

Alexander Thomas–Haug

By

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Alex and Cayley are cousins to me and my brother Scott. We grew up together. 😊 We spent a lot of time together at our Granny's house picking up pine cones, at his Nanny and Papa's house playing chess, spending time at the Folk Fest listening to music, at the lake playing in snow forts, on the ski hills, and at our families' homes for holidays and celebrations. Alex was making us laugh even before he was born; he gave Scott the shock of his 8 year old life when Auntie Lorna showed us how Alex was growing inside her belly. I remember that July day when Alex was born so clearly, being dropped off at Granny's, she opened the back door and yelled, it's a boy with red hair...then Scott and I ran down to the alley after my parents yelling it's a boy with red hair!!!! And a car ride later we were meeting Alan Alexander Thomas–Haug with Auntie Lorna and Uncle Phil looking so happy, so proud.

When we have memories that have different emotions attached to them about someone, I think that is one way of knowing how important they are in our lives. When I think of Alex, I mostly, but don't only think about loving and caring Alex, I think of the turkey Alex too. Just as I am sure most of us do. I am going to share some the emotions that Alex elicited out of me, some Alex stories from a cousin's perspective, and what these emotions and stories mean about who Alex was. And as I share these, I hope they trigger some of your own Alex memories and emotions.

Alright Alex, here we go. ...

Anger – Rarely was I angry with Alex, some of you may have been which shows how close you are with him, but rarely was I. He made me jealous when he wanted to play with Scott more than he wanted to play with me when we were younger, but not anger. Even when he pushed down Cayley when she was just learning to walk, he made me laugh, sorry Cayley, but it was pretty funny....For everyone who spent time at 40 Sundance, you remember how the kitchen over looked the dining room, that over looked the living room, well, I was able to watch as Cayley carefully toddled about and Alex approached her, took a good look around to make sure no one was watching, then pushed her down and then went up to her saying “ oh Cayley what’s wrong, CarrieAnn, I think Cayley fell” that’s what big brothers are supposed to do right. ? It just made me laugh and made it hard to give him any sort of trouble.

And what does that say about Alex, that he didn’t make me angry, it says that he was always looking out to do the right thing in our eyes. He didn’t want to disappoint, he didn’t want to do anything but make us feel good. He wasn’t about anger, not to me, and we can all honour that in him by living love in our hearts, which is what I will do, I’ll live love in my heart for you Alex.

Embarrassment – Alex himself didn’t embarrass me, but a situation that involved Alex and I am sure some of his friends here today, left me a bit horrified. When I was looking through pictures, beside a picture of Alex, I found this movie stub. It is dated June 30, 1999, which would make Alex 11 almost 12, but keep in mind he is my little cousin, so really he is sweet and innocent and in my mind at the time still just 6. I am not sure why I thought it would be

comfortable to take Alex and 5 of his friends to the opened day of the 18A rated South Park movie, but I did. I do not know how many people have seen that movie, but it is definitely not the type of movie that I was prepared to see with my little cousin. Are any of his friends here that were with us that day? Thank you for sharing that day, because as horrified as I was, I could tell how much fun you guys all had. I left with a very red face, but also with a smile because he was so happy to be there with his friends getting to talk about all the rude stuff that went on in that movie on the car ride home.

So what does this story say about Alex? That he was full of laughter and full of joy. That was the Alex he wanted us all to know, the Alex that we did all know. His laughter at the silly and crazy things in that movie was the same laugh we all heard throughout his life, it was genuine, and it was wonderful. That is how we knew you Alex, and it is how we'll remember you.

Happiness – He really did love to make me laugh and hearing him laugh too made me feel happy. Alex always tried to make me laugh, through a story or a tickle. Like the story he told about welding and having a piece of melting metal somehow ends up going down his shirt and lodging in his belly button. What? Crazy! And the tickles, they happened all the time and for years, and as I am hearing through other people, this physical connection through a tackle, hug, pinch or some sort physically touch is how Alex connected with a lot of us to make us laugh and smile. Alex and Cayley would gang up on me to tickle me, and he would say “I know you won’t kick us, you won’t get back at your little cousins”, and I wouldn’t, because I loved it, I loved that he would take the chance to connect with me the same way all the time. As we were looking through pictures we

found a cousin pic on the stairs from about 10 years ago and you can see, right when the picture is taken, Alex is tickling me. I will cherish that picture and that gift of touch and love from him forever.

And what does this say about Alex? That again he loved us all so much. He had a way of showing it through touch. When he touched us physically he was getting back our love too. I can still feel his little hand, with his double jointed thumbs, and I know he is touching us, letting us know he is still with us. We welcome your touch still Alex.

Proud – Alex made me very proud, not only of his accomplishments, but of his character. I remember watching Mump and Smoot with him when he was about 5 and after the show he got up, walked up to them and said, “I liked your show”. I was proud of how throughout his life he recognized other people and their talents. He was so proud of you, Cayley. Over the last few years when ever Alex and I would get together you would be the focus of our conversation, he wanted to brag about you. He honoured other people’s achievements, your films Auntie Lorna, your business uncle Phil, your performances Cayley, your awards Uncle Ken, and he honoured the people you met when you were traveling and the organizations they supported. Of course Alex we are all proud of you, just as you were of us.

Like when you skied for the first time. ...Scott and I were with Alex and his parents the first time he went skiing when he was 3.5. We took him in between our legs and skied down the hill. Scott and I were probably deciding who was going to go down with Alex and all of a sudden we saw him going down on his own. We looked at each other, and thought, what’s the worst that could happen, no one is

on the hill except for those people wayyyyyy over there to the left and there is no way that he could.. Oh no, crash into those people..... But he did and he got up again and skied some more.

What does that story say of Alex? It says he had perseverance at accomplishing anything a snowy hill or mountain and that he knew way back then, that the snow would be his friend forever, his love.

Something that is very special to me, and Alex said to me many times, special to him also, was that Alex and I shared our first times snowboarding together. I remember him making the switch to snowboarding so easily. What a talent did he have on that snowboard! Whether you saw him in person, or through pictures, or through stories, we all know that snowboarding was Alex's passion, flying, being so free. He would tell me how he would hike up the mountain with his board on his back and all the energy it took to get up there so worth the experience of the ride down. And not only on a snowboard, but on bikes and skateboards, he was talented and without fear when it came to that jump, or that trick. And again, Alex was so proud of all of his friends that could do the same. I remember being over for dinner and he barely let me in the door and was dragging me to the computer to watch videos of him and his friends with their bikes. And when he came over two summers ago to babysit, he brought along a lap top to show again amazing videos and pictures of his friends and him on their snowboards. He was so proud of everyone he was around and we are all so proud of you Alex, proud of your passion and proud of your love for those mountains.

Freak me out is what I am going to call his next emotion– Alex was my first job 😊 I started babysitting him a few months after he was

born and couldn't wait for the weekends to spend time with him. Does anyone know what Alex's first job was? Folding boxes for the Riverdale green house when he was, what 5? I think he got a penny a box 😊 He was such a cute little guy. When Alex was about one, I was staying over with him and I would check in on him every half hour, hour, just because I liked to. I opened his bedroom door, really slowly to not wake him up, and there he was, standing in his crib, with his soother in his mouth, eyes close, his hands over his eyes, swaying back and forth, like this... so I said, "Ali, Ali are you ok"? To which his response was (stop swaying, pull down hands, open eye, turn and look at me, turn back pull hands back over closed eyes, and continue to sway back and forth), to which my response was, holy crap, shut the door and sit on the couch and until Auntie Lorna and Uncle Phil got home. So a little fear in the moment, but I laughed with him about it many times after that. This is a mug Alex gave me that I still use and cherish. It is a bird, with Red hair, hugging little birds under the night sky, comforting them.

So what does this story say about Alex? It says to me that he had a way of surprising us. And maybe it is a story that says that he had a side to him that we did not understand. It definitely says that he is memorable in many ways. Alex, we welcome your memories openly.

Excitement – Alex and I shared some excitement when we won the lottery together, well, sort of 😊 Just before he moved to Banff he came over to visit and ended up helping me rip out a rug. I live in our Granny's old house and she left us lots of treasures to find. So Alex and I were moving furniture around and starting to lift the rug when he says, "Um, CarrieAnn, I found \$20 bucks!" so we laughed,

thanked Granny and carried on, until we found more \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills. I think there was just over \$200 all along the edge of the walls under the rug. We gathered up the money and put it into envelopes that we gave out at Christmas to our family.

What does this story say about Alex? That he was generous. He could have kept that money, but he wanted to share it. It reminds me of luck, and that we are all lucky to have had Alex in our lives, blessed. Lucky isn't about the things that we have, it's about the people we have and the time we share with them. We are all so grateful Alex for the time you shared with us.

Love – Alex showed me love. Alex was an extremely caring and loving person. He cared so deeply for others. When he was a toddler, he would follow around our Grannie's cat, putting back tufts of cat hair on it saying, poor kitty. When he was a young boy, I was watching him and his friend Erin; he wouldn't go to sleep until he was sure she was ok. When he was a teenager and worried about Cayley growing up too fast, he called me to get insight and advice about a growing teenage girl... good luck Alex if we ever figure that out, but thank you so much for loving Cayley so much that you were willing to try. Alex organized your 25th anniversary party Auntie Lorna and Uncle Phil, and when we offered to help pay he said no, these are my parents, I love them, and for all they have done for me, this dinner with family is the least I could do. As a young man, Alex was a caring cousin to me and his other cousins. In December when Dennis and I had the flu, he offered to bring over videos for us to watch. He gave me a wonderful Christmas card and a surprise Christmas gift. He was looking out for his other cousins, he did some 'checking around' and assured our Auntie Chris that Brett and

Evan were going to grow up to fine young men. Thank you Alex for showing us your love.

I know Alex loved me because he encouraged me. When Alex and I went to Banff about 7 years ago on a summer camp trip, we decided we would climb to the top of Sulphur Mountain. He, being the fit handsome lad he was, had no trouble, me, well...he encouraged me up that mountain, but when he could see I was struggling, in the most gentle way said, "CarrieAnn, why don't we train and come back next year"? He helped me up that mountain as much as he could, and when I could not continue to go, he didn't give up hope, he just postponed my success up that mountain.

What does that story say about Alex? That he didn't give up on others, that he saw the potential in all of us. That he was strong for us when we couldn't be. And Alex we will be strong for you, and I will still make it to the top of that mountain with you, I promise.

Thankful – Thank you Alex for little kid valentine's day card you gave me a few years ago, for the birthday wishes, for the gift of a massage you gave me for Christmas that I will book next week and feel your hands through it. Thank you for giving your mom, dad and Cayley, your friends and family so many great memories. Thank you for your red hair, your hugs, your willingness to lend all of us your ear, and even though it hurts, your loving nature to protect us from your worries. Thank you for your love, for your laugh, your super wide smile, your need to drink goat's milk when you were a baby, and your willingness to give up lunch in order to get to Christmas two years ago to see me before I left. Thank you for your movement, the way you used to dance with your shoulders and talk with your shoulders. Thank you for your love of music of all kinds, for your

love and need for adventure and the outdoors. Thank you for taking time to share dinner with me at that Thai restaurant last year and sharing your stories about New Zealand and working in the Thai restaurant there. Thank you for going to New Zealand, for traveling, for enjoying the world, for following the snow, for following your love. Thank you for your energy that I feel, for the feeling of peace that you are sending and that you wish us all to be feeling. Mostly Alex, thank you for you.

Sorrow – Alex doesn't make me sad. My missing Alex makes me sad. And how wonderful is that. How wonderful that that red haired boy who turned into such a wonderful man was so much a part of my life that I have tears for him, that we all do. It would be pretty weird if after these nearly 25 years of memories that we wouldn't cry. Uncle Phil talked to me the other day about a tear cup, and how our emotional tears should be welcomed and honoured, that our tears for Alex should be sacred and kept. I was with Alex when he cried when he was a little guy and injured his toe when he was playing at the old family ranch, a different type of tear than I shed today, but a tear none the less. I remember wiping it from his little face, catching his tear. I know he is with me now catching mine, with all of you, catching yours. Let us honour the tears we shed for Alex and in doing so honour him. I love you Alex, I feel that you are at peace, and that wish for us to be at peace as well. You do live on in us, and with love I carry you with me.

LOVE – Again we come back to love. On Thursday Alex's family gathered together and we all shared how we were feeling. I am going to repeat our words, and invite you to think about what your one word is also. Missing Alex so much, my baby boy, proud, Rua –

breath of life, spirit, Red, Love, blessed, honoured, strength, strength, Tranquelo, blessed, proud, too many words to put into one, perseverance, love, acceptance, understanding, peace, laughter, my Alex, closeness as a family, love, and Alex loves us, we love him and nothing else matters. Hear these words now and always Alex. We love you.

