

Otto Felix

Most of you reading this likely will have no knowledge of who we are, but hopefully by the end of this message you will understand that we too experienced the magical influence of Otto. Suffice it to say we knew Otto at a time long ago – in the early 60s. We were all young, probably junior high school age, and all living in a neighborhood in the suburbs of Pittsburgh called Foxridge. It was the new development and all the kids knew each other. It was the kind of place where everyday was a football game in the street or a baseball game in an empty lot.

The message below is from Ron Jancosko.

Mine will follow.....

Otto lived down the street from me in a plan of homes called Foxridge located approx. 11 miles north of Pittsburgh, PA. I met him in 1964. I was 12. He wore a tee shirt that read “Crazy Otto” on the front. He drove a Harley (no helmet he liked to feel the wind in his hair), owned a dark blue Impala SS convertible and played drums.

Otto took the time to know us kids in the neighborhood. When he drove down the street he could have easily passed by, maybe just wave, but he never just passed by. He always stopped he was generous with his time. He made a 12 year old kid feel that what he had to say was important to him. He seemed to close the age gap between us. I guess because he was just a big kid himself.

He organized all of us into a neighborhood football team the Foxridge Falcons. He painted our helmets black with an orange stripe with a pair of FF's on the side. He coached us after school and got us ready to play other neighborhoods as well as a scrimmage against Bellevue High School. We were always out matched due to our young age, but boy was it great to be on a team coached by Otto.

Otto left the neighborhood and we all heard that he went west. His mother told us that he was doing commercials and then movies. What a thrill it was to see him on TV. I always exclaimed to anyone in the room “Hey that’s Otto.” “I know him.”

One day in late November 08 Otto came to my mind. I googled Otto Felix to see if I could find him. I was amazed to see the list of accomplishments that were credited to him. I emailed him with a short update and a request for his update. I was pleasantly surprised when he emailed me back the next day and reminisced about our good old days. After 43 years he still

remembered us Fox Ridge Falcons.

I'm not sure what led me back to Otto after 43 years, but I am most thankful that I had the opportunity to ride on the back of his Harley just one more time.

In loving memory,
Ron Jancosko

Otto lived a couple houses down from all of us. Otto was much older than us. Each of us probably met Otto at different times and through different situations.

I met Otto through one of my friends named Doug Domergue. Doug told me about a guy who could play the drums and had a Harley XLCH. That was enough for me. We would go to Otto's garage and he would play the drums for us. I think it was a blue set, but it was a long time ago and my memory could be wrong. Never in my entire life had I (or have I ever since) been so mesmerized by a look on a face. I could not take my eyes off him and when he looked at me while playing it was simply overpowering. I almost wanted to say "stop – I can't take it." I wonder whether any of you also had this feeling when he looked at you. His smile pierced right through you and he could completely control me. I felt helpless. No wonder he was such a great actor. Nuff said.

My other memories are when he gave me rides on his XLCH. What a thrill to a kid. Mint condition – always waxed and clean. My point in saying this is that Otto was a person who didn't have to play drums for a kid and didn't have to give a kid a ride on his motorcycle - but he did. And to me (that kid) it was one of the biggest thrills of my life. Otto helped give a little kid someone incredibly cool to identify with – these are important things to kids.

So, in conclusion, and not really knowing for all this time how Otto's life took its course, we are saddened by his loss and hardly surprised at how many people's lives he impacted. We wanted you to know that his influence may be greater than you (and we) might have imagined. Every kid in the Foxridge neighborhood was proud to be able to say Otto was their friend and there isn't a single kid who doesn't owe Otto Felix some debt of gratitude

Alan Randich