

Dear JP, 16 Nov. 2012

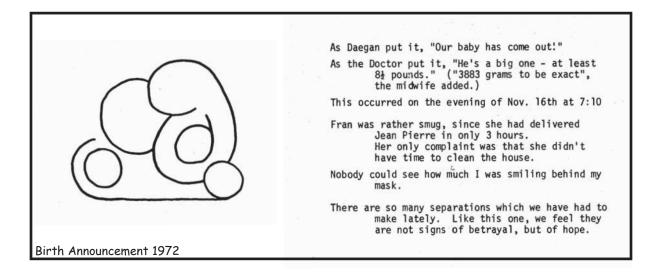
We're not sure why 40 is such a special year — in my case it was probably a few years later that I can mark a major turning-point — but almost every year can serve as celebration time for your contributions to our lives.

To help along the way we have put together some photos and reflections of our 40 years with you. It has been a joy to be a part of this adventure and an excellent basis to imagine the years to come.

You will see that these materials have a decidedly Fran and Bill filter. This should come as no surprise since we don't have the experience or photos to reflect the many other friends, adventures, and challenges that must have come your way in these years. Our glimpses of them leave us feeling very thankful that you have been surrounded by such a supportive and interesting network of friends. We hope you will have many opportunities to exchange their stories as well as ours.

After all — as a wise child and friend of ours once said:

"We live for the memories."



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Anticipation and Birth (1971 and 1972)

Our original plan for a second child involved adoption. After all, we didn't want to exceed our quota of offspring when there were so many others in need of parenting. So we applied to the adoption agency and started the process of certification.

It didn't take long. After a few interviews our social worker reported that we had passed their screening and we would be put on the list for a child. After only a week or so she called to say that they had a child we should consider - a young boy whose mother was a native Canadian and father an overseas visitor. "Of course we are very interested." we replied and she promised to call us as soon as she finished her follow-up.

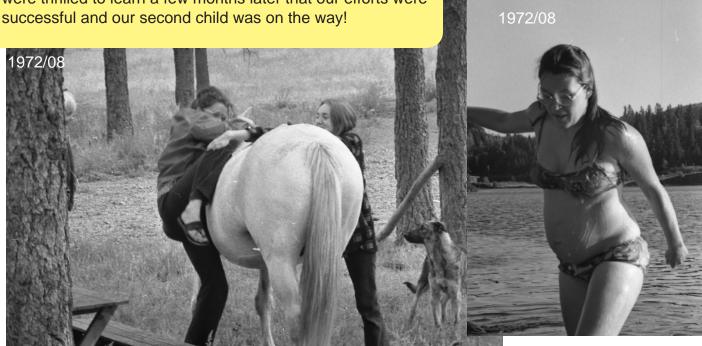
By the time we called back a few days later (to find out why we heard nothing from them), we were told that the boy had gone to another couple since they didn't feel we would be a good assignment. "The father was short" she said "and we were both tall." "Besides", she added, "both his parents were uneducated so he would not integrate well into the family." We were flabbergasted — but undaunted — and asked about other options.

"There are plenty of older children" she responded, "but this wouldn't work for your family since you already have a 2-year old and she would feel that her position had been usurped if an older sibling arrived."

From there, our exchanges with the agency just got worse. So much so that we decided a DIY project was in order. We were thrilled to learn a few months later that our efforts were successful and our second child was on the way!





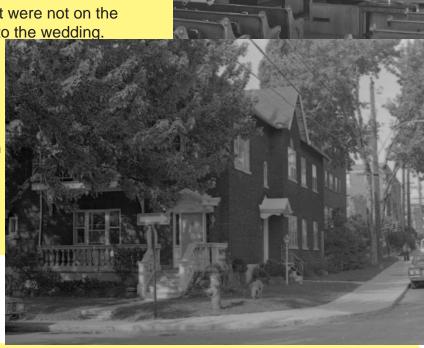


Your gestation was a busy time. Fran was running experiments and writing her MA thesis. I was working on my PhD and applying for jobs. I received an invitation to Sir George Williams in the spring and we accepted a 1-year posting in the Sociology and Anthropology department. It seemed like a very exotic choice to us!

Jim and Marylyn were getting married in Sicamous that summer so we piled all our possessions that were not on the moving truck into our van, and headed to the wedding.

On our way we stopped in to visit Meg and Rick in Kamloops - where Fran decided she wasn't going to let a big belly stop her from a horse ride. You can see from the photo what a struggle it was. We also stopped in to visit the church in Sidney where your grandfather Shaver preached from 1947 to 1952.

Soon we were settled in to our new home on Terrebone and Old Orchard.



1972/08

On November 15th I was busy teaching my first classes and trying to do the editing of my PhD thesis so that I would be eligible for a full-time position. Fran had a doctor's appointment just up the hill from the university so she and Daegan had taken our VW van into the office. About 5 PM or so, I got a call from her asking me to meet her at the doctor's office since she was starting to feel contractions. For some reason (as Fran regularly reminds me), I refused. I told

starting to feel contractions. For some reason (as Fran regularly reminds me), I refused. I told her to drive herself home and I would meet her there. She got Daegan into the van, tried to find a bookstore, but there were no parking places, so she went home to pack.

When I arrived home, Fran was standing at the ironing board with tears in her eyes — pausing to breathe with each contraction. Daegan was taken next door to our neighbours (as previously arranged) so Fran and I climbed into the van and headed to the Catherine Booth Hospital.

You were born early in the morning of the 16th — and what I remember the most is how much Fran talked in the recovery room once her labour was finished. She motor-mouthed for an hour or so — showing no interest in sleeping and all excited about your arrival!









Grands and Greats

You were fortunate to have 4 of your Great-Grandparents alive to fuss over you.

Your Great-Grandmother Hamlet came to Montréal to visit you when you were 3 years old. We remember having a lovely picnic in the van on Mount Royal Park.



I'm very glad that you and Daegan spent some time with my grandparents. I have always considered them special — and I like the fact that you and my Grandfather are peas from the same pod.





1986/01

My mother thought this photo
— with the two generations on
two sides — is a precious one.
It was your sister that brought
them together.



Mum and Dad Reimer got out to Ile Bigras in 1982. We even had a chance to take them to Upper Canada Village. They made the trip as part of a cross-Canada train ride.





Family Connections

You came into a world that was ready for you — but it expected you to make some adjustments along the way. For example, there was a rather strong-willed sister to accommodate, and a dog that expected regular scraps and the occasional wrestle. On top of that your parents seemed to be always busy with something — like baking bread, preparing lessons, or building shelves. Fortunately, they always seemed to invite you along.



on

You seemed to accept our make-do sleeping arrangements very well. This was in my office at Sir George Williams. Years later, when cleaning out my filing cabinet, I found a stash of diapers in the bottom drawer.

977/09

This photo was taken when we visited Shelley and Steven at their home in Okanagan Falls.

Since our famous

Since our families were so far away, it meant that you were introduced to travel very early. Each year (and sometimes more often) we would get out to see them, however — and it was always party time!

Victoria

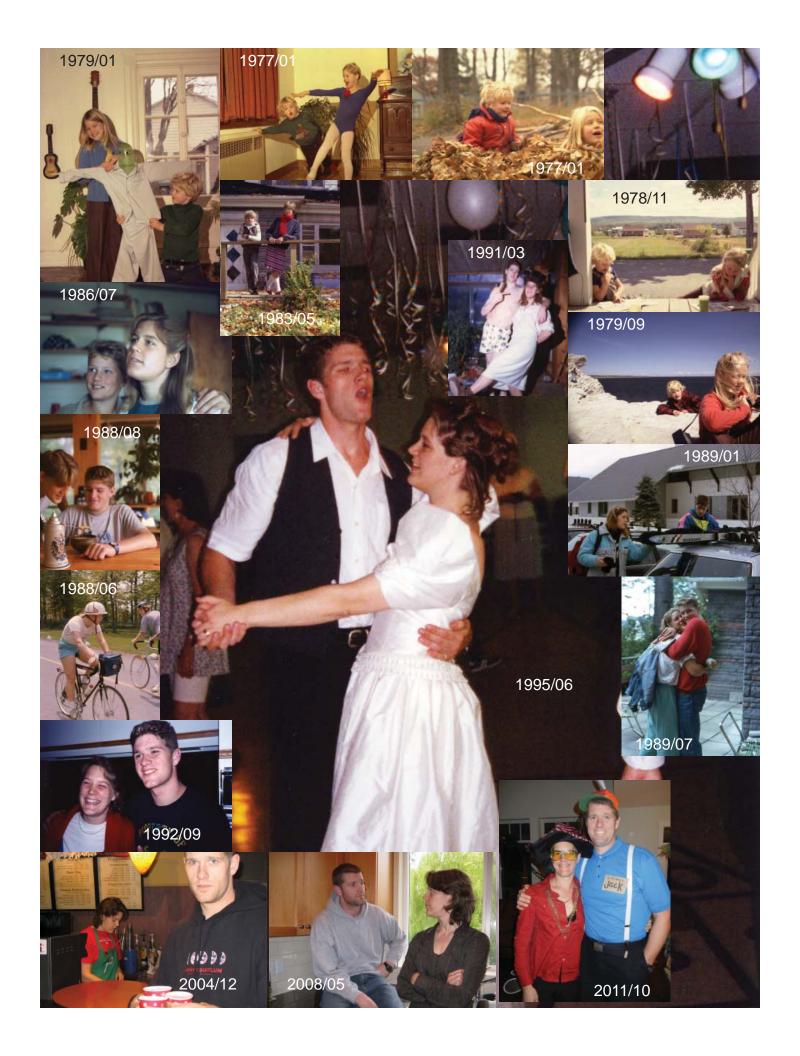
1977/08

1986/10

Your family didn't just include people in Vancouver, however. On our trip through Thunder Bay, you discovered — and enjoyed — your shirt-tail cousins, Kevin and Scott Belluz.







Friends and Neighbours





For 2 summers you went to la Ferme d'André. It was with these friends that you learned how to ride, jump, and care for a horse, play in a hay loft, and I expect, a number of other skills that we haven't heard about (yet).

Christmas day 1984 Fran woke up exhausted, headachy, and not up to cooking turkey. So we went out for a walk and dropped it to the Jemus'. Our visit turned into a party. Once our place at the table was assured we rushed home to get some goodies for dessert and ended up with a turkey dinner and chat far into the night!

1984/12

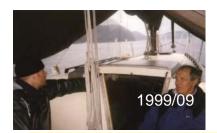
We enjoy how many of your friends are still in touch with us — like Glen (who has set up his own family down the street), Cary, Jody, Matt, Alex, Vicky, and even the Vaniers (who keep us up to date with their own expansion).





We could just as easily have put the Drapeaus into the "family" category as "friends". They seemed to have a special place in their hearts for you. I remember in Cap-St-Ignace when they extended a personal invitation to you to come for a swim at their place (and watch some TV)!.





Of course, you have many other friends that we have never met — let alone photographed! Here is a teaser but I expect you could fill in several more pages. We have always appreciated how welcome we have been as part of those networks.













1985/01

We knew something was going on when you and Misha came into the living room wearing many layers of clothes. You asked us adults to take your photo, then headed back into the bedroom. About 45 minutes later, you rejoined us and announced you had just finished a game of strip poker!











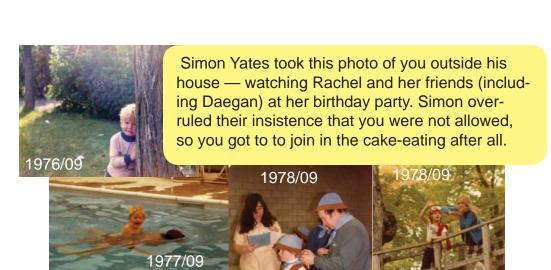
1983/05

1983/05







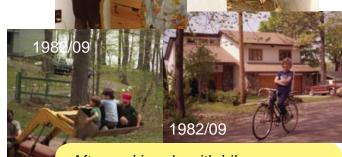


1977/01

We enjoyed your help collecting sap for several years — until the boiling got too be too much for our academic schedule.

Peter led you and Daegan in the art of igloo construction at Cap-St-Ignace — and you picked up a new set of friends such as "Dave puis Alain".

1983/05



1978/09

After making do with bikes assembled from the garbage, you finally got enough money to buy one on your own. I was proud of the way you did this — and of the care you took of it. The bike went through many transformations in its history!



1978/0

1979/01

1978/11

Your homemade Darth Vader mask — the beginning of your mask-making career.

The priest said that you were the best student in the catechism class!







Crafts and Activities



1986/01

I have always liked how you would dream up, assemble, construct, and fiddle with various materials to create or fix something interesting — or make-do when your parents refused to buy you some gizmo.



We had a great time designing and building your first skate-board (well, at least the first one after you created one out of an ironing board and old metal skates). I particularly liked how we rigged up a jig to shape the plywood we used. Too bad it didn't last for long!

You stood in as a partner for one of the girls in Dae-gan's graduating class. It was a very clever way to get in on 2 graduations.

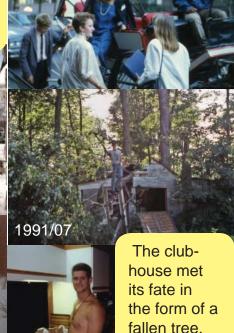
1987/07

You found curious ways of getting into the snow!

1986/02



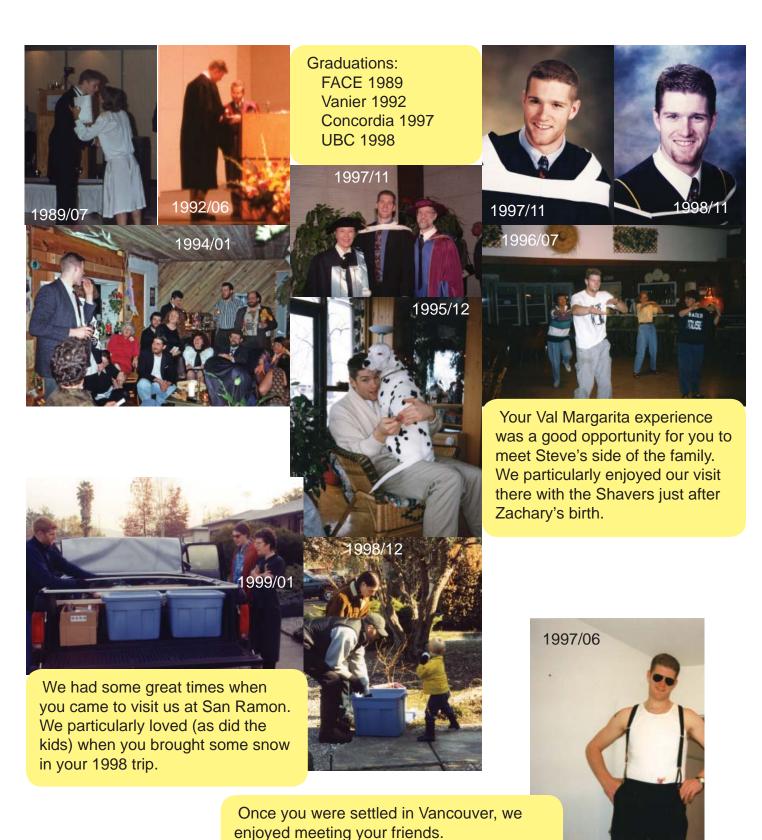
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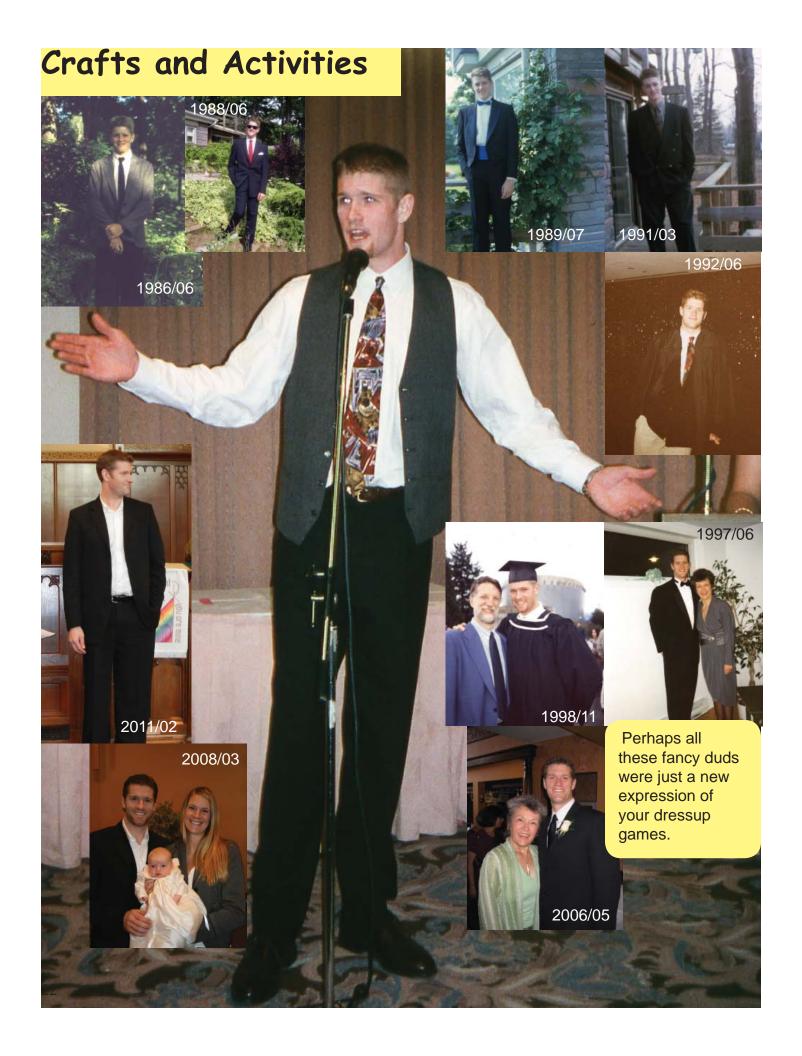
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1992/06

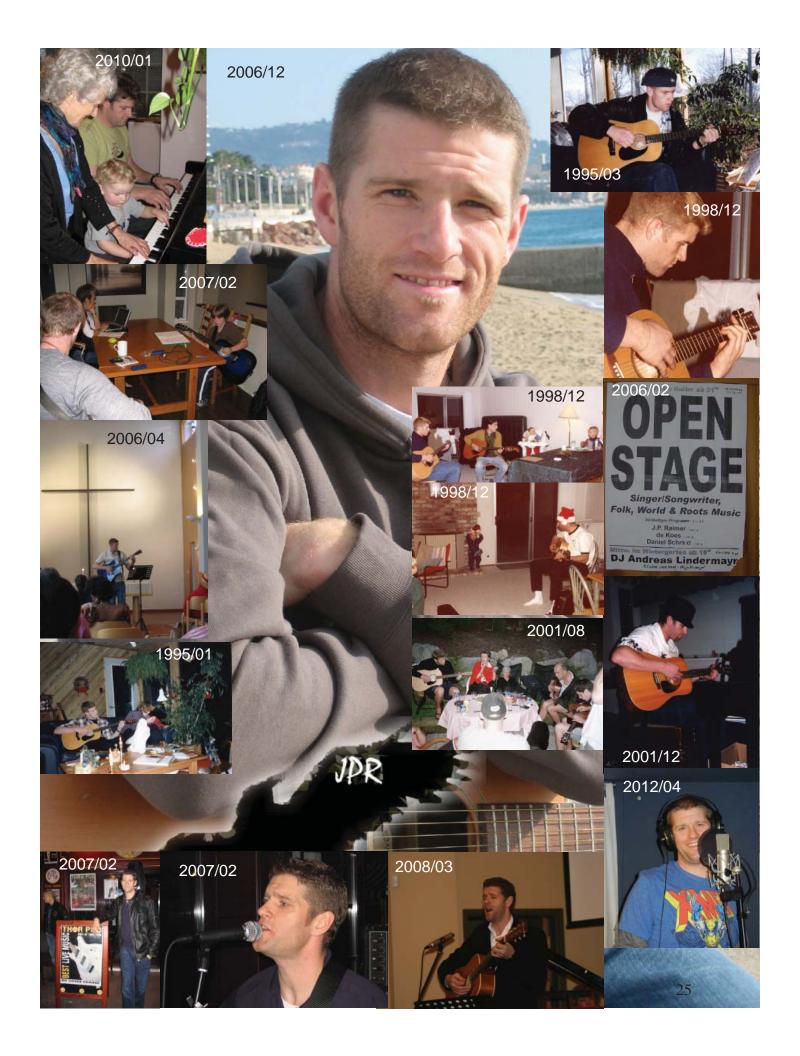




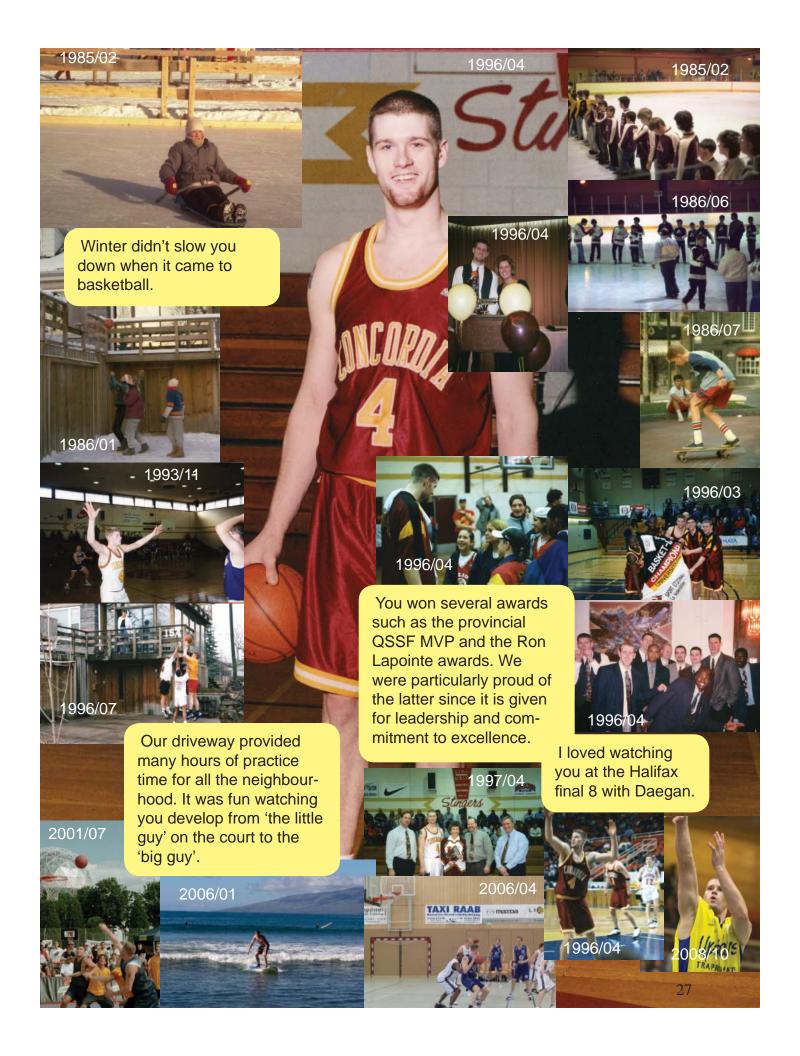




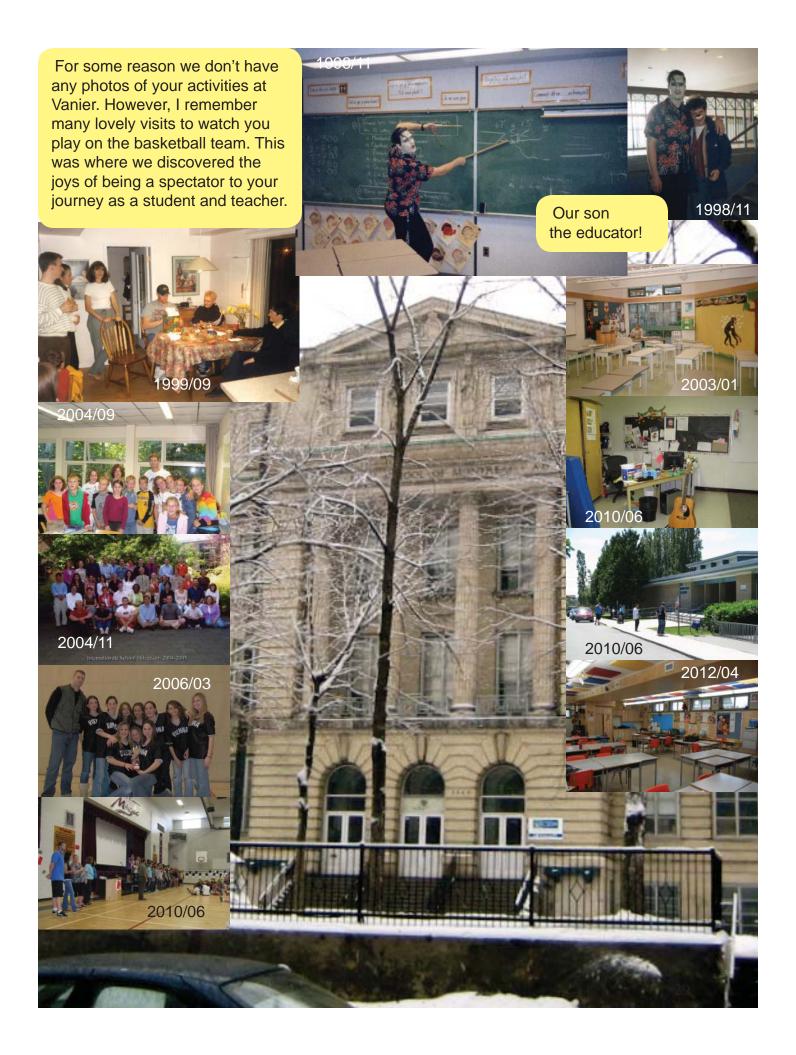


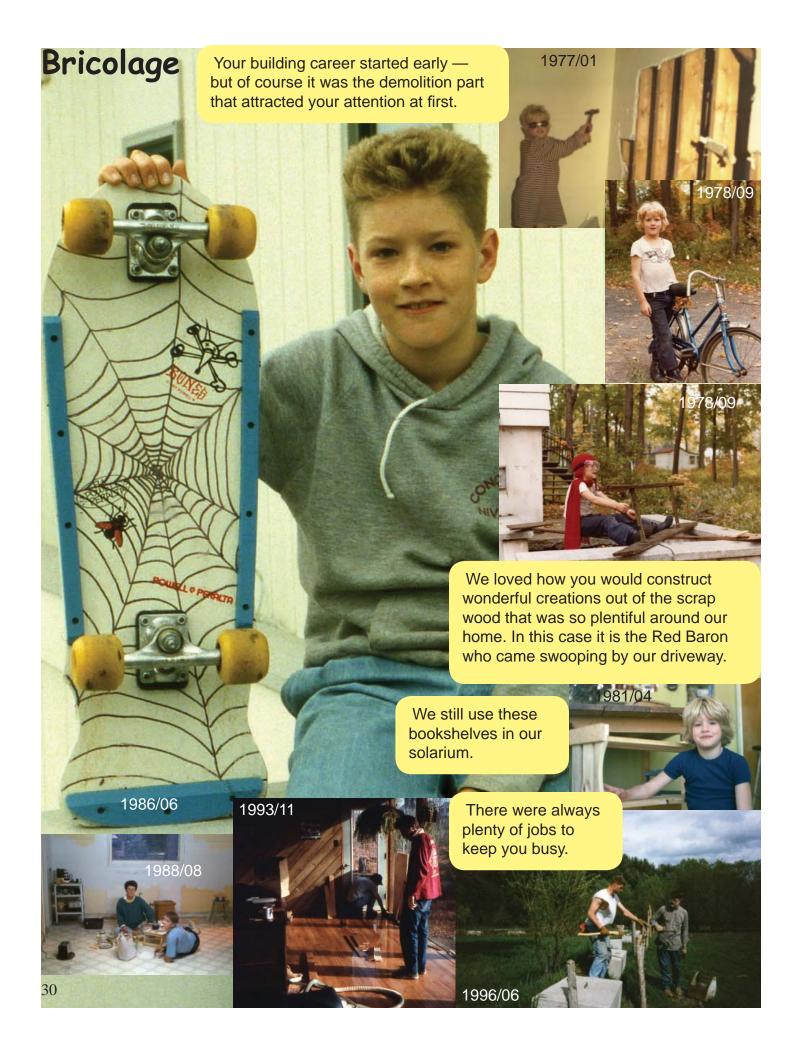


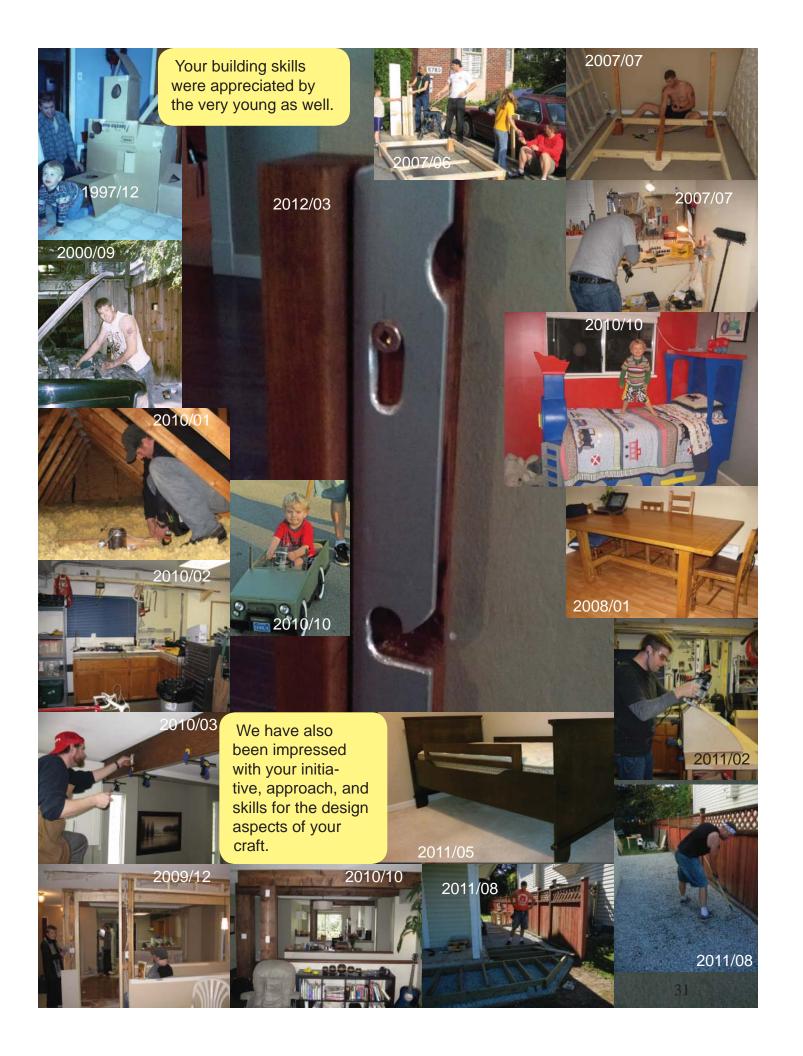






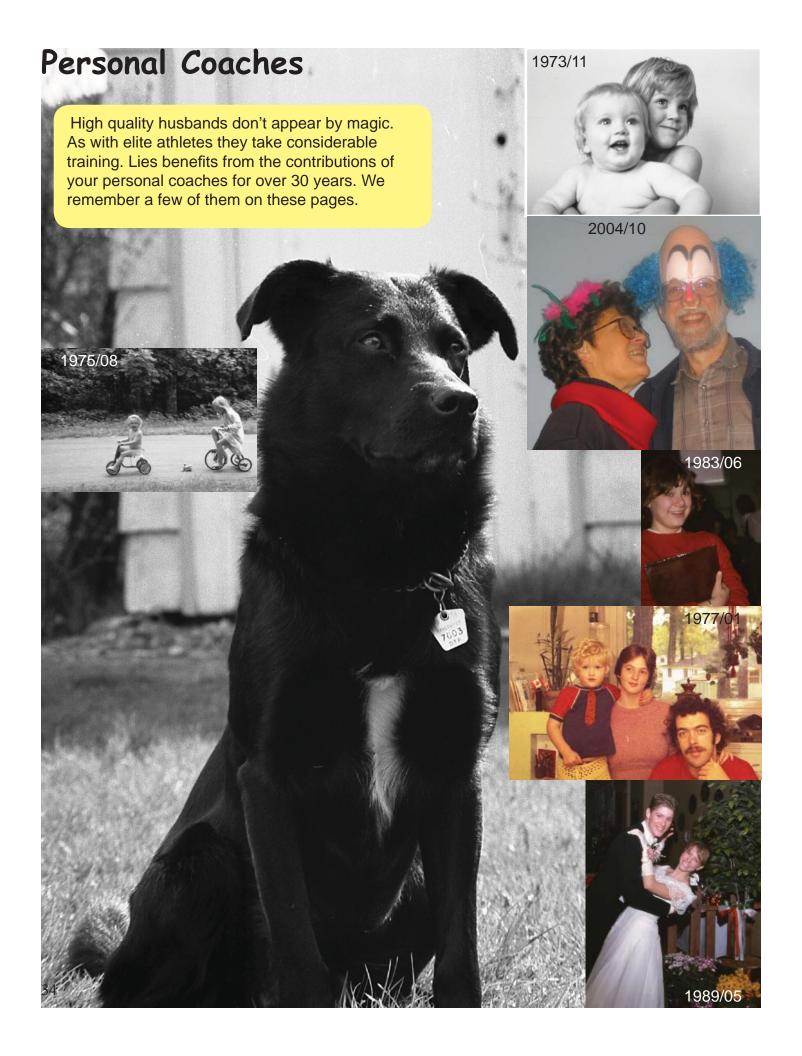


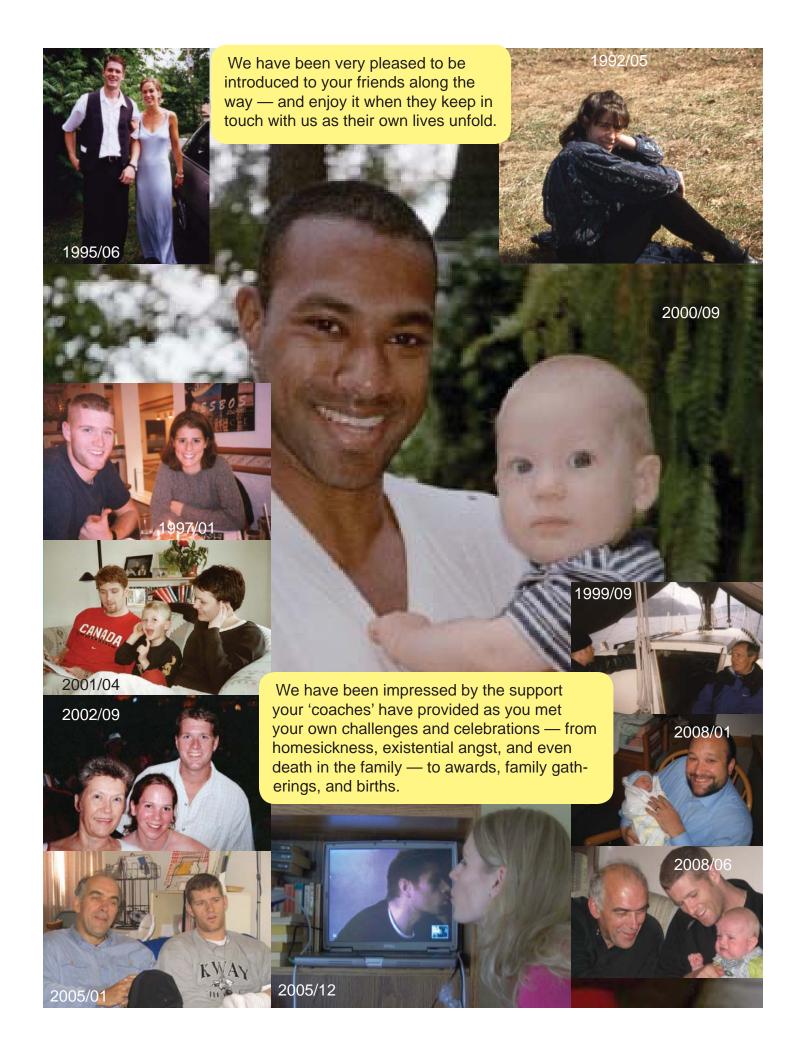




















Your Parents at 40 (1984 and 1985)

Bill at 40

1984 was what I imagine surfing would be. After paddling as hard as I could in the 70s I had finally caught a wave. I had received my tenure in 1979 — thereby giving me a secure job — was actively engaged in an interesting research program on rural communities, had a number of courses under my belt that I could teach with little trouble, and Fran was finally coming back home after her 2 years in Ottawa. I should be relaxed and happy - right?

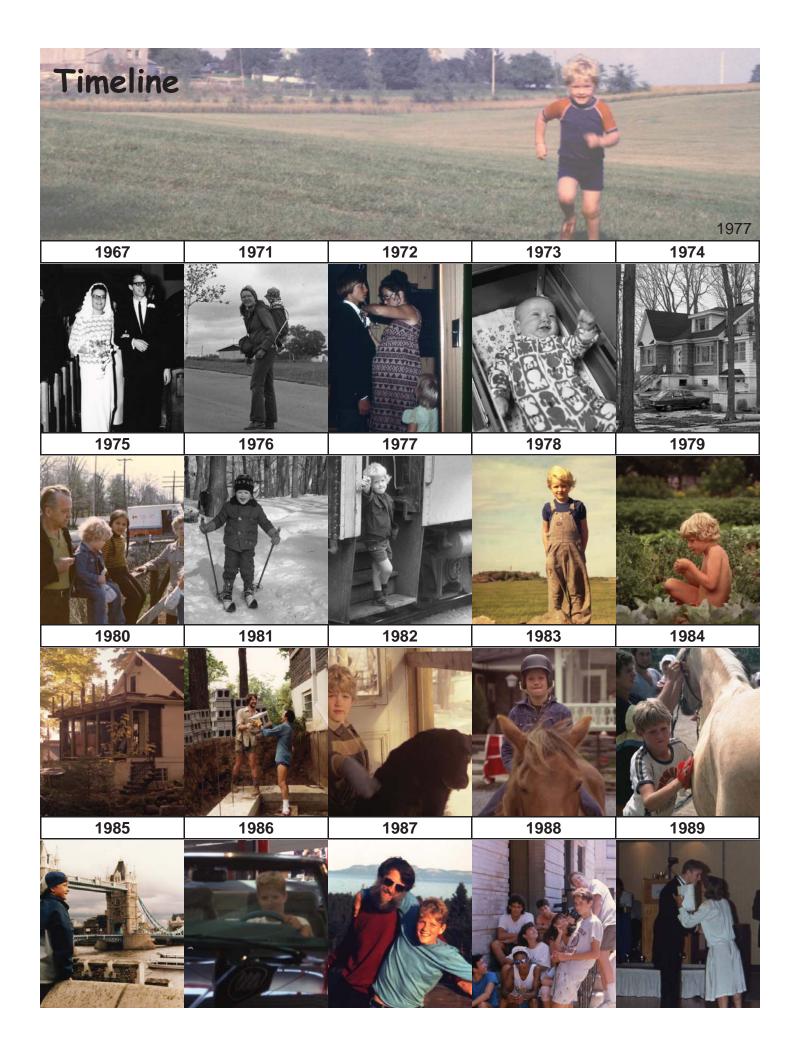
But life doesn't work like that on the wave. First of all, someone else seemed to be running the show. My job was to stay upright: be a good father, teacher, researcher, and husband; finish off the growing list of house projects; publish enough to justify my university's tenure decision; and see if I could come up with an answer to that nagging question: "What's worth doing in my life?" Second, I found, it's extremely tiring looking out for the sidewaves, other surfers, and the inevitable crash on the beach.

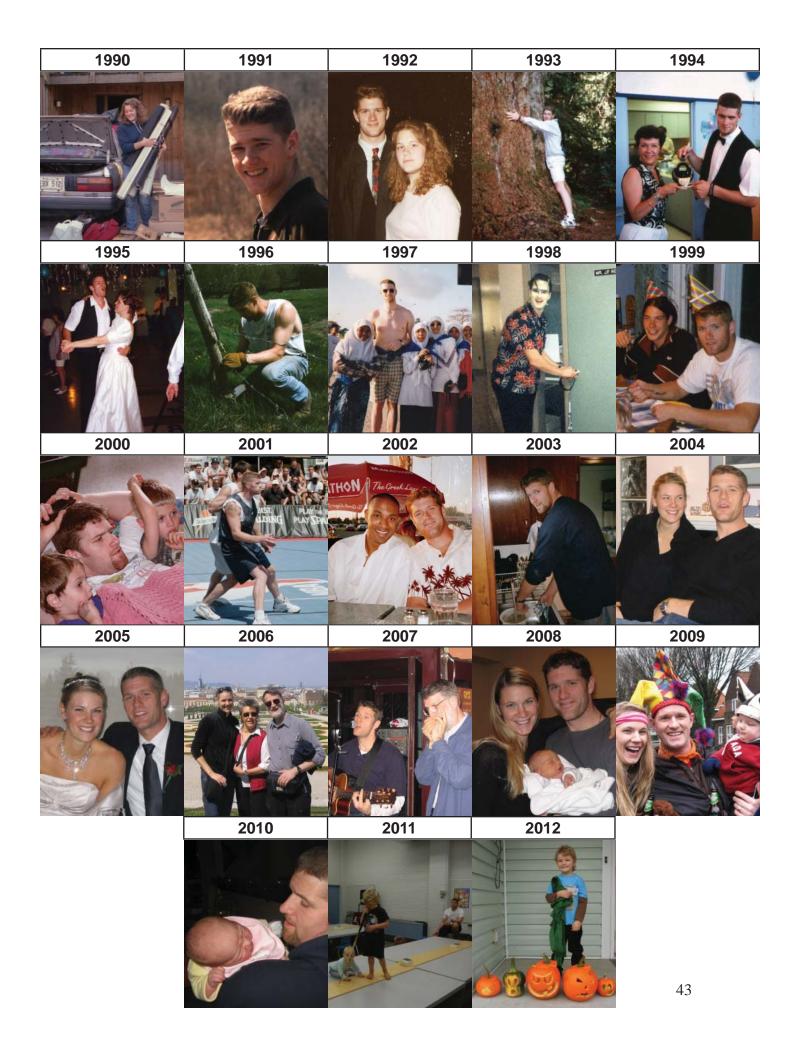
Fortunately, I had plenty of diversions to seduce me from the anxieties of the ride. Fran's return, a visit from Dorothy and Jack, your sojourn at Ferme d'André, and of course the fun of your projects, discoveries, and excitement along the way kept me smiling on the crest of the wave. The crash could wait a few years yet!



1984 was also your first year at La Ferme d'André. That was the year you got a plastic model of the Milleneum Falcon, You and Pascale seem to be busy working on it in this photo. Dorothy and Jack drove out to see us in the summer of 1984. In this picture we are having lunch by one of your favorite spots — the Museum of Science and Technology in Ottawa. We also visited Upper







The Back Page

































F 'n B Productions November 2012