



Summer of 60 Speaking Tour

Poet, Photographer, Queer, Kinkster, Sister

Brian Gryphon came out as gay in a local newspaper in 1978. He lived in 5 cities from North Bay to West Elgin before graduating High School; living in Toronto through the 1981 Bath House Raids and as hiv/aids exploded throughout our community.

Tales of activism, sex, drugs, addiction, abuse, survival.

(a more detailed biography is on the next page)

“This summer I will complete my sixth decade on earth. Living to 60 is not that surprising for most North American middle-income white cis-men. It is a bigger deal for me for a variety of reasons. To celebrate the event I am planning 2 week-long trips around south-western Ontario and Metro Toronto. The trips will be in June and September this year.

“I want to meet and talk with queer folk (young and old) across the area. In addition to stories of being open and active as a gay man for 40 years, I’ve published my chapbook [In Pursuit Of A Dream](#).

“If any central or southwest Ontario LGBTQ groups want to host an evening of poetry/ storytelling/ taking questions with me and/or Sister Flirt OPI, I’m all in.”

Brian is not looking to become rich, nor famous, from this tour. It is rather his birthday gift to queer communities across Ontario. That said, contributions of meals, accommodations or funds for travel expenses are appreciated.



Web page about the Tour:

briangryphon.com/summer-of-60-speaking-tour/

Facebook page for the Tour:

facebook.com/Summer60Tour/

Web contact form:

briangryphon.com/contact-me/

Email: [briangryphon \(at\) yahoo \(dot\) com](mailto:briangryphon@yahoo.com)

Brian's Biography

Brian was born in Toronto in 1958. He and his family moved to North Bay before he started school, and then to a village that became part of Mississauga, before settling in West Elgin in 1968. After graduating high school Brian moved to Chatham, working retail jobs and joining Theatre Kent for the group's initial season. He returned to Toronto in the Spring of 1978, after coming out as Gay to the readership of the *Chatham Daily News* in response to a Letter To The Editor. He has not stopped stating his opinion since.

He missed the Stonewall Riots but began exploring political and sexual activism in his home town. Fighting for basic civil rights and non-discrimination protection quickly pivoted to protesting repeated police raids on gay bath houses in Toronto and elsewhere. ['Operation Soap' in February 1981](#) had long-term impacts on police/community relations as well as shining light on issues of censorship and police over reach.

Just a few years later what we now know as hiv/aids exploded in gay communities across North America. Rather than building a career Brian worked various retail jobs (and one summer as a bath house attendant) and kept his energies for community work. That work ranged from volunteering with the Aids Committee of Toronto, Casey House Hospice, and the Mr Leatherman Toronto committee to membership in Trident Metro Toronto and the [Toronto Order of Perpetual Indulgence](#). He was also a volunteer peer counselor on the GYT Gay Youth Toronto single-line phone service.

He moved to Columbus, Ohio early in 1996. He presently works various part-time jobs to supplement his self-employment at [The Digital Gryphon LLC](#). He is a photographer, graphic designer and publisher as well as an [Ordained Celebrant and Spiritual Card Reader](#). He continues to support and promote the music of groundbreaking '80s and '90s gay folk duo [Romanovsky & Phillips](#).



Sister Flirt OPI

Sister Flirt was accepted into the Toronto Order of Perpetual Indulgence as a Fully Professed Sister in 1983 as Sister Flagellation of Forbidden Fruit OPI. In 2014 Sister engaged in a time-honoured tradition of adopting a new Sisterly name. Sister Flirtatious Romanovsky of Middlesex, OPI honours two pioneering gay musical groups as well as his ties to Middlesex County, Ontario.

He entered the Sisterhood during a time of social upheaval; gays and lesbians (the 'alphabet soup' of sexual variety had not yet appeared) fighting for minimal protection of our basic human rights. In Toronto, the February 1981 Bathhouse Raids were a brutal reminder of where we stood in the social pecking order. The Toronto Order were Guerilla Nuns, fighting for rights with humour, gender-bending and 'cognitive dissonance'.