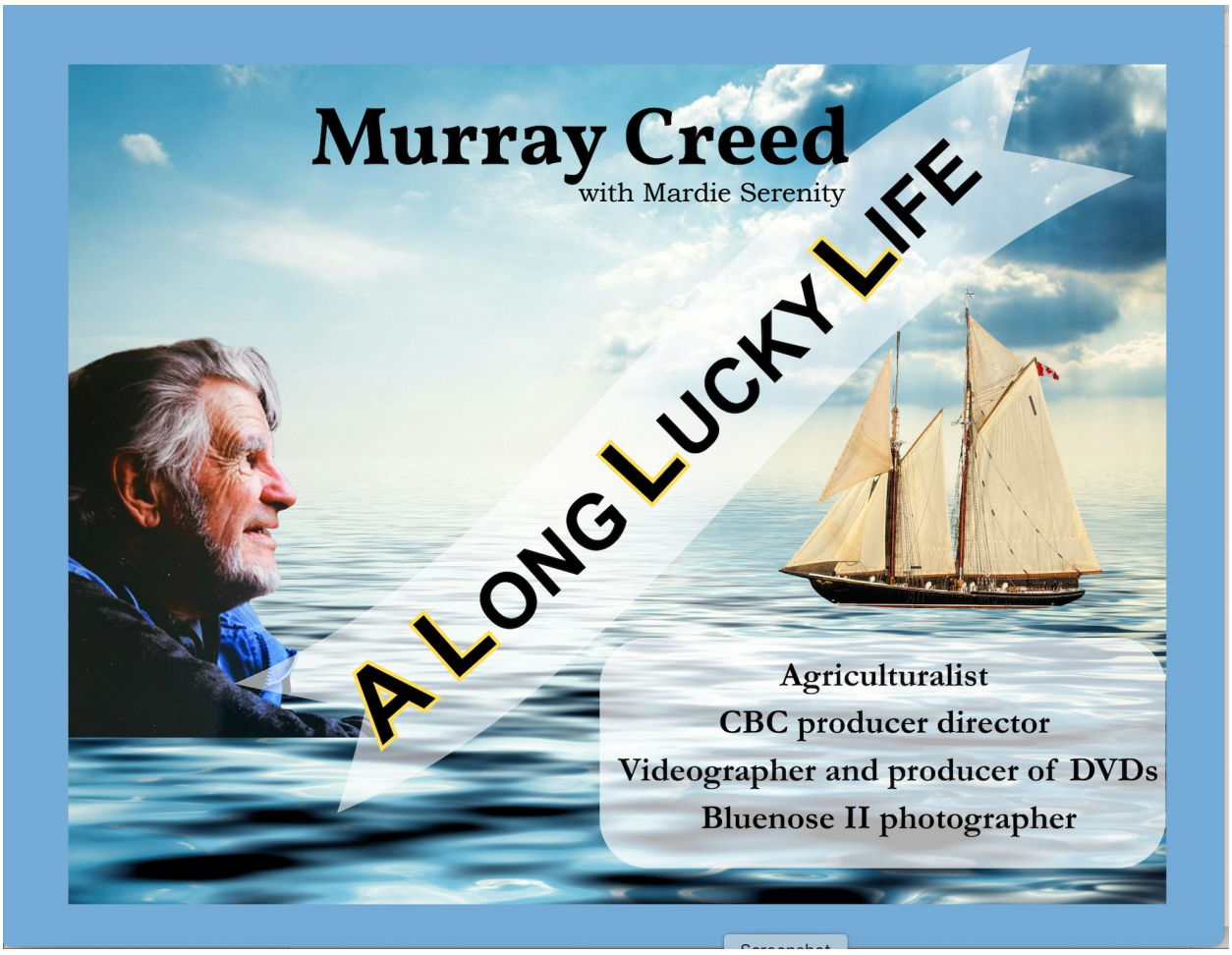

Murray Creed
with Mardie Serenity
A LONG LUCKY LIFE
Agriculturalist
CBC producer director
Videographer and producer of DVDs
Bluenose II photographer

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A Long Lucky Life

BOOK ONE 1926 TO 1953

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

People sometimes ask me, “Where are you from?” I have difficulty answering that question. I have lived a lot of places in my 100 years on this earth.

I was born in Moncton, grew up on P.E.I., moved to Nova Scotia to attend Agricultural College, then went to Montreal to graduate with an Agricultural Science degree. This concluded my formal education.

I then moved to Halifax to join CBC as an on-air broadcaster, and was transferred to Toronto to originate agricultural television and to produce numerous documentaries and TV series (including CBC Marketplace). I had a 40 year career in TV production and management in Toronto, then I moved to Kingston, Ontario and commuted back to Toronto to continue my TV career.

Later, I moved to Lunenburg, and then to Halifax, Nova Scotia to retire and produce industrial promotional videos. I entered Long Term Care at Northwood in Halifax in 2023.

Like all people, I am related to Adam and Eve. I can trace my ancestry, with names and dates, right back to them thanks to MyHeritage.com, as well as to the Mayflower settlers in America and to Henry VIII and his mistress Mary Boleyn. But this story begins with my father, Bentley Creed.

Bentley was born in 1898 and grew up on a small family farm at Dundas, P.E.I.. At 17 he joined the Canadian army and was shipped to France where he was gassed in the Battle of Ypres.

He was reported as Missing in Action and his family assumed that he had died. But his cousin Lewis Cantelo went to England and, after a lot of detective work, found Bentley in Whitechurch Military Hospital. He had slept for 6 weeks.

Bentley's father, mother and sisters

Later he was shipped back to Canada, to recover in the the sanatorium in River Glade, New Brunswick. It was there that he met my mother, Elizabeth (Bessie) Pitman. Bessie, originally from Lamaline, Newfoundland. She was a teacher in a one room school house in rural Newfoundland. Bessie had contracted TB and was convalescing in the sanatorium.

Bentley and Bessie married in 1924, and lived in Monction, New Brunswick, where I was born in 1926.

Life in Dundas

My family moved to Dundas, PEI when I was a toddler. As I write my story here in Northwood, I recall childhood memories such as my father giving me a ride to the road in the wheelbarrow with our milk cans. These milk cans would be lifted onto a truck-wagon and then hauled to the cheese factory in Bridgetown.

I was allowed to drive our old horse, Dot, but wasn't old enough to join the Teamsters Union.



This photo is us with my father's first car, a Durant, which was also the first car in Dundas. Bentley knew that cars were going to be the next big thing, so we saved until we could buy it outright. It would have cost about $600. My father never borrowed a cent in his life.

We also had the first radio, and the neighbours crowded in to listen to the Saturday Night Fights with Joe Lewis and Max Schelling.



Despite, or perhaps because of, living on an island, I didn't learn to swim until I was in my tweens. I remember swimming with a car inner tube. I'd wrap that tube around my middle twice, before I jumped off the wharf into deep water and pop back up like a cork.

Bridgetown, Bikes, Cars & Boats

When I was 6, we moved to Bridgetown, PEI, so I could go to the one-room school located there. The school was three-quarters of a mile from my home and covered 10 grades for 20 kids. Students had half an hour to run home, eat our lunch and be back in class. In the winter I cooled my mother's vegetable soup in the snow bank outside

our back door, so I'd have time to read the funnies before running back to school. It was a bit rushed. We had never heard about school buses or consolidated schools in those days. You walked to school on foot in any weather.

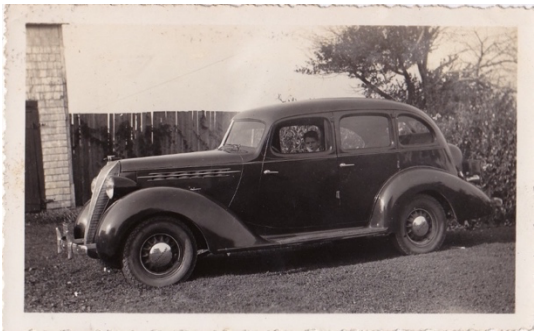
My father still had effects of being gassed in France and wasn't able to stand or work for long periods of time. We had a tiny lawn the size of a small kitchen, which he "mowed" with sheep-shears, sitting down, and working his way across. It took him a week to cut that long grass and when he was finished it was time for him to start over again. That's a true story!

Our house was right by the road. The few cars that passed raised clouds of red dust that landed on everything. My mother would tell visitors, "I could write my name on the piano in the dust. That red Island clay even gets in my teeth."

My father built a front porch with lots of windows onto the house so we could watch cars come down the hill and pass about eight feet in front of us. P.E.I. provided a book where you could look up plate numbers. We could take down (or remember) the plate number of the car and look it up in the license plate book. P.E.I. cars had license plates on the front and back of cars in those days, so you had two chances – coming and going. The license plates numbers were short - perhaps, 4 or 5 digits at the most - so they were easier to remember. When a car went by, my mother would look up the license plate number and say, "Oh, that's the Llewellyn's. They'll be going to visit their Aunt Sarah in Forest Hill." And we would see them going back home three hours later. They probably had stewed chicken for lunch.

Well, I couldn't drive yet, but I wanted a bicycle very badly. I had learned to ride one when I was visiting my chum Bill Hine in Charlottetown. The adults had sat me on the bicycle seat, pushed me from behind and said, "Now steer!" I toppled over and fell off a few more times, but I in the end had learned to ride a bicycle!

But money was tight, and it took three years to get my first set of wheels -- a second-hand one-speed from my uncle Dougal Cantelo, who lived four miles out the 7-Mile Road. My father drove me there in our second car, a second-hand Terraplane, and handed over a "five", and a "ten". I stepped on the left peddle, bravely swung my right leg up over the seat, and wabbled my way down the lane and onto the graveled 7-Mile Road towards home.



Our Terraplane

My father followed behind in the Terraplane all the way and ate my dust!

I rode that bike for many years—including twice all over Queens County PEI, as Judge Murray Creed. That exciting chapter in my life will appear later in this book

Of course, as a young teen I also drove the Terraplane all over King's County, even before I got my driver's license.

The Grand River flowed through Bridgetown, and I lived on and in that river. I built a small boat using boards that I bought from the local store, plus nails and pitch to seal the cracks, for exactly $1.47 all in. It leaked a bit, but just enough to have flatfish and eels swimming around my bare feet while I fished the warm waters of the river.

In winter, when the river was frozen over, I'd cut a hole in the thin ice and spear eels with a long pole. The eels lived down in the muddy bottom of the river. If I stood by that hole in the ice for about ten minutes, the ice would sink a few inches and I'd have to shuffle off and cut another hole or risk falling into the cold river water.

My family's main source of income was my father's military pension. As he recovered more strength and energy, my parents started a small market garden. They grew strawberries, which people from the surrounding areas came to buy, and we also sold them at local shops. They also grew and sold several varieties and colours of prize-winning gladiolus. I helped with the hands-on gardening work and made deliveries around the island.

My father was also very active in the church. We were members of the United Church of Canada and my father and I both sang in the choir. He was an elder and sometime invited guest speaker at Trinity United Church in Charlottetown.

My mother was primarily a home-maker, and did lace-making and knitting, as hobbies. She also taught herself pitman shorthand and worked as a secretary at the hospital in Charlottetown.

As a teen, I worked on several neighbouring farms, driving tractors, milking cows, hand-harvesting potatoes and pitching hay and grain sheaves. I also developed my love of cameras, starting with my father's old Brownie. I had been fascinated by photography from the time I could hold that camera. That would prove useful for me later in life.

Preparing for Prince of Wales College

At the Bridgetown school, most of the children stayed only for a few years and then left to work on their family farms. Those few of us who stayed on to eighth grade wrote the "School Leaving" exam. We would then officially enter "high school", but in the same one room school, with the same teacher. While I was there, I was the only one to pass that exam and continue on after grade eight. My teacher was a teenager just a few years older than me.

For high school, I had to work on my own during school hours, while the lower grades had the teacher's attention. After school I had the teacher to myself and she taught me

the high school subjects: Latin, French, Geometry and Algebra. I wasn't good at any on them—especially algebra, which I still can't understand.

Then at the end of grade 10, I travelled to Montague to write the "Entrance Exams". If I passed these I could go to Charlottetown, PEI to attend Prince of Wales College (PWC). I failed the exam the first year, and narrowly passed the second year, after being bed-ridden most of the winter with Whooping cough and its complications.

Attending PWC

I was then 17. The same age that my father had been gassed in the trenches of France.

I remember my first boarding house in Charlottetown. I was assigned a room with one double bed for me and my roommate, Archie Johnston. The meals were terrible; mostly stew every night of the week. It started out undercooked on Monday and over cooked by Friday.

I discovered basketball. My long legs won me a spot on the College Team, and basketball became my new passion.

I also discovered girls, but I was too shy to approach them.

I studied pre-engineering, but was no good at mathematics, so I decided to take up agriculture, having grown up on a farm.

I had always been facinated by airplanes. I'd watch the military training flights overhead as I worked in the fields, and decided that I wanted to learn to fly.

So I joined the Air Cadets while at PWC. I was promoted to Corporal and was sent on a training course to Shearwater Base in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. While there I took my first flight in an airplane. Shortly after take-off, the plane suddenly dropped, due to an air pocket, I later learned, but that didn't turn me off flying. Despite that experience, I have never had a fear of flying.



My plan had been to enlist in the Airforce when I turned 18, but the war was over before that happened.

The Nova Scotia Agricultural College

After PWC I attended The Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC), which was located in Truro. To get there I took the ferry across the Northumberland Strait with a relative, who dropped me at my new boarding house in Truro.

This one was much better than the one in Charlottetown. We had the same double bed arrangement, but good food, and a great view of the Truro Trotting Park. We could lie in our beds and watch big time horse races. But we couldn't place bets, of course.

There I learned to judge cattle, pigs and sheep, and some veternary science.

I also rediscovered girls, and by now was bold enough to accept a girl's invitation to a high school dance. A Truro high school girl, Helen Annand, invited me to their school sock hop. I accepted, and three years later she became my wife.

Judge Creed

In my first year at NSAC, I got a call from the P.E.I. Department of Agriculture (DOA), offering me a job as Agricultural Fieldman for Queens County. I accepted and held that role for two years.

My first task was to facilitate my county's participation in a Rural Beautification Contest for the Island. There were 200 contestants in Queens County and I was to choose the one that made the most difference in the appearance of their garden and homestead.

I would visit each property in the spring to establish their starting condition and return in the fall to rate the improvement. I would be paid $5.00 a day (which included expenses). They suggested I travel by bike to save money.

I dug out my old bicycle and my father's old Kodak camera and set out to become a judge.

Stewart Wright, by boss from the DOA, drove me and my bike to the west end of my territory to my friend Archie Johnson's place. His Father, Colonel Edwin Johnson, had originated the contest.

I set out next morning on my old one-speed bicycle in the rain. My hands were cold and wet, so I borrowed a heavy pair of woolen mitts from my first contestant. I wore those mitts all spring and brought them back when I returned in the fall.

I cycled many tough miles through Queens County and got to appreciate its beauty as I had to stop halfway up the hills to catch my breath and look at the beautiful countryside.

In the fall I reviewed my notes and the before-and-after photos I had taken and chose a Queens County winner. That was Cyril Tooms of Rustico. He had put in a new lawn

with modest flower beds, put up attractive fencing and painted the house and barns. It went from a shabby, unpainted property to a picture postcard. It was a prime example of Rural Beautification and he was the clear winner for Queen's County.

The P.E.I. Provincial Horticulturist, Gordon Warren, then compared the winners from the three counties and chose my winner as the over-all provincial champion.

I resigned my Judgeship, balanced my books and found that I had a considerable sum of money to help finance my next college year. The $5.00 a day had worked out. I had no transportation costs and never paid for a meal or lodging. All had been provided by the contestants.

Innoculations

My duties as an Agricultural Fieldman also included being available to assist farmers across the county. I bought a $500 wreck of a car with no shocks and bounced my way back and forth over P.E.I. the entire summer, answering farmers' calls for help.

An outbreak of a disease called Shipping Fever was affecting cattle and hogs. One day I received a call for help from a farmer named Don Anderson, who had a large farm in St. Peters Bay. He had Shipping Fever symptoms in his livestock. I gathered up cases of vaccination syringes and we then spent the night innoculating a barn full of Ayrshire Cows and Yorkshire hogs. He called the next week to tell me that it had done the trick. All of his animals were doing just fine.

Another of my duties as a Fieldman was conducting cattle-judging classes in 4-H (Head, Heart, Hand and Health) clubs across P.E.I.. These meeting were almost always in the evening so I would have to drive home after 10 o'clock. As I had been at work for 14 hours, I had trouble keeping awake. I would pull up at the side of the road and take a nap, but the police would wake me up, thinking I had fallen asleep drunk. I solved that by driving with my forearm over the horn so I would wake me when I slumped forward and it honked. I woke up that way many times but never went off the road and into the ditch. I survived, barely.

Harold Clay, a local PEI farmer, developed a unique strain of hogs. They were long and lean, rather than being overfat and they became desirable beyond PEI's shores. I was his assistant during that period. I contacted farmers and accompanied him on visits. I assisted with gathering the hogs and shipping them throughout North America and Asia.

While this was happening, the National Film Board decided to make a film which they called, PEI Hogs, about this development. They selected Armond Boswell for the role of hog farmer, and I played his farm worker in the film. That was my debut film appearance.

Another role I played was, Assistant to the Provincial Beekeeper. In that role, I supported all of the beekeepers on PEI. I managed orders for bee packages in the spring and helped to install them, and I advised them about good beekeeping practice. When a swarm would take place, the Provincial Beekeeper and I would go out and capture the swarm and reinstall it in the beehive. We used smoke to calm them. He could handle them with no difficulty. They would be all over his arms and they wouldn't sting him. But that wasn't the case with me. I got stung a lot that summer. Despite that, I enjoyed the work, and I started my own beehive. I especially enjoyed that honey.MacDonald College

Since NSAC didn't grant degrees, I had to continue my studies at MacDonald College in St Andrew de Belleview, Quebec. I had had to choose between Quebec and the University of Guelph, and Ontario just seemed too far away. I spent the next two years there, working toward my Bachelar of Science in Agriculture BSc (Agr).

I was in my room in the men's residence on the day of my last exam, when I received a call from Dean Britten telling me that Fergus Mutrie, Head of the CBC Farm and Fisheries Department, wanted to see me in his office - in an hour. I knew of Mr. Mutrie as the big chief of all the CBC Farm Broadcasts across Canada…so why did he want to talk to me?

Did he want to hire me to work on the Farm Broadcast, the CBC broadcast that we were required to listen to, as part of our university training? That was one meeting I didn't dare miss!

I walked over the Oval to the Dean's Office and was told that Mr Murtie hadn't arrived yet. I went back to my room thinking, "Shouldn't the CBC be on time?" An hour later, I got another call… Fergus Muntrie's train from Ottawa had been late. He'd see me now.

I was offered the position of Assistant Commentator on the CBC Farm Broadcast for the Maritimes!

That was a Friday in April, 1947. I wrote my last exam and then boarded a train that would take me home to P.E.I. By the time I got to Charlottetown (a 23-hour train trip), I had to decide whether or not to accept the CBC offer.

I had already been offered four other jobs, as a Feed Salesman for Pioneer in the Annapolis Valley, as an Assistant Manager of a Carnation Milk plant in Quebec, as a Cattle Buyer for Canada Packers in Charlottetown, and as an Agricultural Representative on P.E.I.. I had actually already accepted the Agr. Rep job and was ready to go back to my roots on the Island. But, I bit the bullet and left that all that behind me. Soon after arriving back on PEI, I hitch-hiked to Halifax to start work at the CBC radio building.

Life and Work in Halifax

On my first day I was greeted by Keith Morrow[1], head of the CBC Farm and Fisheries Department, who showed me around the studios. He said "You'll start work tomorrow. I've assigned you to the Fishermen's Broadcast. You will be on-air in a few weeks. Meanwhile, you have to learn to type, to write for radio, and to speak on air."

I protested, "You said I'd be doing the Farm Broadcast, I don't know anything about the commercial fisheries industry." "You'll have to get up to speed on that too. You'd better get to work right away", he said with a smile. "I know you'll be up to the challenge!"

Right after my first broadcast, I was called into the office of the Regional Director, Captain W.E.S. Briggs (the big boss). Captain Ted Briggs (ret.) was in charge of all of CBC Maritimes. He was also a very experience broadcaster, assigned to London to cover events like the King's funeral.

He said, "Pretty good job, Creed. No lip-smacking. It's pronounced by sea-men "B-O-Y", not "B-U-E-E", and you said "ropes". THERE ARE NO ROPES ON A SHIP…only hausers, lines and sheets." I didn't know if I had passed or not!



I struggled through a week of Fisherman's Broadcasts before I realized how much fishermen relied on them. We provided *marine* forecasts, which were very different from *inland* forecasts. They covered all areas where saltwater fishing took place – inshore and all the banks from Newfoundland to USA. We broadcast wind-strengths, sea conditions and fog. Our broadcasting of the Coast Guard's "Notices to Mariners" told fishermen of navigation buoys that were off-position or missing, and of thoses which were not lit. This saved them from distress at night or in foggy conditions. Marine forecasts saved many lives.

We also provided fish prices to fishermen all around the Maritimes, including fish and lobster prices in Boston, where most Atlantic-area fish were exported. Until our broadcasts, Boston fish-buyers could say, "Sorry boys, the price of Lobsters went

[1] Keith Morrow was Lt. Commander Morrow (ret.) of the naval reserve. During the war he served as Naval Attaché to the United States and kept things smooth between the two countries. He grew up on P.E.I. and was called Soggy Morrow by his peers. He would later be promoted to one of the highest positions at CBC Head Office in Ottawa. He became my friend and mentor through his lifetime.

down yesterday so I'll have to give a bit less for your catch!" whether or not the price had actually gone down. The purchase price of lobsters in Boston doubled a week after we started providing Boston prices, and the fishermen were some happy.

Captain W.E.S. Briggs bragged, in a joking way, that, "his man Creed, cost him double for his feed of lobsters." But he didn't mind. He had lots of money and he could afford it. It sure helped the lobster fisher, though.



The Canadian Naval Reserve

Due to Briggs' and Morrow's military connections, I was unofficially expected to join the Naval Reserve. This had not been in my plans, as I had been an Air Cadet as a teen, but it may have been the best assignment I ever received!

I joined and became Sub Lieutenant Creed.

The first trip I crewed was to Bermuda on a Bangor Minesweeper, HMCS Kentville. The purpose of the trip was to pick up the rum supplies for the naval base for Christmas. I donned my newly purchased uniform and hat and proceeded aboard. As an officer of the watch, I was meant to be on the bridge at at all times while on shift, to ensure the safety of the crew. We were no sooner out in the open Atlantic, when I felt seasick. When we reached the Gulf Stream I found myself on the rail of the bridge throwing up. That happened every 10 minutes. I returned to the bridge, to "con the ship" between pukes. I even threw up in my hat.

By the time we reached Bermuda I was over it, and I have never been sea sick again in my life.

We entered St. Georges to find still waters, and pastel painted houses with whitewashed roofs gleaming in the sun. We had three days in St. Georges, so on my one day off, a fellow officer and I rented Vela-cycles. They had a battery-operated electric motor that rested on the front tire. One pressed a lever and it propelled the bike with the friction between the spinning fly wheel of the motor and then to the bicycle tire.

We went to the US Military PX Store and bought bargain presents to bring home to loved ones. We visited the famous Saint Peter's church in whose graveyard lay the bones of famous mariners and royalty from all over the world who had been shipwrecked there over the centuries.

We also visited to famous Bermuda Aquarium and saw unbelievable Sea life. When we came out we faced a sudden downpour which drenched the electric motor on our bikes, and killed our power. From then on we had to push our bikes. When it got dark we lost our way and arrived back at the ship at 2am.

Our last stop before sailing home was at Goslings liquor store to pick up a bottle of Black Seal black rum. This rum is known around the world for its flavor and mouth-feel. I payed all of $2 for that excellent rum. I'd pay close to $40 today.

Later that day we departed for Halifax.

If we had thought the trip down was rough, the trip back home was far, far worse. We were met with 50-foot seas that were taller than the ship. She would climb up the on-coming wall of water, and then ride down into the trough.

We put out a call for rescue and waited. Our captain, who was a retired oil tanker skipper, took over and set about to turn the ship about (back towards Bermuda). He waited for the right movement when the ship as on the crest of the wave and yelled "Hard to starboard"! As the ship dropped down the sea-wall she turned about and climbed safely up the next huge sea. We now pointed back towards Bermuda. We did that all that night until the seas subsided and we turned again towards Halifax and home.

Deep Sea Trawler

My next deep sea trip took place when I was the Commentator on the Fisherman's Broadcast for the Maritimes. The first steel trawlers had arrived in Nova Scotia from Scotland and Maritime National Fish wanted to show them off. I was invited to sail with Captain Frank Tidman on the Cape Beaver.

I had previously met with the president of the fishing company, Maritime National, in his big-windowed, corner-office and he had said, "Look at that trawler -- one of the most modern in the province. Her skipper will go astern and plans to go out to sea, but he'll point the ship's nose inward so he can turn "with the sun." Wastes fuel, but his crew would abandon ship if he turned "against the sun"!"

I went aboard and met Captain Tidman, and was assigned a cabin right up against the big thundering winch. Then I went to the bridge. Sure enough, the Cape Beaver turned "with the sun",

When we arrived on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, Captain Tidman called other trawlers on his radio, "Guess who I have aboard! Murray Creed!

"My son, is he with you!" One skipper yelled over his radio. "Tell him to speak slower when he reads the marine weather over the radio. We can't understand a f**kin' word he says!" When I went back to the studio I made an extra effort to speak slowly and pronounce my words distinctly.

Buoy Laying Along the Atlantic Coast of Nova Scotia

I later received an invitation to sail from Halifax to Cape Breton on the buoy-laying, Lady Laurier.

These are the huge red buoys that mark the channel in and out of fishing ports. They weigh close to a ton each.

First, the ship had to get into position and lay the buoy. But the little fishing boats barred the way, guarding their fishing nets which were strung across our path.

“Stop, you big bastards, “the fishermen yelled.

“Do you want your damn buoys!?” The captain yelled back. But the fishermen didn’t move.

Eventually, the Lady Laurier went in reverse and picked her way around the strings of nets. The captain cross-sighted two fixes, a church spire on one angle and a tall tree on the other shore. When the ship moved over the spot, the captain yelled “Let go!” The concrete mooring dropped the 50-foot mooring chain thundered on the steel deck and the buoy dropped into position. The channel marker was in place, and both the fishermen and the captain were happy. The fishermen gave us a cheer, and our captain saluted back with a blast of the ship’s horn.

Starting A Family



Meanwhile, Helen Annand and I were married, and set up our first apartment in the Butler Building, which was on the opposite side of Citadel Hill from my CBC office on Sackville Street in Halifax. I would walk up and over and take in an unobstructed view of the harbour and count the fishing vessels unloading at the wharves below. All of this was fodder for my CBC Fisherman’s Broadcast.

One summer we booked a week at a cottage down the coast near Shelburne. It was owned by a Captain Brushett who also owned a house in Dartmouth. We later rented and moved to that Dartmouth house and lived there for five years. That’s where our first two kids, Kirk Murray and Keltie Marie, were born.

Kirk was born in 1952. Keltie arrived in 1953. In those days, there was no bridge across Halifax Harbour, so the only way across was the ferry. As we didn’t have a car, we took a taxi to the ferry and then to the hospital in Halifax. We made it in time with Kirk (barely), but with Keltie, the ferry had already left the dock and was 100 yards out in the harbour when we reached the crossing point. The only alternative was to drive 20 miles around Bedford Basin and there was no time for that. The cabdriver lay on the horn, and, to our surprise, the ferry captain put the ship in reverse and came back to pick us up. We barely made it to the hospital in time for the birth. If that ferry captain had obeyed his rules and kept plowing on to Halifax, Keltie would have been born in the taxi.



BOOK TWO 1954 TO 1982

TORONTO

The Big Move

In 1954, canadian agricultural television broadcasting was born. Agricultual TV broadcasts were already being aired in the USA, but until then none were produced in Canada. I was transferred to Toronto to work on the launch, and Helen and I moved our family to Ontario. Our first home was in Port Credit, but the following year we moved to and settled in Oakville, then with a population of well less than 100,000. I commuted to the CBC officed in Toronto first by car and then via the Go Train and did that commute, into the sun each way, for close to 25 years.

My Father's death

I received a call late the night of Thanksgiving Day 1963 telling me that my father had died suddenly. I got a flight to Charlottetown the next day and learned that he had read his bible, gone to sleep and died of an aneurism. If there could be a better way to meet the Lord, I can't think of it.

My mother chose the pall-bearers - eight, plus one spare. I was to contact them.

As I had never lived in the community of High Field where my parents now lived, I didn't know the men that well. I asked the men listed by my mother to participate. Two wrong men showed up and two from her list were sitting among the congregation. They changed places and we had the eight she had planned.

And One More…

In a surprise addition to our family, Mardie Lee was born at Thanksgiving, 1964. By then we were living in Oakville, Ontario. As her siblings were 11 and 12 when she was born, she essentially had four doting "elders" around to do her bidding. I remember one day, shortly after she got home from the hospital, when she had been put down for a nap. She woke crying, as all babies do, and the four of us all ran to check on her, colliding in the hallway. Was she slightly spoiled? Maybe.





Most summers we returned to the maritimes for visits, dividing our time between Truro, where Helen's parents still lived, and Charlottetown, where my mother now resided. We also visited my cousin Roy and family, and my elderly aunt Edna, who lived in rural PEI, where the kids enjoyed fishing and foraging for wild blueberries.

TELEVISION

This Land

This Land was a Canadian television series, which aired from 1970 to 1982 on CBC Television. Evolving from the earlier series This Land of Ours, a documentary series about Canada's nature and resources, This Land expanded its focus to include environmental and conservation issues. I was a producer on both shows.

Marketplace

In 1972, a relatively unknown Joan Watson pitched the idea for a new show for CBC television. She had been hosting a radio show aimed at helping consumers make the most of their budgets. Her new idea was to launch a weekly television broadcast focused on consumer tips and investigation of manufacturer claims and potential scandals. Her pitch was successful, and the show was assigned to me to produce.

We hired Stompin Tom Conners to write and sing the themesong for the show.

Lyrics of **The Consumer** by Stompin' Tom Connors

The Consumer they call us

We're the people that buy

Well everyone else is out to sell some kind of merchandise

We run to the boss and tell 'em we need a bit more gold

Some tax deductions later and we still wind up in the hole

Oh yes we are the people running in the race

Buying up the bargains in the ol' marketplace

Another sale on something, we'll buy it while it's hot

Save a lot of money spending money we don't got

We Save a lot of money spending money we don't got

Here's where you can hear the song, if you'd like:

https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/1.446818

Joan and I worked together on Marketplace over the next 12 years, with stories covering what you can clean with vinegar and baking soda, to car repair scams and the dangers of exploding glass soda bottles. There were harrowing times, with threats and lawsuits, but it was always worth the fight!

Country Calendar and Country Canada

Farm televsion in Canada began with a program that we called Country Calendar. It was a half-hour program covering both agriculture and gardening. I was named production supervisor and Norm Garriock was to be my host. He was a little older than I was, and had been the Captain of a torpedo boat in the English Channel during wartime. During my time with that show, I met John and Janet Foster, accomplished nature photographers, who were to become lifelong friends.

Country calendar eventually became Country Canada, for which I became executor producer. The program continued to cover farm news, but also aimed to be pertinent to urban viewers. Working on Country Canada brought me to Sandy Cushon, host from 1975-83, who became another close friend and camping companion.

DOCUMENTARIES & SPECIALS

To the Yukon

When I look back over old photographs I have taken over the years it takes me back to around 1963, when I first got the idea of going to the Yukon to see how they fed the north.

I knew a bit about it, but not very much. I knew that it was very difficult to grow crops there, with the harsh climate.

I persuaded the Corporation (CBC) to let me take a research trip to find if there was a story there. When you need to find something a place, you go is to a local journalist.There was one in Whitehorse –Jim Butler, I think his name was. When I arrived I called asked him to show me around a bit. And he said, 'Well sure'.

He came over to my hotel room next morning and we chatted a while. He told me about Erik Neilson. I had heard of him, but more about his brother, Leslie Neilson, a Hollywood star. Jim told me, "Eric's quite a bigshot up here. He knows everything that's going on. I'll set up a meeting with him."

Eric Nielson had been a fighter pilot in the war. He had a Distinguished Flying Cross and was the local member of parliament. I thought, "That's my kind of guy."So I called him up..

To my delight, he offered to take me for a flight in his Cessna. "Would you like to go up to Old Crow? That's way up the coast and only reachable by float plane." I said, "I'd love to."

So the next day I went up to the float plane base and there was this big, strapping, good-looking guy, with his pilot's hat and goggles.He told me, "You just sit there on that seat and let me do the driving." I replied, "I'm not very good at flying airplanes and in fact have never flown one in my life."

We took off and flew over all kinds of tundra, little forest patches and lakes. Finally,he landed on the lake at Old Crow and taxied up to the landing. When we deplaned, folks came up and said, "Eric, you haven't been up for a while."He said, "No, I've been busy with less important things – Ottawa keeps me busy."

"Come on in" they said,"and we'll have a feast." We went up to the lodge where they were smoking salmon hanging split, over a long pole between two trees. They pulled a salmon down tore a strip off it. My, was it some good!

"So that's how you feed the north!", I said. Our host replied, "Yes, partially, and we also gather roots and plants and berries for nutrition and medicine. Plus caribou, for meat and clothing.

Finally, Eric said, "I think we better go now the wind's picking up", so we went down to the plane taxied out for takeoff against the wind. The pontoons slapped over the oncoming waves and the trees on the shoreline were coming up fast. I was sure we weren't going to make it up over them. – but we did. But no sooner were we up in the air and we heard a loud banging sound.

I was sure that the engine was destroying itself.

He banked around and landed safely, jumped out and closed the engine cover which had come unbuckled and flapping in the wind stream.

He took off again and the people of Old Crow cheered.

1967: Air Of Death

In 1967, Larry Goswell presented me (as Head of the Agriculture and Resources Department) with a proposal that we produce four documentaries about pollution of the environment. His subjects were: Land, Water, Air and Smoking Tobacco. We decided to begin with air pollution. We titled that first documentary, Air of Death.

We chose Stanley Burke, the National News reader at that time, as our host and were slotted in for Prime Time. A first for our department. Then we learned that we were to air just before the Ed Sullivan Show.

This was heady stuff for the Farm and Fisheries Department -- we had never ventured out of the noon on Sunday time slot!

Could we produce something that wouldn't embarrass us?

We hired George Salvarsan, one of Canada's most notable writers of CBC TV drama series and documentaries. Larry Gosnell studied the pollution status of Canadian and US cities and we decided to focus on Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, and Sarnia, Canada. We compared them with the worst cities for pollution in the States.

Then we had a break! Rodger Schwss, a fellow broadcaster from CKNX Wingham, Ontario, had voiced a CBC Radio program about air pollution in Dunnville, a farming area in Ontario. A fertilizer producing plant there was emitting fluorine-laden gas from its smokestacks that was ruining crops, killing cows and other livestock and causing the hospitalization of farmers. The company involved was ERCO, The Electric Reduction Company.

Larry Gosnell followed up on Roger's research, and fluoride-poisoning in rural Ontario became a major focus of Air of Death. The last half of the program was devoted to it. We documented that fluoride poisoning had killed people in Spain and in the US and brought in an expert on fluorisis, Dr Walberg.

When we had shot and edited 90% of this one-hour TV program, we asked Dr. Diamond (the Ontario Minister of Health), and the President of ERCO to appear in our studio to comment on our findings in Dunnville. ERCO refused, so we left his empty chair on the set, while Stanley Burke interviewed Dr. Diamond. To our delight, the Minister of Health praised Dr. Walberg and his findings of fluoride poisoning, and promised to take action to rectify the situation.

After Air of Death was broadcast coast-to-coast in Canada, newspapers such as the Toronto Star, ran two-inch-high headlines praising the program.

Stanley Burke was invited to speak about the program by many organizations and institutions, including the University of Toronto. After he addressed the Environmental Studies Class at U of T, the students asked their Professor, Dr. Donald Chant, "What can we do to help with the pollution problem that Air of Death exposed?" His answer…Start your own organization… you might call it Pollution Probe.

Pollution Probe became Canada's first Environmental movement, which spawned the Acid Rain Foundation and many other organizations. They joined the Environmental Defense Fund and the Sierra Fund as champions of our environmentally conscious.

Two months later, the Ontario Government set up an enquiry into Air Pollution in Ontario, which proved to be an enquiry into Air of Death. The committee was chaired by Dr. G. Edward Hall, former president of the University of Western Ontario. We wanted to defend ourselves, but the CBC said we couldn't because the enquiry was a Provincial creature, and we were Federal. So, we had to stand back and watch the headlines change from WELL KNOWN HEROS to WELL KNOWN LIERS.

In its final report, The Hall Commission called Air of Death, "Unwarranted, Irresponsible and False".

Later in the year, Harry Boyle, Vice-Chair of the CRTC Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission announced an enquiry into Air of Death. The CBC provided a lawyer of our choice to defend Larry Gosnell and me. We chose Joseph Sedgwick, a top criminal lawyer in Toronto. Jacques Alane, the CBC corporate lawyer joined Larry and me in a war-room in a hotel where we collected five filing-cabinets of further research. Jacque prepared us for the upcoming hearings. That was a three-month process. But our "Star Lawyer", Joseph Sedgwick couldn't find time to come in and be briefed of the details of our research.

We bought a bottle of really fine Scotch Whiskey and invited Joseph Sedgwick to pay us a visit. We showed him Air of Death (which he had never seen), and then spent an hour outlining the background.

I was scheduled to be the first witness. Two days before the hearings were to start, I was skiing and collapsed at the bottom of the run. I wound up in Hospital with a middle-ear infection. Extreme dizziness and nausea kept me in hospital for a week, so Larry Gosnell took my place as the first witness. Larry took the stand and was questioned by Joseph Sedgwick and then cross-examined, and the CRTC Enquiry was over.

A 27-page paper about program and its effects on society later described the outcome of the Enquiry:

> "Gosnell's performance was even more impressive in light of the fact that he was a last-minute replacement for Murray Creed, whose appearance at the CRTC hearings was cancelled two days prior by the onset of labyrinthitis, an inner ear disorder that causes hearing loss and balance problems. The CRTC released its report on 9 July 1970. Air of Death received a general vindication, with the CRTC stating that "the program adequately rejected the information reasonably available at the time of the broadcast and is well able to stand as an example of informational programming backed by a wealth of research and serving a useful purpose. Furthermore, it was added that, "It is the opinion of the Committee that Air of Death may well have been one of the most thoroughly researched programs in the history of television broadcasting."

Here is a link to an excerpt of the transcript of Air of Death:

https://fluoridealert.org/content/cbc-transcript/

If you would like to view the full program, you can find it on YouTube.



1970: Who Owns The Sea?

Knowlton Nash, Director of Information Program for CBC Television, asked for proposals for three big-budget, 90-minute specials. I was Head of the Agriculture and Resources Department at the time, and I sent back a proposal which I title "The Sea"

To my surprise, I received a call from Knowlton telling me that my proposal was one of the winners; the other two were The Bible Belt of Alberta and The Separatist Movement in Quebec.

Of all the Producer-Directors in my department, the only one I felt was up to the challenge was Dick Bocking in Vancouver. He was too busy and turned me down. Then I thought, why don't I quit my corner office job and go back to producing? I was tired of assigning producers to specials I would like to produce myself. I took a pay-cut and set out to produce The Sea**.**

But where should I start? There were thousands of approaches to producing a film about the sea. Was it to be about the power of the sea, the people who follow the sea? Many famous authors have written about the sea: The Old Man and the Sea; The Cruel-Sea; The Grey Seas Under.

I needed a lot of help. I started with Doug Wilkinson, who had written and directed 40 Documentary films, as well as the feature film The Land of the Long Day. For that film, he lived with the Inuit hunter, Joseph Idlout for a year, filming walrus and seal hunting, building, and living in igloos. He was given the name Qimmiq. Doug Wilkinson would be my writer.

As researcher I hired Henri Van der Meulen, who had worked with Joan Watson on Radio Noon. He had married and moved to Ottawa, where Doug Wilkinson also lived. We all met at Doug's place to plan the approach. Henri would interview a lot of experts on the sea and provide audio cassettes to Doug Wilkinson and me.

I arranged for passage for Doug and I on the Coast Guard icebreaker Louis St. Laurent. She was to go on a one-month probe into the arctic to help extend Canadian Sovereignty. The goal was to break through 20-foot ice to reach the North Pole.

We sailed out of Halifax Harbor on the Louis St. Laurent in July, 1970. He would film the voyage and write the script while we were aboard (with the help of Henri's box of research cassettes). As we made our way through open water, Doug and I experimented with three or four possible approaches.

One was a marine court investigation to a ship sinking which resulted in an oil-spill. But Doug said, "That's a drama and I can't write that. I'm a documentary writer."

So, we dug deeper into Henri's box of research cassettes and found four interviews with Alan Beasley, Canada's leader in the Law of the Sea negotiations at the United

Nations in New York. We had found our approach. Doug then came up with the title, Who Owns the Sea?

Doug unpacked his portable typewriter and began to write the first draft of the script.

On day three, we had surprise visitors—Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and his new wife, Margaret. Their Helicopter landed on the small pad on the afterdeck and our captain gave the Prime Minister a tour of the ship.

Margaret joined us on the railing looking down on the helicopter. She stood beside me and said, "Comment ca va" and I blurted out in my best French, "Je vais bien". Then Pierre and the Captain joined us on the rail and Margaret joined him, and my little shipboard romance was over. But she did have a winsome look on her face as seen in this photo that Doug Wilkinson took of them.

Their helicopter "whisked" them away soon after and, I thought I saw Margaret wave. But then that might be wishful thinking on my part. Enough said.

Next stop—Thule, Greenland.

This was a six-hour stop and I wanted to mail a letter to my wife, Helen, as we hadn't had any mail for three weeks. The postmaster told me, "You can't mail a letter from Thule, Greenland because you're not a US citizen". I took the letter back aboard the Louis St' Laurent and carried it home.

Thule is a major US airbase—Ballistic Early Warning. And a S700,000 portable nuclear power plant.

Two days later, the Louis St. Laurent was far enough north to encounter light arctic sea ice.

This ice was about six feet thick, and the ship moved through it at five knots. When she encountered twelve feet of ice, the ship was stopped dead.

Then long cracks (leads) appeared straight and diagonally ahead.

The ship went astern and then full-speed ahead and ran up on the lead. The weight of the ship forced the crack to split and huge blocks of ice boiled up at the stern. This process was repeated for one full day.

Strangely, as we approached the North Pole, the ice became thinner and finally the ship nosed into open water and the captain ordered, "Engines stop." We were within one hundred miles of the North Pole. And it was raining! The navigating officer marked our position on the chart. Every cheered and after a moment of pause, the captain ordered, "Hard to port! Full ahead! Set course for Alert."

The Louis St. Laurent swung 180 degrees and headed south the most northerly habitation in the world—Canadian Armed Forces Station Alert.The ship's helicopter

landed Doug and I at the Alert airport and a young driver drove us to the main building by Jeep. I was struck by the bright colors of the buildings—red, yellow, and green which stood out against the snow. A two-inch rope was strung along each building to hang onto in a blizzard and not to be blown away and lost until summer. The doors to the buildings were like huge freezer-doors—heavy and thick. They were to keep the cold out…not in, like to a freezer room.

We were warmly greeted by the CO of the base and sat down to a feast of Caribou and arctic-char. They do eat well there in Alert… compensation for long winter months when they don't dare put their noses outside the door.

Next morning, we watched equipment and supplies loaded on the huge gray Hercules. It would fill the centre of the aircraft. We would sit along the sides on small seats with seatbelts. They transported a trailer-home on one of these planes. We felt overwhelmed by the cargo that towered over us there in the bowels of the Herc.

This was indeed the Land of the Long Day. There had been no night for three weeks. There were small windows along the side of the plane and we could stand and see out. As we headed home, it slowly got dark outside and we saw our first warm darkness. It felt like a blessing of nature.

We unloaded our filming gear and packs, and took a taxi to a motel in Trenton, Ontario, near the airforce base. It was raining. I took off my shoes and socks and walked in the wet grass. It was dark. I felt so warm and comforted …and thankful. It had been a good trip into the arctic.

Producing And Filming Who Own The Sea

I had been impressed with Gordon Pinsent since he starred in the CBC TV series, Quentin Degrons MP, in 1968. He had played a maverick Member of Parliament who put the people ahead of politics…a rare bird in Canada, then and now. I flew to Corner Brook, Newfoundland, where he was filming his new feature film, the Rowdyman.

We met in a bar, where he and a few of his cast and crew were having a few "cool ones." I described the program and asked him if he'd like to front it. To my surprise, he said, "I'd like to take it on after we wrap up here."

When we got started with filming, our first location was Fishermen's Cove, across the harbor from Halifax. We set up on a wharf that looked out on containerships and tankers entering the port.

Gordon Pinsent and a boy-actor, as a father-and-son, sat on the wharf fishing… and watching a tanker pass on her way to the Imperial Oil Refinery. He mused, out-loud, "If these were pirate-days, what a prize she'd make!" Then the son said, "Who owns the sea, anyway?" Gordon replied, "I really don't know…I'll try to find out."

We rented a one-room cottage with a deck overlooking the Atlantic Ocean at Duncan's Cove near Halifax. We filmed Gordon there in his role as "storyteller-investigator."

We then filmed Gordon discussing Canada's interests with Law of the Sea experts on the deck of the retired Hydrographic ship, S.S. Acadia at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic.

Off-Shore Oil Rigs

Next my CBC Halifax cameraman and I flew by helicopter from Sydney to the Shell Oil rigs 200 miles offshore.

We filmed the oil drilling operations on deck.

Then we were swung down a cable to the deck of a supply boat one hundred feet below. My cameraman filmed our decent to the deck. We hoisted back up to the oil rig the same way, and flew back to Sydney a few days later.

BC Self-Loading and Dumping Barges

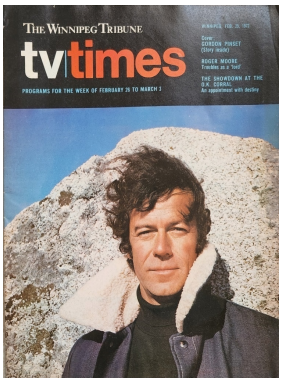
I then flew to Vancouver Island and took a bush plane to a small port on the west side of the Island. There my CBC Vancouver cameraman and I boarded a self-loading, self-unloading barge with a cargo of logs for Vancouver.

The loaded barge was towed through the night to a lumber mill near Vancouver. Normally no one was aboard when it tipped, but my cameraman and I were permitted to board the barge with the First Mate before it pumped out its tanks on one side and the barge tipped about 60 degrees.

The logs slid into the sea, and the barge scooted out sideways. It gave us a hell of a ride and we had to hang on for dear life.

When I was producing Who Owns the Sea? Every country in the world had a 3-Mile limit marking its control of the waters around its coastline. This standard was established in the1800s based on the distance that a cannon ball could travel. Beyond three miles, they had no control of the fisheries or mineral and oil resources. Canada wanted the limit to extend one hundred miles, and so did many other countries. The USA was resisting because a new limit would deny them access to the Dardanelles, which could result in blocking passage to the Black Sea.

A Law of the Sea Convention was to be held at a United Nations conference in New York, where Canada was going to make its case for the extension. This became the focus of our program and the footage shot at sea (including our Arctic trip on the Louis St. Laurent). I returned to Toronto to edit the footage and record Gordon Pinsent's narration.



The resulting TV Special extremely well received and resulted in cover photos of Gordon Pinsent on magazine covers coast to coast in Canada..

I took this photo of Gordon Pinsent while we were filming at Peggy's Cove.

Who Owns the Sea then was featured in Canada's presentation at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment.

It then went on the used by Canada at the United Nations, Law of the Sea negotiations in New York and Geneva. As a result, the new 100 mile limit was instituted around the world.

I was glad that I took a pay cut to produce the CBC Special, Who Owns the Sea?

1976: Bluenose in the Sun

My friends in Lunenburg had been delighted in 1963, when big beer brewing company Oland announced that they would be building a replica of the famed Nova Scotia schooner, the Bluenose. The original Bluenose, built in 1921, had been an undefeated champion in North Atlantic racing and a symbol of Canadian maritime heritage. It had foundered in 1946.

The Bluenose II would serve as a luxury yacht for the Oland family and as a floating advertisement for their Schooner beer.

Two years later Oland sold Bluenose II to the government of Nova Scotia for $1. And she became the Ambassador for Nova Scotia. I sailed on her for thousands of sea miles over the years, starting with my first voyage in 1976.

I was hired by the Government of Nova Scotia to film a documentary about the Bluenose II. Our Marketplace production season was over by then, so I had taken two weeks' leave, hired a Halifax cameraman, Les Kazan, and sailed from Privateer's Wharf in Halifax on Bluenose II on Easter Sunday, April 18, 1976.

When I went aboard I was greeted by Captain Earnie Hartling who said, "You're late! We almost slipped without you. Your cameraman is below already eating his breakfast."

He said, “Stand there so you won’t be in the way.” and then, he yelled, “Let go, aft! Let go, spring! Let go, bow! Slow astern!” He walked quickly back, took the ship’s wheel, turned two spokes to starboard and shouted, “All hands ready to make sail!”

When the bowsprit was free of the wharf, he turned her nose toward the breeze so the sails would flap. The young men ran forward and climbed out on the bowsprit, where the jib was lashed. They release the lashings, hauled the jib up and belayed it. It flapped in the breeze. Then the jumbo, the big sail before the foremast, was hauled up by four young men and made fast.

Then the big winches near the bow revved up while two young deckhands wound wrist-thick, braded hawsers around the revolving drum, and the foresail moved slowly up the mast. Tones of canvas and Douglas-fir booms. And finally, the big fellow—the mainsail! 81 feet of timber in the main boom, and 52 more in the main gaff. The mainsail on Bluenose II is the largest working sail in the world—4,000 square feet—the size of two bungalows.

When the sails were up, I looked skyward and asked the Chief Engineer (a Banker Schooner Skipper himself), “How did they do that?”

He said back to me, “The crew screwed it up! I damn near took over. The peak’s too high. But they are no older than my grandsons -- they’ll learn before we make New Orleans”.

The Bluenose II swung to starboard (with the sun) and quickly gathered way, and I went below to have coffee with Les and Captain Hartling. As US laws prohibited foreign ships from carrying passengers, Les and I had to become ship’s crew during our time aboard in US waters.

We made good time, but as we sailed past Boston in light fog, Captain Hartling casually remarked, “There’s big blow forecast for the outer banks, abeam of Hatteras. Could be chancy, getting in there over the shoals.” I knew how accurate the Marine Forecasts I’d read out over the CBC Fisherman’s Broadcast were…not always that accurate, so I passed his weather comment off.

Next morning, I sat up in my bunk and heard angry voices shouting, “You’re out of your head, if you take this vessel over those Hatteras sands-- Hartling!” The other voice shouted back, “You’re the Chief Engineer on this vessel-- Pitman, not the Master. Go back to your engines and leave the navigation to me!” The argument went on most of the day. I turned in that night, more than a bit worried. The Shoals of Hatteras were known as the Sable Island Graveyard of the Atlantic. In the end, we changed course. We picked up Joan Watson, former host of Marketplace, in Norfolk, for the next leg of our journey (to Miama, where Joan was heading to cover an event for CBC Radio). In compliance with the US foreign ship law, Joan was signed on as Assistant Cook for the duration of her stay on the schooner.



In my old sou'wester and raingear, pretending I was steering Bluenose II.



Me "helping" deckhand, Delbé Comeau to hoist a sail.

Arrival Miami



Three days later we arrived in Miami. Most people think of Miami as beaches and palm trees—but that's Miami Beach. We sailed into Miami Port, joining 275 other ships, most of them huge. Cruiseships, supertankers, container ships tied up at wharves covering more acreage than a small Nova Scotia farm.

In Miami Port one of the crew took a picture of Joan with the Boatswain, Don Barr and Chief Engineer, Clive Hollet. We will meet Don Barr later, when his experience pays off.

We say goodbye to Captain Hartling and a newcomer to the Bluenose II crew, Delbé Comeau. We will also meet him later in this tale. Then Joan flew off to Dallas, and I flew back to Toronto. We will later both join Bluenose II in New York City to sail up the Hudson River with the tall ships of the world to celebrate the Bicentennial of the United States, July Fourth. But there will be a problem and it will involve Captain Hartling,

In late June, I got a call in my CBC office in Toronto. It was the NS Government Bluenose II manager, Mike Patrick telling me, "We just fired the Old Man!" The Old Man in marine terms, was of course Captain Hartling. He was also in his late 70s and he had been taking his girlfriend aboard between ports and that was against the law in the States. And a bit questionable…?

Now what do! Captain Hartling was in every shot we had taken on the first trip. Eighty percent of our footage would be useless and wind up on the cutting room floor, we would now have to start again to establish a new captain in four hours while we sailed up the Hudson River.

Come July 4th, we boarded a small boat for Sheepshead Bay, along with Dr. Mike Delorie, Minister of Health for Nova Scotia. There was a confusion of three-masters and small boats dotting the choppy waves. Then the bare-sparred tall ships raised their sails and moved into line.

By sunup we were alongside Bluenose II, and the crew helped us up to the deck. We got under way and joined among the tall ships from all over the world including the Sagres from Portugal and the Kruzenshtern for Russia.

Those huge square-rigg ships sailed up the Hudson River, line-astern, led by the famous American Coast Guard ship, Eagle.

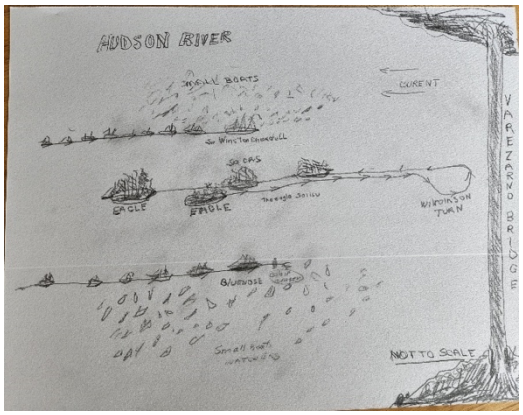
The Sagres swung in behind the Eagle and seemed to pull the long line of white sail ships like a string of pearls shining in the summer sun. The Eagle pull that string of pearl-like ships four miles up the Hudson River to where the Verrazano Narrows Bridge joins Staten Island to Brooklyn.

Then she began the "Williamson Turn," where each ship made a long circle around to where she came up the river, and sailed back down again, towards us.

It sounds complicated, but it's a long-standing method of turning ships at sea. It is also used in a man-overboard situation, turning the ship in 11 minutes while the man still has his head above water.

While 'the Big Class one ships sailed back down the Hudson, two lines of smaller ships sailed up to meet them. Bluenose II led one of these lines.

Sir WinstonChurchill a three-masted, schooner (with an all-female crew) led the other.



Les Kazan was filming the activity on board and on the water. I sketched the situation on the back on a scrap of paper…not so good!

There were small boats everywhere. They were ordered to leave a path for the two lines of ships, but a cabin cruiser was anchored dead ahead. You can't turn a ship like Bluenose II quickly, so we ran right over that little boat. Our starboard anchor (which was catted off the bow), ripped the cabin roof off, and it swept astern with a teenage couple waving their fists at us. They probably had borrowed her father's cabin cruiser.

Now came the big show! The huge square-riggers sailed between our two lines of smaller ships, like military bands marching through opposing ranks. They sailed past us like huge, white-sailed ghost ships…EAGLE, SAGRES, KREZHENSHTIEN, tall ships from Brazil to Japan to Germany.

When the filming was done, Joan Watson and I took the reels of footage back to Toronto for processing, where Les Brown (not the Big Band leader, but an ex-US Marine), edited Bluenose in the Sun. It won an Ohio award (an award for excellence in films) and was projected on Bluenose II's foresail in every port. First Mate Delbé Comeau told me that Stan Rogers' rich voice ranged out through the dark from Yarmouth to Cape Breton.

Stan Rogers, a Canadian folk icon, had written the song, Bluenose in the Sun, for the film.

Bluenose in the Sun

Once again, with the tide she slips her lines

Turns her head and comes awake.

Where she lay so still there at Privateer's Wharf,

Now she quickly gathers way.

She will range far south from the harbour mouth

And rejoice in every wave.

Who will know the Bluenose in the sun?

Stan Rogers had written another song, "Walk the Capstan Around", also used in the film. The ship's capstan is the hoist that eight men turn counter-clockwise to haul the anchor out of the mud, and up to the bow.

This is a publicity picture of tourists "walking the capstan around". Of course, it is not under load, so they weren't raising a ton of anchor and chain. They were raising nothing.

But they don't know the difference.



BOOK THREE 1983 TO 2020

A CHANGE OF DIRECTION

Endings and Beginnings

1983 marked another turning point in my life. I resigned from CBC, joined the Ontario Waste Management Corporation, and married Joan Watson.

I had had a long career in TV production when I was told that I had over two years of untaken leave. I had worked seven days a week for ten years. CBC couldn't afford to pay me for that time, so I would have to resign.

Could I still work in TV? Yes, except for CTV. Instead, I became a Visiting Professor at University of Guelph, then Director of Communications at OWMC (Ontario Waste Management Corporation), which was set up to site, build and operate an industrial waste treatment plant for the province.

Joan and I were married in Cape Cod in the Captain's Church in Harwich, Massachusetts, joined by good friends and family. One friend brought the wedding cake, strapped with the seat belt in the passenger seat, and my mother came over from Newfoundland.







Voyage Two – to Montreal



1984 brought my second trip on the Bluenose II. Joan and I had moved into her waterfront condo in Toronto. From the 21th floor windows we looked down and saw Bluenose II tied up at the wharf. We went down and were welcomed aboard for a harbour tour along with under-privileged kids and Charlie Farquharson and Catherine McKinnon.

Then we invited the crew to come up to the apartment for a party with Stan Rogers. He sang Bluenose in the Sun and we all had a few beers.

I was invited by Captain Don Barr to sail with Bluenose II as far as Montreal. We went down to the ship which was getting ready to sail.

Meanwhile, up in the apartment, Joan and the rest of the party had hung a bed sheet out the sliders with "Bon Trip Bluenose II" written on it with black tape.

As we got underway, First Mate Wayne Walters fired a blank from the swivel gun canon, which boomed out through the dark and echoed around the high-rise towers. Then the crew shouted, "Good night, Joan"! No one knew who Joan was, except those up in her apartment and those of us sailing away for Montreal on Bluenose II.

Voyage Three – To Thunder Bay



Shortly after Joan and I moved to Lunenburg in 1995, I was asked to join the Board of Directors of The Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic. Spike Walters (Captain Angus Walter's son) was also on the Board. He and his wife, Darkie had Joan and me over for dinner and gave me a signed MacAskill photo of Bluenose Racing the Gertrude L. Thibault. I still have that photograph.

Senator Wilfred Moore, Chair of the Bluenose II Preservation Fund, was invited to speak at one of our board meetings, about that summer's sailing schedule. As he was leaving, I mentioned to him that it was about time we up-dated *Bluenose in the Sun* because only one of the crew was still aboard. That was Delbé Comeau. Senator Moore told me that they would be sailing to Thunder Bay, and he would like to videotape it. But, "It'll cost us an arm and a Leg! We can't afford the $500.000."

I said, “I’ll videotape it for half of that”. Next morning, I thought, “What did I get myself into!” I put out $30,000 for a camera and editing equipment, held my breath, and joined Bluenose II as Photographer.



The first event was the opening of Confederation Bridge.

The Snowbirds and Bluenose II were scheduled to pass over and under the bridge at the same time. The Snowbirds were flying at 200 miles an hour, and we were making nine miles on Bluenose II.

It was a tricky situation.

Then a 40-knot wind pushed us up to twice our speed. Captain Wayne[2] tried to hold her back, luffed her up a few times but she still passed under Confederation Bridge before the Snowbirds, which were streaking towards us at a fantastic rate of speed.

A PEI photographer shot this from the bridge

At Cornwall Ontario, the six surviving crew members of the original Bluenose came aboard and sailed with us to Kingston. Paul Couse, Clem ’Hiltz, Capt. Mathew, and two others. They chatted with the young crewmen and told tall tales of racing Bluenose.

When we docked at Kingston the Mayor came aboard and spoke to Clem, who whipped out his business card. It was covered back and front with his accomplishments. The Mayor said, “You would out-strip a politician with your business card!” Clem said smiling, “I try, Your Highness, I try!”

Next stop – Toronto

I hired a boat and videotaped Bluenose II with the CN Tower in the background.



[2] Captain Wayne Walters, Captain Angus Walter’s grandson was now Skipper, so the Walters legend lived on.

Next, we docked in Windsor Ontario, for Canada Day.

An RCAF paratrooper dropped in among us and spoke to a 10-year-old boy. I heard him say, "You'll do that someday, when you're as tall as me.

Then we sailed up the Detroit River to Sarnia, crossed Lake Huron, then up the St. Mary's River to Sault St. Marie. We powered our way through the swift-flowing river, the mate jumped ashore and made fast a line. Two other crewmen followed, and Bluenose II was safely tied up in front of the Roberta Bondar pavilion.

The next morning, we entered the Sault Locks.

Bluenose was raised up to Lake Superior and we sailed into Gordon Lightfoot's Gitche Gumee.

The Wreck of the Edmond Fitzgerald

The legend lives on from the Chippewa on down

Of the big lake they call Gitche Gumee.

The lake, it is said, never gives up her dead

When the skies of November turn gloomy.

…

When suppertime came, the old book came on deck sayin'

"Fellas, it's too rough to feed ya."

At 7 PM a main hatch way caved in, he said

"Fellas, it's been good to know ya."

Well, Gitche Gumee wasn't rough, when we sailed over it on Bluenose II. It was smooth as glass.

We turned in overnight and when I came on deck next morning, there was "The Sleeping Giant" on the horizon. The sleeping Giant is a large rock formation, that mariners of old knew meant that they were nearing Thunder Bay.

Bluenose II sails into Thunder Bay in the early morning light, her topsails flying.

At Thunder Bay wharf we were met by the daughter of my best Lunenburg friends Don and Anne Hebb and, so began a 5-day port visit with shore leave. It was a welcome break after a voyage half way across Canada.

The Trip Back To Lunenburg

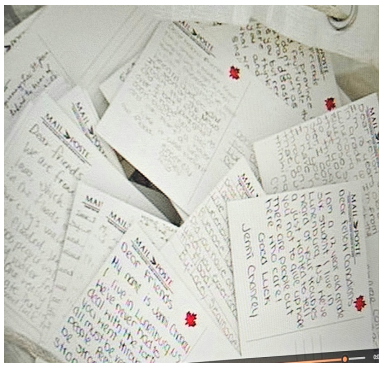
While Bluenose II retraced her course back down the St. Lawrence Seaway. I flew back to Toronto and, a few weeks later, rejoined the ship at Quebec City. Next stop was Tadoussac on the north shore of the St. Lawrence – the entrance to the mighty Saguenay River.

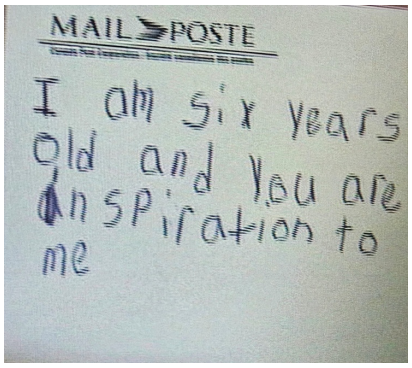
We sailed up-river into the port of La Baie, where a flood and landslide had wiped out whole neighborhoods in 1996. It rained almost every day. And rivers and lakes were full to the brim.

Then there came July 19 and three more days of 75 millimeters of continuous rain. Dams broke and wiped out whole communities. The result: 10 deaths, 800 homes destroyed, and 16,000 displaced at a cost of $300 million in damage.

Schools organized postcard writing in which school kids could send messages to the people of the Saguenay. Bluenose II delivered those messages.

A mailbag filled with hundreds of these cards was dumped out on a table at the museum honoring the victims of the flood.





Next we sailed down the Saguenay and the St Lawrence Rivers and then across the Gulf to Port au Basque, Newfoundland.

After a short visit there we sailed back home to Lunenburg. We were welcomed there by a wharf-full of Lunenburgers lead by Clem Hiltz, who was one of the crewmen of the original Bluenose.



Original crewmember Clem Hiltz welcomes First Mate Delbé Comeau Home to Lunenburg

Voyage Four – the Panama Canal

This would be the most adventurous voyage yet.

Bluenose II's chartroom drawer contained dozens of marine charts covering the passage from Lunenburg to Bermuda, Bermuda to Jamaica and Jamaica to the Panama Canal. Through the Canal to Panama City, and up the Pacific Coast., to Vancouver and, other British Colombia ports. We would use all of these charts on this voyage to Vancouver.

When I joined the ship there was no cabin available for me and my camera-gear, so I slept with the crew below decks. I was assigned an upper bunk and it was a bit of a challenge getting up or down in a rolling sea.

Five days later, we were approaching Bermuda and the narrow passage to St. George's was in sight.

Joan had flown to Bermuda to meet us, and stood on the promontory watching us come in. She held a handful of dimes, which she gave to the kids around her saying, "That's the Bluenose II and her picture is on these dimes. Here's one for each of you."

We rented a cottage for the two-day stay in Bermuda and purchased a wreath honouring the original Bluenose, to be cast on the waters on the site off Haiti where she had sunk.

We then sailed south for Jamaica. As we passed Cuba, we had a surprise visit from Fidel Castro. Delbé Cameo, the Chief Mate climbed up over the Bow of Bluenose II dressed in a Castro-like Kari uniform and took over the wheel. He threatened to sail us into Havana, but gave way to the helms-man and was interviewed by Second Mate, Phil Watson for his on-board publication, *The Rubber Chicken.*

Delbé then went below and got rid of his uniform, and we all had a good laugh.

.

Ile a Vaches, Haiti was our next destination. Bluenose had foundered there with a cargo of freight. The sea was calm and dark that misty day when we found the spot and hove to. Skipper, Wayne Walters picked up our wreath and tossed it overboard. While it floated quietly there, Captain Wayne pulled a micky of dark liquid from his pocket and poured a tot of rum on the waters.

Now, Bluenose II was a “dry ship” and no liquor was allowed aboard, but I guess the Captain had special privileges, especially when he was honouring his Grandfather’s famous Banker schooner, Bluenose.

Jamaica

As we approached Jamaica, the tropical heat hit us and it got so hot below that I couldn’t take it. I tried sleeping on deck but I rolled around with every roll and heave of the ship. I went down to the Salon where we ate our meals and put cushions on the floor to make a bed. But I still rolled around, so I wedged myself between the wall and the table. That was good, except that the crew turned the overhead light on every few minutes, when they passed through to the galley for coffee or a mug-up. But I got used to it.

Our destination was Montego Bay, and I was looking forward to the beaches and the bikinis. But we sailed into the port, where it was concrete wharves, dirty old freighters and fishing boats We had to pass through a locked gate and then walk a mile to slums where we were warned not to walk alone—even in the daytime. Montego Bay Resort was nowhere near.

Two days later we cast off for Colon, the Atlantic entrance to the Panama Canal. The sailors and fishermen snapped pictures of us as we sailed out to sea. We began our 500 sea mile voyage on a strong east wind and a following sea. The sun was bright, the ship raced over the waves, and we were in Heaven.

Then First Mate Delbé took me aside and said, “Come below and don’t tell the crew—we don’t want to alarm them.” When we were climbing down Delbé told me that water was coming in faster than the pumps could handle it and he wanted me to document

it in case of an enquiry. It was dingy and cramped down in in the bowels of the ship, perhaps five feet in every direction, and the third Mate was there to assist. Delbé pulled up two floorboards and we could see black water sloshing around with pieces of wood floating in it. Wood left behind in the last re-fit, perhaps. Then Delbé stripped to his shorts and squirmed down the two-foot opening like a latter-day Houdini.

He was up to his neck in the murky water looking for the source of the leak. He crawled back out and said, "Get me a big juice bottle, a garden hose, and my drill. We need to make a new pump." He drilled about 20 holes in the 2-litre plastic jug, taped one end of the garden hose to the neck of the jug, and put it down through to floorboards in the water. Then we went on deck, he attached the hose to the pump and waited. A couple of minutes later a stream of dirty water flowed over the side into the sea. "We were about two hours away from being in the dories and life rafts," he said to me. "I hope that will get us to the Panama Canal."

We made it to Colon and the ship was still handling well when we tied up at the wharf. Skipper Walters summoned the Ship's Agent, who brought in scuba divers. Delbé briefed them about what to look for using Jansen's famous drawings of Schooner construction, under-water details and above deck rigging and sails. The divers found nothing so Captain Walters had to gather the crew and tell them that he couldn't risk sailing the west coast of America, where there were no ports with experience in repairing wooden Schooners. The trip was over—no visits to British Colombia. The Bluenose II would have to sail back to Halifax and find out what went wrong. The shipbuilders there would know.

One crewmember hung his head and said, "This is the worst day of my life!"

I took a taxi across the Peninsula to Panama City, where I took a plane back to Halifax. Bluenose II sailed back towards Lunenburg.

A week later she was up on the slip and they found the problem. A metal tube that housed the propeller shaft had holes in it, through which the seawater flowed in and flooded the bilge hold. Shipwright, Philip Schneider took me to the machine shop and showed me the holes in the pipe.

But at least the Bluenose II had made it back to home port. The juice jug and garden hose had done their jobs.

Scallop Fishery

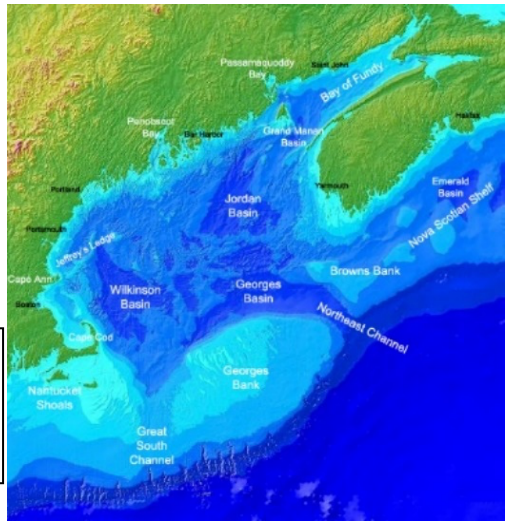
I went to Jim Mosher, President of Scotia Trawler, to ask for the assignment to film his ship-repair operations. Instead he said, "Go to Captain Mike Pittman over at Clearwater Fisheries and he might have some work for you."

Captain Pittman was expecting me. He told me that a consortium of scallop fishing companies was about to undertake under-water mapping of the off-shore Scallop beds. Those maps would show the seafloor and the position of the ship as it moved over the boulders and shipwrecks below, so that the scallopers could avoid gear-wrecking obstacles on the seafloor. It would be like driving a car along a winding country road.

Would I like to get involved? Just watch me! I would spend more time on scallop trawlers than at home in Lunenburg for that year.

One day later I was sailing with Captain Roy Rose was over the raised ocean Georges Bank, where sea scallops abounded on the sea floor.

Clearwater had converted one of their scallop draggers to a microwave under-water imaging ship. Her hold was rigged out with computers and monitors, where computer operators were hard at work. I could see the microbeam image of the harbour bottom under the ship on three of the big monitors.

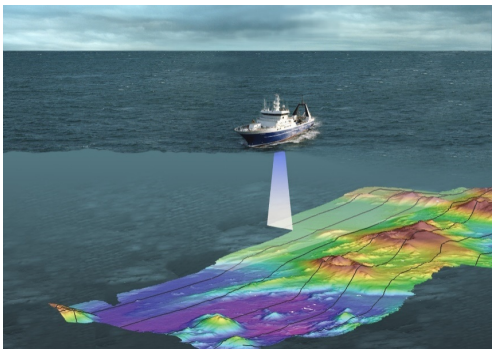


Georges Bank is a 150 X 75-mileplateauon the continental shelf between ***Nova Scotia*** and ***Cape Cod***.

Canadian Coast Guard Ship Hudson

My videotape production work with Clearwater led me to the Bedford Institute of Oceanography (BIO), a world leader in underwater imaging.

I was invited on a two-week research cruise on the famous CGS to HUDSON. This was on Georges Bank. The scientists were there to videotape the sea life, including Scallops and the dozens of other species that thrived on that amazing bank.



As the ship moves over the ocean floor, it maps the contours and obstacles. With microbeam technology installed, trawlers skippers can see the bottom, its contours and obstacles on their monitor and steer around them like driving a car up the street.

The nutrient-rich Labrador Current sweeps down over the inside edge of the Bank where it mixes with the warm Gulf Stream. The result is an abundance of plankton and other sea life which provide food for cod, haddock, and scallops. Georges Bank is the richest dinner table for sea life in the world.

They sent video cameras down and the scientists watched the scallops swim about and feed on the seabed. Then a scraping of the seabed was brought on deck, and they collected specimens for inspection and preservation.

They also towed a collection bag from the stern of the ship and captured sea life at various depths of the ocean.

All of this was mapped by the scientists so they had records of what was where, for further study.

After 10 days, the seas became so rough that all on-deck work had to cease. Hudson is an exceptionally large ship, but she was tossed around like a cork. Everyone grabbed onto something when the ship lunged and bucked. The old sailor's advice, "One hand for the ship and one hand for yourself", came into play. We were all glad when the Skipper announced that we were returning to Halifax four days early!

Blueberries Galore

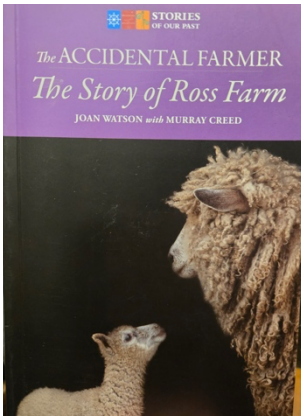
A commercial project I undertook was the creation of a documentary about blueberries. I was hired by David Sangster, Manager of the Wild Blueberry Association, to film a promotional video for overseas markets. Did you know that the majority of blueberries grown in Nova Scotia are actually sold to Japan? That was a fun project.

Moving to Halifax

About 15 years ago, Joan and I made the move back to Halifax. We rented a lovely condo on Spring Garden Road, and then moved to a beautiful house that Joan had inherited for her use from her dear friend Murial. We lived happily there for many years, enjoying the garden and our friendly neighbours.

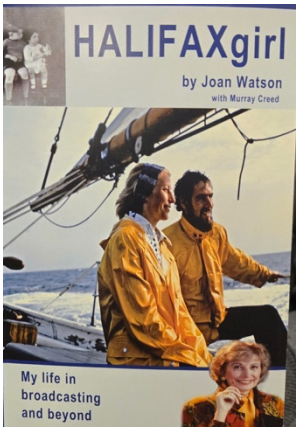
The Accidental Farmer

One project that Joan and worked on together, was the writing of the book, the Accidental Farmer, which was the story of Ross Farm. The Ross family settled on Ross Farm shortly after the war of 1812, but the story began in 1805 across the pond and included their voyage(s) across the sea to North America. As usual, I was in charge of photography, and we wrote the book together. It is now available for sale at the Ross Farm Museum.



Halifax Girl

I also worked with Joan on her own autobiography, Halifax Girl. Joan's story is also in interesting one – with lots of travel and adventure! I encourage you to read it, as well!



BOOK Four 2021 TO 2026

Northwood & St. Vincent's

In 2021, Joan moved to St. Vincent's, as she required more care than I was able to provide. She has been happy there, and we enjoy visits several times per week, with the support of our dear friend, Holly.



A year later, I moved to Northwood, to an independing living apartment. I now reside at Northwood Manor, in Halifax, and I can look out at the Harbour from my window.

As senior's residences go, Northwood's not so bad. The food could be better, but the residents and staff are friendly, and I enjoy the music and other entertainments from time-to-time. I still bring my camera (which is now my phone) and photograph or videotape the goings-on, and participate in official videos, interviews and photoshoots as an enthusiastic promotor of the facility.

I have all manner of devices to help me get around, as my balance isn't what it once was, and enjoy scooting over to Fort Needham Memorial Park, a commemoration to the 1917 Halifax explosion, when the weather is favourable.

Marketplace 50th Anniversary

In 2022, the CBC show Marketplace celebrated it's 50th anniversary! David Common, one of the current hosts of Marketplace, tracked Joan and me down in Halifax and came to interview us about the show's origins. It was a lovely, spring (?) day, and we both enjoyed the chance to reminise about the early days of our broadcasting careers.





Clips from the interview were used for promotional shots for the 50th anniversary special, and parts of the interview were aired to a live audience at the taping of that show in Toronto. Mardie and her son attended on our behalf and sent us some of the swag.

From one of the broadcasts:

> Murray Creed may be 95, but his memories of creating CBC's investigative consumer program *Marketplace* are so clear, it's as though it happened yesterday — not in 1972.
>
> "We talked straight. Named names. And we got famous for that," says one of the first producers on a program that is now marking a milestone — 50 years of programming, the longest-running news, consumer or current affairs television program in Canada
>
> > Links to some of the broadcasts:
> >
> > https://www.cbc.ca/news/marketplace/marketplace-50th-anniversary-special-1.6606824
> >
> > https://www.cbc.ca/news/marketplace/marketplace-anniversary-1.6606727

Family Updates

My three children are living interesting, fulfilling lives, that I hope they also see as lucky!

As Kirk excelled in art, his High School teacher took him to Winnipeg to enroll him in Fine Arts at The University of Manitoba. Part way through his first term, a classmate (who was a potter) invited Kirk to visit his pottery studio. Kirk was captured…working with his hands, being his own boss, having a chance to produce a product that would last after he was gone…what could be better?!

Kirk resigned from University of Manitoba and set up his pottery studio on a small treed farm in rural Manitoba. He designed and built his own wood-fired kiln and cut the timber to fire his pottery.

Despite being wiped out by fire more than once and having to start again from scratch, he persisted and, at 74, still makes and fires pottery in his studio in rural Manitoba. With his first wife he fathered three terrific boys, the last of whom was born in Eswatini, Africa, where Kirk spent 3 years building a studio and kiln and developing local materials for clay and glazes. All three sons also live in Manitoba with their partners and children. Kirk has also been a beekeeper, a house-builder and, with his second partner, a frog counter. Variety is the spice of life!



Keltie has had a very productive life. Inspired by theatre in High School, she attended the University of Calgary, where she obtained a BA in Fine Arts. She worked as a stage manager at numerous theatres in Toronto, studied carpentry, and became Head Carpenter at the Shaw Theater at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. She was active in the feminist and LGBT communities, especially by producing concerts and designing lighting for music, cultural events and festivals.

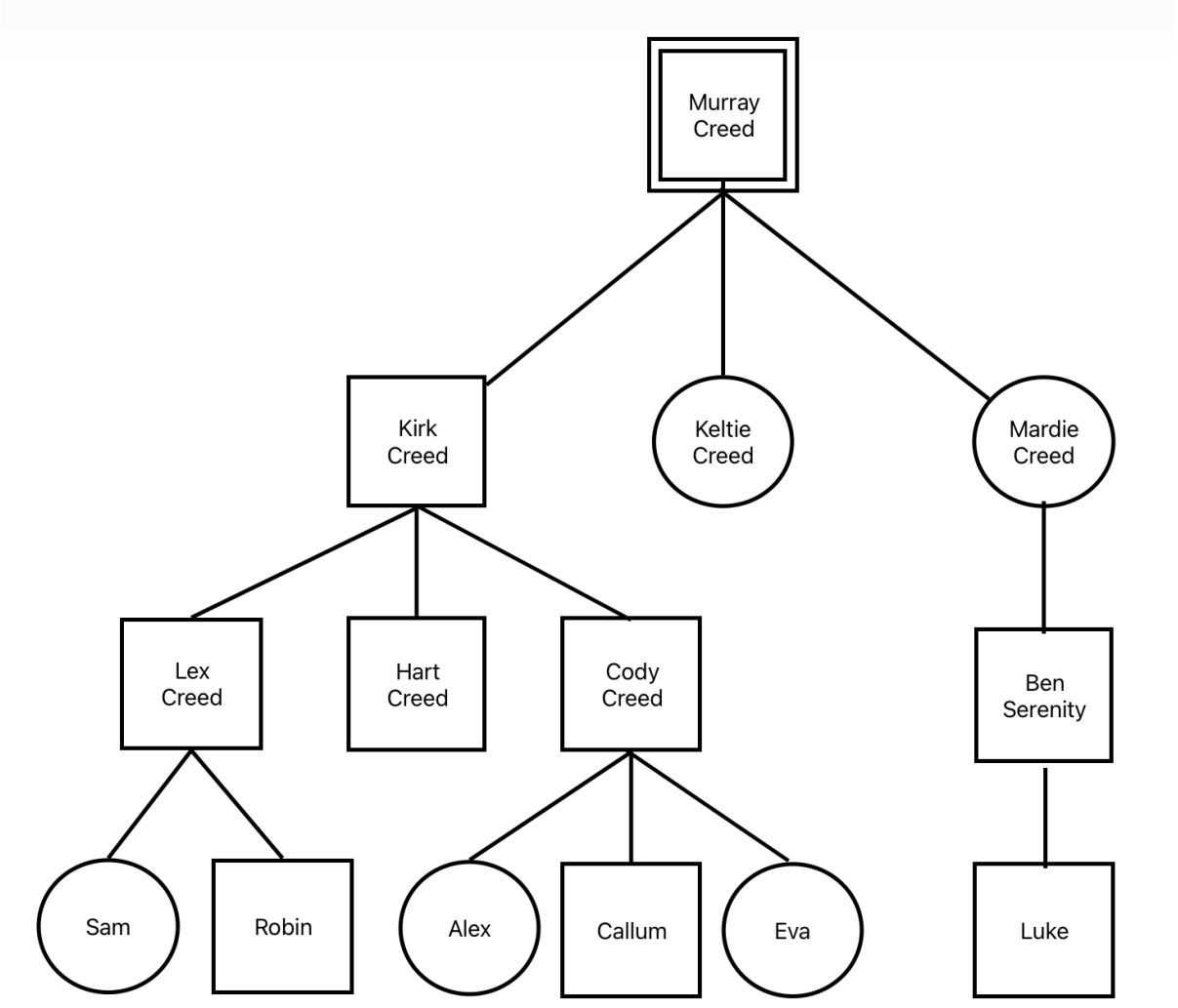
After some years working in the theatre and music communities, Keltie transitioned to working for other non-profits and then became a career counsellor, specializing in working with individuals requiring accommodaton due to physical disabilities such as vision imparement. She retired in British Columbia with her wife, where she enjoys knitting and teaching line dancing to seniors.

Despite a few forays into theatre in University, Mardie veered away from the arts, studying psychology and then earning a Masters of Health Science in Health Promotion from the University of Toronto. She worked for many years in non-profits focused on health-related concerns (including HIV/AIDS, women's reproductive health and breast cancer) before transitioning to working in clinical edemiology research. During that time, she and her then-husband had a son, who became the bright light in her life. She later became a PMP (Project Management Professional) and worked at Ontario Health.

Having had enough of bureaucracy, she semi-retired at 59 and started a home organizing business (Serene Space Toronto). Between that and spending time with her second partner, her stepson, and her son's new family (including a grandson), she keeps herself relatively active and very busy. Having always been a cat or dog servant, she recently changed camps and is now the proud co-servant of a pair of lovebirds. Mardie visits Halifax several times a year to check up on me and re-organize my space!

So, my direct offspring number 13, as of this writing. Two daughters, one son, four grandsons, three great grandaughters and three great grandsons. Lucky, indeed!





My Direct Descendents

BOOK Four 2027 TO ??

The next book (2027 to ??) has yet to be written, but I'll get started on it now…

