

Tom Agnew

By Ken South

On November 4, 1941 Mr. March (M) joined the human race at St. Margaret's Hospital in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts. M was the only boy in the family, with two older and one younger sisters. His high school days were in Quincy, MA where he loved playing bass drum in the marching band and graduated in 1959.

At the Rhode Island School of Design, his senior year was in Italy, under RISD's European Honors Program. He graduated in 1965 with a degree in Landscape Architecture. While in Italy, he learned to speak Italian which he still speaks. He even watches Italian Public TV to help maintain his fluency.

In 1966, M moved to New York City where he's lived alone ever since. He worked for three different consulting firms in a fifteen year stretch while working on public parks, private gardens and swimming pools and site improvements associated with mass transit construction in Washington, DC, and Atlanta, GA. He also headed up a design team developing a tourism and infrastructure plan for the Lake Izabal region of Guatemala.

In 1980, design budgets disappeared and M was forced to move to another industry. A friend, who knew M loved to travel, encouraged him to go to work for TWA as a telephone reservation sales agent which he found extremely interesting. He spent six years in the travel industry and took advantage of its perks. Among them was a trip to London aboard a British Airways Concorde and nineteen trips to Western Europe. In 1986 the architecture field opened up again and M began to work for the New York City Department of Parks. It was then that M first confronted problems brought on by alcohol addiction, including losing two jobs.

Last December M proudly celebrated thirty years of sobriety at his AA meeting. M says alcoholism is by far the worst health problem he has had to face. They say "the third time is the charmed" and M returned to work at the NYC Department of Design and Construction where he managed construction at public buildings designated as NYC landmarks or situated in one of the City's 125 Historic Districts. Construction at libraries, firehouses, police precincts and court houses needing new additions, roofs, windows or doors were his responsibility. He monitored the work to ensure it complied with design guidelines for historic architecture. M retired in October 2016, after 28 years in NYC government.

M knew he was gay when he was 14, in 1955. He's never had interest in women and has no children, but there have been four significant men in his lifetime. As a HS sophomore, he met his first partner and lifelong friend, Domenic, who became a Registered Nurse. For decades, they made annual trips to Domenic's home in the Russian River area of Northern California. Domenic unfortunately passed away in 2007.

M met Tony in 1966 when he first moved to NYC. Tony was 13 years older than M and a sports industry executive. The two never lived together because of Tony's need to remain "closeted." Following Tony's retirement in 1998, he purchased a condo in Ft. Lauderdale and the two became NYC/FTL snowbirds. After Tony's death in 2008 the condo passed to his nephews. They encourage M to continue using it.

He met Ted in 1966 at an Atlantic City gay bar. He was a timekeeper for the Pennsylvania Railroad and had a great interest in antiques and historic houses. They took many trips together and Ted triggered M's interest in opera. Ted died in 1997.

M met Henry, his fourth "significant man," at The Beacon Baths in NYC, a very popular spot for chubs and chasers. Henry was a resident physician training in anesthesiology at a large hospital. The two shared an interest in travel and films, but Henry died of AIDS in 1991.

M has enjoyed his time with Prime Gentlemen, especially the History Group. One of M's favorite pastimes is sitting on the pier at Lauderdale-by-the -Sea, enjoying the surf and sunsets. He's also an avid reader and has keen interests in railroads, movies and restaurants.

