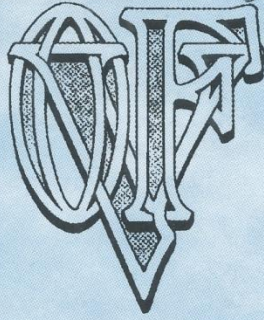


OCTOBER 1996



In memory of Barry Stevens



1955 - 1996



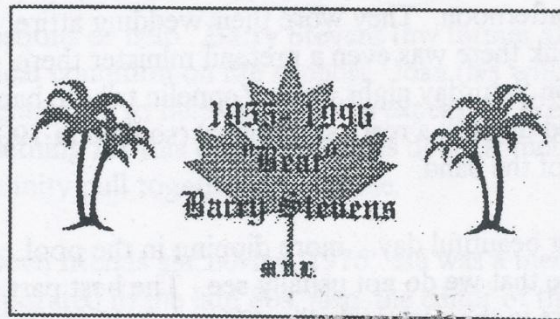
FROM THE EDITORS....



It is with deep sadness and much sorrow that we must regretfully inform everyone on the passing of Barry (Bear) Stevens, 1955-1996. Barry was taken from us this past Saturday, September 21 at 10 P.M.. His life in Vanning spanned some 20 years and touched many lives while he was member of Southern Ontario Vans in Ontario and Midwest Vans Ltd. In Chicago. He was also the previous CO-editor for this newsletter (OFV) for a number of years and was even an alternate on the Nats board.

It was Bear who opened that much larger door for us when, and I can still remember him handing a yellow brick with a flyer attached to us, and telling us to meet him at the service center by Windsor. He was going to Midwest's "Return to OZ" and we WERE coming along !!! Our life from then on brought us in touch with a whole new wing of the family.

Over the past 12 years our family has grown to overwhelming proportions when he and Beth both felt confident enough in our abilities to carry on with the newsletter that they passed it on to us. This once again created another increase in our family circle as we got to know even more people and make friends all across the continent.



*It is very hard to say goodbye to a dear friend
so to this end we say "Till we meet again !"*

Geoff and Sonya

And please remember to always

"Cherish a friend !!!"

I would like to thank, once again, Brett & Brenda and Bars for making it possible for Sonya to go to Chicago and back safely and worry free to pay our finally respects to a dear friend. Once again Vanners helping Vanners in a time of need !! On that same note We would like to thank all of the people at Van Fest 96 for donating generously to the fund to assist Joan with the expenses of funeral and the hospital. Immediately following Sonya's page is the eulogy that Bear's best friend Howard read at the memorial service on Friday. Sarge was brave enough to try to read it out loud for everyone to share and allow us to have our own memorial moment to say farewell to Barry at the awards at the Truckin this weekend.

Monday Kathy Bruce will be opening an account that will allow anybody else that would like to help contribute to the cause to be able to make a deposit at their local bank branch. You can call Kathy or us for the account number.

Thanx in advance for any help you can add.

Sorry this issue is so late but things were very hectic around here with all of this going on.....

BARRY STEVENS "BEAR"

1996



Club

MidWest Vans LTD
Elmhurst Chapter



Barry Stevens

Here is the eulogy that was read by Howard at the memorial service for Barry (Bear) Stevens on Sept. 27, 1996 in Chicago:

TWENTY YEARS AGO
CARTER WAS PREZ
VANS COST 5000
GAS WAS 75c
CANADIAN BEER WAS AFFORDABLE
I HAD HAIR
DANNY WAS YOUNG
RANDY AND KG WERE THIN
BUT
BARRY AND I WERE FRIENDS
ACROSS THE MILES WE
BUILT OUR FRIENDSHIP
AND TRAVELLED TOGETHER
PEOPLE TELL ME I DRIVE AROUND NORTH AMERICA
LIKE IT'S MY HOMETOWN
IT WAS BARRY'S HOME TOWN, TOO
FROM KING CITY, CALIFORNIA
TO RICHMOND, RHODE ISLAND,
FROM HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA TO ORLANDO, FLORIDA
WE CAME AND WENT AND ENJOYED LIFE TO THE FULLEST

VANNING IS LIKE A FAMILY IN MANY WAYS
OUR COMMON INTEREST IN A VEHICLE
LEADS TO MANY FRIENDSHIPS,
SOME LASTING, SOME FLEETING
BARRY AND I BECAME VIRTUALLY INSEPERABLE,
DESPITE THE FACT I LIVED HERE
AND HE LIVED IN TORONTO
THRU THE SUMMERS, HARDLY A SUNDAY WENT BY
THAT DIDN'T END WITH US COOKING OMELETS
AT OUR CAMPSITE AND SAYING SEEYA IN A COUPLE WEEKS

LAST NIGHT YOU SAW THE FRIENDSHIP AND RESPECT
HE EARNED FROM MANY PEOPLE
IN THIS GREAT FAMILY OF VANNERS
CLEVELAND, COLUMBUS, ELKHART, MILWAUKEE
TORONTO AND LONDON

JOAN AND I HAVE
RECIEVED NOTES AND E-MAIL FROM
THE NORTH OF ALBERTA AND THE SOUTH OF CALIFORNIA
FROM PEOPLE WHOSE LIFE BARRY TOUCHED.
THERE WAS MUCH MORE TO OUR FRIENDSHIP THAN
VANNING...COMMON INTERESTS SUCH AS TRAIN
ANTIQUES, PHOTOGRAPHY, AND CARS
LED US ON MANY OTHER ADVENTURES TOGETHER
IN SHORT, WE BECAME LIKE THE BROTHERS
NEITHER OF US HAD.

TODAY SAY GOODBYE TO A WONDERFUL FRIEND,
AND WE ARE SAD AND MAD THAT HE LEFT US.
BUT WE HAVE TO GO ON, WE HAVE TO REMEMBER THE
GOOD TIMES AND THE FUN WE HAD.

BARRY'S HAVING FUN RIGHT NOW...
HE'S PARKED HIS VAN WITH DAVE PILON AND
JOURNEYMAN AND LJ AND ALL THE OTHER VANNERS
WE'VE LOST OVER THE YEARS.
HE'S PROBABLY GETTING READY
TO GO BUY AN EVENT SHIRT AND WAIT FOR THE REST OF
US TO SHOW UP. THERE'S A BAND TO GO SEE
FRIENDS TO VISIT
AND A VAN SHOW TO BE JUDGED.

THEY SAY THAT PARENTS SHOULDN'T HAVE TO
SAY GOODBYE TO THEIR KIDS,
WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO SAY GOODBYE TO
OUR FRIENDS EITHER.