

Tom Rankin, a Brief Bio

My Birth Certificate says I was born in Armadale, West Lothian, Scotland, and named Thomas Rankin (no middle name). My grandfather was a Thomas as was one of my uncles. As a Scot, I was destined to get called Tam or Tammy, but on immigrating to Canada when I was nine, Tom was the name that stuck.

I survived public and high schools and did well enough to go to the University of Waterloo in its Co-op Engineering program. Engineering didn't quite do it for me, and after several years I squeaked through with a degree in Math and Physics; gained experience in journalism as editor of the student newspaper; followed after graduation with a stint working in the University's Information Services Department.

More importantly, Marian (whom I met in Grade 11) and I got married which led to three daughters, six grandchildren, and in August, this year, we will have squeaked through 59 years of marriage.

In October, 1968, I started working in London with the Youth and Recreation Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Education. My degree, information services experience and summer jobs during high school and university as a leader of community children and youth recreation programs was enough to be hired as a Consultant encouraging community recreation and community school activity in Southwestern Ontario. This work suited me.

Twenty-seven years later, I retired after working as a Consultant, Manager and Regional Director in Southwestern and Eastern Ontario through several Ministry name changes but always in community based development in recreation, culture and tourism.

The most useful post-career skills I learned was community leadership development which I applied in work I did with The Niagara Institute, the Canada Centre for Leadership Development and as a board member for various regional health organizations: in primary care for Rideau Community Health Services and the Smiths Falls Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic; in community care with the Community Care Access Centre for Lanark, Leeds and Grenville and the Ontario Association for Community Care Access Centres; and in health services coordination as a founding board member of the South East Local Health Integration Network.

That's a long list of capitalized words, but it represents a decade plus of activity which had its frustrations but satisfactions. I was drawn to Health Care being challenged by an acquaintance 'to look after my future' and by interest in my daughters' careers since all of them took post graduate studies at McMaster University's Health Care School. Well, that challenge to look after my future is also what brings me to participate with the REAL board. There is nothing more important now than the Environment, and efforts like those undertaken by REAL deserve our attention.

So whether you call me Thomas, Tom or Tam I hope you will see me as a person doing his best with some skills and experiences that could be useful.