

## **all about teri**

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### **Born in the 'burgh raised in the burbs**

I am the second daughter of four children. The order is Tami, me, Patrick and Shawn. My mother had four children in five years. My dad named the girls: Tami Marie and Teri Marie. When asked why he named us like twins, he replied, "I figured I would only have to buy you one set of initial luggage." (Note: we never got the initialed luggage!)

We were raised in a suburb in the South Hills of Pittsburgh called Mt. Lebanon. It was once referred to in the local paper as the "lush underbelly of suburbia" and while lush is nice, it never seemed that complimentary to be the underbelly of anything.

My mother is a retired music teacher who taught in the same schools we attended (which made it hard to act up in music class or in any class for that matter as my mother always got the inside story in the teacher's room.) My father passed away several years ago. When he was alive he worked for the Steelworkers and State workers unions. Although I did not inherit my mother's gift for music, I did get her creative passion and drive. I got my Father's sense of humor and ability to read people.

### **The Bear Facts**

Among the many presents I got from my mother encouraging my artistic expression, the most cherished was the manual typewriter I got for my 10th birthday. My mother spotted it in the window of an office supply store "up street" which was what we called the small shopping district within walking distance of our two-family home. It was used, but in good shape. My mother bought it along with a ream of paper and wrapped it in beautiful wrapping paper. My father was the first to use it after I unzipped the harvest gold case. He typed, "Happy Birthday Bearcat" on the thin onion skin typing paper. Bearcat is my family nickname.

My mother found an old TV cart in the basement and moved it up to the room I shared with my sister (we shared everything, even a bed.) I setup a small writing nook and started typing short stories and poems. I hid most of what I wrote but shared what I thought was good. (Not much has changed.)

I found acting in High School after considering a career as a doctor (the D in chemistry was the "go to jail" card on that idea) and then one as an artist (I had a fantasy of weaving beautiful tapestries in my studio on my farm.) I won a scholarship to study acting and writing at a prestigious program sponsored by the state at Bucknell University the summer of my junior year of High School. The experience was life changing. When I got back home, I knew I would live a creative life in New York City (don't know what happened to the farm fantasy, that disappeared for over twenty years.)

### **The Big Campus**

I came to New York at 18 to go to NYU. I was fortunate enough to be accepted to the drama department and to mix academics with studying acting at the Lee Strasberg Studio. Upon driving over the George Washington Bridge the day my parents dropped me off at NYU, my father caught the look of terror on my face and asked, "Is this a big enough campus for you Teri?" Little did I know that living in New York would be the greatest adventure and education of my life.

I loved life in the city and explored the crafts of filmmaking, producing, acting, writing and even stand-up comedy (which is by far the most difficult.) I shared apartments in the city until finally moving to Queens and ending up in a studio on my own (at last my sharing days were over!) in my late twenties.

### **The Whole World**

To earn a living while pursuing my creative path I started working in technology as a trainer and technical writer, and eventually became a manager in the IT department of a large global law firm. Although the work is challenging it has allowed me to pursue another passion in my life—travel.

About ten years ago I began to travel seriously. I made an effort to go as far and wide as my time, budget and interest would allow and found my world expanding in ways I could never have imagined.

## **A Place to Call Home**

In addition to quenching my wanderlust, I was also beginning to feel the need to put down roots somewhere other than my one bedroom apartment in Queens. I had scoped out a few areas where it might be possible to buy a home outside of the city while still affording my apartment. My favorite place outside of the city was the North Fork of Long Island in the village of Greenport.

On a whim I made an appointment to see a house a realtor I contacted over the internet said met all of my qualifications. It was in the village of Greenport and priced right. The appointment was for September 12th, 2001.

I made the drive that day, in spite of the intensity of what was happening in the world and to the city. I had to stop a few times to pull myself together but the day was beautiful and the appointment gave me a purpose.

I put an offer on the house and embarked on another journey of discovery. For the past five years I have been restoring and renovating the 110-year-old house I call home.

## **What's Next**

Hmmm..what's next? Aside from more sleep? Finishing my second novel, more home improvement plans, visits with my nieces and nephews, and I've got my heart set on taking a big trip soon (the question is which item on my travel list will be next?)