

Hello dear friends...

When Brian asked me to sign his passport application in May, we tried to figure out how long we had known each other. We conservatively estimated 8, but it was probably closer to 10 years.

Brian joined the McGill Outing Club in the early 1990's. That's where we met. In the beginning, we referred to him as Brian F. because we couldn't remember or pronounce his last name. He would be around for the summers, but we wouldn't see him during the winter until a few years ago when he took up skiing.

At the weekly Wednesday night meetings he would greet us with a smile and a playful, exaggerated slow motion martial arts punch to the shoulder. In the early days, Brian would occasionally be late for the trip meeting time. He'd show up and say, "Sorry to keep you waiting, guys" then flash that amazing grin and launch into an amusing, detailed explanation. I just couldn't stay mad long.

This spring, Brian joined the trip to the Gunks at the last minute. In the middle of a climb, he turned to me and said, "Thanks for letting me tag along". But Brian never just tagged along. He was always very much present with enthusiasm, determination and charm. He was very much involved in the group activity and often the center of focus. And he was always willing to try something new. On a hiking trip, two beautiful European women decided to spontaneously take a swim. Brian, hesitated for just a moment, then took off his t-shirt and said "Oh, what the heck!" And he was very earnest in his attempts at singing, insisting on doing all the verses of Swing Low, Sweet Chariot. He decided to try cross-country skiing and was initiated on a five-day tour of Parc des Grands Jardins. Just having learnt to telemark, and despite extremely cold temperatures of -30, his goal one weekend was to do all the ski runs at Le Massif.

He organized and participated in dozens of MOC trips over the years. Many people took their first trip with Brian. Climbing at Seneca and Grand Morne, hiking the Whites, canoeing the 1000 Islands. He introduced us to the idea of scrambling with his classic trips up the Trap Dike and Gothic and discovered hiking the beautiful, secluded

Santanoni trail. And just this morning, he inspired a tennis tournament.

Brian had an amazing ability to amuse us with epic adventure tails, complete with flamboyant hand gestures. And those awesome trip reports like “Bon Echo the Luxury Edition”. Even if you weren’t on the trip, you’d look forward to hearing about them in Brian’s unique style, and witty sense of humor.

Most of my time with Brian was spent climbing. And though I loved his energy and his stories, some of the best times we spent together were in silence, sitting on a belay ledge in the Gunks, listening to the gentle clanking of climbing gear and whispers of conversations of climbers nearby, watching the hawks soar overhead, looking at the beautiful puffy white clouds in the big blue sky and enjoying the spectacular view. What a feeling of peace and a sense of awe. Doing what I love to do in a spectacular place. Sharing it with a friend who I respected, admired, trusted and who made me laugh made it so much better.

Brian would pose for pictures at the top of mountains, standing tall and pointing up to the sky. It became his trademark and we would tease and encourage him to do his classic pose. Maybe he knew that there’s where he was to be... the top of Kilimanjaro and beyond. It’s so much sooner that we would have wished. It’s hard to understand why and even harder to accept.

On behalf of hundreds of MOCers throughout the years,

We miss you, dear Brian.

We thank you for all the wonderful times together.

And we are so very, very grateful that we had the chance to call you our friend.