

# Epilogue

## *Qué será, será*

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A great deal of water has flowed under the bridge since I retired to private life on December 21st, 2005. Opportunities for unlimited travel presented themselves and, indeed, we took advantage of our extra leisure time to explore new destinations and revisit old favourites (see Appendix 5). Day trips to beauty spots such as Inglis Falls near Owen Sound, Ontario, and the occasional overnight stay at a country inn became an accepted activity. Further afield, the lump sum paid out of the Employee's Fund financed our 2006 holiday to St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, and that same year saw two extended stays in Toronto. In general this was to become the pattern of our retirement lifestyle and, ten years later, following the release of these memoirs (with the exception of certain health issues) we have not slowed down in our 'golden years.'

With no family of our own, we continued to take an interest in our goddaughter's progress. Lindsey returned to England in 2000 when the bureaucrats rejected her visa application, but she managed to find permanent employment in the Logistics Department of Unipart plc. in Coventry. After an absence of five years, we met again when Roger, Susan and Lindsey visited Stephen, Erin and six-week old Niall at their Waterdown, Ontario, home. This process was repeated the following year, 2007.

Lindsey still had her sights on returning to Canada and continued to apply for emigration. After successfully satisfying all requirements, she finally emigrated to Canada on April 9th, 2009. The plan was for her to stay with Stephen and Erin and babysit their two infant sons, Niall and Leo, while looking for work. After several months of searching, she finally managed to get a job at a newly opened Walmart department store. However, she continued looking for a job in her chosen field and, on March 29th, 2010, joined Ryder Logistics in Mississauga, Ontario. Later in the year, Lindsey bought a condominium townhouse in Waterdown.

In the meantime, she had met Chris Morton using an Internet dating website. The friendship showed promise of developing and eventually became a common-law relationship. In July, 2013, they moved into a house in Georgetown, Ontario; Chris having sold his apartment and Lindsey now renting out the townhouse. We received news in January, 2014, that Lindsey was pregnant. A surprise to everyone; especially to us who thought that she was avidly pursuing her career. However, the couple were excited at becoming first time parents and Ella Adelaide arrived punctually on June 19th, 2014. Since both Chris and Lindsey were getting older, they planned an addition to the family, and a baby boy, Ross James, was born on July 7th, 2016. A nice ending to this aspect of my memoirs.

Although maintaining a well-balanced lifestyle, health issues naturally came into play as we grew older. Prior to retirement I had not been affected by any serious illness and was able to overcome occasional infections such as the bout of pertussis (whooping cough or '100-day cough') in 2003 that eventually ran its natural course. One situation did develop that required me to take daily medication

and that was an enlarged prostate gland; a nonmalignant condition common in men over sixty years of age. However, Monica was subjected to several health issues; one that had possible life-threatening tendencies.

In 2010, Monica developed a skin rash that the GP (family doctor) considered as a form of dermatitis. A change in laundry detergent cured this, but another, more serious, skin disorder made an appearance. It took over a year to diagnose it as urticaria with dermatographism by allergy specialists. Antihistamine tablets and hydrocortisone cream help to alleviate the discomfort.

We were perturbed when in January, 2015, Monica was informed of a “suspicious area” in her right breast; discovered when she went for her routine biannual mammogram. The suspicious area needed investigating and a biopsy was arranged. The following month it was revealed that some cancerous cells were found in the samples taken, and consultation with a breast cancer specialist was next on the agenda. It was explained that Monica had ductal carcinoma in situ – DCIS for short – an early form of breast cancer that is highly curable. Monica could have either a mastectomy or the less invasive lumpectomy followed by radiation treatments. She chose to have the lumpectomy and the procedure, which was performed in April, 2015, went well. However, the pathologist’s report recommended that a sentinel node biopsy be done to confirm that the cancer hadn’t spread to the lymph nodes. In May, 2015, the sentinel lymph nodes were surgically removed and this time the pathologist’s report was negative, which meant that the cancer hadn’t spread to the lymph nodes.

The final stage was a course of radiation treatment. The radiation oncologist ruled out chemotherapy and eventually 21 treatments were allocated, five more than normal because of a technicality. The course went smoothly and, in August, 2015, we went out for dinner to celebrate the end of the radiation treatments. At the follow up check in April, 2016, nothing amiss was found and Monica was effectively discharged.

The cycle of life goes on and, inevitably, we experienced deaths in the family. Dad’s third wife, Pat, passed away on August 29th, 2012, age 88, following a long illness with much discomfort. Dad was again living on his own, but eventually found some measure of companionship through the volunteer based “Good Neighbours Circle”, a small group of single seniors that met periodically for tea, cakes and company. Dad was still adamant that I should not visit him, and only because of his foresight to allow a trusted volunteer from the group access to his house that he was found deceased on February 5th, 2014. He was in his 91st year. As next of kin I travelled to England to arrange the funeral, which took place on February 21st, 2014. At least I was able to exercise filial piety and salute my father an honourable farewell as his casket was carried into the crematorium to the sounds of the “Last Post.”

### *Finis coronat opus*

These memoirs, five years in the making, is my legacy to the world. Although much more could be recorded describing my retirement, you, dear readers, have travelled with me down the road of the first sixty years of **Just an Ordinary Bloke**.

