



Roland Lee Sardeson

November 12, 2016

Mineral Point - Roland Lee Sardeson, longtime resident of Mineral Point, born November 26, 1946, passed away November 12, 2016. These are his words: Since I have learned that obituary words are not cheap, I'd like to save my dough for charities. There will be a memorial party April 20, 2017, at Lind Pavilion, Mineral Point. I won't be there, but you'll have a good time. I refer you to my long obit on www.RolandSardeson.com and also to a Facebook page somebody set up.

Roland's words:

It is customary for one's obituary to be penned by a third party. Why is that? I wanna do my own. What could go wrong?

I was born in late November 1946 on the cusp of the baby boom in Dodgeville, Wisconsin. After some confusion over where I would live and with whom, I was placed with my maternal grandparents on an Edenic (in hindsight) dairy farm hard astride the Pecatonica River near Hollandale.

In addition to the Pecatonica, there was a big frog and turtle pond, an abandoned railroad right of way, sandstone bluffs crowned with white pines and century-old oaks and several Native American camp and tool making sites. These treasures, along with the cows, pigs, chickens, and a menagerie of plants and wild animals, made for an idyllic if somewhat sheltered

childhood.

Small dairies abounded at that time. Neighbors exchanged work, there were playmates, cousins, and quiet times. I was quite oblivious to the travails of the outside world. I hoped it would never end.

End it did. At 18 the world intruded upon the lives of many young men when our leaders, the smartest men in the room, the best and the brightest, decided we must save a small country in Southeast Asia from itself.

Not content to be drafted, I signed up willingly and joined the Marine Corps. You may ask why would anyone join the Marine Corps and especially during a war. Well, I don't know. Who knows anything at 19 years of age? I suppose patriotism had a part in it, adventure, also. See the world. Ignorance and naivete surely played a role. In any case my outlook on the world expanded and changed during those three years. All the stories good or bad one reads about Vietnam or any war are probably true to someone at some time. My tour was by turns boring, scary (if not terrifying), exciting, rewarding, devastating, exhilarating, life affirming, life threatening, and eye opening. When my turn came to go home I didn't need to be coaxed. I survived/thrived during it, and it was the seminal event in my life on which all other things are partially based.

Twenty-two years old, free of military encumbrance and discipline and glad to be home, I spent my time growing hair and being responsible and attending the University of Wisconsin at Platteville. After four years of rigorous study they awarded me a bachelor of arts degree. It did not, however, confirm on me any job skills. And here is where fate played such a profound role. A random pottery course taken to fulfill an art requirement led me to talk my way into a job in Mineral Point, Wisconsin, making pottery, and it has been my home for 43 years.

Natives like to say, "But you weren't born here." I reply, "No, I was not born here, but I got here as soon as I could." The pottery fling lasted a decade or so, but if you keep your eyes open you can still find my work at rummage sales and antique shops at a fraction of its original cost, and now that I'm gone, who knows what will happen?

Pottery making did not afford me the means to the style of life to which I wanted to become accustomed. And when no one was looking, I slipped over into the stone masonry business. Mineral Point is blessed with extant stone and limestone houses and commercial buildings, stone walls, and outlying farm buildings often in need of repair or rebuilding. So this is what I did for three decades. Now, again you may ask, isn't stone masonry a brutal, hard, and mind numbing trade which results in sore backs, smashed fingers, and a sour outlook on life and sometimes too much drink. Yes, for many, but not me. I found it a useful and honorable task which brought me much satisfaction. Gradually, though, the stones became heavier, due, I think, to increased gravitational pull as a result of global warming. Just a theory. The jury's still out on that.

Mineral Point has an opera house and the Opera House has a stage. This, too, was a central part of my time here. Community theatre provided an outlet for all the things I wished to be.

I would be remiss if I did not mention sky diving. At midlife I learned to skydive. It was an excitement akin to Vietnam, but more controllable and in small doses. I made 1860 jumps in all. They were all good, the best being when I jumped into the 4th of July band concert for 2 or 3 years.

If I have had any regrets of a lifetime lived, they would be

1) it seems our leaders, the smartest men in the room, continue to try and

improve the lives of people in other countries by attacking them with little or no forethought as to its necessity or consequences.

2) I would have liked to have been a senior fellow at a think tank.

3) I should have danced a lot more.

At this time obits usually list surviving relatives and friends, but they know who they are, so I'll forego that. There will be no funeral, just a private burial.

Space is limited so it should be a hot ticket.

Bruce, Shari, Sandy, Judy, and Mike said they would do a little memorial service later when things calm down. There will be the requisite photographs, pottery, and home baked pies from the Pointer

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Cafe. Attend if you like. The memorial date has been set for Thursday evening, April 20, 2017 at Shake Rag Alley's Lind Pavilion @ 6:30 pm

Well, this bio has gone on much too long, and I still have much to say, but let's end with the quote from that king in the Scottish play:

Life is but a walking shadow, a poor player who struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. That may be dark, but I like that whole thing. Semper fi.

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Tribute Wall



“ *Roland Lee Sardeson*

November 15, 2022 at 06:49 AM



“ *Roland Lee Sardeson*

Laura Bollerud Hojem - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM



“ *So very sorry to hear you are gone Roland. You will be missed as a friend and classmate, we enjoyed some good laughs back in HHS. I can only say goodbye for now and maybe we will meet again as I have heard the streets up there are guarded by Marines. So Go Panthers, Semper Fi and Bah Humbug.*

Dick Anderson - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM



“ *One of the joys of years of weekends in Mineral Point was Steven Fisher's and my friendship with Roland. In so many ways he personified all of the uniqueness and charm of Mineral Point, at the same time that he worked on his creative endeavors and supported the community. Every time a certain beautiful and sturdy salad bowl comes to the table, wonderful memories grace the meal.*

Richard Mariner - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM



“ *To a classmate and friend, many memories of the farm, pond, RR track, and the Pec river as I spent a lot of time at Laura's. Myrna Bollerud Severson*

Myrna Severson - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM

SP

“ So sorry to hear of Roland's passing. We grew up together and went to school in Hollandale for 11 years. Much time went by, but we did get the chance to meet again in Mineral Point when my wife had her book signing a couple of years ago. You were always smiling, had a good sense of humor and fun to be around. Rest in peace,...you certainly earned it. Heaven just accepted another wonderful person.

Sven Prestbroten - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM

MB

“ Rolli was so impressive in his part in the first play we saw after we moved here in 1988. He was always my favorite actor in all the plays at the Opera House. I never knew him personally, but loved his quirky humor.

Marie Baker - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM

GF

“ Thank you for joining me in a couple of great and memorable skydives this summer. I am going to try to find the videos so others can see your skydiving skills even after you have left us.

Gene Frakes - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM

CO

“ I loved him too

Colleen Ott - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM

SC

“ I stopped in Mineral Point two years ago on the way to Iowa to see my mother (who soon died). My son Drew was with me and we saw Rollie at his shop. We stood in the cold room talking for over an hour and it seemed just like it was just days before that we had seen each other. Actually I had moved to Fort Worth Texas in 1979 and hadn't seen him but once during all those years. After we left Drew said to me " you guys must have been really good friends. I think we were and probably everyone who knew him was too.

steve chojnowski - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM

SB

“ Attended his memorial last night. I was humbled by his grace, and I remain immensely proud to have known the man and have the chance to provide him with music for dancing on occasion.

Steve Brown - April 28, 2018 at 01:25 AM