought me so many gifts that it embarrassed me: 13 CDs, BTV tiepins and cufflinks, sweaters, and more. There was no way I could take all of what she gave back to Canada. I was humbled that she and her team would take the time after such a big week hosting the conference to come see me off. I truly am a fortunate man. [On the heels of this successful and enjoyable trip in 1997, I accepted an invitation in 1999 to return to China to perform at the Great Wall Festival representing Canada. This festival was also televised on CCTV and reached an audience of 450 million.]

When they left, my guide and I looked at all the gifts, and I offered some to her, but she said

she could not accept. I guess it was her old army training. So I went out into the hall to find some maids and called them into the room. They chose two items apiece. I kept the rest. Beautiful CDs they were!

I arrived home safely into the bosom of my family and then went back to work the very next day. It was good to be back in uniform again and back in the schools and community. I had just booked on the air when I heard another unit asking for assistance near the Civic Hospital. A patient the officer was escorting to a police car for transport to the Royal Ottawa (psychiatric) Hospital had bolted out the door and made a run for it. I answered the call for backup and met with the officer on Parkdale Avenue just south of the Civic, and he informed me which direction the patient had headed. I circled around the area hoping I would find him. Nope. I stopped about two blocks from where he was last seen and waited there for 5–6 minutes. The other officer said he thought the patient was heading my way. Sure enough, there he was coming over a backyard fence and running like a scared deer. I shouted to him to stop, which made him run even faster. I tried to cut him off with my van, and in doing so he ran into the right front fender, got up, and kept running. We chased him down in a backyard, and the officer put him on the ground.

This scene was very reminiscent of a situation several years earlier when, as an OPP officer, Cst. John R. (Bob) Maki, was escorting a prisoner to the Royal Ottawa Hospital's Forensic Unit, the prisoner overpowered the officer, grabbed his gun, and fatally shot him. So I was very aware of that possibility. Even after our person was on the ground, he was still struggling to escape and was out of control. The officer took out his pepper spray as I attempted to hold the person down. He pepper sprayed him, handcuffed him, and put him in the cruiser to drive him to the hospital. As we were putting him in the cruiser, the homeowner drove into the laneway. It was quite a startling moment for him. He saw us and quickly got back into his car and backed down into the street. The patient was taken to the Royal and turned over to the staff there. A “good” ending to what could have been a “bad” day!



## CANADA/USSR

I have been directly involved with many different organizations and have chaired many boards of directors and committees regarding fundraising for organizations such as ROTEL, Children's Treatment Centre, CHEO Telethon, Heart and Stroke Foundation, Kidney Foundation, Diabetes Foundation, and many others. In 1985 I became a member of Canada-Russia Friendship Society, whereby we attempted to bridge the gap between our two societies. The board chairperson was an engineer, and we met monthly at his house in the Glebe. Some of the members were teachers, nurses, or professionals in government and the private sector. The vice-chair was Mr. Kuzma Tarasoff, who was of Russian descent. We held numerous functions that the community at large

was invited to attend. I usually supplied the entertainment and sound and lighting. We also invited people from the USSR to Canada in an exchange program. The first one I was involved in was the Singing Doctors from Moscow. All were surgeons, four males and one female. They were met at the airport by committee members and taken to their hotel. Musical appearances were arranged for them in Ottawa and Toronto. I performed with them in Ottawa. They were fabulous! All played Russian instruments and sang. Very well received by those in attendance and the TV networks.

The plan was to go to Moscow and record a CD with them at Melodiya Studios, which was formerly a very old church before communism arrived. I was taken there by my guide when I was in Moscow later on a tour. Well, when the walls came down on communism and the USSR was in a state of dissolution and turmoil, I canceled my participation. It surely would have been a great blend of Irish-country and Russian music. Oh, well, possibly in another lifetime.

A Soviet opera singer I invited to Canada that same year performed in Ottawa at a few functions and did some TV interviews. After I heard him sing, I felt I never wanted to sing again. Wow! I invited him to my house, and when he started singing, my two dogs Pharaoh (a Doberman) and little Kandy (a terrier) ran upstairs and hid under the beds he was so loud. I thought some of the neighbors were going to call the police with a noise complaint. I arranged to have him come to the police station for a tour and to meet the chief, who presented the singer with police ball-cap and sweater. He sang for the chief, and I thought the windows were going to explode. Then we went down to the lobby at lunchtime, and he played my guitar and sang. He was very well received.

In May 1989 fifteen members of our group arranged a tour of the USSR that included stops in Leningrad (St. Petersburg) and Moscow and environs. I was to do two performances. I made a personal visit to the chief with my request to go (off-duty), and it was granted. Some members of the media became aware of my tour and did a few interviews. A few weeks later, I received a call from Ottawa businessman David Smith. He said he and some friends would like to support me financially and asked how much money the airfare cost. It cost \$2000. He called me a few days later and gave me four checks totaling \$2000. He went with the idea to three friends, and each of them contributed \$500: Mayor Jim Durrell, former mayor Marion Dewar (1928–2008), and National Capital Commission chair Jean Piggott (1924–2012), whose family owned Morrison-Lamothe Bakery.

I was performing at Grace Manor, a senior retirement home, in January 2012, and I was aware Jean was living there and was quite ill. However, she came down with her husband, Arthur, to see my show. She and her sister Grete Hale were supporters of what I was attempting to do in society. [Of course, Dave Smith and Jim Durrell were also very involved in our community.] I gave Jean a peck on the cheek and a hug, and I had the feeling I might never see her again. Six days later, she died. What a great loss to our community!

I had first met Arthur Piggott several years earlier when I was traveling west on the Ottawa

River Parkway (later renamed the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway) in my police cruiser. As I just passed the Chaudière Bridge, I observed a vehicle that was traveling east hit the curb and stop. I did a U-turn and came back to the vehicle. The male driver had suffered a heart attack and appeared to be in bad shape, so I informed dispatch I would rush him to the nearby Civic Hospital. Emergency personnel met us at the entrance and began cardio/pulmonary resuscitation. Arthur survived, and he and Jean never forgot that event. As for me, it was all in a day's work. That's what we police do.



I was on a day-off and was playing golf with Allan Morissette, Alanis's father, and her twin brother, Wade, when my cell phone rang. It was my inspector "Big Dan" McFall requesting (ordering) me to attend his office at the station ASAP. I informed Allan that I had been ordered to the station and that it sounded very important. All the way to the station I wondered, "What now?" Had I been under surveillance again, or...?? I was extremely nervous; for what was I again being investigated?

Inspector McCall asked me to sit down; then he closed the door. I could hardly speak my mouth was so dry, and all I could think was what the heck was it this time. He asked if I had accepted money from Smith, Durrell, Dewar, and Piggott for my trip to the USSR, and I said that I had and asked what's the problem? He stated that the chief said I had to return the money. I was stunned. These were four pillars of the community who were supporting my attempts to make a difference in the world. No explanation was given. Dan just shrugged. I really liked him, as did all of our platoon. He was fair, jovial, and a very good police officer. He was a supporter of what I was doing. I called all the donors and said I had been ordered to give back their money. I could not accept it as a policeman. They were confused, and Dave Smith refused to take his money back. Dan said I should quit the force and that I was good enough to make it in the music industry.



We were bused to Montréal's Dorval Airport and took an Aeroflot flight to Moscow, then changed planes to proceed to Leningrad on a smaller aircraft. Now that was an adventure. It appeared that no one had to wear seatbelts. There were passengers with hens and roosters in cages. What a racket they made, especially on take-off and landing. When we arrived, we took cabs to the hotel. We were all on the fifth floor. Outside on every floor there was a woman (who looked like the Gestapo) at a desk at the only elevator that worked. That person checked the IDs of everyone coming up on the elevator or leaving the floor.

We assembled down on the main floor for breakfast. Well, that too was very interesting. I don't recall what we were served, but it was not very much. I went down the street to what we call a farmers' market to purchase some fruit and vegetables (there was none served at meals). I came back with five very small tomatoes, not much else to choose from. I had to share them with my

tablemates at lunch. After lunch, I spoke to the manager and stated that I was a Canadian police officer and that I would like to meet with a Russian police officer to exchange some police items. He said he would look after it, “Comrade.”

I was performing in the main hall of the hotel that evening and went in to meet my backup band to give them the music scores. They were a quartet and looked and sounded like the Beatles. They were very good musicians. We all had dinner in this main hall. It was such a beautiful and interesting room—mostly marble and large paintings! After dinner the band performed for about 45 minutes, and then they introduced me. In preparation for this trip, I had studied Russian for three months and had also learned a few songs, including “Kalinka.” I sang “Kalinka” and several more songs in Russian that night, but I was thinking that this was not working, as they were just staring at me. I am used to the audience being a little more responsive. As this was my first show, I thought it’s going to be a long night. So I switched gears. Stevie Wonder had a worldwide hit with a song called “I Just Called to Say I Love You,” and before I sang it, I spoke a little about love and understanding between people and nations, no matter how different we are. I introduced the song, and the band backed me up. About 30 seconds into the song, they were still just listening to me, no reaction, no emotion. So, I thought, D’Arc, change gears again. I left the stage with my wireless head mike and Ovation 12-string and went over to a couple at a table in front of the stage and looked at the middle-aged woman and asked through an interpreter if her husband were jealous, and she replied, “Niet (no).” So, I sat on her knee and sang the chorus, and the place went nuts. Everyone started to sing along. Then I did a Beatles song, “Hard Day’s Night,” which most knew. I walked among them dancing, and by the end of the song, most were on the floor dancing. They love to dance. They waltz like they’re all professional dancers. The manager later informed me that they were listening, and once I gave them permission, they all joined in. It was a good time for all.

The band had very old equipment, and some of their equipment was homemade. The guitar and bass players had instrument stands that were homemade from pieces of steel and iron. They were impressed with my guitar and case. I left my guitar stand for the guitarist. They invited me to the bass player’s home to join them after the show, and I agreed. (I ought not to have.) We took taxis, and driving there I was looking for landmarks to identify where I was going and what direction. Not to be. Everything looked the same—streets, buildings, etc. We arrived at the apartment, had some food, and played music. One of the wives asked me where I was from, and I said Canada, to which she replied, “There’s no such place as Canada. You are all American puppets.” I said that wasn’t true, that we are all North Americans, but we are not US Americans. She asked me what I did, and I said I was a police officer in Ottawa. She responded, saying, “No, you are not. You are a spy for the Americans!” It’s absolutely astounding how the people from the former USSR were brainwashed! So, at just after midnight I said I needed a ride back to my hotel, to which they replied that I could not leave until 6:00 a.m. because all the bridges are up from midnight to 6am

over the Bay of Finland for the ships unloading and reloading to return to sea.

Now I was in a defensive mode and knew I could not remain with them. Oh, oh, what to do? I said I would go out and get a taxi or hitchhike, and one replied, “You would not be out there a half-hour before you would get picked up by the KGB. I looked out the window, and the only vehicles on the street were little black cars patrolling the streets. So, I had no choice. I stayed on the couch by the window, awake all night. At 6:05 a.m., I snuck out and walked down to the street not knowing which way the hotel was and stuck my thumb out. I was there only five minutes until a small Lada stopped, and the driver asked where I was going. I told him what the hotel looked like because I could not recall its name. He was a very tall man—way too tall for a Lada—and he spoke English very well. I trusted him and gave him \$10.00, and he was very appreciative. Now, the challenge was to get past the Gestapo at the elevator without being noticed because you must be on your floor before midnight. I snuck through the lobby and took the stairs, hoping she was either asleep or away from her post. I reached the fifth floor, and she was not to be seen. I was lucky! I entered my room very quietly and slept for a few hours. Then I went down for another delicious breakfast (not!).

As I was coming down the stairs, I observed this very tall man in a black suit and tie, and I just knew he was waiting for me. As I entered the restaurant, he approached me and inquired if I was Mr. D’Arcy. My knees almost buckled, and I said, “Yes.” He asked me to go with him, and I followed him into the manager’s office. Another suit guy who was behind the desk instructed me to be seated—at which point if I were in Canada, I’d have asked for a lawyer. I was really very concerned. He started by saying, “You are a Canadian police officer.” I said I was. He said he understood I was looking for a Soviet police hat, and I said I was indeed. From under his desk, he presented me with a brand-new police hat and badge and all kinds of medals. I said, “Spasiba (thank you)” and took some CDs and Canadian pins out of my shoulder bag and gave them to him. Well, that episode ended on a positive note!

Kuzma Tarasoff and I went to the Leningrad mayor’s office and presented him with a token from Jim Durrell, Ottawa’s mayor. He was a very nice person, and he too spoke English very well. We returned to the hotel and had a nap before going down to the lobby to socialize with our group. After dinner Kuzma suggested that he and I go for a ride in the Tube (underground streetcars). So we walked to the center of Leningrad and walked around for an hour or so before descending to take the underground trains. It was unlike anything I had seen before. Absolutely beautiful, the painted murals on the walls and ceilings were unbelievable! (They were even more magnificent in Moscow, if that’s possible.) We came up after a few hours, and it was still daylight. I asked what time it was. It was 11:00 p.m., and it was still daylight! I had forgotten that we were so far north that because of the earth’s axial tilt this region experienced Midnight Twilight during the summer months.

As we were walking down the street heading for the hotel, Kuzma suggested that we stop at a restaurant to sample some “real” Russian cuisine. We went into a restaurant, and once we got in the door, I felt uneasy. I looked to my left and saw a half-dozen or so tough-looking guys, and I did not like the vibes I was getting from them. I said, “Let’s get out of here,” and we had just made it to the sidewalk when all of them came running out chasing another man. They caught him and struck and kicked him until he fell to the ground, and then they kicked his head. Kuzma felt my anger and sensed I was going into police mode, and he said, “Dominic, don’t get involved.” The guy was trying to get away, but they kept kicking and punching him. I don’t think I have ever seen anything so vicious. They left him on the street, probably unconscious, and I don’t think anyone called the police. Very upsetting.

The next day we went to visit the Hermitage Museum. You would need three months to see and admire all that is collected there. The signs and security personnel said no cameras, but I waited for the right moment and snapped a few photos. There are signs of the German army’s entry to Leningrad. There were bullet holes all around that area. The Russian army held them off.

After spending six days in Leningrad, we were off on the “midnight” train to Moscow at 11:00 p.m. I had a berth, which I shared with our guide who snored like a Russian bear, keeping me up most of the night. I finally had enough and got dressed and went to the window in the hall around 4:30 a.m., and at that time the train began slowing down as we were approaching the suburbs of Moscow. It must have taken the train two hours to go 20–30 miles. But I got a chance to see all the neighborhoods leading into Moscow. We arrived at our hotel around 10:00 a.m. and checked in. I had my own room this time.

I had a performance at the Canadian embassy the next day. Our entire group was invited to dinner and the show. It went really well. The US Marines, the embassies of Sweden, and other European countries were invited. The Swedish guys came on stage and sang some national songs, as did the Americans. Those guys like to have fun.

Rather than take the limo that I arrived in to return to the hotel, I suggested to Kuzma who spoke fluent Russian that we take the train and meet people. We walked from the embassy to a shopping area called the “Arbut.” If you have ever been to Ottawa’s Spark Street Mall, this would be about four times the size in length and width. Thousands of pedestrians! I was carrying my Ovation guitar, and people kept telling me to play it. Well, I did not wish to be arrested in Moscow for breaking any laws, so I asked Kuzma to please go to the police officers standing on the corner (it could have as well been any city in North America; it’s what we do: observe and be present) and tell them I’m a Canadian police officer and ask if it would be permissible to sing a few songs. The inspector said, “*Xopouo (Kharasholokay).*”

By that time there were a few hundred people standing around. So, I took my guitar out of its case, and as I strapped it on, the crowd went, “Ooooooh!” There was a woman in her thirties beside



me who was in tears looking at me. She was just so excited that a Canadian was going to sing a song. I chose an international hit song “I Have a Dream,” written by the Swedish group ABBA and that I had just recorded as a cover. Well, the people were pushing to get close, and the police came over and held them back. I don’t think that was because of me personally; however, they perceived me as being free and able to do anything and go anywhere. That woman began crying when I introduced the song and said that everyone ought to dream and that someday these dreams may come true. Most knew the chorus of the song and sang along. I did a song I wrote for Canada Day on Parliament Hill called, “My Canada.” I taught them the chorus, and they sang along. Even the police officers were “jiggling.” They are a very musical culture. I gave the four constables each my CD, and when they told the inspector, he sent one of them back to get one for him. They also gave me some pins, and I gave each one a Canadian pin and an Ottawa police pin.

My guide the next morning was a 24-year-old student, and she arrived with the little limo, a Volga. She took me to an assembly near the Politburo—their parliament—where I was to entertain approximately a hundred people assembled in a theater-style room. I don’t recall what it was for; however, I enjoyed myself. I sang six songs, one being my song “My Canada,” plus “Farewell to Nova Scotia” and “I’se the B’y,” which some were prompted to dance to, and they did. One other song was Johnny Cash’s “Fulsom Prison Blues,” which most of them knew. My presentation was well received. I also invited them to Canada’s capital and said that I would put them in the back of my police car and show them around the city.

The next day, I was shown around Moscow. It is such an old and beautiful city, very active! I was taken to Red Square, and as we were coming from the north side to the south to see Lenin’s tomb, the police assumed I was going to walk through the square and he blew his whistle at us violently and shouted to us to go around (all around the world for a shortcut). We went to the tomb, but you could stop only for a few seconds, and if you did, as I observed, you would be pushed forward.

That night, I had a performance at an Armenian restaurant in the extreme south end of Moscow. It was one of the first capitalist businesses in Moscow. It was a fabulous evening. What an amazing restaurant, what an amazing culture! I performed for an hour. I sang all sorts of songs and even had the owner on stage singing an old Middle Eastern song called, “Ya Mustafa,” which I knew. It was a 45-minute drive to get there. In Canada it would have taken 20 minutes. Plenty of traffic.

I also did a performance at a very large park in the southwest section of Moscow as part of a large cultural event. There were several groups from all over the USSR, and all in full colorful costumes. It was magnificent! Some of my songs were a mix of “I’se the B’y,” “Farewell to Nova Scotia,” and “Alouette.” I had the Hungarian Ladies Group, all 35 of them, join me for these songs. Magic, just magic! They danced and sang and shouted. My final song was “The Friend-SHIP Song,” which I co-wrote with poet Ed Smith:

This world of ours is just a ship  
 Sailing through the sky  
 And countries are just cabins  
 To be kept by you and I  
 On this ship are many duties  
 That we, as shipmates, share  
 But first of all we must begin  
 By learning how to care.

*[Chorus]*

For people are just people  
 No matter where you go  
 And the friend ship seed is planted  
 In all of us to grow  
 It must be watered with compassion  
 And fertilized with care  
 'Til our love becomes a treasure  
 For all of us to share.  
 This cosmic ship we call our own  
 Needs all of us to sail  
 So, if we opt for mutiny,  
 Each one of us will fail  
 This ship needs every hand on deck  
 This ship needs her whole crew  
 To plot a course to harmony  
 This ship needs me and you.

*[Repeat chorus.]*

The song had been written for the Russian Singing Doctors and me to record. I did record it a few years later.

After the performance, I was sitting with my group, and someone's fifteen-year-old daughter came running from the bathroom, crying. We all got up and ran to her asking what had happened. She said two very large Russian women "robbed" her of her toilet tissue she had taken into the

bathroom with her. We had all been told before leaving Canada to take toilet tissue with us, as it was a scarce commodity in the USSR.

Now it was time to go home. I really missed my wife and sons (and the dogs)! We got to the airport early. I arrived at the check-in and was told that I owed US\$325 for excess weight baggage. The mayors of Leningrad and Moscow had given me three heavy books for the mayor of Ottawa. Our tour leader Kuzma could not do anything, so I paid. I was later told that I should have refused to pay and said I had no money. What would they have done? Kept me in Russia? Shame, shame! Made it home safely and happy to be home. My seatmate on the flight was the famous Russian goaltender Vladislav Tretiak.



I have had three jobs most of my life. When I joined the police force, many officers held second jobs, ranging from driving limousines, to working in private security, construction, or gas stations. However, the most prevalent job type was painting and general handyman.

So, not long after, I started my own business. I would do security checks on houses for Royal Trust Real Estate and Rhodes Real Estate. I would subcontract through their property manager. For example, if an unoccupied house was being sold through them, Mr. Eady would hire me to visit the home as often as required. During the winter months, I would check every twenty-four hours. At one time I had twenty-one houses to check. These were mostly upscale homes. I would cut the grass, change the lights around, bring in newspapers, trim branches, and if required I would paint the house. Then I thought if I do all of that, I should also do snow removal. So I bought a front-end loader. (My wife really loved having that monster in our backyard. Not!) That was fun and good money. The person I hired to take away the snow was another police officer who had a few dump trucks and who sometimes hired other officers to drive the trucks when he was on-duty. Once, I needed a tow truck at an accident scene I was investigating, and it was an off-duty officer driving for a local towing firm. Plus, all the while I was an officer, I of course had my music—none of these off-duty activities ever adversely affected my job as a police officer.

I was still working in Crime Prevention/Community Services and on this particular day I was working afternoon-shift. At 10:00 a.m. I had an off-duty performance at a school in the west end of Ottawa. I finished the show and left the school at about 12:30 p.m. I drove home to have a bite to eat and freshen up before I went to work. I decided to check a friend of mine's house on Clemow Avenue east of Bank Street. He was the president of the Canadian Bar Association and had asked me to check his house while he and his family were away in Vancouver for a law society convention. So on my way to work, I stopped at his house and gave it a security check. When I was coming back out to my vehicle I noticed a car parked east of the residence with the driver in it. I glanced at it and then drove off to work. [I was a little suspicious.]

As I was exiting the Queensway at Nicholas Street, I observed that same vehicle behind me with the driver blinking his lights and motioning me to pull over on the overpass. He beckoned me to the passenger side of the car, and it was then that I realized it was one of my supervisors in his personal vehicle. His first question was to ask where was I coming from. I responded that I had been at a school performing.

He then asked where I went after that. I responded that I went to check a friend's house on Clemow. I asked why he had me under surveillance, and he said there had been complaints about a suspicious person hanging around. What a joke! I had a good idea about who directed him to tail me; however, the jury is still out. Quite possibly, he initiated the surveillance himself.

A few days later, a senior-citizen family friend, who lived on Echo Drive, phoned me and said there were two police officers at her house inquiring as to whether she had hired me to look after her house. One was a staff-sergeant and the other a detective-sergeant. They also wished to know how much she was paying me. She told them she wasn't paying me anything, and it was also none of their business. Then she asked them to leave. I was not charging her for home checks because she and her husband were very kind to my family in many ways. Her husband was the former deputy-minister of Public Archives Canada and had a fantastic huge home library where I could borrow books.

Then I received a call a few days later from my friend on Clemow, and he related the same story that two officers were inquiring about my visits to his home and asking how much he paid me. He also had the same response that he was not paying me and that I had offered to do it as a favor, as I was looking out for the house next door for Royal Trust.

I was weak with anger, totally flabbergasted, that such high-ranking officers would have me under surveillance like a common criminal. Had they nothing better to do? What with all the crime and injustice in our city, they wasted how many days following me around for God knows how long. (I probably will never know.)

That's not the end of this story. I was hired by Rolly Hammond Entertainment, Inc. (an agency known across North America for booking some of the large acts into Ottawa, Toronto, and Montréal) to do a few songs at the Civic Centre as an opening act. There were approximately 6,500 people, and I was very well received. A few days later, Rolly too was approached by the same "Columbo" and his partner and asked how much he had paid me. When he asked them why they were inquiring, he was told it was none of his business. He told the officers it was none of their business either, and they left. They also went to meet with his assistant Ted Larabie, which angered him, and he too told them the same as the others had. He later called me and told me if I needed him as a witness or whatever pertaining to this matter, I could call upon him.

I should mention here that I also had some fans on the force who would sometimes come with their families and friends to my shows. I really appreciated that support. On another

occasion, I was performing in a little pub in the west end of the city where many of my friends and acquaintances would attend. Several detectives came one evening and accompanying them was an on-duty detective/sergeant. I was taken aback because I didn't think he was a fan of mine. I was right. He was the one who later investigated me. Up to that time, I had not been notified as to an investigation, which is the standard procedure. Someone must have had great disdain for me, or they really hated my music or my jokes! It was ironic—to say the least—that this same year I received the Solicitor-General's 1986 "Police Officer of the Year Award."



*February 1985*

I'm still working in Community Services Branch, 5:00 p.m.–1:00 a.m. shift. I leave home at 4:30 p.m. and am back at 1:30 a.m., unless I get a late call that causes me to come home at 3:00 or 4:00 a.m. Not much of a family life; however, I enjoy the section that I'm working in.

February 11th, I was cruising around the housing projects in the southeast end of Ottawa and had pulled over a vehicle that was just driving around the public housing project on Ledbury Avenue. I recognized the driver from dealings I had with him before regarding drug possession and unlicensed firearms. I had him get out of his vehicle to talk to him. When he got out, I noticed that there were burn marks on the passenger seat. When questioned as to how they got there, he said he had been smoking dope and ashes got on the seat. Everything checked out with his papers, and as he was getting back into the car, he said he would like to talk to me about something. He sat in my unmarked vehicle, and I asked what he wished to talk about. He said he had not been on drugs for several months; however, he wanted to give some information on some dealers and pushers. I said talk to me. He wanted to remain anonymous, and I agreed. He spoke about new dealers and pushers in the area and said that they were very dangerous and were making a lot of money from the youth in the area. He gave me the make of car they drove and said the last three numbers of their license plate were 6 5 5. He thought one was Turkish and the other Iranian. He also told me that they lived in Centretown in a half-double with a frosted front window and that he believed another Iranian, a taxi driver, also lived there. Furthermore, he said that some of their customers worked at Voyageur Bus Lines and that they smoked up and took acid in their cars while working.

He thanked me for treating him right in the past and said he hoped this information was good. Well, good it was! I passed it on to Criminal Intelligence and arrests were made.



I was called by Larabie Entertainment asking if I would be interested in going up to the North Pole, to Alert [Nunavut] to entertain the troops. I said I certainly would. I made a personal request to the chief that I be allowed to go on my own time. It was granted. The Family Brown, Ronnie Prophet,

Wayne Rostad, Robin Averill, and Seamus Costello were to be entertaining as well. We were all assembled in Ottawa in a hall to rehearse two weeks later.

We were transported in a Canadian Forces CC130-E Hercules, a four-engine propjet troop carrier. Our first performances were at CFB-Goose Bay, Labrador. We went to the base's mess hall to rehearse and did the show that evening. It was spectacular. It was a good blend of music and other entertainment. There are several American Air Force personnel there as well. The first night I went off for a walk with some other entertainers, and the stars appeared so close you wanted to reach out and catch one.

I would see the Northern Lights on a clear night back on the farm in Sheenboro, Québec, but these were so bright and they were dancing across the sky. Very spiritual.

The next morning when we were having breakfast in the mess hall with the troops, we were told that the trip to the Pole was cancelled due to very bad weather. Now when the military says very bad, that's bad. So, our trip was shortened, and we bypassed the Pole and went on to Yellowknife, NWT and the base on the Queen Charlotte Islands (renamed Haida Gwaii). It was fascinating to me to be traveling up over northern Canada. We had two great shows in Yellowknife. Ronnie Prophet is a prankster several levels above me. There was a magician on our tour as well. He was good, but all too serious on stage. While he was on stage the first show, Ronnie kept rolling duct tape across the stage while he was doing his magic. The audience was all laughing, as the tape was rolling behind the magician. The second show Ronnie turned on the fog machine, and the magic show just disappeared in the mist.

We then left for the Queen Charlotte Islands. We landed in Sandspit, BC, a sliver of land out in the Pacific Coast. We took a boat to Masset Island. The base there was recently closed, and a Japanese company had purchased it and made it into a senior retirement community. We did our shows in a very large auditorium. We were really beginning to blend and to get to know each other. I knew the high school principal on the island, and he asked me if I would do a performance for his staff and students. I would be delighted, I told him, as I perform in many schools across the Ottawa region and beyond. The sound guy from our show brought some sound equipment and lights, and we had a great time. Total participation. These kids were dancing, singing, and some came up on stage and sang some songs.

The principal loaned me his 4 x 4 truck for daytime use as long as I wanted it, and that was nice. We all went salmon fishing near the Haida Nation Indian Reserve, and that was absolutely incredible. The fish were all shouting, "Pick me! Pick me!" Well, I did, and I left with seven very large salmon. The base commander had them all prepared and cut into steaks, and then wrapped and put on ice. In the morning we left for Ottawa. That was a long, long ride in a Herc to Ottawa. It was all worth it, and I felt so privileged to have been asked to be part of it.

About a year later, the major who does all the entertainment for the Canadian troops in Canada

and abroad called the chief himself requesting that I be allowed to join other entertainers flying to Labrador and Newfoundland, and the North Pole to entertain. Permission was granted. We had a similar group this time as well as some new performers. We all boarded the Hercules and off we went again! We did our first show the next night in Goose Bay. Great audience again. I had five jet pilots from the US up on stage doing jigs to my Irish music.

The next morning we departed for the Pole. We were given Arctic gear and “told” (ordered) to keep it on at all times—boots, parkas, pants, etc. The reason is if those planes go down and you survive the crash, you would not otherwise last two hours above the Arctic Circle. Those planes are so noisy you cannot hear the person next to you speak. They gave us headphones. It's quite an adventure flying over the frozen North. We arrived late evening in semi-darkness. It would look like Ottawa at about 9:30 p.m. in August. We were told to remain seated and that there were very high winds and it was 81 below zero. We remained on the plane for a half-hour before being shown to our quarters. The females were housed in another building next door. Everyone was instructed to keep our survival gear on because the storm had not yet passed. Well, I'm in a room with the magician, sleeping with my gear on when around 1:00 a.m. I hear very loud bells ringing and sirens go off. When I went into the hallway, there were red lights flashing in the building (we were in the old barracks in the old building). Well we had to wait 20 minutes for the females who had taken off their gear and had to dress again. The military man in charge was not amused. We got outside, and the soldier had a long rope. We all had to hang onto the rope and follow him approximately 300' to the main building. The rope was needed in those high (50–60 mph) winds and blinding snow; you could easily be blown off course or become disoriented and end up in a polar bear's arms. We were in the cafeteria for about three hours until the storm passed. Everyone was again told to stay in their gear. We did our show, and it was one of the best.

As these folks were in isolation, they wanted to party. John Paul Rogers was a new face in the mix. At that time he had good airplay for some of his country releases. And the Family Brown, who had a TV show on CTV for many years, was always a crowd pleaser. After the show, one of the managers of the base asked if some of us wanted to go for a ride down to the dump at the Arctic Ocean. It was mid-November, and the sun in that season was always below the horizon at Greenland. One hour before sunrise, we left for the dump in a ¾-ton green 4 x 4 van. I was in the backseat between Lawanda and Tracey Brown. The driver had a plan, and he had probably practiced this before. He parked the van near the dump, and within a minute two large white wolves jumped up at the rear window. Well, Tracey screamed so loudly you could hear her in Greenland and grabbed me by the leg and scared the living daylight out of me and all the others. She had a very strong grip! The manager has pulled the same trick numerous times and with the same results. We then drove around near the frozen sea and saw some white rabbits and wolves.

That is amazing that animals can and do survive in such harsh conditions and temperatures.

All went to their quarters, and the base manager asked me if I wanted to see Santa Claus. We approached this small building with the sign "Santa's Workshop," which was built by the soldiers and staff many years ago. I entered, and if I were a kid, I truly would think I actually was in Santa's workshop. It was all constructed so well, so real and with a dummy Santa mechanically working away on toys at his bench.

Well, my night wasn't over yet. He asked me if I wanted to go for a ride on the big snowmobile and possibly see some polar bears. So we headed out onto the tundra at 10:30 p.m. or so, and after a half-hour, we observed a polar bear in the distance. He did not wish to go that far away from camp. All in all, it was the gig of a lifetime. We were all on board at around 10:30 a.m. and were just about to head out on the ice runway for takeoff, and as I was in a window seat with Barry Brown, we noticed oil on our windows. We got the leader's attention, and sure enough it was a seal leaking in the #2 engine. Back to the barracks. They needed to wait a day and a half for a new part and a mechanic to come from Ft. Churchill, MB. Imagine changing that seal at -80°! [I should mention that only a month later I performed at the Holetown Festival in Barbados, which I had done for several years, and I asked the audience what the temperature was and was told it was +80° F. I related my story of being at the North Pole, and the natives could not get their heads around that!]

We left Alert heading over the Arctic for Yellowknife, NWT and Masset Island in BC. All were great shows, and we had a wonderful time. Those military personnel really know how to look after you. About a year later, I was asked by Major Roberge to come on a tour to the Golan Heights, Damascus, and other bases in the Middle East. I put in a request to the chief, but he said no. It was too dangerous there at that time. There had been an uprising, and some international troops were killed and others injured.



For many years I had wanted to travel to Nashville, TN to absorb the true sounds of root country music. I contacted that city's Holiday Inn person in charge of booking entertainment and asked if he had any openings in the lounge during Country Music Awards (CMA) Week. As luck would have it, he knew me from the time he had worked in Ottawa, so I was booked two nights in the lounge.

I then found out the great Orval Prophet was going to be in Nashville at the same time to record so I called to ask him if we could meet. He agreed and invited me to the studio to sit in on the recording session with his cousin Ronnie Prophet, with whom I had done shows. He called me back and said he was staying at the Hyatt-Regency and that if I wished, we could share a room. I accepted his offer.

I took a week's vacation and drove to Nashville for Country Music Awards (CMA) Week.



Quite an exciting time! I had taken some of my posters and other promotional materials with me. I went to the auditorium where all the shows (including those of the star performers) were held, and I talked my way into the loading area and then plastered my posters all over, indicating I was performing at the Holiday Inn. It was just a fun thing to do; I don't know if anyone attended my show as a result of these posters, but I felt it was worth the effort to put my posters next to Dolly Parton's.

My show was not bad. Not many people attended, but I made some new music friends, and I got to say I performed in Nashville. I attended the Grand Ole Opry show with a ticket given me by the Holiday Inn. Hank Snow and Marty Robbins were performing that night, and many other greats. One of the ushers was an older woman born in London, Ontario, and we got talking about Canada. I mentioned that I was a police officer, a singing policeman. She put me in a seat at the front for the second show. What a nice person she was!

I went to the recording studio and sat in on the session. Orval Prophet, for those who don't already know, was an incredibly talented entertainer. Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson said that he had the best voice in country music. I heartily agree. After the session, Ronnie invited me to accompany him, Orval, and his producer on a tour of Nashville, which was very exciting. Orval passed away in 1984 of a heart attack. He had been plagued with heart problems all of his adult life.

When I returned to Ottawa, I phoned the office to ask if I had any messages, and the officer who answered said my shift had changed from days to afternoons and I had a Neighborhood Watch meeting to attend that night. That was rather strange as I already had meetings booked for the Monday day shift. I also had a music gig booked for 8:00–10:00 p.m. at a restaurant called the Silver Dollar, which was owned by the nephew of a judge who was the chairman of the police commission. He often came for dinner and attended shows there with colleagues, friends, and family. Teachers, firefighters, and police officers frequented the place as well. It was a comfortable place for someone like me to perform, plus Monday nights were family nights. I called an Irish trio, Wicklow, to cover for me due to my shift change. They were available, so I called the restaurant owner, and he approved the change.

I reported for work on Monday afternoon shift (2:00–10:00 p.m.) and got caught up on my messages and correspondence. I attended the Neighborhood Watch meeting, and halfway through my presentation, there was a severe storm with high winds, torrential flooding rain, thunder and lightning, and a power failure. We all waited until about 8:50 p.m., at which time the chairperson decided to adjourn the meeting. I packed up and left the community centre at about 9:15 p.m. and decided to see how the boys were doing at the gig. It was agreed upon by our sergeants that we could take our personal vehicles to such meetings and functions and that if the meetings were closer to home, we did not have to return to the station to sign out.

I had just arrived back from Nashville late Sunday night, so I still had clothes in the back of

my van, so I changed out of uniform and drove through the water-clogged streets to get out of the area and proceed to the restaurant to make sure all was well with the gig. I arrived just before 10:00 p.m. and entered the rear door to the kitchen, as I did not want the band to see me. I asked for the owner, and as I opened the door from the kitchen, there was my sergeant who had been waiting for me. Then all the pieces fit together. I approached his table, and he said he didn't think I'd show. I started to explain, but at this point it was of no use. I believe he was following orders, so I left.

The next morning, I received a call from Dave Mulholland, the entertainment columnist at the *Ottawa Citizen*, requesting an interview about "my situation." I asked what he meant. He replied that he had been having breakfast at the Silver Dollar and had seen and overheard two detectives and an officer from Identification Section there photographing the stage and speaking to staff. I declined an interview. He had always been fair and kind to me as a critic reviewing my music.

I reported for duty Tuesday morning at 8:00 a.m. and was told by the sergeant that I had been transferred to platoon and that I should report to the desk sergeant for Patrol Division. That was a shock. Neither the sergeant nor the officer answering the phones would make eye contact with me. At the Silver Dollar the previous night, he had been aware that this was going to happen but of course couldn't warn me, or he'd have been in trouble himself.

In the long run, he did me a favor because it brought the situation to a head. I really ought to have known something was up in the week before I left for Nashville. I was working in the office for that week, and this sergeant had called the office asking for one of the constables, who wasn't available, and had refused to identify himself; when I asked for his name and message, he hung up.

When he later came into the office without speaking to me, I asked him what the problem was. He came over to my desk and stood over me threateningly and told me to shut the #\$% up. At that point, I had few options available to me: respond with aggression (a poor idea), complain to my superiors, or take his advice to "shut up." You will never win with a man like that, especially when he is your superior officer. The irony is that we got along well over the years, as I overlooked his at times demeaning attitude and behavior.

As a side note, most Monday mornings we had a section meeting with the inspector and all the Community Service Section (CSS). The inspector was looking for input regarding new initiatives and so forth. I had an idea, a jolly good one, I thought, and I presented it. After I did, the sergeant's response was, "This is not a nursery school, D'Arcy," thus shooting down my idea in front of all those present. However, the inspector, who was a very fair fellow, said we should examine the idea and perhaps with some modification it could work. That felt a lot better, some vindication at least.

I reported to the platoon staff-sergeant, and I was relegated to Rideau Street (15 Beat). Very humbling experience. Some officers and the public were asking me what had happened, why I was on the beat. I went home that night a broken man, as low and discouraged as one could be. My inner voice (my spiritual guides, angels, the Universe, God) was saying, "Don't give up. Quitters

never win, and winners never quit,” and all the other such clichés.

When my wife saw me get out the car, she realized something was very wrong. Upon entering the house, I started to tell her what had happened when, I'm not ashamed to admit, I broke down and cried from anger, disappointment, and all the other disruptive such nouns one could think of. My dear Noellie tried to console me, however, it was lost on me at that point.

I don't think I slept one full hour that night and reported for duty at 7:15 a.m. and went on parade, which was extremely embarrassing with my fellow officers observing me and asking what happened, what kind of trouble am I in, and so forth. After parade, the staff-sergeant called me aside and told me to report to the Force Sergeant-Major at 8:00 a.m., which I did. He instructed me to write a personal communiqué to the chief explaining my actions regarding not coming to the station to sign out and leaving work early, as well as explaining my extracurricular activities.

I went to the patrol office and sat for an hour writing this personal communiqué, submitted it, and went out to 15 Beat. At this point, my inner voice was repeating, Don't give up! I was so close to just attending at the chief's office and quoting the lyrics of a David Allen Coe song made famous by Johnny Paycheck, “Take this job and shove it, I ain't working here no more.”

But, as the saying goes, “If life hands you lemons, make lemonade.” So I thought I am going to make so much lemonade I'll be selling it on Rideau Street Beat to defray my legal costs. I realized that the “powers that be” were trying to get rid of me, or make it so unpleasant that I would voluntarily just go away. Imagine that, a policeman who sings. You can drink on duty, hang out with hookers, or even be charged with criminal negligence causing death, as one detective was after returning home from work, impaired.

The same officer and his partner escorted a prisoner to the cellblock where I was relieving an officer for lunch a few years ago and began to strike the prisoner as I was searching him. Both detectives had been drinking, and when I intervened, one of them pushed me away. Well, that didn't go over too well.

The detective was later convicted of a lesser charge, but was allowed to return to duty. He must have thanked his lucky stars he was not caught singing. The other detective was promoted.

The next day, I was called to my patrol inspector's office and was told that I was being charged with neglect of duty. Further, I was being charged under Section 222 of the Police Act, “Having another calling (second job).” Imagine that, a police officer with a second job. How unique is that? The date was set within a month for me to appear before what was known as the “Kangaroo Court.” The judge, jury, and Crown would be as per usual the chief or his representative, a deputy-chief, superintendent or an inspector.

I called a defence lawyer friend whom I had known for several years and asked for a meeting. The next day I met with him in his office and had a debriefing on my situation, and he commenced to build a defence to the charges. He had a large physical stature and was a commanding presence

in court. As we were finishing up, he went to the corner and picked up a sledgehammer—a big one!—and stated something to the effect of, We mean business! We will have no problem winning this one.



I continued my work on Beat 15 on Rideau Street, midnight shift, and, interestingly enough, I absolutely enjoyed working on the street, which really confused some of my colleagues and supervisors. I was supposed to be angry, but I truly enjoyed the excitement of working the streets and felt that my capacity to serve the community was more rewarding there than in any other area of policing. It's right there in front of you. You don't have to identify yourself as a police officer when in uniform that proclaims, "This is who I am."

Walking 15 Beat was usually very lively until about 3:00 a.m. The bars and restaurants in the Byward Market closed at 1:00 a.m. and on the Québec side of the border at 3:00 a.m. I always had action, especially in the Market. Most patrons acted responsibly; however, there is always that small percentage of drinkers who consume too much disinhibiting alcohol and have a "stupid license." They are usually under the influence because the drunker they stand, the longer they get.

Depending on the officer on 14 Beat in the Market, which is adjacent to 12 Beat that I worked, we would often work as a team and attempt to curtail the anti-social behavior such as shouting, urinating in public, using profanity, or drinking or being drunk in a public place. It was always very busy on Friday and Saturday nights, especially during the summer, and I enjoyed that.

If I was going to enforce the laws in that area, I would always set it up with officer on the next beat and the patrol officer in the area because the situation can become quite violent and dangerous, not so much from the person committing the offence as from the friends and fellow patrons who decide to become involved. So it was of paramount importance that you make the other officers aware of your going inside an establishment to make an arrest or even to make a drop-in check.

I recall an incident at Stony Monday's when I worked the Byward Market Beat, a patron came running out to find a policeman. He related to me that there were several men fighting inside. Without a radio, I had to confirm with the bartender that he had called the station, and he said he had just called. I stood outside for a few minutes uncomfortably awaiting backup, as the outside patrons looked on wondering why I wasn't rushing in and taking action.

Well, there is a very good reason why—officer safety. Sometimes prudently waiting a few minutes for backup is very beneficial, as two or three officers walking in defuses a situation more quickly and effectively than does a lone officer—which is a plus for all concerned.

I waited a few more minutes and thought it was imperative that I go in, as it was becoming apparent that the fight was getting out of control. I felt I had to enter the premises and summoned three men just inside the door and asked that they keep an eye on me. They looked well built and

very fit. They identified themselves as firefighters and said they had no problem helping until other officers arrived on scene. One identified himself as the son of “Big John” Gagnon, a sergeant with Ottawa police who grew up in Chichester next to my village in the Pontiac.

I entered the bar (with my three deputized citizens right behind me) and saw there were five or six men kicking, fighting, throwing chairs, etc. The guy who started the fight was pointed out to me, and I immediately grabbed him and dragged him towards the door. One of his friends and fellow combatants was heading toward me ready to jump me when my “Deputy Gagnon” intercepted him and took him to the ground. (He did manage to get in a swing at me, striking my shoulder.) Others may have wanted to join in taking on the cop, then backed off, assuming the firefighters around me were off-duty cops.

As I took my guy to the door, my backup arrived: three officers and a sergeant. They entered the bar and made four more arrests following information supplied by the management. The reason for their being a little late was a hit-and-run accident with injuries at Charlotte and Rideau Streets. The driver was fleeing to the Québec border and was apprehended just before he made it to the bridge.

The next day I phoned the fire chief and related to him what had happened the night before and the professional courtesy his off-duty firefighters extended to me. I had been very lucky throughout my career in situations such as that where the public came to my assistance when requested or occasionally on their own initiatives.

The instigator of the fight was charged with Assault Police, Causing a Disturbance, and Damage to Property. I returned to my beat and attended at Stony Mondays to obtain witness statements for court. The accused pleaded not guilty. However, when he appeared in court, six months later with his defence lawyer, he changed his plea to guilty and was fined \$1,000 and sentenced to thirty days in the county jail.



***June 6, 2008, In Jasper on Via Rail-sponsored tour of Canada. Stayed six days at Mountain Mist Bed and Breakfast in Jasper, at the foot of the Rockies.***

The idea of my being sponsored by Via Rail was initiated four years earlier at a Chinese New Year celebration at Casino du Lac Leamy (formerly Casino du Hull) in Gatineau, Québec. The head of Via Rail operations in Ottawa was my tablemate for dinner and suggested it. However, he was later transferred to head office in Montréal, and the idea was left on a back burner for four years.

Via Rail offered to have me travel first class from Ottawa to Vancouver to perform and speak about my no-bullying program, which I had been running for several years by then. In January 2008, I submitted a proposal to head office that was immediately sanctioned. I departed June 1<sup>st</sup> and spent a couple of days in Toronto at the Royal York Hotel before traveling westward. Quite

exciting, to say the least! It's a very civilized mode of travel, and I would strongly recommend it to all—what an up-front and personal way to connect with the vast, incredible country we call Canada (and home).

The Via Rail staff could not have been more professional. They were attentive and helpful. The food in the dining car truly was first class and so was the staff. I met, dined with, and spent time in the observation car with people from all over the world. I spent a great deal of my time with a trio. A woman named Emily was the daughter of the Dr. Ballard of pet food fame and her female friend was Jeanie from Honolulu, Hawaii, who was a wealthy businesswoman dealing in properties on the islands and who had been the stand-in for Marilyn Monroe in a movie shot in Hawaii years ago. The third person in the trio was a very serious, pleasant businessman who managed all the business interests for Emily and who sat on numerous boards in the region.

There was also the civil engineer, construction company owner and his wife from Ohio who invited me to his area to perform at a festival. His personality was very similar to mine, and we shared a lot of laughter and discussions.

There was also another civil engineer who was born in Slovakia, came to Canada as a young man, and settled in Québec. He had designed several bridges in that province. He married a much younger woman from Thunder Bay; he was probably three or four decades her elder. They seemed so happy together, and she related to me how much she had learned from him. She was very spiritual. They left the train to spend a few days in Jasper, and one evening there I saw them on the street walking and holding hands.

I was having dinner in the dining car one evening, and I observed this eight-year-old boy looking at me from across the aisle, as were his grandmother and mother. I always acknowledge young people in my presence, something I wish all adults would do. I walked over and asked his name. He replied, "Ben." I shook his hand and told him my name. Immediately, his grandmother and mother said, "You're the singing policeman from Ottawa." Just kidding, I said, "No, I was the singer Gordon Lightfoot." The boy had remembered me (subliminally perhaps) performing at his school two years earlier, and his grandmother worked for the Ottawa Senators Foundation, for which I had performed. She said that Big Ben was and always had been crazy about trains so she booked a four-person compartment and headed across Canada with Ben and her daughter. I could fill another book with all the details of the people I met en route and all their stories I heard on that trip.

The only negative occurrence was the train's striking a big black bear near Lake of the Woods, in the Minaki wilderness area, at 2:00 a.m. while I was asleep in my compartment. As a result, the train lost its water supply, and passengers were without water until later up the line where the water tank could be repaired and refilled.

I have always felt great sadness when I see an animal killed on the road or on the tracks. You

have to wonder what happens to the little ones when their parent is killed. One hopes instincts kick in and they survive.

Of course train engineers have no recourse when they come upon an animal on the tracks. However car drivers on highways do have options. There are large yellow signs posted that caution about large animal crossings for the next xx number of miles. Now, these signs are not posted because of occasional sightings. They are posted because of observed migratory and feeding paths of animals.

Unfortunately, a large percentage of drivers ignore these signs (perhaps assuming low odds of a crossing happening in front of them) resulting in numerous collisions with animals on highways. Whenever I see the signs, I slow down and keep scanning an eye on both sides of the roadway, especially for deer that jump in front of you in a flash with little or no time for a driver to react. And if one jumps in front of you, most times there is another deer right behind the first one.



**March 1, 1988—My dear dog Kandy was put down**

We had our dog Kandy for 16 years, and it became obvious in the months and weeks before his death that we may have to put him down. He was losing his eyesight and balance. If you ask anyone who has ever had to put down their pet, they will tell how they felt and continue to feel profound emotions.

Well, the time had come to do the deed, have him put down. It's as if it was last week. I fed him his last breakfast at approximately 7:30 a.m. Noellie and the boys had left for work and school, and after an hour or so I got the strength to finally take him from the house to the truck. When I put him in the front seat, I went back to the house to lock the door. I returned, and Kandy was standing on the driver's seat with his little paws on the window, thinking we were going on an outing to the park.

We arrived at the animal hospital, and I held Kandy for a few minutes before giving him to the vet to do the deed. He was taken from me and heading to the room, quietly yelping and looking back at me, I left. That was a very sorrowful time.



Years ago, I was scouting locations in Ottawa and the Ottawa Valley with my Hollywood producer/friend Brian Michael Stoller for a movie he was producing and in which I was to play a role. The movie was called *Light Years Away*. While driving west of Ottawa, we came upon a deer crossing sign, and Brian asked me tongue-in-cheek if it was so that the deer knew where to cross. (I informed him deer cannot read.)



***November 9<sup>th</sup>, in cabin @ 316 Fifth Avenue***

I recall one day-shift, I was in Sam's Music Store in the Byward Market taking a complaint, when in walks the famous Roger Whittaker. I introduced myself and complimented his music, especially "The Last Farewell," which I still include in my shows. He was looking for a new twelve-string guitar, and he ended up purchasing a Guild twelve-string. I had a Guild six-string several years earlier when I was with the folk band The Claytons until it was stolen from my car. They are great-sounding instruments.

I classify and compare all my instruments with cars. For example, my Martin twelve-string is my Rolls Royce. The Gretsch was my Mercedes. The Ovation twelve-string, my Jaguar. The Guild, I had considered my Bentley.



While walking 11 or 12 Beat, I would often go into the National Arts Centre via the stage entrance speaking with security and in so doing was afforded the golden opportunity of meeting some of the celebrities backstage. Celebrities must be cautious about whom they let approach them, as there is always the risk of hidden microphones or cameras and possible hidden agendas. You have to sometimes earn their trust. I was in the uncommon position of both being a uniformed police officer and being a fellow entertainer.

Among the most noteworthy encounters were meeting Gordon Lightfoot, Harry Belafonte, and Nana Mouskouri, whom I met several times. I had the chance to perform for her at an after-show meet-and-greet fundraiser type of an affair for which you paid a ticket surcharge of \$50 to attend and meet the performer. I was asked to perform at that function at the Royal Bank Building at Sparks and Metcalfe Streets. There was a Greek woman named Sophia who worked at the police station and who had taught me some Greek words for my introduction of Nana.

One of the songs I had just recorded, called "I Have a Dream," (which had been written and recorded by ABBA and was also a song Nana had recorded several years earlier) was recorded with the musical assistance of several members of the National Arts Centre orchestra. So it was a particularly special evening for me.

I also met Roger Whittaker backstage several times. As a matter of fact, I took my family—Noellie, Darren, and Anthony—to one of his sold-out shows. We were seated in the box seats directly behind Roger's wife and young child. We walked with them back to the Sheraton Hotel on Albert Street.





The Irish Rovers (of the 1967 million-selling song “The Unicorn” fame) were in town for a show, and I spotted the lead singer Will Millar and Big Fergie coming out of a drugstore on Bank Street. I was working day shift with a partner, and I decided to have a little fun at their expense. I pulled up beside them, put the red lights on, and got out. My partner was a young rookie from the Eastern Townships in Québec who spoke broken English and did not have a clue who these famous musicians were. However, I did tell him it was *une chose drôle* (funny thing), so don't overreact.

I approached the pair and asked in a very audible stern voice, “What's in the bag?” Will asked why I was inquiring. To which I replied, “I'll ask the questions.” They said they had been in the drugstore and purchased a few items. I then asked for their receipts, which they fumbled around trying to find before saying they didn't take a receipt.

At this point, I felt it was time to tell them it was a gag, as they were becoming nervous. I told them my name was Dominic Patrick William D'Arcy, and then Big Fergie (Jimmy Ferguson) said he had met a guy in the lobby of the hotel last evening and that was his name too. I asked whether he was an entertainer who invited you to come to his show at the Irish Pub. By that time, they were beginning to put things together.

You see, I was performing at the hotel where they were staying, and I did in fact speak to them in the lobby and ask them just to come in quietly for a drink after their show at the NAC, and they had agreed. So I then admitted to them that I was that same guy. Will said, “You bastard! You really got me.” I said, “Next time show up, or I'll arrest you.”

We had a good laugh together, as they say in Ireland, a good crack. To be fair, in uniform and police hat, I hadn't at all looked like the person in the lobby wearing my little Irish newsboy cap.



We had what were called Pay Duties, whereby we would work off-duty but in uniform, for example, at football games, high-school dances, the Ottawa Exhibition, and other entertainment venues. The organization that requested us would pay the city for our services, and the city in turn would pay us. We made good money, if we got several such assignments a month during our off days and holidays.

When we worked Pay Duty at the Central Canada Exhibition, the junior officer would always get traffic duty at the entrance to Lansdowne Park. Standing on the hot pavement in mid- to late August in the sun in full uniform—in those days you wore tunic and forage cap always. It was some hot! We would meet at the police command post just inside the gates and were given our duties by the sergeant. There was always a lieutenant there as well.

This one particular day, I reported for duty on afternoon shift. Lieutenant Walter Panagapko (known among the ranks as “Penny”) was the ranking officer. He was a serious man, did not speak much, and just looked at you. He inquired if anyone could drive a scooter. I was the first to put

up my hand. These Vespa scooters were new to us and were standard shift. My duty would be to patrol the Glebe area on the Vespa and be responsible for dealing with parking violations. Well, the problem was that I had never ever driven a motorbike before, especially a standard shift with a clutch. I just wanted to avoid being put on traffic detail again. I was given the keys and got on the bike with Lt. Panagapko standing there with his arms crossed staring at me. I think he had a feeling that I had never driven one.

Now bear in mind there were hundreds of people both coming and going at the main gates. My dilemma was how in the heck am I going to get this bike on the street without running over someone. I walked it to the sidewalk with the lieutenant still watching me, thinking that if I can just get on the street, I would start it and off I'd go.

I reasoned that I had driven a tractor and the same principle should apply, so I put it in neutral, started it, pushed down the clutch, put it into first gear, and let the clutch out slowly. That sounded like quite a good plan. Lt. Panagapko really made me nervous standing there glaring at me though.

Well, I thought it's now or never. I did all of the above, kept my foot on the clutch, waited for the traffic officer (sucker!) to stop traffic, and then once he blew his whistle, I de-clutched and took off across the street, narrowly missing several pedestrians and the traffic officer, struck the curb on the opposite side of Bank Street, stalling the scooter against the curb with Lt. Panagapko still there watching me.

I started it up again, pointed it south on Bank Street, chugging along, and because I had to get out of the lieutenant's sight so I could practice, I took a right turn onto the Driveway just before the Bank Street Bridge and the Rideau Canal, and away I went. I had about 3.5 miles of roadway ahead of me to get to know how to drive this puppy. I was okay going straight ahead with no red lights or stop signs. The first traffic light in my direction on the Driveway was at Preston Street intersection, and I timed it so I would get there on a green light.

The cars behind me were getting a little antsy, probably wondering why in the world I was going so slowly and probably cursing me. I caught the green light and went up the hill and into the Experimental Farm, approximately 2,000 acres and plenty of little-used roads. I spent a ½ hour up there until I was like Sterling Moss, the racecar driver.

I went back down to the Glebe area and got on with my parking duties. When I went back to work on my regular duties a few days later, my sergeant told me that Penny had made a few remarks about my navigation abilities. Panagapko went on to become deputy-chief of Ottawa police. Subsequently, he moved to Arizona and has since passed away.



### **May 2008 Trip to the French and Italian Riviera**

In the summer of 2008, Noellie and I booked a holiday package to the French and Italian Riviera

on the Mediterranean. It was a high-end trip with a 15-member group, and we were picked up at home by limo and driven to Dorval Airport in Montréal. Noellie and I had not traveled together much, so going on an overseas holiday could easily pose a problem in that I usually traveled alone when I'm touring. One bathroom, one bedroom, no guitar, no stage performances! When I perform, I play my instruments, write, and practice, so there was to be a vacuum in my life without all of the above. Noellie is quite easy to travel with; however, I am not if I am not in charge and instead am led around by a tour guide, etc., etc. But I was looking forward to being away and with Noellie for a change.

We flew Air France in a Boeing 747 and had very good seats near the front of the plane. We landed in Paris and really had to scurry to connect with our flight to Nice. Two women were very fragile and ought not to have been on the tour. I was told that they had had to fill out a form stating any preexisting conditions and attesting that they could manage independently. They in fact could not. We were held up numerous times, especially in Italy. I would assist them up stairs, etc.

In Nice, we dined at some pretty fancy restaurants. In one restaurant in Nice, the waitress found out that I was an entertainer, and she inquired what type of music I sang. I told her and added that I recorded a song called "Dominique," written by the Singing Nun from Belgium (1933–1985, née Jeanne-Paule-Marie Deckers). The waitress and the others at the table asked me to sing it, and I did. I also said that I had a connection to her by being the Singing Policeman, in that we had many, many challenges and had dared to be different. She informed me that the Singing Nun had committed suicide. The French government had come after her for back taxes on royalties in the sum of \$63,000. She had given all her earnings to the convent. She had left the convent and gone to Antwerp, Belgium, moved in with another nun, and opened a house for wayward women. She was devastated and could not pay the money. She instead committed suicide. I was so fond of her and all that she had done. I sang most of the songs she had recorded. What a blow! I was deeply saddened and wept when I got back to our hotel. I had taken many suicide calls in my police career. Who was not paying attention to this wonderful human being? She did not just wake up one morning and decide to commit suicide that day. There is usually a progression or series of transgressions leading up to the final act, just as people don't suddenly decide to rob a bank, take drugs, or be a bully. Most often, they start with petty misbehavior and aggression when they're young. Parents/guardians, teachers, and society in general must pay attention!

In Monaco, we went to the palace and casino, which were quite beautiful. Next day, we took a train (trolley) tour and circled on the mountains above the city. We saw Elton John's summer retreat high up on top of the mountain. I thought I would be able to swim in the Mediterranean Sea, "not." The beach is all volcanic rock, very sharp. However, I did manage to put my feet in the water.

We then took a bus through the mountains to Italy and stayed in a seaside resort hotel in Via

Regio. Very old city, and the people were soooo friendly. After five days there, I left the hotel for a walk and located a music store about seven blocks away. The owner is a childhood friend of Andrea Bocelli and arranges for all the musicians to accompany him when he performs in the area. He has ten mandolin players on stage. I inquired if the storeowner would rent me a guitar for an evening. He said he did not rent instruments. I told him I was a Canadian police officer and showed him my badge and passport. He responded that if I gave him my VISA credit card, the amount of the guitar's price would be run through so that if I didn't return it, he would process the payment and be compensated. He promised to put new strings on the guitar, and I was to pick it up the next day.

We were to have a farewell party in a room off the hotel's lobby. So the next afternoon I went and picked up the guitar and hid it under our bed in the hotel. That evening I left the party and got the guitar from our room and entered the party room singing. All had a good time, and Noellie said that I was like an alcoholic who, when he really wanted a drink, would always find a way.

We departed the next day for our connection to Paris and were delayed taking off. Therefore, we had very little wiggle room. The gate we arrived at was quite a distance from where we were to board and really had to hustle despite being slowed down by the two frail women. Nonetheless, we made it just in the nick of time. I'm of the opinion that if you don't ask, you don't receive. At the boarding desk I asked if there were any seats in first class in the 747's upper deck, saying that I wasn't feeling well and would really appreciate two seats up there. The agent said there were no available seats in first class. I didn't believe her, and she kept looking at me. Then she summoned me to the desk and told me there were two seats available. I thanked her. Noellie and I really enjoyed all the space and service. We arrived at Dorval, and the limo was waiting for us and drove us to Ottawa. I was happy to be home and also glad that we went.



### *Written at Lowney Lake*

In the summer of 2010, Noellie and I decided to rent a cottage at Fort William, Québec on the Ottawa River for the D'Arcy family reunion, which was held every five years at Art and Frances Fleming's Auberge Northfork on Old Nichabeau Road in Chichester, Québec, at the foot of the Laurentian Mountains (my son Darren calls them hills, as he resides in Vancouver at the foot of the Rocky Mountains). It is just so pretty there! Our family tree has certainly expanded. There are now approximately 110 (and growing) in the D'Arcy Clan. When Momma died in 1993, she had 44 grandchildren and 147 great-grandchildren.

My brother Harold was gravely ill and not expected to travel from Sudbury, ON to attend; however, he and his wife, Cathy, arrived just before dinner, and everyone was so excited to see him walk in with his oxygen tank. It was so moving to see him—all shed a tear. I had a sound system set up, and brother Cecil had his piano, and Harold had brought his fiddle. I opened the show after

dinner and brought Cecil on for a few numbers. Then I invited Harold, and the hall uproar was deafening when he came to the stage with his fiddle. I truly did not think he could play, as he was very weak, but he stayed on with us until our time was given up to the younger generation. Shortly after the reunion, Harold became very ill, as the cancer had spread to his liver.

Noellie and I stayed on at the cottage for another week. She is a prolific reader, and she had brought several books to read. She sat quietly at the far end of the wraparound, screened verandah. As I was opening the door from the kitchen area to join her, I noticed what appeared to be a small fuzz-ball, and I picked it up. Much to my surprise, it was actually a small dead gray mouse! Now bearing in mind that all was quiet in the cottage and surrounding area, I gave out a very loud scream and dropped it on the floor. Noellie must have thought I had seen a ghost and quickly came to where it was, saying, "It's only a little mouse, Dominic," but it frightened me so badly that I stopped breathing for a few seconds.

Noellie went back to her reading and must have been wondering about her protector if there were a real emergency. I too took a book and sat at the other end of the verandah. After about fifteen minutes, I looked through the screen, and there was a large black bear staring in at me! I whispered to Noellie that a bear was looking in at me and to come near quietly and see. She didn't believe me at first, as she is accustomed to my pranks. I asked her to get my camera. When she came over, she could then see the bear. I took the photo, however, he heard the click and turned away heading for the forest just as Noellie went to the safety of the cottage. I always have shelled peanuts for the Blue Jays and asked Noellie to bring out the bag so I could feed some to the bear. She thought I had gone mad because a few minutes earlier I had been screaming about a little mouse, and now I wanted to feed a bear. As I got to the screen door, the bear didn't seem to want to socialize with me, and he slowly wandered into the bush. I respect all animals and am not afraid of them—it was just that the mouse startled me, honest.

I was to drive Noellie to the bus terminal in Pembroke to return to Ottawa while I remained in Sheenboro to spend some time alone writing more for this book. However, after I dropped her off, I was on my way to Sheen and was about to turn left in the direction of Sheen when I suddenly decided instead to keep going to Ottawa and pull a prank on her. The bus was due to arrive in Ottawa in 2½ hours, which would give me ample time to get to the Ottawa terminal to greet her arrival. I stopped on the way down at a restaurant, and they supplied me with a large piece of cardboard and a marker with which I made a sign saying "NOELLIE."

I arrived and asked a bus employee about the arrival time and gate number of the bus from Pembroke. I went to the specified gate and waited and waited with my sign. When I went back to check the information, I was told the bus had arrived ten minutes ago at a different gate. I ran out to the taxi stand in the parking lot, and there she was just getting into a taxi. Wearing shorts that showed my legs, I ran through the crowded parking lot towards the cab shouting her name, and

the cab stopped—Noellie had seen a man who had legs resembling mine and had told the driver to stop. I can't even imagine what was going on in her mind when she saw me.



***October 28, 2012***

At a coffee shop down the street from where I live, I had a meeting today with two retired police officers—one a senior officer and the other a detective—and we exchanged stories about cases we had been involved in. We worked on Platoon together, and it was really nice to spend time with them. All of us recalled an officer named JG. He was also in our platoon. JG had seven or eight children, and he had to work two jobs to make ends meet. Thus, he would come to work having had little sleep. He would sleep in doorways while on watch when he was on the beat. One morning my patrol sergeant picked me up off 14 Beat in the Market and said, “You have to see this.” JG was working 15 Beat (Rideau Street), and the sergeant had driven by JG earlier at 7:00 a.m. and observed him at Rideau and Charlotte Streets in a doorway to a drugstore at a bus stop sleeping standing up. We arrived, and there he was still sleeping with people looking at him. The sergeant honked his horn a few times, and finally JG saw the police car and came over. The sergeant said, “You were sleeping.” JG replied that he hadn't been asleep and that he saw the sergeant drive up, which he didn't. He got a warning. The sergeants on our platoon were always asking JG why he never made any reports, so he started making false reports, lots of them. He left our Service and joined the Hull Police Force. He was later fired from that Force for sleeping in his patrol car while on duty.



In 2013, I departed to Florida on February 13th for a month-long annual tour and was happy to be out of the cold but sad to be away from Noellie. I really miss her when I'm away. Our cab driver Michael always picks me up, and as we are driving past my house, Noellie is always in the doorway, and we both wave goodbye. I tell Michael each time that I really have trouble leaving her, and his reply is always, “Then why do you leave?” Good question. The older I get, the more difficult it is to remain in the cold weather. Noellie and I have tried on different occasions to travel together. However, it just does not work. If I'm not playing music, I'm like an alcoholic without a drink (not that I've ever been a drinker).

When I perform in the Ottawa area, people will invariably inquire if Noellie's with me—not that it's anyone else's business. I don't know of many entertainers or pro athletes who take their spouses on the road with them. I get so tired of responding to such questions that I reply by saying she's here somewhere, or she's driving/flying in from LA or NYC, should be here soon, or look them straight in the eye and say, “Why do you ask?” That makes them very uncomfortable. But to

be fair, everyone loves Noellie, and they just wish they could see her. I speak to her on the phone at least four or five times a day; so we keep in touch when I'm away.

On February 15th, just three days into my tour, I received an early afternoon call from Noellie. Her first words were, "Are you sitting down?" I asked her why she asked that, and she said I have bad news. I immediately sat down at the kitchen table and asked her to tell me the news. My first thought was that something had happened to one of our sons, but she said it wasn't about them. For some reason unbeknownst to me, I asked if it was about Denis Ouellet, my sister Leona's husband. Noellie said it was. He was treated for a blood clot behind his knee, and parts of it dislodged and went to his lungs, causing a fatal pulmonary embolism.

Leona and Denis had both been out that morning, and Leona arrived home first and changed clothes. Denis was out with his buddies and brother for breakfast, as they had been doing for years. Denis drove his vehicle into the laneway, came in, and sat at the kitchen table and informed Leona he was having trouble breathing, which was already obvious to Leona. Ten minutes later, he went upstairs, and Leona heard him say, "What's happening?" Leona saw his color was changing, and then he fell backward against the wall at the top of the stairs. Leona called 911, and paramedics arrived ten minutes later. They found a weak pulse and transported him to the Ottawa Civic Hospital only ¼-mile away. Although he likely died in transit, the doctors and nurses nonetheless attempted to resuscitate him; however, he was pronounced dead a short time later.

Denis was one of my favorite people—always outgoing and positive; very active with his grandchildren and his children, Guy and Lynn. He swam daily, did not smoke, and drank socially but lightly. We have my family over to our house every Christmas season, and Denis was always the life of the party. I will truly miss him.



The morning of February 15th, I left my residence and went into a cafe to get a coffee. I then drove ten minutes away to Lake Parker in Lakeland, FL and parked in an area behind some trees just to be by myself and collect my thoughts regarding this book. I really enjoy watching nature. There are several types of birds at this location, and I saw a big black bird on a tree branch. At first I thought it was a decoy because it never moved for fifteen minutes yet had its wings spread as if ready for takeoff. I attempted to have it fly away or at least move, but it didn't. I found out from a park worker that it was a cormorant raven, which is a large, voracious sea bird. As to why it was not moving, he informed me it was drying its wings.

I returned to my vehicle and was sipping at my coffee when for no apparent reason started thinking about Denis. That was approximately the time he had the attack. This type of coincidence happens so often in that I will be thinking of someone when the phone will ring and it's that person on the line. Or I will call someone who exclaims that they were just thinking of me, etc.—another lesson in listening to your instincts, inner voice, God, angels, guides, helpers.

I scrambled to find a seat on a plane home, but the earliest one I could get left Tampa late Friday night, February 22nd. I arrived at the airport by 7pm hoping to go standby for an earlier flight if there were cancellations but to no avail. The plane was delayed an hour to 11:30 p.m., and I used the time at the airport to call and cancel my remaining performances.

As Dénis was deemed to have died at home, an autopsy was required. Therefore, the wake and funeral were delayed. I arrived at the Ottawa airport around 2:00 a.m. and in bed a half-hour later. The funeral was the next day at 11:00 a.m. The church was full; approximately 800 people attended. My niece Kelly Ann and nephews Chris and D'Arcy McGuire sang and played instruments at the funeral. It was an amazingly moving sendoff for a wonderful human being! I love you Dénis and will miss you at all our family gatherings. Leona is dealing with her grief, and the family keeps in touch by phone and lunch invitations.



I just happened to start reading a book Noellie bought a few weeks ago, entitled *Life is Not an Illusion, It Just Looks That Way* by Aaron R. Fodiman, and I opened to page 41. The heading was "Procrastination." That has been exactly what I had been doing in not starting to write again. My editor, Christine Zerbinis, says the term for this is "productive avoidance syndrome" (meaning that the person will do almost anything to avoid the task at hand, rationalizing the "anything else" as more productive, higher priority, etc.) We have all probably heard of people who wait so long for their ship to come in that the dock collapses. More specifically, think of people you wanted to tell you loved or respected, such as your parents. Sometimes it's too late. Our time is finite, and we do not know at any given point how much time is left for us. Our clocks are always running. Do it now, don't wait! In waiting, we often lose. It is far better to fail and be able to try again. Reality is only real if tested by trying it. Write, D'Arcy, make mistakes, and do it over. If writing this book is important, then write it. If not now, when?



### **Saturday, June 15, 2013**

I have decided to heed my own advice and packed up the van and headed up the Pontiac County to the old Fahey farm on Chemin d'Montagne, near Luskville, Québec, 22 miles from Ottawa. Mike Fahey is a fellow musician, a former Ottawa police officer, and my best friend. His uncle left Mike his farm, which is more than 200 acres at the foot of the Laurentian Mountains. Mike has graciously allowed me the use of the farm while I write. I hear not a sound except the birds singing (on key).

I am producing CDs for four of my junior Rising Stars: Natalie Harrison, aged 16, and the Mullen sisters, Michaela, Molly, and Marley, aged 11, 13, and 15. The sisters' stage name is



“Triple Trouble.” As well, there is a senior Rising Star named Rita Hughes who is 65 years old. Rita won the Chartwell Rising Star in 2012 at the Casino Lac Leamy. I had never met her before the competition at which I was one of the judges. She was the clear winner as soon as she began singing. She entered the 2013 competition and won again. The other two judges had also never heard her before the competition, and when we adjourned to a backstage room to deliberate about the contestants, I asked the others who they had at the top of their list, and they both answered Rita Hughes. I then informed them that our decision was unanimous. She received a perfect score. I am starting to promote her at local functions. Her new CD is completed, and as I write this, it is being pressed in Toronto. I do not charge a fee for producing/music/background singing/promoting and developing rising stars’ skills, as it gives me great joy in watching them advance. I have a talent development fund (Rising Stars Foundation) and will assist with the studio time expenses. Rita founded the House of Hope and Healing, whereby she counsels people with mental illnesses who have fallen through the cracks in the system. Her CD is to help fund a new building for her cause.

I should mention here that one of my Rising Stars has recently jumped to the big stage. Her name is Kira Isabella, who just turned 19 years of age. She was in my program for seven years, and I watched her grow. She was signed by Sony Music Canada in 2009, and she was one of four nominees for the Rising Star Award by the Canadian Country Music Association (CCMA), which was broadcast by CBC-TV. She won that award and performed her hit song. Carrie Underwood watched the show and called Taylor Swift, who was on the show as well, asking her to have Kira call Carrie right away. Kira spoke to Carrie briefly and put the Sony Music rep on the phone. Within 2½ weeks, Kira was opening for Carrie in all her big venues like Toronto’s Air Canada Centre and Ottawa’s Canadian Tire Centre. I’m really happy for Kira, as she worked really hard to get where she is now. I miss her being on my stage.

Alex Lacasse, who was with my program between the ages of 12 and 18, was signed to Universal Music, and he has several hit songs as well as videos on the market. Both Alex and Kira were very dedicated and had great work ethics. I miss them as they fly away from the nest. I find myself pleased at some of my shows to see some of the kids who have “jumped” to the big stage arrive backstage to greet me.

Another young man Jonathan Estabrooks was with me almost eight years, as was his brother Brian. They had both received four-year scholarships to Ashbury College and to the University of Toronto, and Brian one year to University of Michigan, and Jonathan three years to Julliard in New York City. Brian recently married and sort of changed directions. Jonathan stayed in New York City and has performed opera at Carnegie Hall and around the world. [His first album, *These Miles*, was released April 2014.] He is absolutely incredible. When I first met the brothers, I was doing a show at the Nepean Sailing Club in Ottawa. As I always do, I asked if anyone would like to come up and sing a song. They immediately raised their hands and ran on stage. I asked what song, and they

replied, “Bye, Bye Love,” and off we went. Incredible! I lost my show yet again thanks to the kids I have on my stage. Jonathan was 9 and Brian 12. I introduced them to musical theater, and they both had many leading roles over the years.

One does not have to do what I did for youth, however, you might have a talented kid in your family or neighborhood. They don't have to be entertainers. They could be talented or gifted in sports, academics, teaching, accountancy, etc. Help steer them towards what they appear to be interested in and good at. Not all my kids will make the world stage; however, they learn through my program the life skills needed for success, and they will become better teachers, police officers, lawyers, and bus drivers due to the skills you and I teach them—the each one, teach one principle. I would encourage you to check out (and encourage talented youth to as well) my website: <[www.dominicdarcy.com](http://www.dominicdarcy.com)>, which has information on Rising Stars and has links to my LinkedIn and Facebook accounts.



### ***June 20, 2013—at cabin***

Most writers that I have spoken to gave me the following advice: Writing should reflect the flow of my basic self, bringing attention to the good and the bad within to give it voice, draw it out and give the book its own dimension without bogging down in detail, visualize. *En theos* (God within). As Byron Katie said, “Loving (accepting) what is.” Wherever you go, you take your self with you, and that's not to say that you will be happy.

### ***June 30, 2013***

Moving right along after stumbling many times to get this book kick-started. I have often read about and heard the term “writer's block” used. However, I had never before fully comprehended its true meaning or contemplated the various causes for this condition. I now understand writer's block and am blocked no more. I have so many stories and memories of my life on the farm and beyond into law enforcement and the entertainment world that I would need to write several volumes to do them justice. My editor, Christine Zerbinis, and I had a meeting this morning re: writer's block. And after I returned home, she emailed me a link to a writer's blog on addressing this unfortunately common issue. The suggestion that stood out for me was to create a routine to write 10 pages a day no matter what, and that's the one I hung onto and am trying to put into practice: Git 'er done!

Our national day, Canada Day, is tomorrow, and the capital city and all of Canada is preparing for the celebration. Ottawa is bursting at the seams with visitors for the celebration on Parliament Hill and other gatherings across the city and this incredible country I call home. I hung my large Canadian flag over my front porch.

When I performed in high schools and universities, I suggested that students see more of Canada before visiting foreign countries. There were 400,000 people on Parliament Hill this year to be part of the festivities—music, dance, and of course the spectacular fireworks. The last time I performed on the Hill on Canada Day approximately 18 years ago, there was a record crowd of 133,000 people. I don't miss being on duty for Canada Day—long, long days always with problems, many of them alcohol related.

I am sitting in a beautiful boat at Grand Lake, Québec in the Laurentian Mountains at my friend Brian Reynolds's summer residence. Brian was an extremely active man, worked hard all his life, and was a successful businessman. I would stay at his house in Sarasota, Florida, when I was doing shows in the area and always felt at home with him and his wife, Glennis. About three years ago, Brian had a stroke that paralyzed one side of his body. He has since been in therapy with unfortunately little improvement. So every so often I bring my guitar up to his home at Grand Lake to attempt to cheer him up. It gives me great satisfaction to do so, and music can make a difference. I can't even imagine how I would deal with that affliction. However, Brian is not a quitter. At least he has not lost his speech and has not given up. Whenever I think of Brian or the people I meet in wheelchairs with no legs but with smiles on their faces, I have to say to myself, "Shut up D'Arcy and stop complaining! You think you are having a bad day?"

There is a creek with water coming from the mountain right beside me. How peaceful is that? Not another sound except for birds, as most people come up only on weekends, and the ones who are here are considerate and respect their neighbors.



### ***August 5, 2013***

I had arranged a two-week musical tour of Ireland this August. I was to travel with a tour group of people from my hometown and Pontiac County. However, I had to cancel for several reasons and am very disappointed—to say the least. However, I will attempt to go later. I was so looking forward to seeing some of my relatives, visiting a few areas that I had not been able to on previous trips, and of course performing!

My old injuries (chronic severe migraines, backpain, and concussion-related symptoms) are coming back to haunt me—as I mentioned before, I've sustained several concussions and broken bones that were aggravated over the years by active police work and contact sports. I could have gone, however, Noellie and I discussed it and decided that it would be best to postpone the trip. So instead, I went up to Sheenboro the next week to spend some time with my friend Andrew Perrault. I rented the old Hector Perrault little house on the hill. Hector married my Grandmother Walker's sister, Bridget D'Arcy, and worked the little farm. Andrew had the log house renovated, and it is a special place to get away to up on the hill with forest all around me. I opened the gate,

and I noticed two small bears 50' from me. Wow, it is good to be back home again! When I started driving, they just sauntered into the bush. They were eating the oats (grain) that had just been cut. I got up the next morning around 7 a.m., and there they were about 5' from my door. Now that's as close to nature as you can get.

Andrew's wife, Norma, had been bedridden for several years. In 2008, he was out at the Fort (Fort William) on the Ottawa River for dinner, and as he was driving home and came up the hill approaching the farm, he saw smoke coming from the house. Somebody had already called the Volunteer Fire Department, and when Andrew arrived, the fire was well under way. His wife was in a second-floor bedroom. Her room was on fire, and she fell through the floor in her bed. What a horrific scene that must have been for him! The house burned to the ground. He has since built a new house, which is just beautiful.

A week before she died, I dropped in to see Andrew and took my guitar upstairs and asked her what her favorite song was. She said, "The Green Grass of Home." I sang the song, and she sang along with me.



### **Irish Heritage Festival**

My last time there, I was upstairs around 5:30 p.m. and heard a sound that seemed really weird and very loud. I went outside, and the noise was deafening. I was about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the Ottawa River, and it was the wind I heard blowing through the trees, knocking down several maple and pine trees. Immediately, I recognized that sound and grabbed all my stuff, loaded it in my van, and took off down the road leading to the main road. As I was driving down, I could see there were trees falling and snapping/breaking about 15' to my left. The rain was like I had never seen before. My van was being pushed along by the wind, and as I approached the steel gate, the lightning was constantly striking the big trees in the bush. Now, as the gate was steel with chain locks, I had to measure the time between lightning strikes and try to open the gate in the interim. The rain and wind were very scary. I finally got the gate open and got back in my van. I was soaking wet, as was the inside of the van on the driver's side. I turned left to head into the village, and there were downed trees blocking my way. Meanwhile, the tornado was in full force. I got out again and was able to move a tree enough to get through. I have all-wheel drive, so I made it through half in the ditch.

I get to the village in Sheen and observed the very large tent, which was set up for the festival, had blown down, and chairs were scattered all over the place. I had heard on the radio that the road to Pembroke was closed. So I went to my friend John Berrigan's farm and stayed the night. No one lives there much any more, and I was a little apprehensive (in case there was more to come). I phoned Noellie to inform her of my ordeal and to warn her that the severe weather was heading her

way in Ottawa. Two hours later the storm arrived in Ottawa; however, it was not as severe as it had been in the Pontiac. I left Berrigan's farm the next morning and drove around numerous downed trees and branches from Sheenboro to the bridge to Pembroke. There were several tornados there in the last thirty to forty years.



### **Ottawa Kiwanis Club**

For the past twenty-five years, I have been a loyal member of the Kiwanis Club of Ottawa, a branch of an international service club dedicated to helping children and youth through service projects such as the Kiwanis Read-a-thon, the Kiwanis Music Festival, and mentoring with Cadets, Circle K, and Key Clubs. The Ottawa chapter has 150 members from the private, public, and voluntary sectors.

It has been my very great privilege to serve among such a wonderful, dedicated, generous and talented group! I have met such wonderful people with whom it was a joy to interact and serve with as a team. I am happy to count them as good friends.

I was very pleased to receive the Club's Legion of Honor Plaque, commemorating my quarter-century of membership. It has a place of honor in my home. It is such a worthy cause, and I look forward to continued membership as long as I am able and can contribute! Furthermore, I encourage others to look into joining—for information, the Ottawa club's site is <http://www.ottawakiwanis.org/>, and the parent club's site is <http://www.kiwanis.org/kiwanis>.



### ***September 16–22, 2015, Portland, Oregon***

*Enough is enough! I made the spur-of-the-moment decision to finally complete this project (after a two-year hiatus) and flew across the continent to Portland, where my editor, Christine Z., had moved from Ottawa. The following concluding thoughts were written in Portland. At last, after 16+ years since beginning the memoir, I have closure. 10–4.*

### **Looking Back**

Upon looking back after all these years, there are many things I would change if I could do over: I would have told my mother, Mary, that I loved her more often than I did and would have called and visited more frequently. I would have paid more attention to my family—Noellie, my boys, and my brothers and sisters. I would have continued my university studies. That being said, hindsight is 20-20. My younger self (like most people's) had imperfect vision to see what I would regret most in the future.



### **Looking Forward**

I believe I am pretty well on track for what I wanted to do after my retirement from the police force. I continue with my musical performances, and it's that much easier to schedule without having to secure departmental permissions. I continue teaching through my Rising Stars Talent Development Program. I enjoy the frequent solitude of visits to the country—especially, Pontiac County, the farm in the Laurentian Mountains, the cabin at Lowney Lake in the heart of the Lanark Highlands, and spending as much time as possible with the family!



### **Advice to Readers**

If I've learned anything especially worth imparting to others, it's the following four pieces of advice: first, pay attention to your children, their precious time with you is all too brief; second, get to know your neighbors and join or start a Neighborhood Watch Program; third, if you see anything suspicious, report it ASAP before crime happens—police need the public's assistance; and fourth, include the police in your community events, sporting leagues and events, festivals, community yard sales, etc.

I could cite numerous people who have come from humble beginnings and had big dreams, which they never gave up on or lost sight of making their way up the ladder of success. To mention a couple: Kevin O'Leary, a highly successful venture capitalist who is a judge on the TV show *Dragons' Den* and his fellow judge on the show, Jim Treiving, a former RCMP officer, now prosperous entrepreneur and CEO of the Boston Pizza empire.



### **Flashback to My Last Day as an Ottawa Police Officer**

When the day arrived for me to retire after thirty-six years with the Ottawa Police Force, it was very emotional. When I left home for my last day as an Ottawa police officer, knowing how much I will miss my comrades, it was difficult for me to accept the fact that I was not as young as I still felt. Facing my retirement in 1999 was a bittersweet moment for me. On the one hand, I was leaving the comradeship of fellow officers with whom I was sworn to serve and protect the public and with many of whom I had deeply bonded. I was leaving a job in which I felt good about performing my duty for some three decades and which formed part of my self-image.

To ease the transition after I retired, I submitted a proposal to the Ottawa Police that I be hired on a contractual basis to continue the work I had been doing in the community, performing and speaking at schools and elsewhere in the community on safety matters. I provided an estimated

budget and list of other requisites. A week later, Deputy Chief Sue O'Sullivan asked me to see her in her office and granted my request and included the use of a van for my equipment. The contract lasted three years. So, back on the road again!

Despite having rubbed some of my supervisors the wrong way with my efforts to blend my police and musical interests, I was gratified to receive numerous awards recognizing my community-building activities and was particularly touched by this tribute from my deputy chief:

There is no doubt, Dominic, you left your mark embedded deep in the Ottawa Police Force and later in the Ottawa-Carleton Police Service and the community.... As you retire [in 1999], you must feel very proud of your accomplishments on and off the job. Your wife deserves a medal, for without her holding the ship steady at home, there is no way you could have carried on night after night in the entertainment business along with your police commitments. One sure thing, Dominic, is you did what you enjoyed most in your life, that is, sing and play guitar and entertain people. What more can one person ask for! ....I will always remember the song you composed and sang at my retirement party....This is another example of your talents and dedication to your craft and how you used it to bring joy and happiness to people you cared for.

—Armand Soucie (1928–2012), former Ottawa Police Deputy-Chief

However, on the other hand, retirement from the police force meant an opening of unscheduled time to devote more concerted, focused effort to my love of music—both performing and enriching the community through music in support of good causes and mentoring rising stars, travelling and meeting new people. I can truthfully say, now with the passage of some 16 years since retirement, that I have never looked back. Life is still interesting, and my inborn curiosity and lifelong sense of loving adventure keep me going full throttle.

I must confess, dear readers, to having great difficulty in writing a conclusion to this memoir. I feel as if there is so much I still yet want to do. New plans keep being made. It seems fitting to conclude by using a musical simile, since music is so important a part of my life: I feel as if concluding this memoir writing project is simply like picking up the needle on a record that is still spinning. I leave it to my biographers to write the sequel from this point and wish him or her good luck with that task!

### Acknowledgments

I sincerely want to thank all the people who supported and assisted me on my journey. Foremost thanks to my wife, Noellie, for her faithful support over the 50 years we've been together. As well, I greatly appreciated my sons' encouragement to commit my stories to paper for posterity.

I also want to acknowledge the valued support and recognition I received from Ottawa mayors Marion Dewar, Jacqueline Holtzman, Jim Durrell, Bob Chiarelli, and Jim Watson.

Special thanks are due to my police superiors and colleagues, then Chief Tom Flanagan, Deputy-Chief Armand Soucie, Deputy-Chief Sue O'Sullivan, Inspector Dan McFall, and Inspector Bob Woods. I also want to thank my supportive colleagues on the Force—you know who you are!

Finally, I extend my utmost thanks and gratitude to my editor, Christine Zerbinis, retired managing editor of Association for Bahá'í Studies Publications (Ottawa) and former managing editor of Landegg International University Press (Switzerland). Her efforts and guidance over the past seven years most certainly improved the readability of my stream of consciousness memoir. As well, my appreciation goes out to several others who contributed typing and editorial services at the outset of this project so many years ago.

Heartfelt thanks to you all!





*For over forty years, Dominic D'Arcy has entertained crowds around the world with his unique blend of music and message. Musician, humourist, actor, singer and former police officer, Dominic is a truly versatile performer. His shows offer a high-energy mix of original music, combined with favourites in rock and roll, pop, folk, Celtic/country, Irish traditional and a little of everything else. A true minstrel, the songs he sings are about people, community, dreams and hopes. No matter his audience, Dominic creates an engaging connection with children, teens, adults and seniors alike.*

*A decorated police officer, now retired from the Ottawa Police after thirty-six years of service, Dominic is affectionately known as "the Singing Policeman". Sergeant D'Arcy (retired) has since expanded his mandate from a front-line officer to entertaining prime ministers, heads of state, dignitaries and monarchs from over thirteen countries and in six languages.*

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