

Terry Ferguson 1942 – 2011

by Mark Coady



On January 1st of this year we lost a valued long-time member of the Ontario DX Association and I lost my best friend in the hobby, Terry Ferguson. The minister at Terry's memorial service said it well. The significance of a person's life is not found in the years of 1942 or 2011 but in the dash between those years. It is here where a person's life is measured and Terry's dash was certainly jam-packed with a life of love, fun, and hospitality. No matter what he felt inside, or was going through, there was always a smile on his face, a joke on his lips for everyone, and a willingness to be the kind of friend that the good Lord intended everyone to be.

Except for a period in the 1960s Terry had a life-long passion for the radio hobby – a passion that extended to everyone he met – whether you were in the hobby or not. His hosting of twice-yearly DX weekends, at his Muskogan Motel from 1979 to 1997, can truly be called legendary as, with the passage of time, the memories of each one seem to get blended together.

I first met Terry in November of 1981 at my first Gravenhurst DX weekend. While stopped for a coffee break enroute to Gravenhurst, Harold Sellers warned me that Terry suffered from Tourette Syndrome and would likely drop the "F" word into conversation without realizing it. "Sounds like my kind of a guy." I remember telling Harold.

Terry and I immediately hit it off and we became fast friends – a friendship that is still as strong today – despite his passing. We kept in fairly constant contact with occasional phone calls and regular e-mails. Quite often, when I was feeling a bit down, one of his jokes would suddenly pop into my inbox.

Since I also visited him on other occasions, I got to know his family quite well. I distinctly remember his daughter, Heather, bouncing on my knee at three years of age and her brother, Ken, showing off his latest break dancing moves on the floor of the motel office. Both are grown individuals today with Heather as tall as I am and Ken looking every bit like his father.

As well as listening to our radios, Terry's DX weekends were great for the camaraderie we all shared. There was plenty of laughter – sometimes to the point that our ribs were aching. Thanks to those weekends I got to meet a lot of great people in the ODXA as well as Terry – people who I count as friends still today – like Harold Sellers, Mike Csorbay, Paul Goliboski, Robert Ross, and the like.

And there was plenty of good food. Friday nights we were treated to Chef Terry's famous spaghetti with meat sauce. Saturday mornings there were breakfasts of steak and eggs next door at Dee's Diner. Saturday nights we usually had pizza from Rombo's – which amazingly, considering we haven't been around in over a decade, is still in business. Sometimes we went for Chinese food – especially when Terry's birthday was being celebrated. Robert Ross recently reminded me of the time the two of us drove to the local Chinese restaurant and picked up about \$200 worth of food and we ate it all!

Then there were the horse-trading sessions. It was a rare occasion that a DX weekend went by without Terry and I involved in buying, selling, or trading receivers and/or accessories. I still have a Drake SPR-4 from one of those sessions and will never part with it as it is my own little piece of Terry that will stay with me.



A Drake SPR-4 that I acquired during on of our Muskokan Motel weekends. It is one piece of the great memories of my friendship with Terry that I will cherish forever.

Whether at his DX weekends, ODXA conventions, or at Ham fleamarkets, I have not met a Ham, DXer, or SWL who has an ill word to say about Terry. He became sort of like an Everyman in the hobby. Everybody loved him and loved being around him.

If you have ever been up and down Muskoka Road, Gravenhurst's main street, especially in winter, you will get the feeling that you are in Bedford Falls - the fictional town depicted in the Christmas classic "It's a Wonderful Life". Sleep well, my friend. I honestly say that we, and Gravenhurst, have lost its own George Bailey.