

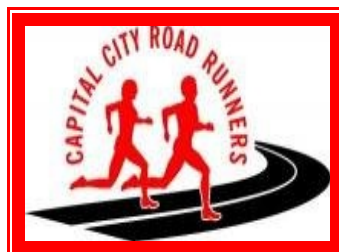
MAY/JUNE 2020

~FOOTNOTES~

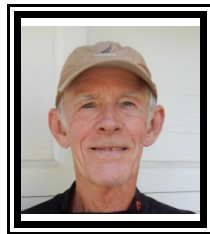


Tom Reddon ~ Mr. Metric Marathon

Tom and Tony participated in last year's Metric Marathon



Mike Stapenhurst



He was a good runner, always ahead of me on the fun runs and races. The only times I got to run with Tom were during the first kilometer of a run, or if he was recovering from an injury!

Please visit the Heart & Stroke website and make a donation in Tom's memory at Run for Reddon, posted by Tom's daughter Ashleigh. Just Google 'heart and stroke Ashleigh Reddon' to find the web page.



Tom & Ashleigh

Since some of the Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted we are starting the fun runs on Saturday May 23rd, so I hope to see you there.

Good running, and stay healthy...
Mike

[illegible]

Thanks! John.

cathcartjohn@hotmail.com



Remembering Tom

by Tony Tremblay



Bernie, Tony, and Tom on their annual Christmas Day run, 2019,
a tradition they observed for over 20 years.]

On April 24th, our running community lost a good friend. For a small group of us lucky enough to have also known Tom outside of running, the loss feels more like that of a brother.

Tom was absolutely original and quietly, though intensely, intelligent, possessing not only an encyclopedic knowledge of music and film, but also a well-honed anti-corporate streak that he described as “equalizing.” Did he ever pay for a piece of music or television or film? Did his buddies ever pay? Not if he could help it. He copied and shared generously, rarely missing a birthday compilation or failing to share a link to a favourite movie or TV show he’d just seen. He stored content in back-up drives and clouds before most of us knew what those were. In that, he was the best kind of hacker, a 60s-inspired Robin Hood always roaming the digital veldt. Creation was for sharing, he believed, so he took it upon himself to, well, open the channels.

As I said when a small group of us gathered to bid him farewell, I was so looking forward to talking with him about the American songwriter John Prine, who had recently passed. We had never spoken about Prine before, but I knew Tom would know all about him – and that some kind of link to an obscure offsite cloud would follow to enable me to listen to all of Prine’s music ... for free. Tom knew that that was how it should be, and of course he was exactly right.

But it is perhaps on the trails and in pursuit of our common running goals that I remember Tom best, for we did mile after mile together, sometimes lamenting that

our small group of dedicated marathoners spent more time with each other than we did with our own spouses. We did ladders on the middle-school track, speedwork by the river, 800s by the gym, Wednesday night tempos to Tim Hortons and back, and countless other runs and races all over Canada and the US. I can remember 20-milers out to “buddy’s driveway” when we would hardly say a word. Three hours together with maybe five minutes of discussion throughout. We both knew at the time how rare and precious that was. We were simply friends at play, completely comfortable in each other’s presence. Chatter was disingenuous. And so, on that very difficult Saturday morning of April 25th, after a sleepless night, I took Tom along on my 28-km run. He didn’t say much, nor did I, and in that we found what we’d had in our Boston training days: a relaxed and restorative morning amidst the chaos that swirls.

There will be some people who wonder why he ran after his heart problems, and there will be a few who are angry with him for doing so. I understand those feelings because, as a serious runner, I too must answer for what seems like foolhardiness, even recklessness. So let me try to explain. Tom did not love running more than his family and friends. His family and friends were the most important things in his life, by far. However, as counterintuitive as it may sound, running enabled him to love his family and friends more profoundly. Running enabled him to give more of himself, and a better self, to them. He thus could no more stop running than he could stop caring for them. It was in his DNA to keep trying, no matter the difficulties and dangers along the way. In that sense, he practiced what Dr. George Sheehan, one of our gurus, said of runners: that they “preserve in their heart and mind a passion for growth. They seek not so much to enjoy more or to know more but to *be* more.” Tom lived that truth; he knew that you just keep moving forward. You try, perhaps you stumble (inevitably you stumble), but you pick yourself up and try again, for the greater goal has very little to do with running. The greater goal is to nurture oneself in order to be the best husband, father, and friend one can be. Tom was Tom because he knew that in his heart, his positive and nurturing presence among us communicating that clearly.

For those of us who are hurt, and bewildered, and grieving the loss of this very good man – a loss so sudden that it provided no time for goodbyes and happened when a . pandemic put restrictions on the closeness we rely on at these difficult moments – I’ll share a final observation about Tom that, for me, explains why he continued to run as he did and how he’d remember each of us if the circumstances were reversed. The observation is that, among his friends, Tom was completely without judgement, a rare quality indeed. Because of the nature of my work, I’ve had to step away and live deep inside my head for long periods of time, often in the

summers. That, combined with the fact that Tom had slowed down in recent years, meant that we didn't run or hang out together as often as we used to. But that never mattered to Tom, nor did it matter that the pack, which he'd once led, sometimes left him behind. He never scolded us about the pace, never asked why I hadn't called or kept in touch, and never sought any kind of accommodation. Rather, he understood that we each had to be ourselves – and he insisted that we were. When we did finally connect, we'd pick things up exactly where we'd left off. I'd tell him about my projects and he'd share his latest news about family, work, and his hapless Edmonton Oilers (he was a long-suffering fan). His home was always open and the invitations always came, more so than perhaps I deserved. But that was Tom. For him, life was too precious to keep score or harbour grievance. Things like “who raced ahead” or “who did and didn't show up” never mattered to him. Friendship was always more important, sharing a craft beer and a laugh always paramount. That's the Tom I will remember and the Tom he'd want us to remember. No judgements. Rather, a life lived intensely and well.

As I've said to my small group of close running friends, perhaps too infrequently, I consider it my great fortune to have had them in my life. I don't know what my life would have been had I not found running and the people associated with it. It certainly would not have been nearly as rich or fulfilling. The last few notes I had from Tom just a week or so before his passing will illustrate what I mean. In one, he reminded me of Terry's 70th birthday, which he'd recorded and made sure to share with friends. In another, he called “an emergency meeting at the legendary Red Lantern [Tavern] once it reopens so we can ... discuss our experiences and the ramifications of this unprecedented [COVID] event!” “Who hasn't been craving a cold glass of brew from the Red Lantern?” he asked, knowing how we all detested the cheap Alpine draft they served. That was Tom: looking out for people, getting his buddies together as soon as possible for a debrief and a few laughs. “Best joke I heard today was from Bette Midler on Twitter,” he wrote just a day before he died. “What borders on stupidity? ... Canada and Mexico!” There was the 60s-inspired hacker again: quietly, thoroughly political and intelligent, and always gentle in delivering his opinions. His pace was never rushed but always got him to where he needed to go.

My life, Ellen's life, and the lives of our friends were made infinitely better by Tom's presence. I will miss my friend deeply – and will continue to take him along on each of my long runs, being sure to respond appropriately when he tells me to pick up the pace at every small hill we meet.

Obituary of Thomas Raymond Reddon
November 28, 1955 - Walkerton, ON
April 24, 2020 - Fredericton, NB



Thomas Reddon was the beloved husband of Charlotte (Blakney) Reddon, father to Ashleigh (Jeff Johnson) and Alex (Martika) Reddon and foster son Jason Wilcox. He was the proud Papa to three well loved grandchildren – Carter and Logan Johnson and baby Eloise Reddon.

Tom is survived by his mother Mary (Anstett) Reddon and sisters Jane Hendry (Duncan) , Deb Reddon (Gary), Mary Ellen Reddon and older brother Bill (Lynn) Reddon along with his sister and brother in-laws Heather (Dale) Keith, Alan (Corey) Blakney and Bill (Debbie) Blakney, and many special aunts and uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews. Tom was predeceased by his father Roy Raymond Reddon, (1994) and Charlotte’s parents – Randolph (Randy) Blakney (1981) and Eleanor (Geldart) Blakney in 1998.

Tom loved his family beyond measure. He enjoyed spending time with Carter and Logan down by the river and loved his snuggle time with Baby Eloise. He never tired of wheel barrel rides, skipping stones, Sunday family dinners, lawn races and fires at his prized ‘new’ boathouse.

Tom’s other loves were running with Ashleigh and his buddies from the Capital City Roadrunners, biking, and kayaking. Tom and Alex enjoyed a regular Tuesday movie date, particularly when a new Marvel movie was released. Tom also loved live music- he was a front row fixture at community music events and a supporter of the Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival. He had an organized archived music collection that might rival the CBC.

Tom was a man of quiet confidence. Friends were drawn to his easy natured personality. He mastered the skill of being a good listener and was a kind, thoughtful friend.

At the time of his death, Tom was employed as a consultant with Accreon, on contract with the Department of Health. Warm thanks are extended to his work team.

Together almost 40 years, we enjoyed a life of great adventures both travelling and at home. A favourite memory will be our sunset kayaks, with our celebratory cheer of “Life is good!”

before we paddled home. In our house, the music always played, and we were never too busy for a dance in the kitchen. “Once there was a tune in my heart; then I met you, and for the first time, I heard the words.” was penned on our wedding vow cards, we never forgot that.

Our family extends thanks to the bystanders who stepped up to help, the first responders and the DECH hospital staff. Donations in celebration of Tom’s memory can be made to the Heart and Stroke fund or the charity of your choice.

Arrangements for a celebration of life will be made when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. .
Personal condolences may be offered through www.yorkfh.com .

I will love you Tom, forever and always. Charlotte

A Runner’s Prayer

Run by my side,
live in my heartbeat,
give strength to my steps.
As the cold surrounds,
as the wind pushes me,
I know you surround me.
As the sun warms me,
as the rain cleanses me,
I know you are touching me,
challenging me, loving me
So I give you this run.

Thank you for matching my stride.

Amen



Memories of Tom Reddon the Runner by Steve Scott



Tom & Peter Kyberd - last minute prep Fulton 5k, stone cold Steve Scott, and camera shy Mike McKendy

Tom Reddon's Philosophy on running hills including gentle climbs, steady climbs and short/long hard climbs. He never varied in his philosophy which in reality was ***attack constantly***. This attitude was a constant whether it was a Fun Run with the CCR, a training run for a marathon or in the marathon itself. Oh yes there was always present that ***little smile/smirk*** that Tom had to make sure he had your attention. It did not matter if he beat you in the event or whatever but only that he pushed you up that hill and made you work hard.

One of the fondest memories I have of Tom using this ploy occurred in The Maine Coast Marathon held in South Portland Maine probably in the early 90's when I was a decent marathoner. This Hill Attack Tom initiated began near the end of a gentle climb around mile 23 as we approached a very long and steeper climb. I think that Tom had been lurking behind me for quite a while because all of a sudden there he was. At this point I was not feeling great and his sudden appearance startled me and I said "for Fudge sakes you scared me". My adrenalin surged as he said "come on Scott lets go".

So away we went as my energy levels soared, passing everyone in sight and at the top of the hill a gentle down grade began. Side by side we increased the pace until I began to creep ahead, but one more surge from Tommy left me hanging on and then there was nothing but wheezing from both sets of lungs for a while and then I could

only hear my own wheezing. A short while later I heard a voice behind me holler, see you at the finish line Scott.

Suffice it to say, Tom had done his job that day and I had one of my best Marathons ever. Thanks to my friend and running buddy Tom. I waited at the finish line that day and as he came through I handed Tom a can of “American beer” and we had a few sips and he said “wish it was Canadian”. It was a good day for a couple of “weekend warriors”. ~ Fossil



Steve Scott - The Fossil



Many enjoyable runs – I miss you Tom

Mark Tremblay (Capital City Road Runner 1990-2001)



I'm not exactly sure when I met Tom, but it was probably 1990. We were part of a CCRR contingent that ran the Halifax Marathon in 1991 (see before and after photos below – possibly 1992?) so it was before then. I figure I ran with Tom more than 2000 times – mostly during the "Nooners" runs from the LBG (strict departure time of 12:05, Monday through Friday), but also almost every Wednesday evening and Saturday morning during the CCRR scheduled runs. I also ran with Tom (and Bernie, and Mike, and others) on almost every visit back to Fredericton since we left in 2001.

Tom represented the CCRR and the running community in Fredericton to me. He was President of the CCRR (always it seemed like), Editor of Footnotes (always it seemed like), involved in local race organization and a great running partner. He would always be keen to accept an invitation to go running. Despite the periodic punctuality problem, he was great to run with. We would talk about family, work, current news, where we were meeting for beers on Wednesday, and of course running. Most of you reading this do not even know me, but in the early 1990s my wife Helen and I wrote a monthly column for Footnotes titled "SWEAT (Science With Exercise And Training)". When Bernie informed me of Tom's untimely passing I went on a nostalgic journey back through the SWEAT columns we had written. Most were scientific and/or medical in nature, offering advice to CCRRs on how to run better. But some truly captured what the CCRR was all about – friendships and important, deep philosophical conversations. Below is an excerpt from a column in 1993.

"I am always encouraged when fellow roadrunners request a particular topic for the column. Recently, while running with lunchtime running mates Tom Reddon and Bernie Arseneau, Bernie posed a question that has apparently plagued him for some time. Since the question also relates to running I thought it would be appropriate to devote a S.W.E.A.T. column to assist Bernie and Tom in their struggle. The question is (and I'm sure you have all thought about this at one time or another) Do you get more wet when you run in the rain or walk in the rain? This issue has application to both competition and everyday life. For example, if you get more wet running than walking, you should take your time going from your car to a restaurant when it is pouring outside. This may also influence racing strategies as you balance the difference between running fast and getting soaked versus going slower, remaining drier, and carrying less weight in the form of water."

Pretty deep stuff I know! I remember many such conversations and problem-solving think tanks during runs with Tom and colleagues. Post-run beverages at a local establishment usually assisted in bringing focus to the solutions of the problems of the day. In truth, the exercise and friendly conversation helped to put our real problems in perspective and helped melt them away – and this undoubtedly added life to our years, years to our life. Without this I am sure Tom would have left us even earlier.

Each time we visited Fredericton since we left I would run with Tom (and Bernie, and Mike, and Harry, and Tony, and...) and it was like time had stood still. Tom never aged, he always looked young, vibrant, and healthy. Our conversations began where they left off, often a year earlier. We would reminisce fondly about old times, about running under 40, 45, 50, 55, or beating your age for 10k. And we would always look forward to next time.

Jim Allard, another old CCRR member now lives in my neighbourhood in Kanata. We bumped into one another while out for runs a few days ago, and we stopped to chat, >2 metres apart. We talked about Tom, who is omnipresent in both of our minds on runs these days. I'm so sorry there won't be a next time Tom, but when I am out for my run, I know you are there and enjoying it as much as ever!



You've never noticed the Nooners? Memory Jog!

By the running rev



*John Cathcart, Harry Drost , Mike McKendy, Jim Allard, Sandy McMillan, Terry Haines, Tony Tremblay
Please note the “sports bags” carried by all Nooners.*

In 2002, on becoming the Pastor of All Saints Anglican Church in Marysville, one of the side benefits of being called to that parish was, during my lunch break, being able to go to the UNB gym and meet up with a group of runners. I was able to be a part of this group for 12 years. It came to an end upon retirement and I moved to Ontario in 2014. That group was known as the “nooners.” It helped me keep my sanity during that time. I wrote the article below, with tongue in cheek, for Footnotes in 2007. Tom Reddon, Bernie Arseneau and Mark Tremblay were the 3 runners behind the forming of the Nooners.~ Running rev!

To the discerning eye, they are easily identified as they carry their little travelling bags. They may seem innocent enough to the untrained eye, however, as soon as noon hour approaches they can be seen coming from the four corners of city to engage it what can only be described as some kind of strange ritualistic observance that appears to be carried out religiously.

The ritual begins first thing in the morning, or perhaps even the night before as careful preparations must be made beforehand. Adherents who practice this daily ritual often ensure that they always have all of their ‘ritual artifacts’ necessary, and they tend to carry them along with them where ever they go in these innocuous little travelling “sports” bags. Some even have a spare bag just in case. Most of these ‘artifacts’ are very decorative, usually they have the name of a particular sports god on them, Nike, Saucony, Adidas, as each person gives personal expression to their daily observance through the creative designs which can be very colourful indeed. However these artifacts must also be highly functional, especially their

wrist watch it would appear, as they have a particular role to play in enabling the practitioner to give full and comprehensive expression to their formative daily ritual.

Whether these practitioners are at home, at work, or some other place, as soon as noon hour approaches, they drop everything and head towards the centre from where their strict observance begins. It is from these centres that their daily ritual observance begins to be played out in earnest. They grab their ever present travelling bag of 'artifacts' and jump in their cars, or on their bikes, some even choosing to walk, but come they do, with one destination in mind, and immediately upon arrival at one of the designated centres, they begin first with the act of disrobing, quickly shedding their everyday, ordinary street clothes, which serve to hide their true identity, and then upon donning their own distinctive ritualistic artifacts the true self appears and is revealed. The speed with which this transformation takes place is mind-boggling so adept are they after years and years of practice.

Once dressed in their proper ritualistic attire, they prepare themselves for the challenges of the strict observance of their religious ritual in which they shall diligently participate. Some prefer to engage first in a series of spiritual exercises that prepare both the body and the mind for the rigours of their religious ritual that can on occasion last as long as a full hour, and on some occasions, even longer. It is a strange sight as you see these practitioners standing on one leg, some appearing to be holding up walls and pillars as they do. Some practitioners have even been known to participate in religious rituals that have lasted as long as three hours, and even longer!

However, once dressed in their ritualistic attire, some choosing very colourful vestments indeed, while others seem to prefer more traditional garb, which usually can be very old, indeed some seem to find a particular comfort in wearing attire that has been a part of their religious ritual for many years, even though it may be discoloured and even in some cases, a little worn around the edges. It seems to give a sense of comfort, similar to perhaps a security blanket to which some were very attached when very young.

However, once the assembled group is called to order, the person who usually presides is known as the 'Bernie' and it is the "Bernie's" task to orientate the practitioners in the right direction. Each day presents its own challenges and different directions are offered. It should be noted that when the 'Bernie' is not present, the group appears to be somewhat directionless, even confused, seemingly not knowing when to start or where to go on that particular day. It takes some time to figure out and bring the confusion to a satisfactory conclusion.

The group initially begins to practise their noon ritual in what appears to be a huge circle that encompasses the city. This seems to gather the four corners of the city within a circle. Once the ritual is underway however, led by the 'Bernie' - usually assisted by Tom and Tony and Harry, the group heads off in the direction of the day. During the summer they appear to move in an anti-clockwise direction and during the winter a clockwise direction. The wind seems to have a bearing on this. The slower ones must keep the main body in sight at all times as there are other smaller rituals to be carried out, like stopping at designated water fountains, where practitioners once again engage in spiritual exercises such as standing on one leg, etc., that seek to stretch both mind and body and offer worship to the god of noon. The motto appears to be 'never look back'.

When the noon hour ritual has once again been completed, the circling of the city, the practitioners participate in what appears to be yet another ritual concerning water. The practitioners remove their religious attire, and all then proceed to enter the bathhouse, where they stand under outlets where water gushes out. It would appear that they are engaging in some kind of spiritual cleansing ritual at this point, perhaps washing off the dust and dirt encountered in their act of circling the city. Once this part of the ritual is completed, the practitioners then dress themselves once again in their ordinary everyday clothing, incognito, and head out into the world once again, the only thing that identifies them as noon hour ritualists, would be the little travelling bags in which they carry their ritual artifacts. Have you seen them? They are known simply and succinctly as the "Nooners"!

~ the running rev!



John Cathcart , Paul Lavoie, Tom Reddon, Mike McKendy, & Steve Scott.



Mike Richard chasing down Tom - Fulton 5k



Last minute preparations Peter Kyberd, Steve Scott & Tom

My Friend Tom

by Bernie Arseneau



Bernie, Tony and Tom - December 25, 2019

I have known Tom since 1994, and over this period we developed a great friendship. We have spent countless hours, running, biking, kayaking and socializing together. His wife Charlotte has also become a friend of Charline and myself.

Tom was a quiet, unassuming individual. Tom spent many hours volunteering in various roles for the Capital City Road Runners (CCRR) and the Fredericton Marathon. He became an expert in race course measurements, and his services were sought by several race directors across the Province. As an example of his leadership, Tom created the Metric Marathon held on November 11; this run has become a club staple.

In the early 1990s, Mark Tremblay, Tom and myself started running at lunch time from the UNB gym. As the years progressed, several people joined the Nooners; one could easily expect 8 to 10 runners out each day. The departure was at 12:05 sharp. We would have great conversations and debates. Tom would like to sprint up the hill behind Government House.

On the weekend, when not joining the CCRR Saturday morning run, we would run together from the neighborhood. Often, Tom would come over to our place, knock on the door and ask Charline if I could go out and play. Our Northside Sunday morning runs with Jeff Pierce and Tony Tremblay were always a fun time. Depending on the time of year, we would be joined by Jim Allard, Mike McKendy, Mike Richard and Steve Scott, who would always spice up the conversation.

Tom was never early for anything. His watch seemed to have an offset from all of us. A typical sight on a Sunday would have several of us standing around and then Tom speeding up the street to join us. Tom also had a challenge mastering the time change. Twice he showed up an hour early for a run in the fall. We would always remind him of the time change.

Tom could fix almost anything, from electronics to things mechanical. He repaired our lawn mower on several occasions. He rarely tossed anything away. Tom had quite a collection of stuff in his shed, just in case it could come in handy at some point. He has two snowblowers (one that belonged to his father) and four lawn mowers all in good working condition.

At the Fredericton Marathon in 2016, they were doing a tribute to Fort McMurray and the wild fire victims. While the Canadian anthem was playing, Tom made a point to find me in the crowd – that is the type of person Tom was. Tom and Charlotte had lived in Fort McMurray and so has my daughter; it was very touching.

Some of Tom's favorite biking routes included the Mazerolle Settlement Loop and the rolling hills on River Road from Marysville to Durham Bridge. I would love to give him a hard time that his favorite running route was Fulton – Gibson. The McLeod Hill loop was among his favorites as it was hilly; I remember him doing that on December 24th in 2014 or 2015.

Sometimes, Tom would stop by our place in the morning for a date square (his favorite) and coffee. It would give us a few minutes to catch up on life and share stories. Tom was always positive regardless of what life threw his way.

Tom liked craft beer, especially IPA's. Both Pivot and Yippee from Picaroons were his favorite beers. Another yearly tradition we had with Mike and Tony was walking the bridges and touring the breweries in town, always a fun afternoon. On a typical Friday evening, Tom would send me a message asking,- What is in your growler this evening?

In 2019, on a run in Indian Shores, Florida, Tom suffered a heart attack. Sandy MacNeil from Fredericton was on the scene very quickly and performed CPR until the first responders arrived. Four hours later, Tom was out of surgery, and was I ever glad to see him. I am grateful to Sandy for having saved my friend's life and enabling all of us to enjoy an additional 55 weeks with Tom.

After returning from Florida, the last year was quite busy for Tom. Eloise, the third grandchild was born, his daughter Ashleigh and Jeff got married. Tom spent a lot of time working on his beloved boathouse, a great place to socialize and hang out.

Over the years, several traditions were created, one of these was for Tony, Tom and myself to have a Christmas Day run together when we were all in town.

On April 4th of this year, Ashleigh, Tom and myself had a social distanced run to celebrate the anniversary of his heart incident in Florida (picture below). The intent had been to have a 5 km run in Indian Shores. Ashleigh and myself have agreed to complete the run in Indian Shores together post COVID-19 when it will be safe to travel again.

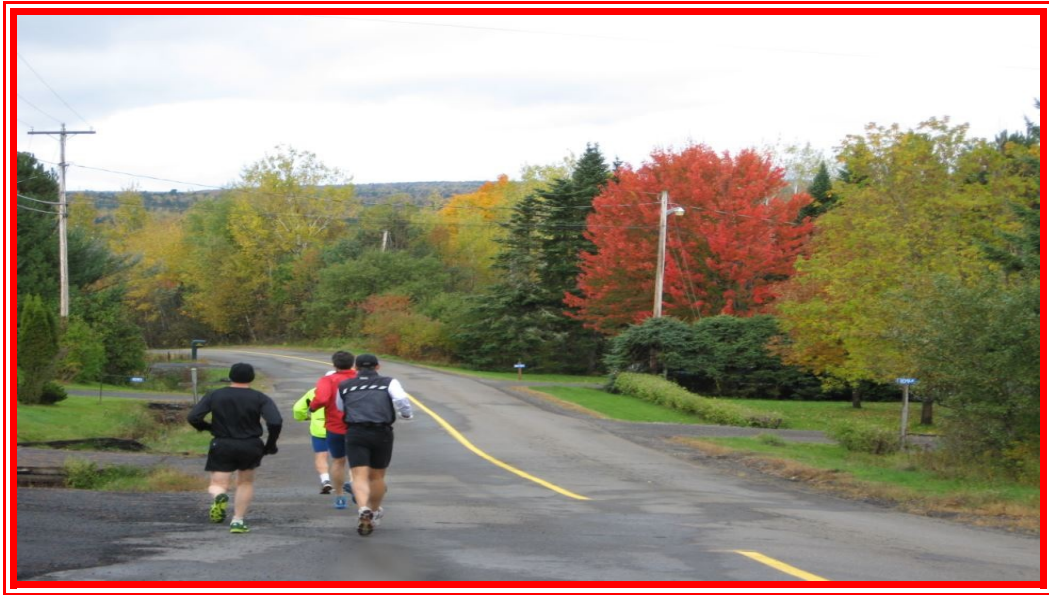
I will miss my friend Tom, as we had lots of great times together.



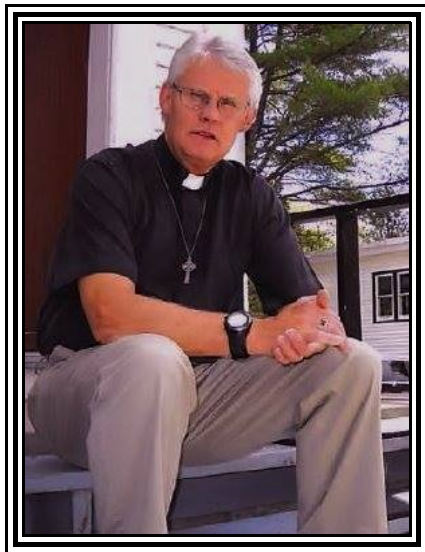
Bernie, Tom and Ashleigh

The Power of Conversation and Presence

by the running rev



Dave MacLeod, Tony Tremblay, Tom Reddon, and leading the pack , Harry Drost.
I took the photo. It was Thanksgiving 2013, and we did, if I remember right, 21km



This may seem to some a different way of honouring Tom Reddon, however, it has been going around in my mind since Tom died so tragically and suddenly, so here it is. It is both eulogy and a reflection.

As a running reverend - aka - an Anglican priest I recently celebrated my 25th anniversary as a priest on Thursday, May 14th, 2020, on St. Matthias' Feast Day. Not much is known about St. Matthias, but he embodies the joys and sorrows of life. His ministry was carried in out in obscurity and thus Matthias is a good role model for clergy as much of ministry is often carried out in obscurity. Yet, as clergy, we are privileged to hear people's stories, and

in such a way and depth that often their families are not privy to. Secondly, we are invited to journey with them in times of sorrow and joy.

Part of my job description is to officiate at baptisms, weddings and funerals. Before retirement I was also, as the incumbent, the chief liturgical leader of the parish, responsible for officiating and leading Sunday morning worship. All of that is "work" (and that is the correct word), for any kind of worship service is an

unfolding liturgy, (the Greek word *“leitourgia”* means “the work of the people”). True worship is the work of all the people. If, when a person who is offering their worship, finds it boring, they aren’t “working” hard enough.

Shortly after ordination (less than 24 hours after ordination) I discovered that being “a priest” was 24/7. It didn’t matter where I was, Tim Hortons, Luna Pizza, at the hospital, or just walking along the street, or even when out running with the CCR club, people would engage me in “deep” conversations. These conversations were, as pastoral counselling describes it, at a level beyond “talking weather.” It is my practice not to specifically start a conversation about “religion” however, I am more than happy to engage if or when the topic was brought up. Even in retirement the “beyond the weather” conversations continue. I call it a level six conversation, number one being about the weather.

Now I tell you all this as it brings us to Tom. I don’t remember the date, or even what year it was, however the conversion came to mind when Tom had his brush with death a year ago. We were running together as Tom wasn’t feeling so good. As we ran along he told me how he was beginning to have these “funny palpitations” every once in a while. Tom told me his father had died in 1994. Tom was, as you can imagine, very concerned. Listening to Tom I recalled the Jim Fixx story. He was the go-to-running author of the 70’s who wrote the best selling book, *The Complete Book of Running*. Jim Fixx died while out for a run. He was 53 years old. His father died at age 43. I remember reading at the time an article, “It’s hard to outrun genetics.”

I well remember how, at the time, the papers and running magazines carried all kinds of articles on the “dangers of running.” I was in my “qualify for Boston era” when Jim Fixx died, and many close non-running friends had heard about Fixx’s death and sought to warn me about my “addictive” running. I was running in excess of 70 miles a week at the time as my Jim Fixx 1984 runner’s log will attest.

As we ran along and talked I told Tom that one of the driving forces behind my running was my own father’s death from cancer at age 53, and his death was the reason I gave up smoking and took up running seriously, adding how I had looked forward to the day when I surpassed my father’s age. When I did reach 53 I realized just how young my father was when he died.

There you have it. Existential anxiety! In my 25 years as a priest that has been a common denominator. Pastoral Care professor Howard Clinebell calls it “the ticking clock.” Clinebell, quoting theologian Martin Heidegger, makes the observation that our knowing that we must die is the background music that plays faintly in the distance all during our lives. As Heidegger says, “At times we may blot it out, but

there are other times when it swells in volume and tempo, and we cannot be unaware of it.”

Tom’s untimely death is one of those times when it “swells in volume and tempo and we cannot be unaware of it.” In this memorial issue of Footnotes, you have already read several deeply personal and heartfelt eulogies that speak of a deep and lasting relationship with Tom, both as a runner and as a friend. (I have included Tom’s obituary in this issue as it speaks far louder than anything any of us might wish to say.)

When someone dies suddenly, as Tom did while out for a run, the shock is beyond description. As a hospital and police chaplain I have witnessed the aftermath, felt the fear, and watched helplessly as families struggled to deal with the grief, the sudden emptiness, and the existential anxiety of adapting to a new normal.

As the ad for Farmer’s insurance declared, “We have learned a thing or two because we have seen a thing or two,” so pastoral ministry has taught me a thing or two which I call “life lessons” especially around bereavement, grief and sorrow.

The hardest thing for the bereaved to deal with is that the people they might expect to “be there for them” often aren’t. The reason is simple they too are grieving. Often, those we might least expect to be there are the ones who actually are there for us. I don’t fully understand it myself but in my experience in ministry it’s a rule of thumb. I have had people tell me on many occasions of being in the grocery store and seeing “a friend or neighbour” quickly dart down another aisle to avoid having to speak to them, thus adding to their pain and confusion.

In this time of Covid19, grieving is made even more complicated because the family can’t gather with friends, neighbours, and co-workers thus they can’t “hear, see, feel or celebrate” what their loved one’s life meant to the community.

At any time, but especially at this pandemic time, a card, a phone call, or even an e-mail can make the difference in a grieving person’s day, and especially saying the loved one’s name. I call it practising a presence. Simply letting the grieving person know that you are thinking of them and care about them. I have learned from grieving spouses that a card is probably the best way of practising a presence, as people will often tell me that the card came in the mail on the day it was most needed.

Finally, I would add that this special memorial issue of Footnotes, and the heartfelt memories shared of the friendship many of us had with Tom, will help us all deal with the shock and suddenness of Tom’s death. For me it is Tom’s smile that stands out, he had a permanent smile that spoke of an easy going kind of friendly guy.

I have reread Tom's obituary many times and there is one part that stands out for me when Tom's wife Charlotte wrote: "Together almost 40 years, we enjoyed a life of great adventures both travelling and at home. A favourite memory will be our sunset kayaks, with our celebratory cheer of "Life is good!" before we paddled home. In our house, the music always played, and we were never too busy for a dance in the kitchen. "Once there was a tune in my heart; then I met you, and for the first time, I heard the words." was penned on our wedding vow cards, we never forgot that."

That is the main thing I have learned in pastoral ministry. Life is very fragile, and at the end of the day, the only thing we are left with are our memories. It's important to make those memories "good" memories for it is those memories that fill the rooms of our minds, mends our broken-hearts, and are balm for the grieving soul.



RUNBERS

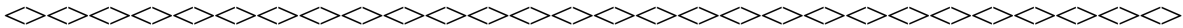
in memory of Tom Reddon.



You're reading "Runbers", a collection of numbers related to running. Issue #8: 564.3614

Tom Reddon meticulously measured dozens and dozens of race courses over many, many years. Athletics Canada lists 30 certified distances under Tom's name, including 300m, mile, 5kms, 10kms, half-marathon and marathon.

The total of these is a whopping 564.3614 kms. This is the equivalent of measuring every metre of the highway from Fredericton, NB to Liverpool, NS. Tom's legacy will live on for many years, as his most recent course certification will not expire until December 31, 2028.



~ A Jog Down Memory Lane ~



A Jog Memory Lane



Hanging out at the LBR gym just before the 2013 Metric Marathon.



FULTON FIVE K - 2014

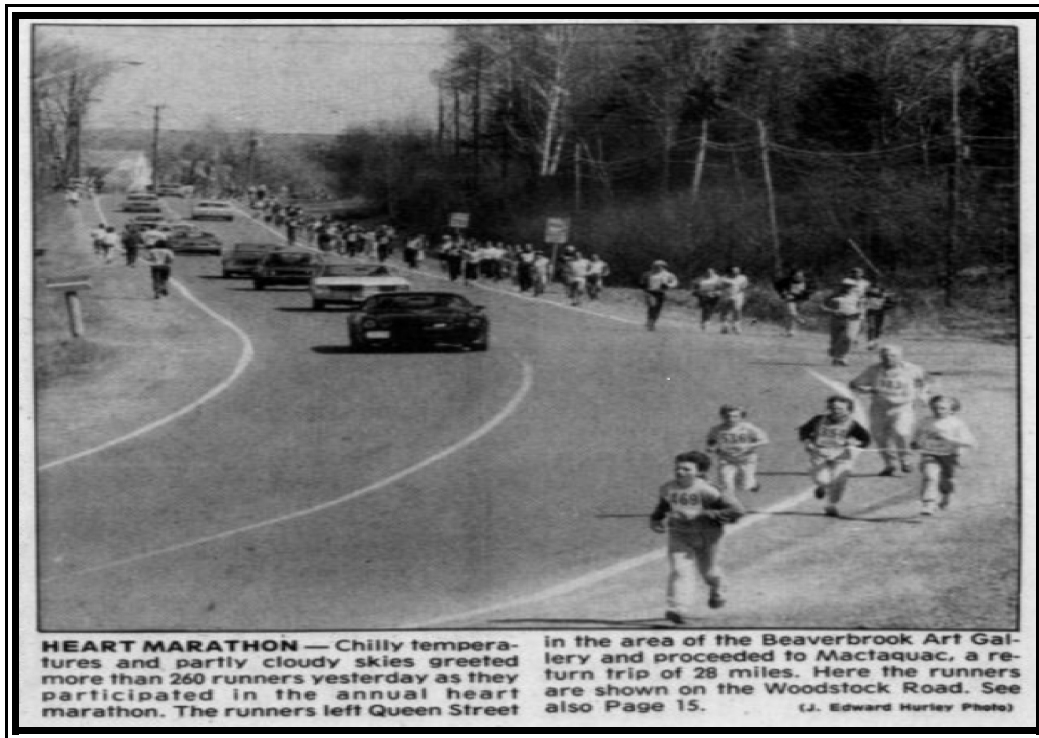
I think Tom was probably late for the photo!



What a great turn out on this lovely spring morning, keep it up! — with Gabriela Tymowski, Dragan Veselinovic, Jeff Rutters, Susan Belliveau, Pam Shanks, Corena Walby, Richard Stairs, Carey Deschamps Richard, Elaine Bell, Kevin Richard, Krista Murphy, Amanda Hickey, Noortje Kunnen, Fran Robinson, Danielle LeBlanc, Julie Beaulieu Mason, Elizabeth McEwen, Ann Flynn, Harry Drost, Paul Lavoie, Leesa Russon, Mike McKendy, Elizabeth Richard, Leslie Connolly, Julie Grant and Michael-Rhoda Flynn.

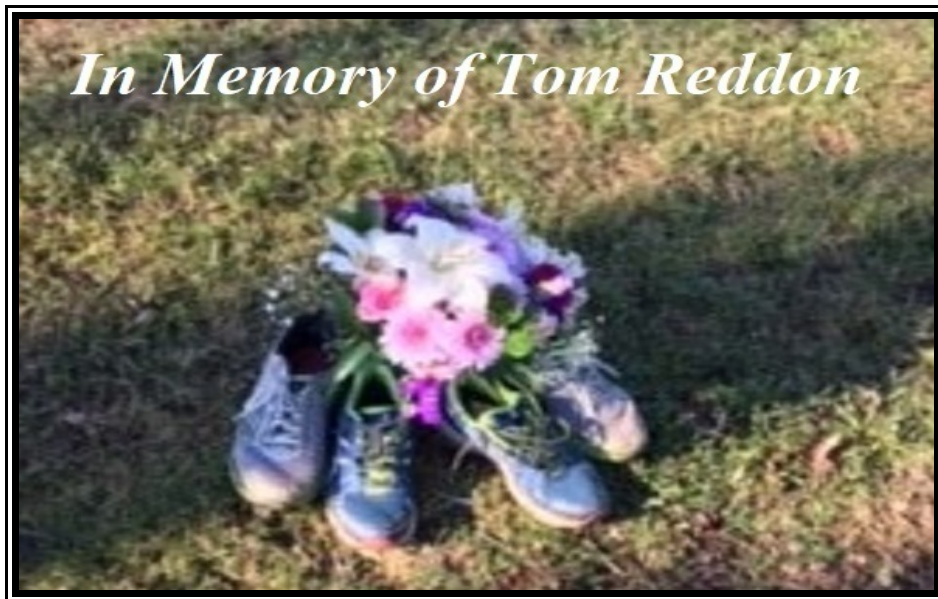
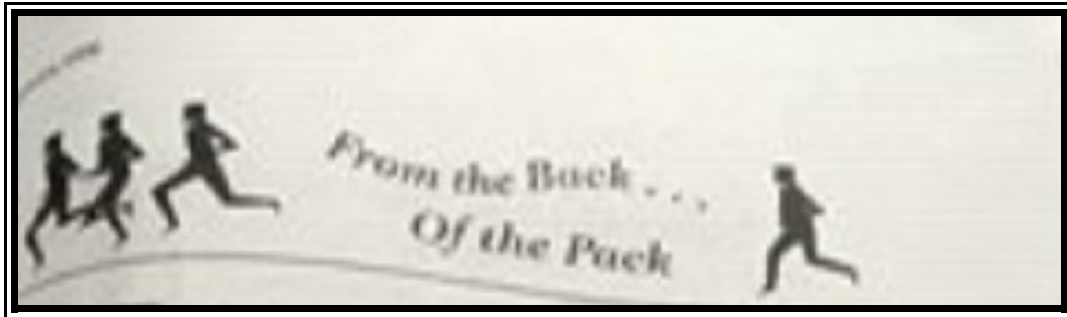
Saturday Club Run - 2014

A Jog Down Memory Lane



If you have favourite "old" photos please send them along.

Cathcartjohn@hotmail.com



This is the spot where Tom stopped his watch and passed away.
It was in front of the York Manor. The flowers and Tom's running shoes were
put there by the family Reddon, I added mine as a tribute to a very good friend.

Harry Drost.



Rest in peace Tom.

