

# Terry Fox — He had a dream as big as our country

By Jon Hurst  
Special to The IFP

On Sunday, Sept. 20, the 35th annual Terry Fox run will take place at two sites in Halton Hills, as well as in communities across Canada and around the world.

The Georgetown event takes place at the Gellert Centre, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., while the run in Acton takes place at the Acton High School track, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Over the past 34 years, the run sites in Acton and Georgetown have raised more than \$1,122,000 for cancer research, as well as championing Terry's legacy of hope and courage.

It is amazing to think that 35 years have passed since Terry Fox inspired the nation with his Marathon of Hope. I still vividly remember seeing him one early morning in July. It was before 5 a.m., still dark and quiet, Terry's favourite

time of the day, and a small crowd had gathered at a remote intersection south of Barrie on Hwy. 11. We all silently stared down the highway with great anticipation, and finally the flashing lights of the OPP cruiser following Terry were visible. The car and Terry were hidden behind a slight incline in the road, but soon we could hear the thumping of his footsteps. Then suddenly, out of the darkness he emerged, his silhouette outlined by the headlights of the cruiser. It was an unforgettable moment, and it is hard to describe how a 15-20 second encounter with someone, with no words spoken, could be so meaningful and inspiring.

In recent years Terry has been recognized as one of, if not the greatest Canadian, a true Canadian hero, who inspired a nation. And now, with so many years having passed it is important that we continue to share Terry's incred-

ible story with our children and grandchildren, in classrooms, and in the media, so that those too young to have seen him can appreciate and celebrate his efforts, as well as contribute to his cause and keep his dream alive.



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Earlier this year, I was privileged to attend the official opening of The Terry Fox exhibit at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Que., just across the river from Parliament Hill. In attendance were Terry's father Rolly, his brothers Fred and Darrell, his

sister Judith, and his best friend and travelling companion Doug Alward. The exhibit is entitled "Terry Fox— running to the Heart of Canada" and it is a collection of every important item the family and Foundation had saved from the Marathon of Hope. It includes t-shirts, grey shorts and single grey sock Terry wore on his artificial limb during the run, one of the artificial limbs he wore, picture displays, video and audio commentary from many locations along the way, the restored van they travelled in, his Order of Canada medal, and so much more.

As I walked into one area, there were hundreds, if not thousands, of cards and letters hanging in the air, as if frozen in place. These were the correspondences that Terry had received from supporters and admirers during the run, and after he was forced to stop. In the middle was a large screen, and below

that a small desk with a computer. It was there for anyone who had written to Terry, and by simply entering your name, your card or letter would show up on the screen.

I sat down at the computer, entered my name, and instantly up on the screen popped the letter I had written to Terry some 35 years ago— the letter I remembered writing, but was unsure of the content.

It was an emotional moment and as I read my words, I was taken back to the days when Terry was fighting his losing battle with cancer, and how he had affected our lives.

This summer I returned to the museum with my four grandchildren, my cousin's two grandchildren and their friend. They already know about Terry, having attended the Acton Terry Fox Run for many years, but they were certainly

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