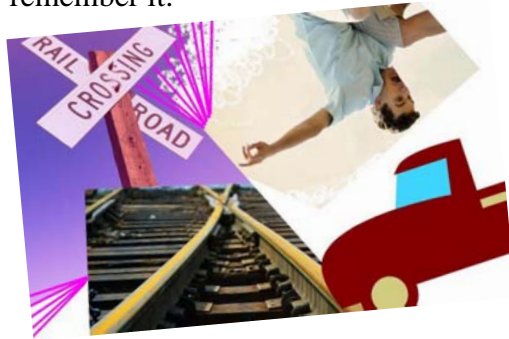


It was the morning of June 5, 2003, I was on my way to work, and little did I know, I was about to do something I had always wanted to do - sort of.

Working at an oilfield supply company in Nisku, and not having a driver's license, I relied on getting rides from co-workers and friends; on this particular day a friend drove me in. Once we arrived at my work I realized I needed to run up to the convenience store for a few things and so I hopped back in and closed the door. However I hadn't closed it properly and along the way I was thrown from the vehicle at approximately 70 km/hr and went head first into the train tracks at a rail crossing. Stars Air Ambulance was dispatched and after 31 years of wanting it to happen, I got my first helicopter ride, even if I would never remember it.



They took me to the **University of Alberta** hospital where I spent my first four or five days in a coma state and another couple of weeks in a very hazy, confused, surreal state. The staff at the hospital did so much; from keeping my friends and family aware of my situation to, well, saving my life!!

Once I was strong enough and there was a place for me, I was transferred to the **Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital**. It was here that I first began to appreciate what had happened to me. Besides a broken vertebra, broken elbow, not being able to hear in one ear and various cuts, scrapes and bruises, I found out that I

had suffered a brain injury. To this point in my life, I had been fortunate enough to have not had any experience dealing with brain injury and initially I was in denial. It was only after the amazing staff at the Glenrose, so patiently taught me more about brain injury, did I finally accept what happened to me. I spent about six weeks at the Glenrose before I was released and now my rehabilitation would be taken care of as an out-patient.

The difficulties I was having with trying to get back to "regular" life were, at times, very overwhelming. Through the incredible help of family, friends, and again the staff at the Glenrose, I was learning new strategies to help me with the problems I was having. A little more than three months after the accident had happened, fate decided I needed another life changing moment. It came in the form of an incredible young Australian woman by the name of Lucy. We met through common friends and, without getting too mushy, fell madly in love. Lucy was here in Edmonton attending the U of A on exchange, studying engineering.

I began taking courses as an **out-patient at the Glenrose. Psychosocial Adaptation, Memory Group, and Anger Management** proved to not only be helpful in the strategies that they taught, but were also a great place to meet new friends and to have a place to speak fearlessly about the problems we were all fac-



The logo from the Brain Injury Society, HeadWAY, where Chris attended groups in Australia. www.headway.org.au

