

# Greetings!

On Mon., **Aug. 20, 2018** at Lake Erie's **Port Stanley**, Ont., Canada, we cast adrift both this handful of beach and our message in a bottle.

**We are** a group of aging citizens who like to talk and write, and are



opinionated • changing society • nervous • happy • gaining too much weight • seekers (and a speaker, I'm that, too) • interested and interesting • 'people' persons • glad to be useful, even such as going out to water the plants • enjoying humour as part of our day • spiritual • social beings who value face-to-face • trying to be someone who speaks mindfully and if it comes out wrong, tries to correct it; unlike Twitter where the world's looking on, the damage is done, it's instant communication, 'Friends' are at the tip of your fingers.

We've enjoyed many of our own **good times on or by the water:**

at the cottage in Grand Bend, I taught my kids to swim (then we got them *proper* lessons) • made sand castles, buried each other in the sand • a beach reminds me of the spiritual, poetic book, 'Gift from the Sea', by Anne Morrow Lindbergh (wife of aviator, Charles) • collecting pebbles, shells • at our cottage on Lake Constance, northern Ontario, we had so much company, we were busy every weekend • my family lived on a Lake Huron beach, so it was just down stairs to the water every morning • on Lake Winnipeg, it was picnic all day, sunburn, and sand dunes • in Scotland, we had seaside resorts • at Port Stanley, I double-dated in a rowboat and listened to the Stork Club music from the lake; my friend and I were cursing the boys, we wanted to dance! • my uncle who lived with us would close his store and we'd go to a Doon beach near Kitchener; it was my job to keep the flies off him while he laid on the beach • for our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Mickey and I went to Hawaii with my sister and brother-in-law (Ray); Ray and I, adventurous types, went to hear a guy who wanted to sell us shares; it was a nice lunch, paid \$5 for a gold chain we never got and, when Mickey went to insist we get it, the salesman slammed the door but it was only a half-door, so he snuck in underneath and sure enough, we got the gold chain • when we got to the beach and wanted fried chicken we'd packed, we couldn't get the trunk open; my husband took out the back seat and our son was small enough to crawl in and retrieve lunch • at Falcon Lake, Manitoba, I'd forgotten the chicken cooling in the oven at home; wouldn't you know, we were trying to impress cousins from Europe, and what we ate I don't recall • in Holland, Dad took us for a walk over the dunes to see the North Sea; no matter where, I'm always impressed by the strength of water, the power it has, it reminds me of the Bible story of the flood; no matter what, water can do anything it wants to.

In the **hope you'll reply**, here are a few questions for you (as we said, we're seekers):

what did you feel when you found/read this letter? • where/when did you find it? • how old are you? • what's your favourite food? • are you single? (the lady enquiring is sorry she mustn't ask for your phone number, confessing *'I've got a plan'*) • married? family?

... /continued, over

We find we have **wisdom now** that we'd tell our younger selves, if we could, such as when it comes to **love**:

*tell* the people you love that you love them; in my day, we didn't; I can't recall if I ever told my mother how much I loved her, nor she me, but I felt her love • my mother in later years said *I love you*, but never when we were young; as she got older, she got more affectionate • society can make it a cheap word, as in *I love ice cream*, or *I love your brooch*; maybe *thank you's* better • even if it wasn't said, I felt love from my parents and in their actions; for instance, in the Prairies, the sky's wide open and when storms came, we kids had to go a half-mile to the pasture to bring the cows home, and Dad would stop what he was doing to rush and open the gate so we didn't touch its barb-wire in lightning.

and as for **hardship**:

you live through it • you better appreciate all you have • you can grow stronger • this too will pass • as a kid, I had hardship but didn't know it because everyone else was poor too, and luckily we had clothes and a hot meal • know that your Creator is with you • smarten up and don't worry so much; have faith in life, in people • everything worried me when I was a kid; I realize now it didn't actually help, and that I did my best anyway • when I had to move, I thought it was the worst thing, that I'd lose everything; instead, it opened up new adventures, and I gained and grew more than I could have imagined!



We've enclosed a handful of sand – **sands of time** – from this, our day at the beach, and our wish for you is that with each grain, you'll have times of

**happiness • laughter • good health • joy**  
**time for friends • wisdom • lack of worry • peace.**

We're curious to hear your thoughts so, if you will, please reply to:

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composed as a group by residents  
in story circle guided by Sandy Ross  
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