



## Bill Forster

September 20, 2023

Bill Forster, Daddio, Uncle Bill, Bill Baby - that's his name, don't wear it out. Goofy, generous, handy, stubborn, and thoughtful. Unique would be an understatement - if you know you know.

Our friend told us that in dad's last days he said "No one ever really dies because someone can be so alive in a dream." This makes it clear that he was in no way ready to leave. Luckily, he will never really be gone, and yes, we have dreams, but we also have all the walls around the neighbourhood that are still patched and painted, all the plumbing that still flows because he fixed it, the lights that still shine because he did the electrical work, and the floors we still walk on that he installed. He lives in every inch of Riverdale, he was the ultimate doer. He literally did it all, including driving planes, trains, and automobiles.

Not only did he fix and do, he also created. He was confident in what he said about dreams because "you may say he's a dreamer."

Although he worked hard and was dedicated to the railroad for a large portion of his life, after 30 years he realized his dreams were bigger and it was time for a track change. He was more than just a trainman confined to a set of tracks. From there, he built a house from the foundation up, started a business, invented, volunteered, travelled, wrote songs, and caregave to

loved ones. He became an integral part of Riverdale, fighting injustices in the neighbourhood by raising money with Riverdale Share, helping those in need through Out of the Cold, and we could never forget the great parking petition of Jackman Avenue.

Not only was he a great supporter of the community, but he was also his family's biggest and proudest fan. His passion for life lives in us. He wanted us to always find good and beauty in the world, whether it was through music, dance, sports, play, art, science, you name it, he encouraged us to learn, no matter how much we resisted. This is because he was an artistic spirit himself, and wrote beautiful poetry and music. Although it was not often shared with us, it is what brought him to his "beautiful bride" over 30 years ago. Music was always playing in our home, whether it was The Beatles blaring through the surround-sound, Dad accompanying whatever we had on TV with one of his guitars, or the beating of his drums coming up from the basement.

Regarding dad's passions, hockey was always a focal point in the house. Our earliest memories being of him teaching us to skate on the rink he built in the backyard before we could walk, carbing up to play on Merv with his buddies, and skating us around the ice after the game. Once dad stopped playing hockey, he still had the Leafs - not much consolation there.

Although he was great at many things, he never quite mastered the art of the grill. Whether the steak was totally blue or burnt to a crisp, it was always "just how he liked it". This philosophy extended to the corn he cooked that was still raw, and the peaches he picked off our tree that were crunchy and sour. However, he did make some mean hot dogs, cheese omelettes, and popcorn, never leaving a single lost solider behind (un-popped kernel). He had an adventurous palette for food and also for travel. This quality took him and his beautiful bride to places in Europe, and more recently to Southeast Asia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Nova Scotia, and Vancouver. At home or abroad, Dad

always found ways to bring family and friends together to share laughs, adventures, long-winded, detailed stories, and of course, many-a-drink along the way!

“You’ll ride so high  
On that railway in the sky  
The silver rails will lead you home  
To a place that’s warm and dry  
There’ll be no more tomorrows  
When finally comes today  
The switch is lined  
The signals clear  
You’re on this road to stay  
The switch is lined  
The signals clear  
You’re on this road to stay”

- Bill Forster

There will be a celebration of life for Bill in his favourite season, Spring, as the blossoms return beauty to the world after a cold, dark winter. Please leave a message if you would like to join us. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Riverdale Share or a charity of your choice. <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/m/54398?v2=true>

# Tribute Wall

EK

“ On behalf of Danny Grossman, who passed away on July 29, 2023, I wish to send my condolences to Bill's family. Danny admired Bill and always had a good word to say about him. In the days and weeks before Danny passed away, he kept in touch with Bill about his cancer progress and the two shared many sweet memories. Love from above to all. (Eddie Kastrau)

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**Eddie Kastrau** - May 28, 2024 at 02:32 PM

LB

“ From coaching my boy's hockey team to volunteering for Riverdale Share, there was never a time that my family and friends could not rely on Bill to be support and help out. He was a wonderful friend and neighbourhood supporter and I will miss immensely. Love to Jo, Nickie and Sophie.

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**Liz Brule** - March 20, 2024 at 02:48 PM

CH

“ Josephine, Nicki, and Sophia, your words beautifully capture Bill's spirit and personality. Our visits to Toronto left us with fond memories of him. He was an all-around good guy, capable of finding common ground with virtually anyone, whether it was in building construction, arts and culture, politics, or kid stuff. Always engaging and a source of great fun, with just the right touch of mischievousness. He leaves behind a wonderful legacy in his family and friends and a lasting place in our thoughts and hearts. Christine, Richard & Ariel Heinicke

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**Christine Heinicke** - November 02, 2023 at 04:49 PM

IC

“ We are very sorry and sad to hear of the passing of Bill. I remember him at the games at Jackman as Nikki and Tara played. He was always so positive. We didn't know him well, but what we did know of him, we liked. The life stories you speak of in the beautiful obituary bring him to life in a fabulous way. We send our love to the three of you, Jo, Nicola, and Sophia. With much love, Barbara Reid & Ian Crysler.

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**ian Crysler** - October 02, 2023 at 05:19 PM

MB

“ The most beautiful tribute for such a special and adventurous man. He was one of a kind and will be deeply missed. Sending all my love to the whole family xo

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**Macauley Bullock** - October 02, 2023 at 11:43 AM

CL

“ Deepest condolences to Jo, Sophia and Nicki.

*Devoted husband and father, friend to many!*

*I will miss him and our euchre games.*

*Christine LeGrice & family*

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**Christine Legrice** - October 02, 2023 at 08:14 AM

DH

“ Jo, condolences to you and your family.

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**David Hill** - October 01, 2023 at 10:09 PM

CL

“ Dear Jo, Sophia and Nicki,

*Deepest condolences to you all.*

*I will miss Bill and our Euchre games.*

*He was a devoted husband, father, brother and friend. No doubt he would want you to continue moving forward so he could look down and smile at his girls wherever he maybe.*

*Sincerely.*

*Christine LeGrice*

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**Christine Legrice** - October 01, 2023 at 07:08 PM

RB

“ *Condolences to Jo, Nikki, Sophia and all that love Bill. I haven't seen him in quite a few years but as I write this , I can see him clearly with my mind's eyes. I am sad. He will be missed. Romi and Doran*

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**Romi Brooks** - October 01, 2023 at 10:27 AM

AK

“ *Condolences, sorry to hear about Bill's passing. A wonderful person to know.*

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**Anna Marie Kalcevich** - September 30, 2023 at 06:50 PM

DK

“ *My sincere condolences to you and your daughters Jo. I enjoyed seeing Bill every yr at Riverdale Share. Thinking you you 🙏*

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**Dale Kowcenuk** - September 29, 2023 at 10:47 PM

RD

“ Jo. As you know there are no words, other than he is free and out of any pain and with the stars. I wish you and your lovely Sophia and Nikki healing and hope, and please know Amanda and all our family are thinking of you, and look foreward to the spring. As for myself, you might say I'm blue. xo

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**Reid Dunlop** - September 29, 2023 at 06:51 PM

PO

“ Dear Jo, I'm so very sorry to hear this sad news. Bill was a real sweetheart and the two of you were such a wonderful couple. You and your girls are in my prayers. I would very much like to celebrate you guy in the spring. Take good Jo xoxo

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**Pat O'Neill** - September 29, 2023 at 04:49 PM



“ I am very sad to hear that Bill has passed. He was such a great person and hockey team mate. I'll never forget this overtime game winner for the championship. My condolences to Jo and Bill's family.

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**Emmett O'Reilly** - September 29, 2023 at 03:33 PM

CD

“ Our sincere condolences to Jo, the girls and all the Foster clan from Cam Ducharme and Janet Urquhart and family. We are thinking of you and are very sorry for your loss.

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**Cam Ducharme** - September 29, 2023 at 02:40 PM

MS

“ Dear Jo and the family. I'm so sorry to hear of Bills passing. His family went to the same church as we did and him and Dave sang in the choir with my brothers. In 1972 him and Dave lived in a townhouse with Steve Ambrose, myself, Joe Serednicki and our son. We loved his zany wit and vast knowledge of music. R.I.P. Bill.

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**Marilyn Anne Stevens** - September 29, 2023 at 01:44 PM



“ *Bill has been an instrumental part of our Riverdale Share gang for many, many years. I've been thinking lately about we've always taken him for granted. He's always been there when we needed something. We need somebody to get ice, call Bill. We need some help to get stuff to storage, call Bill. We need to pick up the signs, call Bill. The choir risers have to go back, call Bill. We need extra hands for load in, call Bill. We need wine, call Bill - actually he usually volunteered willingly for that job!*

*On a personal level, he's always been there for me too. My furnace isn't working, call Bill. I need to move a dresser from the basement, call Bill. A tree fell down in the yard, call Bill. I could go on and on.*

*Bill was such a loyal friend. If you were ripped off or slighted by someone, he would step in and try to fix it. And of course he was an even more dedicated husband and father. There was never any doubt that Jo, always referred to as 'my beautiful bride' and his girls, Nicola and Sophia, were the centre of his universe.*

*I was the friend at Sunnybrook visiting Bill when he talked about people living on in your dreams and I've thought about those words a lot since that Wednesday and it gives me great comfort. Our loved ones are just in a different dimension that we have access to whenever we want. We can't touch them but we can be with them there.*

*RIP Bill. You are greatly missed but I'm going to dream about you!*



**Susan Baker** - September 29, 2023 at 01:25 PM

KK

“ *Dear Forster Family:*

*I'm so sorry to hear of your beloved Bill's passing. I was friends with Bill, David and Anita over 40 years ago. Most recently Bill took me to visit David at Sunnybrook, and I am so grateful to him for this.*

*Decades ago I asked Bill to a party at A & M Records after the Juno Awards. In walks Alice Cooper, he spent hours hanging with us. When we decided to go to another record party, we got on the elevator at the same time as Alice (Vince). As we got out of the elevator, he asked where we were going. He then followed us to the other party, his entourage looking surprised, followed Alice, Bill and I in tow. Please notify me of his celebration of life. [kathrynkates@cogeco.ca](mailto:kathrynkates@cogeco.ca)*

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**Kathryn Kates** - September 29, 2023 at 01:11 PM

MB

*Dear Forster Family. Today my sister, Chrissy, informed me that Bill had died. We are both in shock. We've known Bill from the 1960s Downsview Collegiate and Madonna days.*

*Chrissy and I would like to attend Bill's celebration of life in the spring. Deepest condolences.*

*Margie (Quigley) Buttignol*

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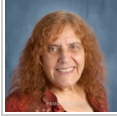
**Margie Buttignol** - September 29, 2023 at 05:24 PM

ST

*I loved Bill and I still do. He loved me!*

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**Steven** - September 30, 2023 at 03:11 PM



*I too go way back with Bill from Downsview Collegiate when sometimes we were in the same class, to York University where I would go to the house he shared with Steven and Dave where much merriment abounded with colours swirling in wax that was pounded to make beautiful candles. We also shared our mutual interest in poetry and the philosophy of yoga so I know he is now flowing free playing in the astral plane! Much love and care to Jo and their cherished daughters! Please do include me in the Celebration of Life for Bill next spring through facebook as Angel Devaki or email: [angel\\_c\\_d@hotmail.com](mailto:angel_c_d@hotmail.com)*

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**Angel Devaki** - September 30, 2023 at 07:26 PM

RB

*I did not know about the drumming.....or the Jackman Ave. parking petition--but i will always remember Bill as a man of action who looked after everyone before himself. He was resourceful, loving and interested in finding solutions for every situation that came his way! His loss will be difficult, especially for Jo, Nicki and Sophia--but where there is light there is hope. My heart goes out to you today, and we'll share the peace that comes in remembering such a kind soul. Im hoping that ill hear his melodious voice tonight, in my dreams.*

*Robin Burgess///burgessrobin@hotmail.com*

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**ROBIN BURGESS** - October 05, 2023 at 02:48 PM

LS

*Dear Jo. I was saddened to hear of your loss of Bill. We were children living on the same street and attending the same church, going to cubs and scouts, singing in the choir and attending choir school in Port Hope together with him and his brother David. We all attended the same schools but were never in the same classes as I remember. My heart goes out to you and your daughters. Please include me in the Celebration of Life next spring. RIP Bill.*

*Larry and Sue Stevens.*

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**Larry Stevens** - October 12, 2023 at 10:54 AM



*Forster family, I am so sorry to hear the sad news about Bill. I worked with Bill many trips with ViaRail over the years. He always had a big smile and liked to have a good time whatever train trip we were on. He will be missed. Dave Teggart.*

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**David Teggart** - October 23, 2023 at 03:59 PM