

Dear Family and Friends,

2009 has been a year of sadness in our family, but hopefully we have not allowed the sadness to hide the simple pleasures that we have enjoyed this year.

On June 14th, Richard's father, Richard Farmer Hess (Dick Hess), passed away quietly at age 93 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. His wife of 34 years, Jay, was by his side. Richard visited him on the 12th and the 13th, but did not stay as we didn't know how long it would be.

On October 20th, Richard's Aunt Betty (Marcelia/Bonnie Phaneuf) died. Now, all three Hess siblings have died, including Uncle Don (Donald Farmer Hess) who died on July 30, 2002. Jay is doing well, and she is the only remaining member of Mary Beth's and Richard's parents' generation.

Richard took the photo below in April of 2000 when he and his Dad visited the Manheim, Pennsylvania Historical Society, during the production of a monumental history book.



To celebrate Dick's life, our family and Jay's two daughters and their families gathered in Lancaster, Pennsylvania to attend an absolutely wonderful memorial service at the Willow Valley retirement complex. Thank you, Jay, for all of your hard work caring for Dick over the last few years and for organizing the perfect memorial service.

The official published obituary and Richard's eulogy for his father are online at www.richardhess.com/family/dad.htm for those wishing to read more. Richard knew that he could not get through reading the eulogy, so Pastor Kenneth O'Neal kindly read it.

General

This year was very similar to last as we have stayed close to home. We hope that the economic recovery is treating you well.

Volunteering continues to be a large part of all of our lives this year. We have all helped at two national historic sites, Hillary House in Aurora and Sharon Temple in Sharon, where John, Mary Beth's brother, is Director/Curator.

On July 12th, Ellen and Bill Miller from New York stopped by for a visit. It was great to see them—it is always too long between visits with old friends.

The second week of August, we spent a few days with Cathie Joyce in Sarnia and saw some of her large family, too.

On August 27th, the four of us went to the Canadian National Exhibition and thoroughly enjoyed our day. This was a first-time event for three of us as Mary Beth had gone as a young child. We even heard Petula Clark at the band shell!

Mary Beth and Richard

In addition to being chauffeur, and keeping everyone on track, Mary Beth does a lot of volunteering also at Trinity. She continues as chalice bearer and is also helping more with the sound system. She is currently busy selling Christmas CDs at the Bazaar and every Sunday morning. This fall, she went canoeing for the first time at Trinity's Women's Retreat in Minden at a semi-luxury camp.

Richard has been busy with upgrading the church sound system by installing a wireless assistive listening system, a new 32-input audio mixer, and some additional wireless microphones. He has also taken on recording the York Symphony concerts (about five a year) held at Trinity.

Richard's business continues to do well. One of the exciting projects this year was digitizing the first five Stan Rogers albums from the original master tapes and also digitizing some other reels of Stan Rogers material. Rogers was a Canadian folk legend who tragically died in an airplane accident in 1983, at age 33.

Robert

Richard hired Robert during July and August to scan family negatives. We have finished scanning 99% of the family negatives and prints and about 30% of Richard's slides.

Robert started Grade 10 this fall and is really enjoying it. He is in the Grade 10 band. This is in addition to playing in the church orchestra and singing in the church choir. High school students must do 40 hours of community service during their four years in order to graduate. Robert has accumulated about 200 hours so far, but he'll continue his volunteer work.

Robert used his money from his summer work to purchase an acoustic guitar in January and an electric guitar and effects pedal in November. He is having loads of fun "jamming" with friends and is beginning to play with church groups. Dad gets to help out with the sound at times.

Michael

In March, Michael auditioned and earned a spot in the York Region Enrichment Band with his flute. He therefore was able to enjoy a week away from school in June. Graduating from Grade 8 in June, he won the music award.

At the end of April, Michael was confirmed into the Anglican Church. Unlike last year's confirmation which took place at Trinity in Aurora, we travelled to St. James Cathedral in Toronto for this year's service. Once again, Trinity presented ten youth to be confirmed—the largest contingent of the represented parishes.

In mid-May, Michael and his class took their Grade 8 graduation trip to Montreal and Quebec City. He had a wonderful time!

Michael also worked for his dad this summer, sharing the scanning responsibilities. He did a great job.

Michael continues to be active in choir and orchestra at church, as well as being a server/acolyte. He is also in the Grade 9 band at school.

While we cannot visit with all of you this Christmas season, our thoughts are with you and we wish you love, happiness, and prosperity! While we are living in challenging times, we also have hope.

With all our love,

Mary Beth, Richard, Robert, and Michael

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