

Green's Harbour's Teaching Yields Life Changing Results

By Marie-Beth Wright

In September 1963, Carl Wright, newly graduated from Memorial University, was raring to go back to outport Newfoundland and Labrador to teach. He had been educated in Greenspond, so life in smaller communities felt comfortable and familiar.

In the brand new Central High School in Green's Harbour he met Clifford George, a student in his homeroom. Clifford, from the nearby town of Whiteway stood out for his sketches could be found in the school corridors and teachers sought him out to draw illustrations in subjects like biology.

But Clifford needed to bring color to his art and the brand-new townie teacher could deliver the goods – real paint from St. John's to help him express himself with vibrancy!

Years passed, Carl moved on to Carbonear and later to St. John's, still positively impacting students' education. Clifford's career arc took him to the Health Sciences Centre where he helped medical personnel illustrate textbooks and enhance their lectures and conferences. Simultaneously, he developed a very successful career as a landscape artist with customers, colleagues and art students admiring his every creation. He also received huge admiration for saving countless Newfoundland ponies from slaughter, plus preserving them in art form.

More years passed until Carl, and I went to one of Clifford's expositions at Christina Parker Gallery. We chatted; the story of Carl's help so long ago came out and fast forward a few years, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Association was looking for a fresh story for its Teachers Change Lives campaign! It was a deal made for television and social media. In the dramatized section of the ad, well established actor, Justin Nurse, plays a young Carl while an adorable child actor shows Clifford's child-like delight in being provided with paints.

Seeds of success go a long way, for as Clifford says, "If someone believes in you, it can last a lifetime. Thank you Mr. Wright." Just as telling is Carl's response in the longer interview: "I did something very important in getting him started ... I am so happy for that."

Carl and Clifford's story arrived on NTV, during Survivor, in Facebook posts, on YouTube, and in Cineplex theatres. It can only raise the profile of the teaching profession and gain healthy respect for the work teachers perform with each new generation of students in our schools.

Carl and Clifford's Story is produced in conjunction with the fine talented folks of M5 Advertising and Wavelight Productions.

