**Robert Norman Ball**

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| The surname Ball is a familiar one here in Oxford. In fact, starting with an 'A Ball' in Tillsonburg, and ending with a 'W Ball' in Salford there are no fewer than forty three entries listed under 'Ball' in the local directory. But curiously enough, considering that Robert was born right here in Woodstock, none of these 'Balls' are related to him. Robert's father was an only child, and, so too, is Robert. But just to set the record straight, he has lots of cousins on his mother's side all over the county. Robert lives on Mary Street, in the same | E:\2015 NEW MEMBERS\Bob Ball.jpg |

house his parents bought in 1948, just four doors down from where he was born. On the surface its suggests a sort of 'stick in the mud' kind of guy. Not so. After graduating from WCI, he left Woodstock in1964 and didn't return until 2002

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Bob was good at math. At WCI, he discovered that the chemistry lab was too messy; the biology lab was too smelly, but the physics lab was nice and clean and was full of "neat stuff to play with". Football was his other great enthusiasm and you could say he grew into it, weighing a hefty 265 pounds (120 kg) when he moved on to the University of Waterloo. After one year in Engineering he switched to Honours Physics and continued on to earn a master's degree in 1972. Apart from achieving his advanced degree, Robert accomplished something that should make him the envy of at least half the people on this planet. While earning his master's, he shed 90 pounds, and when he launched himself into the 'real world' he weighed a remarkably trim 175 pounds (79 kg).After qualifying as a teacher he moved to Bermuda where he taught at Bermuda College (the only post-secondary institution on the island). Bob described his time in Bermuda as 'like living in a tropical paradise". His apartment was in a hundred year old Bermuda style house and from his kitchen window he could look out over 'the sound'. Good company. Good friends. Many expats from Canada, the US and Britain. Leisure time was occupied with golf and tennis and we were told that a fire at the Swan Co. Rum Distillery caused no end of distress.

However, Bermuda was not completely immune to the forces at work in the real world. The culture in Bermuda still bore the after effects of the racial segregation that had previously been accepted on the island. In March 1973 Sir Richard Sharples, the island's Governor General was assassinated while walking his dog on the promenade. Sadly, the dog perished as well. His murderer was hanged in 1977 and this was followed by three days of rioting. But calm returned.

All good things have to end and after 11 yrs in Bermuda, Bob returned to Canada, where he took up a position at the College of New Caledonia in Prince George, BC, where he taught a course in Physics for Technology and, on occasion, presented courses on computer programming. He observed that living in Prince George was little like living in Bermuda, but this time the ocean was replaced by a sea of trees five hundred miles wide.

In 2002, he took advantage of a generous buy-out from the College and returned to Woodstock to be closer to his now elderly mother. Often his time was occupied with travel to many of the most exciting destinations worldwide. His mother and Robert enjoyed ten good years together until her passing at age 92 in 2012. In 2014 hints of his own mortality struck when Robert experienced not chest pains, but a vague feeling of unease in his upper body that proved to have been a mild heart attack. A warning to all of us. Heart attacks don't always present the way they do in the movies. It might sound like that after 2002 Robert was here for good, but that was not the case. For at least half of the time he travelled extensively on his own and he and mother enjoyed three wonderful trips to Spain and the Canary Islands. Just next month Bob is on his way to visit friends in Sabah in East Asia. While there, he'll be taking a side trip to visit the ancient ruins of Angkor Wat. Take plenty of pictures!