

Many New Year's Eve revelers in the 1960s danced to bands like Georgetown's Manhattans, which consisted of George Rowe on drums, Ian Cass on guitar, Hughie Hunter on saxophone, Bernard Shrubsole on bass and Ralph Ursel on accordion. Tom Darcie was the soloist.



EHS/photo

OPINION

# THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WAS - AND A TIME TO SAY 'THAT'S ALRIGHT'

A NUMBER OF CHANGES IN 2018, WRITES TED BROWN



TED BROWN  
Column

It's a well-known fact that farmers, after they have finished plowing, planting, or harvesting one of their fields, stop before leaving the field to look over their shoulder behind them.

It's an opportunity to make sure everything is in order, until the next visit to that field.

But it's also a look of approval, allowing them to have a moment's pride, and

say "That's alright ..."

I suspect farmers from the dawn of civilization have done the same. The Neanderthal scratched a patch of loose ground with a stick to plant some seeds, the early civilizations discovered iron and bronze to work the land easier, and our pioneers, right up to today's agriculturalists, all have taken that step back to survey their fields and say, "That's alright."

Even our urban cousins do the same after mowing their lawns or weeding their flower beds. They take that moment to look behind.

Using that farming analogy, we can do the same about the past year - the good times, and the not-so-good times. Looking back shows us where we've been - but it also

gives us a reference and direction as to where we might be going and take stock of everything before us.

The Sidekick and I are no exception.

We had a number of changes during the past 12 months. None were what I'd consider bad, but they did create changes in our life.

Early in the year, we were contacted by a sheep breeder wanting to purchase some lambs, to build a new flock in Prince Edward Island. We didn't have enough lambs to fill his bill, so he also dealt with other breeders. He came back and asked if we'd sell some adult ewes to finish the load and establish his flock.

The Sidekick and I perused our inventory and found we'd be down to a very

small flock.

But we also knew this day was coming, when we'd finally retire from raising sheep.

His offer was the catalyst. We agreed to sell them, and in July, we emptied the barn.

It was a bit emotional, but in retrospect it was the right decision. We have lost some income but have gained some freedom in our lives.

As that chapter of our farming life closes, we are left with warm fuzzy memories of our sheep and lambs, and also take comfort knowing our flock is in the good hands of a shepherd in P.E.I.

Of course, Hamish the dog is still undergoing some doggy counselling for his loss of a flock to watch over!

We decided this was the year to spiffy up the garage

and driving shed, by pouring new concrete floors in both, and replacing the doors and adding electric door openers.

The Sidekick claims I have a permanent smile carved into my face since replacing the floors and doors.

We welcomed some grandbabies this year. On my side of the family, wee Atlee Catherine Edwards arrived in the early hours of Aug. 3, bringing my grandchildren up to five.

The Sidekick couldn't be outdone, and Braylyn Harley Marion Cowan was born Nov. 14, bringing her total grandkids to six (there is no competition, yeah, right ...)

And in September, The Sidekick decided to slow down a bit, and become semi-retired, no longer

working Fridays. I now have two "Saturdays" to deal with in the week - the one that follows Thursday, and the one that comes before Sunday.

And finally, I was successfully re-elected in October's municipal election, so I'm back for another four years.

So, all in all, it was a pretty good year, with several good things, and minimal "bad" things.

And taking stock of it all, I can honestly say "That's alright."

The Sidekick and I wish you a Happy New Year and the very best in the coming year.

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