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Plane Crash Survivor Reflects on Harrowing Accident 50 Years Later

Bill Kinnear spent five months at HSC after fly-in fishing trip went awry

Physical trauma; drowning; hypothermia; burning. On June 26, 1964, Bill Kinnear's life was nearly taken by all four.

Kinnear, 24 at the time, embarked on a fly-in fishing trip with two friends to Eden Lake, Ontario. Kinnear boarded the small aircraft, like he had done numerous times before, eager to spend the weekend camping and fishing with friends.

To say that the trip was doomed from the start is an understatement. The wilderness outfitter that supplied the trip didn't properly pack the plane with equipment, and what they did provide was in poor shape.

"Whoever used the tent prior to us didn't properly store their food; it was clear that a bear had slashed through the tent, and it wasn't repaired," recalls Kinnear. "We were in the wilderness, in bear country, without a rifle or proper supplies."

Making the best of the situation, Kinnear and his friends remained at the lake while the pilot went back for equipment. When the plane returned with, yet again, inadequate equipment, Kinnear and his friends demanded that they be flown back home.



Bill Kinnear with his scrapbook that documents his accident and recovery.

The pilot's inexperience—and fear of water despite flying a float plane—contributed significantly to the disaster. The pilot hadn't properly secured the cowling—a cover for the plane's engine to cool it and reduce drag—causing them to stop the take-off process, secure the cowling, and try again.

Finally, take-off was a success; however, shortly after gaining altitude, the pilot made a wide turn and hit a downdraft.

"I hit the dashboard on impact, knocking myself out. When I came to, we were sinking, and water was quickly rising around me. I couldn't undo my seatbelt, plus I was pinned down by the strut. I thought I was going to drown."

—Bill Kinnear

Kinnear remembers the plane dropping, being dangerously close to treetops, and catapulting towards rock and land before the pilot straightened out, enabling them to crash into the water. In the process,

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one of the plane's struts impaled Kinnear just above the knee, while another hit near his hip.

"I hit the dashboard on impact, knocking myself out," says Kinnear. "When I came to, we were sinking, and water was quickly rising around me. I couldn't undo my seatbelt, plus I was pinned down by the strut. I thought I was going to drown."

Without a second to spare, the plane twisted in the water, producing an air pocket, allowing Kinnear a moment of clarity and oxygen. He freed himself from the seatbelt and strut, making it to the surface and over to the detached floating airplane pontoons, where he was pulled onto them to join the other three men.

Kinnear's moment of relief disappeared as quickly as it arrived. "I began coughing up the reddest blood I'd ever seen." Kinnear would later learn that he was only using 11% of his lung capacity due to injury.

When everyone was ashore, the other men made a makeshift stretcher from sticks and the clothes off their backs to carry Kinnear, who was in and out of consciousness, to a more level spot above the shoreline.

The group survived the day and night—just barely—by eating bait minnows and drinking water from their shoes.

Other than feeling an endless line of carpenter ants feasting on his body, Kinnear remembers feeling extremely cold.

The men laid Kinnear as close to the fire as possible, laying rocks around him and placing large pine tree branches on him for insulation. Despite their good intentions, the branches on Kinnear's chest caught fire when a stray spark caught them.

They were rescued the next afternoon, and Kinnear was brought to HSC (then known as Winnipeg General Hospital). Upon arriving, Kinnear was met by a team of doctors, including a plastic surgeon, an orthopedic surgeon, and a thoracic doctor.

The next five months at HSC were far from easy, but Kinnear was—and still is—a fighter. During this time, Kinnear was intubated, put into a Thomas splint (a revolutionary treatment that worked so successfully that Kinnear was featured at an international orthopedic conference), was treated for gangrene, survived an embolism, had a skin graft, and more.

"I was told that at that point in time, no patient in the hospital had ever received as much penicillin as I had," says Kinnear.

Although it has been over 50 years since Kinnear recuperated at HSC, it is certain that those who worked there at the time remember him almost as well as he remembers those traumatic days.

"My nickname at the hospital was King Billy, and I often had beer stocked for health care staff to enjoy after their shift and a sports game on my TV so that other patients would wheel themselves to my room to watch," says Kinnear. "Many times at night, I ordered in food for staff to show my appreciation."



A page from Bill Kinnear's scrapbook. (Top L-R: the plane pre-crash, the plane post-crash. Bottom: recuperating at HSC.)

Kinnear, now in his 80s, lives a full, active life that resumed right after he was discharged from HSC in 1964. Kinnear boarded a plane within months of being discharged, received his accounting certification, played lacrosse a year later, and then joined a hockey team, the Winnipeg Steelers, with whom he continues to play. "Without a doubt, there is a history of excellence at HSC, and I am proud to be a part of that history," says Kinnear. Kinnear also acknowledges that without the care he received from his fishing pals, Grant Milne and Herb Burlock, after the crash—and the extensive hospital care by all of the HSC departments and staff—he would not be alive today.

Bill Kinnear, his fellow plane crash survivors, and HSC personnel are all heroes in this story. To be a hero in the lives of patients like Kinnear, please donate today at hscfoundation.mb.ca.

More than Fun and Games

Foundation funding helps recreation therapy patients live fuller lives

It's not as high-tech as some of the other equipment you might find at a hospital, but a Sony PlayStation can be an important part of the healing process. Especially during a pandemic.

HSC recreation therapist Taylor Owens tells the story of a recent spinal cord injury patient.

“Playing video games and connecting with others over the Internet was a big part of her life before and during the pandemic, but the injury affected the use of her hands,” says Owens, who has worked at HSC since 2016. “So, working with occupational therapists, we adapted the equipment so she could still play, and we were able to acquire a matching device for her home. Her life has changed because of this injury, but she can still connect with her friends. To me, this is an inspiring example of how recreation therapy helps people.”

“We’re giving people the opportunity to feel like themselves again as they cope with injury or illness.”

—Taylor Owens



An adapted PlayStation controller.

Owens helps patients who are recovering from physical injuries, amputations, and flare-ups of conditions like multiple sclerosis. As a recreation therapist, her job is to help people re-integrate into community life through hobbies and activities. A big part of that is getting people out and about to Goldeyes baseball games, visits to the Forks, museums, and other outings. Additionally, depending on the patient and the activity, recreation therapy can help recovering patients sharpen their coordination and fine



HSC recreation therapist Taylor Owens: “The support from the HSC Foundation and its donors helps us do our job better, and we are grateful.”

motor skills. Some pre-COVID funding from the HSC Foundation will help Owens continue to help patients recover and “bring joy back into their lives.”

“It sounds like I get to play for a living, but recreation therapy is about more than fun and games,” she says. “We’re helping people restore leisure into their lives, and leisure is freedom. We’re giving people the opportunity to feel like themselves again as they cope with injury or illness.”

Like all health care, recreation therapy is about giving people as much quality of life as possible. And, like all health care, raising the bar, innovating, and doing more for patients requires philanthropic support.

“Adapting video games, going to events, and helping patients achieve as much progress as possible takes funding,” says Owens. “The support from the HSC Foundation and its donors helps us do our job better, and we are grateful.”

Dufresne Family Makes Transformational Gift

Manitoba Urologic Centre campaign approaches goal

Thanks to the Dufresne family, the dream of a new Manitoba Urologic Centre at HSC is now several steps closer to reality. A million steps closer, to be precise.

Doug and Eva Dufresne, along with their children, Mark and Stephanie, Shaun and Lori, and Mike and Laurel, recently made a \$1 million gift to the project through the Dufresne Foundation.

“HSC has had a profound impact on our family and thousands of other families throughout Manitoba, Northwest Ontario, and the north,” says Dufresne Group CEO Mark Dufresne on behalf of his family. “It is our honour to support the HSC Foundation and contribute to this important advancement in urologic care.”

The Manitoba Urologic Centre will be developed in the former Women’s Hospital at 735 Notre Dame Avenue, with an expected completion date of autumn 2023. The goal of the Manitoba Urologic Centre is to provide timely, leading-edge care to patients requiring prostate, bladder, kidney, and other urologic procedures. The Centre will see up to 10,000 patients a year and remove many procedures from the hospital’s main operating rooms, thereby improving overall hospital efficiencies.

“The importance of this initiative cannot be overstated,” says HSC urologist Dr. Jeff Saranchuk. “Under current conditions, patients have to wait far too long for the care they need. The new centre will help us reduce wait times from up to one year to weeks which will improve patients’ recoveries and reduce the risk of complications. Additionally, thanks to donors like the Dufresne family, we will be able to acquire the latest equipment to perform minimally invasive procedures. We are very grateful that this project is moving forward.”

With roots in Kenora, The Dufresne Group has been recognized as one of Canada’s 50 Best Managed Companies for over 20 years. The enterprise includes Dufresne Furniture & Appliances and select Canadian Ashley HomeStores locations. Family members are deeply committed to philanthropy and have been supporting the HSC Foundation since 2009. Their charity, the Dufresne Foundation, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the communities in which it operates, with health care being one of its key values.



The Dufresne family.

“We are passionate about taking care of the people who live and work in our community. With the Manitoba Urologic Centre, Winnipeggers and rural patients can make fewer trips to HSC, have shorter hospital stays, and receive more timely care,” adds Mark Dufresne. “This project goes beyond urology. We believe in the vision for the future of HSC, and the key role this project will play in that plan, freeing up operating room time and resources. As donors, we all play a part in helping HSC become even more efficient and effective in delivering care to patients. I hope that other businesses and individuals will step forward and make a gift to help this campaign reach its goal.”

“The Dufresne family is one of the most respected families in Canadian business. Their impact in Manitoba and Northwest Ontario has been significant,” says Jonathon Lyon, President and CEO of the HSC Foundation. “We’re grateful for their tremendous generosity and that they have chosen to support the Manitoba Urologic Centre in this exceptional way.”

To make a gift to the HSC Foundation Manitoba Urologic Centre campaign, please call 204-515-5612 or visit <https://www.hscfoundation.mb.ca/support/ways-to-give/manitoba-urologic-centre/>

Grant Recipient Driven to Prevent Hearing Loss for Cancer Patients

HSC Foundation Awards Nearly \$400,000 to Research

Hearing “you have cancer” is a life-altering experience—but it is only the beginning. When undergoing treatment, patients are often faced with a litany of side effects, some of which are debilitating. Grant recipient and geneticist, Dr. Britt Drögemöller, is exploring why certain people experience hearing loss because of chemotherapy, whether their genes play a role in this devastating additional diagnosis, and what can be done to combat this adverse effect.

“This funding will help to get me started so that I can continue to do research, which will hopefully have a meaningful impact on patients’ lives.”

—Dr. Drögemöller

“Advances in cancer treatments over the last few decades have really improved survival rates for some cancers. One of the shortcomings now is that a lot of these cancer treatments have very toxic effects—a lot of them affect the nervous system. Specifically, what I’m looking at is hearing loss that is caused by a specific cancer treatment called cisplatin,” says Dr. Drögemöller. Dr. Drögemöller’s pilot study—“Harnessing genomic data to guide the development of personalized treatments to prevent the neurotoxic effects of chemotherapy”—aims to use genetic information to predict who is going to experience hearing loss and then use this information to try to guide the identification of additional treatments that can be used in combination with cancer therapies to reduce this adverse reaction.

“We know that genetics plays a very important role in why some people experience hearing loss when they get this treatment, but we don’t really know what genetic variants are contributing to this, so it is hard to predict and prevent,” says Dr. Drögemöller.

Dr. Drögemöller graduated with her PhD from Stellenbosch University in Stellenbosch, South Africa, in 2013, completed her post-doctoral fellowship at the University of British Columbia in 2020, and then moved to Winnipeg in April 2020 where she currently works as an Assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba in



Dr. Drögemöller’s pilot study aims to use genetic information to predict who is going to experience hearing loss during chemotherapy.

the Department of Biochemistry & Medical Genetics. “I would sincerely like to thank the HSC Foundation donors for providing these opportunities. Especially as an early career researcher, this is coming at a very important stage in my lab. This funding will help to get me started so that I can continue to do research, which will hopefully have a meaningful impact on patients’ lives,” says Dr. Drögemöller.

When possible, Dr. Drögemöller spends as much time as she can hiking, camping, and fishing with her husband Dr. Galen Wright, another HSC Foundation General Operating Grants recipient.

Congratulations to Dr. Drögemöller and her fellow 2021 grant recipients. To learn more about this year’s grant recipients, please visit <https://www.hscfoundation.mb.ca/about/grants/2021-grant-recipients/>. To help our researchers raise the bar in health care excellence, please donate to our Innovation HSC annual campaign at [hscfoundation.mb.ca](https://www.hscfoundation.mb.ca) or call the Foundation at 204-515-5612.

Feeding Workers; Lifting Spirits

Princess Auto Foundation supports COVID-19 fund again. And then again.

When the HSC Foundation launched its COVID-19 Crisis Response Fund in the spring of 2020, the Princess Auto Foundation was one of the first donors to step forward with a major gift to support Health Sciences Centre in the battle against the pandemic.

In November 2020, as the pandemic intensified in Manitoba, the Princess Auto Foundation stepped forward again with a second major gift, this time earmarked for the Feeding the Frontlines initiative providing meals to health care workers at HSC. In May 2021, as the third wave tightened its grip, the Princess Auto Foundation once again upped their commitment to Feeding the Frontlines.

“The morale lift was huge,” says Evelyn Casey, Manager, Volunteer Services and Spiritual Health Services at HSC. “I think everyone here was floored when the meals kept coming. We didn’t have the same access to food services here during the pandemic, so people were very excited and very grateful when the meals came in.”

Casey, whose department was responsible for distributing the meals throughout the hospital, is also pleased that the Princess Auto Foundation gift supported the local restaurant industry at a challenging time for businesses and their employees. Meals were purchased from Salisbury House, WOW Catering,

Trans Canada Brewing Company, and Fionn MacCool’s. When the program concluded in June 2021, the Princess Auto Foundation had purchased roughly 20,000 meals for Feeding the Frontlines.

“When COVID-19 first hit, we knew that we wanted to provide rapid response funding to support frontline health care workers in the community,” says David Shnider, Director of the Princess Auto Foundation. “We had to pivot and change our model very quickly. Our foundation primarily supports trade school students in our 19 partner colleges across the country. Everyone has had to pivot, especially people who work in health care.”

The genesis of the Princess Auto Foundation’s support of the HSC Foundation came from Bob Tallman, Chairman of the Board of Princess Auto, a Winnipeg-based tool and equipment enterprise. The company, says Shnider, was keenly aware from the outset that health care and local businesses needed support.

“The Princess Auto Foundation saw a need and they acted quickly to make a difference for frontline health care workers, for the patients in their care, and for local businesses,” says Jonathon Lyon, President & CEO of the HSC Foundation. “Their early and consistent support has inspired others to contribute and make a difference. We are very grateful.”



Thanks so much for thinking of Diagnostic Imaging. The lunch was very much appreciated. It was delicious!

Lauren Gregg
Manager of Adult Radiology |
Mammography | MRI, Diagnostic
Services | HSC Winnipeg,
Shared Health



Thank you for your acknowledgement; did want to send a big thank you on behalf of the entire social work department here at HSC. We appreciate very much the lunch we were treated to yesterday by the HSC Foundation and the Princess Auto Foundation. It was most appreciated and gave us all something to look forward to. It was delicious and enjoyed by all!

Lisa Manning, BA, BSW, MSW, RSW
Social Work Manager – Women’s and Children’s Hospital | HSC Winnipeg,
Shared Health



Thank you!

Karen Malenchak, MHM, BMR PT

Manager of Area One | HSC COVID-19, Manager of Rehab Physiotherapy, PAR Health Services, and Spine Assessment Clinic | HSC Winnipeg, Shared Health



On behalf of the Staff, Physicians & Residents in PsychHealth—I am passing along a big thank you to the Princess Auto Foundation and the HSC Foundation for providing the fantastic meals today! And a thank you to you and your team for the great delivery service! Our tummies are happy and warm!

Stephen Diakow, M.Sc., CAT(C)

Acting Director of Health Services – Mental Health | HSC Winnipeg, Shared Health

On behalf of our clinical health psychology team at HSC, I wanted to reach out and thank you for the support through lunch yesterday. Many of our group were able to take a few moments and savour a hot and tasty lasagna meal. As clinical psychologists we are seeing the huge impact of the pandemic on health care staff and in the community. The challenges of high demands at work and family needs at home have been stressful for many. I know our group felt very cared for through the offer of lunch. Thank you for your generosity and thoughtfulness. It provides encouragement as we navigate through this pandemic together.

Dr. Lesley Graff C.Psych.

Medical Director, WRHA Clinical Health Psychology Program, Provincial Specialty Lead, Clinical Health Psychology | Shared Health



GH5 wanted to say thanks to the Princess Auto Foundation and the HSC Foundation for all the delicious meals.

Laura Hildebrand

Interim Manager of Patient Care, GH5 Burns, Plastic Surgery, ENT, RR4 Plastic Surgery Clinic, HSC Winnipeg



Manager of Volunteer Services and Spiritual Health Services, Evelyn Casey (back row, far left), and her team from Volunteer Services who were instrumental in delivering the meals.



We express our sincere thanks to the HSC's Volunteer Services, the Princess Auto Foundation, and HSC Foundation for the generous meal provided to our department today.

Clinical Engineering Team



Delicious. Thank you!

Lisa Anthony

Director of Surgical Services, OR/MDR, Surgery Program | HSC Winnipeg, Shared Health

Not everyone sees what the Princess Auto Foundation and the HSC Foundation are doing with Feeding the Frontlines, but it is really boosting morale.

Dr. Duane Funk

Paying it Forward Pays Off

One ticket; immeasurable impact

Whoever said money can't buy happiness never met Faruq Musa*.

In 2020, Nigerian-born Musa celebrated his third year in Canada by receiving a cheque for \$668,690—the HSC Millionaire Lottery's largest 50/50 prize ever!

"I was at work when I received the news—I was so ecstatic. That call was life-changing," says Musa.

Musa isn't an avid lottery ticket buyer; rather, he was looking for a way to give back to Health Sciences Centre, the hospital that provided excellent prenatal care to his wife.

"Many who immigrate to Canada come from countries where they must pay for everything—including health care. I see this purchase as a way to give back and express gratitude," says Musa.

Musa, his wife, and their one-and-a-half-year-old son are thrilled to be able to move out of their apartment and into a new custom-built home; give back to charities, loved ones, and their church; and put Musa's Master of Finance degree to good use by saving and investing the remaining money.



Supporters of the HSC Millionaire Lottery have the chance to win big and give back.

"My perspective has changed, and I see life from a new angle now. If you have the means, I encourage you to give back," says Musa.

To learn more about the HSC Millionaire Lottery, please visit HSCMillionaire.com.

**Name changed at winner's request.*



Innovation HSC

2021-2022

An annual campaign for health care excellence.
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