

Steven Ross Stapley in his 63rd year.

March 16, 1958 to July 28, 2020

Died peacefully, after a fierce and courageous battle with brain cancer, in his own home surrounded and supported by his loving family.

Best friend & loving husband of Carol Anne for 43 years. Extremely proud & supportive father of Scott & Erica, Bryce & Chantal, and Kelli. Super Proud “Peepa” of Lola, Dax, Jocelyn & Caysen Stapley all active members and activist for the great sport of Model T-ing

Steve was the owner/operator of Stapley Car Care & Towing, having bought his first tow truck at the young age of 17, while still in school. He followed in his father’s footsteps with his love of old cars. He became a very reputable & well-known Model T restorer world-wide. Steve sat on many boards including Model T Ford Club International. He served as president of the Ontario Region Model T Club & was instrumental in organizing the Neccesi T Model T Club for those in the Eastern part of Ontario. His goal was to keep everyone interested, but especially the kids. The love of the Model T led to numerous car tours for the entire family all over the United States and Canada. Winter time was all about snowmobiling & from 1991 the family spent weekends at the cabin. His love for the sport encouraged him to step-up & serve as the president of the Old Hastings Snow Riders for several years. He also served at the district level. Meanwhile, in 1990 he became a volunteer fireman for Campbellford Station. He remained a fireman for 27 years & was the assistant deputy chief when he retired in 2018. Through his constant hard work, dedication, powerful drive & commitment Steve had an extremely happy, rewarding & fulfilling life always being able to do things that he loved. Car tours, snowmobile trips, motorhome adventures in his custom rig, hunting, and spending time at the cabin are all passions that he cherished. He made friends wherever he went and the love & support they have extended during this difficult time is a testament to that.



Model T'ing with Dad

Dad's passion for Model T's developed at an early age. There had always been old T's around his father's shop growing up including two Model T's that were bought new by his great grandfather Frank Stapley. Dad's 1917 Touring and 1923 TT Truck have been Stapley members since new.



Figure 1 1917 Touring Bought New by Frank Stapley



Figure 2 Newest Generation of T'ers Jocelyn, Lola, Caysen and Dax in their great great great grandfathers 1917



Figure 3 1923 TT Purchased New by Frank Stapley Modern Pictures taken Circa 2014

Dad's Father, Sherwin had a 1911 touring since the mid-60s so it was only natural that he would acquire his own 1911 touring someday.



Figure 4 Sherwin Stapley's 1911 on Steve & Carol Anne's Wedding Day

In the 80's Dad's dreams came true as he purchased his own 1911 touring. A shocking discovery was determined when he went to register the vehicle. The VIN number was one number off from his father's 1911. Incredibly these cars came out of production simultaneously. One car had been purchased in Eastern Ontario and one from the West however fate somehow brought them back together. Dad quickly completed his restoration and had his 3 young boys and enthusiastic wife touring North America in his own 1911.



Figure 5 Steves Fresh 1911 wife Carol Anne, Scott, Kelli and Bryce in Rear. Circa 1989

Dad often chuckled as we would attend car tours when people would be looking for an older gentlemen that owned that beautiful midnight blue 1911. He was the young guy with the old car and 3 younger kids in the back seat. A very rare combination some 30 years ago. More recently he would chuckle that he's somehow become the old guy with the even older car.



In 1989 Dad tossed together a few parts for a Santa Clause Parade. It was meant to be temporary use of parts however it instantly became an integral part of the family. Henry the Jumping Model T was born and grew great fame and popularity in local parades and events. It jumps, hollers, whistlers and screams. It shoots out water from the rad and top post. The rubber chicken dances and jingle bells they all wiggle. For three decades now old Henry has brought smiles, tears and soaked clothing to children young and old.



Figure 6 Henry the Jumping Model T

At the young age of 35 Dad loaded up his family and headed west for the Tacoma Washington Tour from Campbellford Ontario Canada. This was a 21 day adventure of traveling West for the family of 5 in our Ford dually hauling 3 Model T's. One was our 1911 and 2 were customers to help make ends meet on this trip of a lifetime. Debbie and Larry Adams of Roseneath ON Canada helped make the trip possible switching out one of us kids every couple hundred miles. This was pre tablet or iPad days and the extra room or change of company certainly helped keep the peace between the kids. Getting to the tour destination is sometimes the craziest part of the adventures that kept us all so interested.



Figure 7 Jack Zimmer's 15 Headed West



Figure 8 Stapley's and Adams Headed West 1993

The years quickly slipped by and many miles piled on annually as the entire family was hooked. Dad's custom built Volvo Motorhome easily tows his T's and housed his family. Numerous cars were restored, serviced, sold and traded over the years. Dad learned at an early age it was okay to have a shiny car but you would certainly have more fun driving them. Anyone that knew Dad would agree he wasn't much for the show field days but first at the draw for the dirt backroads and occasional water washout.



Figure 9 circa 1996 International Tour



Figure 10 Little D-tour in his 12 Car



Figure 11 Model T Olympics



Figure 12 Yard Sale Treasures

As we grew up and became licensed drivers Dad was insistent on keeping us and the other youth engaged. We were each privileged to restore custom built speedsters with our Dad. Radical colours, fenderless bodies and loud exhaust pipes ravaged the tours and likely turned up the noses of some old school T purists. Never the less we were still touring as a family in the T's that we could afford. We've since each matured slightly and have our own touring cars also but the speedsters will always be a cherished pastime we built with our Dad.



Figure 13 Kelli, Bryce and Scotts Speedsters



The 2007 International Tour had us back in Clear Lake Iowa. A trip we had done previously in the 90's and had just as much fun a decade later. Dad was like our own pit crew chief and likely didn't get much of a holiday helping keep all four of our cars touring daily. Between the 4 T's and two double car trailers we experienced 21 flat tires from the start to finish of our week long extravaganza. After the 10th flat they became almost comical. Dad's bear paw sized hands and elevated blood pressure could rip the 30' smoothies right off the rims, tire irons not required. The car that received the bulk of these flats has since received a set of wire wheels. LOL Problem solved.



Figure 14 flat Tire. 1 of 21 that week

2009 presented yet another trip of a lifetime. Dad often joked that he lived more on most weekends than some do in an entire lifetime. The 2009 Ocean to Ocean reenactment was a farfetched dream financially however due to many local friend's families and business's supporting donations made this trip possible. Mom and Dad sported a bright Canadian Red 1915 roaster pickup complete with a giant maple leaf proudly representing Canada. His 1915 features an auxiliary transmission and oversized pistons. It's sassy and classy with just a hint of brass. She has enough extra horses to really haul some A\$\$.



Figure 15 1915 Cross County Car



Figure 16 Dads 1911 and 1915

In June of 2016 Dad decided he would like to take a different car to the Finger Lakes international Tour. He dug out some old 1912 sawed off touring car he had acquired from the corner of the barn and began to assemble his project. He had a little over 30 days but he worked best under pressure so he knew it would not be an issue. Still working fulltime, this project was completed on nights and weekends thus cutting the deadline even closer. Having completed his new project with 4 days to spare Dad thought to himself, why not drive the car from home instead of trailering it? A quick test drive around the block gave Dad the assurance it was ready for a few thousand miles and off they went. A show car it is not, however it seems to attract lots of attention wherever it goes. Dad's 1912 features Model A crank, 12 volt LED lighting system and fully equipped cell phone charger for long hauls. It certainly makes people give it a second glance as it tours by. It's truly a "go'er not a show'er" just the way Dad likes them.



Figure 17 Day One of build June 16 2016



Figure 18 Leaving for Tour July 14th 2016, Paint likely still wet

Dad lived, ate, slept, breathed T's and had no better feeling then resurrecting some old T Motor that had been found in a fence line or swamp somewhere. At the occasional glance or ponder you would swear Henry Ford himself was smirking at the project in question.



Figure 19 Carol Anne & Steve Stapley in 1917 Touring

Dad was headed to Colorado in April 2019 to collect another load of Western T treasures and visit with the Barth's when he got the devastating news of a Glioblastoma Multiform Brain Tumor. Quickly cutting his trip short and returning home Dad knew his parts were waiting and sent his 3 boys on to finish the journey. 3783 miles of shift driving got the job done in 5 days so Dad could see his treasures.



Figure 20 Mens Ride to Michigan 2019 for T parts

Dad bravely conquered his first tumor removal 2 weeks later and tested the limits every day. He looked at it as nothing more than a little dirt in his carburetor. A simple carb adjustment and rinse out the sentiment bowl and he'd be fine. Dad's determination and positive attitude had him back in action in no time. He worked full days in the shop right through his chemo and radiation appointments. He traveled, snowmobiled, T toured and lived 18 months to the fullest, smiling every day.



Much like the summer touring season all great things come to an end. Dad's tumor returned and unfortunately the second removal surgery did not have the positive outcome we were hoping for. We luckily had Dad out for one last ride in his 1911 two days before he passed. A sprinkle of rain had us headed home early when Dad spoke up from the back seat and said keep going further. "That's the best feeling ever, you can't beat some rain hitting your face when you're driving a Model T on a hot day" a somber moment of touring that we will cherish forever.



Figure 21 Steve's last T ride July 26 2020

At Dads request his remains have been placed in an old coil box that he picked out. It is not perfect or pristine like a Stynoski car winner rather dirty and dark, a real patina pleaser.



Figure 22 Remember me and Smile

Think of our Dad Steve the next time you start your ol' fliwer. Tour them in the rain, overuse your exhaust whistle every chance you get and drive them like they were made to be driven, but most of all think of Steve and Smile.



Steve Stapley
March 16, 1958 - July 28, 2020

*Dads Diagnostics Simplified in T terms
By: Kelli Stapley*

*His magneto had stopped charging and his battery became too weak,
His axles were worn and his spokes became real bleak.*

*His Carb was all cluttered and his fan belt, it was tore,
We knew his leather cushions had all become so sore.*

*His points were now burnt out, and his coils they stopped buzzing,
His paint job, it was cracked but wasn't worth the fussing.*

*He smiled and joked as his choke became quite stuck.
He laughed to himself, "Push me out of this muck!"*

*His spark rod was now missing and his head was running hot
His old Ford parts were slowing, the thought quite hurt a lot.*

*His crank was out of balance and his rad began to seep
His pistons all stopped moving, the hill was far too steep.*

*His timing seemed cut short and his bands were all so stripped,
One thing was for sure, this wasn't his last trip.*

*He coasted to the curb and his break let out a squeal
It was time to trade this old T in and think of ways to heal*

*He'll tour so much more with old Henry up in Heaven
I guarantee you, he'll be driving his Eleven.*