

Bob Brine Bio

(1961-1964)

I have been truly blessed on this strange road of life, and Saint Mary's College was a serendipitous detour that changed my life substantially!

I was a shy kid with 3 sisters in a single mother family in suburban London, just finishing grade 10 at a large Catholic high school, about 4 foot 11 and 74 pounds. My mother wasn't pleased with the education I was getting in the public system, so she arranged for me to go to Saint Mary's. Becoming a priest probably wasn't foremost in her mind or mine at the time.

The College was a great place to live and learn! The society, the music, and the sports had a profound effect on the rest of my life! Everyone seemed so friendly, and having special friends like Jack Madigan, Ken O'Hagan, Red O'Reilly, John Clark, Bryan Hurrele, Bernie Thorpe, Rick Boulianne, and others was so crucial for this timid, fatherless, insecure 16-year old. The priests and brothers were excellent, and Fathers Scanlan and Callaghan lived up to their "socius" status. The access to most sports in a school of 100 instead of 1000 allowed me to actually participate and improve. That eventually led to a very successful and fulfilling competitive slo-pitch career in southwestern Ontario for 25 years, and much enjoyment from golf, hockey, tennis, squash, and curling. My life also changed dramatically when Doug McCarthy pushed this fairly non-musical kid into taking over the tenor sax before he graduated. Little did he and Conductor Scanlan guess that those initial squawks would lead me later to create and play in several "teen" bands, including a 10-piece R&B group that opened for some top-name recording artists in London from 1967-71 before I converted to the bass guitar in a bar band for a few more years.

After Preliminary Arts, I realized that my interest in the fairer gender was a bit more than passing," so I left Brockville to attend the University of Western Ontario in London. With my 3-year degree, I was accepted to Queen's law school in Kingston, but fate intervened once more. I took a teaching position with the brand new community college system at Fanshawe, in the adult education program for the summer. However, I enjoyed it so much and I wasn't very committed to a law career and they made me an offer I couldn't refuse, so here I am after 35 years of teaching and 15 years as department head at the St. Thomas Fanshawe Campus. In that time, I married Debbie, a nurse turned social worker, and had a daughter, Meggan, who is now 20 and attending pre-med at Queen's. At the age of 56, I'm close to retiring, perhaps to my cottage on Lake Huron to work at lowering my golf handicap.