



REMEMBERING
Bruce Lindsay

May 31, 1956 - May 30, 2016



This commemorates Bruce Albert Lindsay, May 30, 1956 to May 30, 2016.

Bruce is predeceased by his mother Sarah (Babs) Beal Lindsay and his father Albert Raymond Lindsay, both of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Bruce is survived by his brother Brian Robert Lindsay, Brian's wife Jane (Ryan) Lindsay, their children Michael Lindsay and Erin Lindsay, and his sister Laura Mae Lindsay, and her children Sarah Lindsay and Alisha Lindsay.

It is my hope that we will be able to remember Bruce with a sense of humour, laughing out loud at some of our memories of him, because that was such a large part of his personality. Bruce could make you smile no matter how bad things were. He continued somehow to laugh and to make others laugh during the last 2 very difficult years of his life.

Bruce was born and raised in Willowdale, Ontario, which is just north of Toronto. Immediate family consisted of his dad, Al (Albert) and his mom Babs (Sarah), his older brother Brian and his younger sister Laura. For many years they shared their home with their grandmother, Granny Beal and their great uncle Jim Thurmer.

Bruce's growing up years were filled with family. In addition to his immediate family, he had aunts and uncles and cousins nearby. He and his cousins Barry Denman (child of Dot and Ed Denman) and Tom and Pat Swabey (children of Nesta and Ernie Swabey) and Barb and Debi Beal (children of John and Ella Beal), were often together for family events like corn roasts, birthdays, anniversaries, Thanksgiving and Christmas. He also enjoyed the occasional visits from aunts, uncles and cousins who lived too far away to visit on a regular basis: Owen and Edith Lindsay (cousins Marlene, Colin and Heather); Don and Jean Lindsay (cousins Bonnie, Karen and Stephen); Hugh and Helen Lindsay (cousins Cam, Anne and Colin).

Bruce went to school at Edithvale, R.J. Laing and then Northview Heights. Likely the most significant event of his school years was the fact that he met his life long friend Jock Stirling in grade 6.

Bruce's mom passed away when he was 16, and his father remarried.

Bruce was one of the lucky ones whose stepmother is a warm and caring person, Grace (Gueran) Lindsay. Bruce didn't live at home many more years after Dad and Grace got married, but in those years they developed a loving relationship that would last for the rest of his life, despite the physical distance between them. Grace knew Bruce's sense of humour as well as anyone did, and loved the fact that every year when he called her on Mother's Day, it was to wish her "happy wicked stepmother's day" - they both laughed, knowing it was far from the truth and that he felt exactly the opposite about her. Bruce REALLY wanted to be there for Grace's 90th birthday 3 years ago - he tried, only to get waylaid by winter storms, and was stuck in Edmonton for 4 days waiting to get the rest of the way to Toronto. He could have turned back, but persevered and finally made it, and he has kept a photo of Grace from that time, although he missed the actual party.

Bruce was a lot like his Dad in many ways - they both had a well-developed sense of mischief (they were the 'wiseacres' in the family), they were calm, generous, and not self-absorbed; neither was a person to share his private thoughts. Bruce also had a very sentimental streak.

While growing up he began to learn about two things that he would go on to excel at - cooking, but most of all gardening. Their home was unusual in that all the men were interested in cooking at some level. Making jams, jellies and pickles was the job of Al and the kids, and Bruce grew up to become a very skilled and imaginative cook. He and his brother Brian shared cooking tips and recipes, and on the few occasions when it was possible, loved to cook together. His love of gardening also came at least partly from his Dad, whose vegetables and roses were always a source of pride.

Bruce's main job before leaving Ontario was at Parker Brothers toys, where he was, among other things, the safety supervisor. He had some harrowing tales to tell of accidents on the production line, and safety at work has always been a theme for him.

Bruce moved to British Columbia in 1979. After moving so far, he couldn't return to Ontario very often, and his family couldn't visit very often. Despite the distance family ties remained strong. He was such a private person, though, that those ties remained a strong undercurrent in his life, rather than a focal point. In a very real way, his friends became his family on the 'left coast.'

He lived in a couple of locations in the lower mainland before settling in Mission. He worked in human resources at the Annacis Island terminal, a job he initially enjoyed because it allowed him to help his fellow workers. However, as the job changed, he found it very distressing to be the one handing out lay-off notices.

Bruce's dream job, however, was his own Abal's Landscape and Maintenance. Being self employed allowed him to be his own man, and he always had a boss he could get along with - in this case, the boss was known as "the handsome young

gardener" - a name he invented to poke fun at himself, but which was happily used by many. This work also allowed him to be outdoors, something he loved in its own right, and to work with plants. While not a formally trained gardener, he was a life-long learner, who would make sure that he educated himself thoroughly when he was confronted by something he didn't yet know.

This love of learning extended beyond gardening and maintenance, into his love of history and literature. He was an avid reader, and loved to discuss books with his friends.

Bruce also loved to go camping. In his younger years, some camping trips were from the back of his motorcycle. He also enjoyed trailer camping and hiking. Twice he hiked the trail to Cape Scott on Vancouver Island, trips that he described to his Ontario-bound brother with wonder and joy.

Music was a very important part of Bruce's life. He was a very accomplished 12-string guitar player, and playing and singing were sources of joy whether he was with one, two or many friends, or when he was alone.

Everyone has a public face and a private face, and like all of us, Bruce was complicated. None of us can ever truly know anyone else, and there are lots of things about Bruce that some of us know, some of us don't and none of us ever will.

His public personality was very upbeat and positive, and I believe that this was a true reflection of the core of what made him himself. He could always find some way to laugh and to make others laugh. His sense of humour could be very sarcastic, but in a humorous, not a hurtful way. He wasn't above making fun of himself.

He loved to be with his friends, having fun at parties and gatherings of all sorts. He cared deeply about his friends, and wasn't above giving advice when he thought it was needed, although for the most part his philosophy was 'live and let live.' While he had many very, very good friends, the core group that he could always count on were Jock Stirling, Lyle Beebe, Jamie Jackman, Stef Lock and Rob Williams. They and their spouses have been supportive of Bruce through thick and thin over many years. It's impossible to list the names of all of Bruce's other good friends, but they should know that his family cherishes the fact that they were there for him, too.

Bruce had a very serious accident two years ago. He broke his back badly, in several places, in a fall. The injury was complicated, and he wasn't able to find any significant medical help. He met a series of "top notch" surgeons, none of whom offered any real assistance. Despite the fact that he was in constant pain, he managed to maintain his sense of humour, although of course there were dark moments too.

The next part of this is something that Bruce wrote himself, which we found among his papers. We believe that he wrote it approximately 20 years ago, but he kept it with items that he reviewed on a regular basis. It summarizes many important parts of his philosophy of life:

I've learned some things in this short life from all those people I have loved and held dear. These things have shaped my past, help me shape my present and with some luck, will continue to shape my future.

I believe that love is worth the risk of loss. I believe that anger harms no one more than the person that harbours it. I believe that bitterness and true happiness are choices that we make, not conditions that fall upon us from the hands of fate. I believe that peace is to be found in the acceptance of things that we are unable to change. I believe that good friends and family are the blood of life and that the purpose of our existence lies in caring and commitment.

These things I believe. Despite what befalls me or life dishes out, these things I believe.

We know that you'll remember the good times you've had with Bruce. A celebration of his life took place on Friday June 10 at the Elk's Hall in Mission, B.C.

