

# Andrew Dunn's Story

By Judy Dunn

**A**ndrew was the first of my 2 sons, born at the Health Science Center on May 10th, 1983, with his brother Robert to follow just 15 months later.

Andrew was a cute, cuddly 7lb.14oz. red haired bundle of joy, that quickly made himself known to the world, He never thought much of the idea of sleeping as a baby and got off to a very early start by walking at 7 1/2 months.

He just as quickly became very independent and would entertain himself for hours with his Lego blocks and soon showed his artistic talents.

Andrew attended and loved his years at Royal Elementary School in Charleswood, K through 6, with many awards or certificates of excellence every year.

Andrew and his brother Robert were inseparable all through early childhood years and even shared a bedroom, by choice so that they could talk and laugh together till well after bedtime.

Our family made the moved from Charleswood in May of 1995 to Cooks Creek, Manitoba. We thought this would be a good time to move for the kids but Andrew



especially hated moving away from the home he had grown up in and away from all of his friends. He did make friends quickly and continued to do very well in school, graduating from Springfield Collegiate.

We started noticing a sort of dark cloud over Andrew between the ages of 14 to 16. He became very negative and cynical about everything, which was not characteristic of Andrew at all. He and Robert drifted apart. He isolated himself from his family for a period of time and then it was as if he had put on a mask of sorts to get on with life, but deep inside, he was not content.

Then one day I found a binder under his bed. It was one of the scariest moments of my life. I really had no idea how really bad my baby was hurting inside; he was in such a dark place.

His words were pained and his poetry, although amazing, was so sad, dark, tortured and even scary - he wanted to die!



My happy, cuddly little boy was disappearing before my eyes. I felt so helpless.

We took Andrew to see a youth counselor and our family physician who prescribed antidepressants and then Andrew “pretended” to be fine.

He had worked in the restaurant/hospitality industry since around the age of 16 and had worked at number of restaurants. He seemed to be happiest or most fulfilled when he was working. I guess he didn't have time

anything to harm himself.

Andrew experienced some events at home that had hurt him deeply, and he shared these feelings with his close friends and me.

I had hoped that in time he would be able to get over the hurt, but according to friends, apparently not. He just decided to not talk about it anymore.

Andrew did get another management training opportunity and he seemed to be happier again. I thought and hoped that maybe the worst had finally passed.

On December 11th at around 8:00 p.m. he came to give me a kiss good-bye and told me he loved me, as he always did before saying good-bye, even on the phone. He informed me he wouldn't be late because he had to work the early shift the next morning.

He had thrown in a load of laundry, put one in the dryer and had one sitting on top of the washer, yet to do. He left his bedroom light on, as well as his heater so that his room would be nice and warm when he came home, and then he left to meet up with friends for the evening.

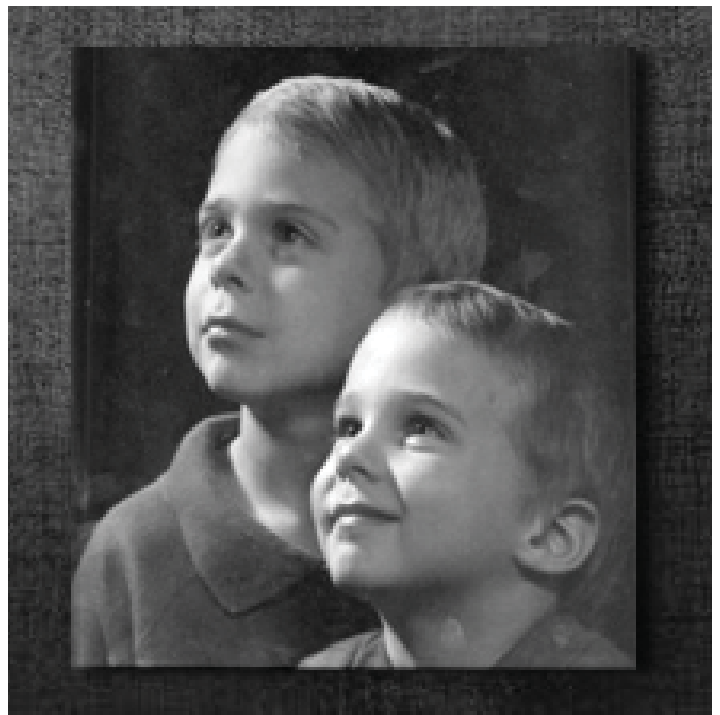
December 12th was a very foggy morning and when I saw under Andrew's bedroom door, that his light was still on, I made the assumption that he had chosen not to come home. I phoned him to let him know that the roads were slippery and visibility was not good, then



to think so much then. He was probably at his happiest at the Olive Garden on Regent, but decided he wanted to further his career goal and entered into management training.

He somehow felt as if he had become a failure because, at the “ripe old age of 23”, he had not made something of himself yet! He had not made his mark on the world. I couldn't understand, as he was so young to feel this way, with so many possibilities and so, so many opportunities still ahead of him.

He had gone through a couple of different management opportunities that had not worked out too well and was off work for about a month. It was at this time that I had become really concerned, but we talked about it and he assured me that he was fine and would never do



wished him a good day and again told him that I loved him, but when I got out to the garage to leave for work I saw that his car was there and that just didn't make sense. I again thought that there must be some logical explanation.

When I got home later that day, his car had still not moved and yet he was still not in the house either. Something was definitely not right. I phoned and left 2 more messages on his cell and asked him to, "Please, just call me to let me know you're OK".

I finally went outside to the garage at around 8:40 p.m. December 12th, 2006 to check over his car to see if I could find any clues as to what was wrong. I was terrified of what I might find by now, because I now felt something was definitely not right.

How could I have not felt it in my soul? My baby had taken his own life. I will hear my own voice screaming, "No, No, No, Andrew, No", forever.



My normal will never be normal again. Half of me will be gone forever. Robert lost his only sibling that night and he Andrew left behind so many friends and family members that miss him very much. All that life could have offered him will never be.

Suicide is so final and you cannot take it back. It leaves a wake of devastation and countless people in great pain with such a loss. There are so, so many lives that Andrew touched in his short life, but there are so many more that he could have, if he had only been able to see through his pain to recovery and a happy, healthy and full life.

I love you Andrew and miss you every day.  
Mom

