Bea’s 60th birthday – speech notes

I love everyone here tonight – especially the bartender and the caterer.

Okay put up your hand if you can’t quite talk yet. Put up your hand if you’ve the latest lego movie. Put up your hand if you remember 911. Put up your hand if you can remember where you were when John Lennon was shot. Put up your hand if you were present for the World War 2 battle of Scheldt. This is just to illustrate that our youngest person here is 5 months and our oldest is almost 95.

A few months ago Mike looked at me and said “honey are you mad at me”. A few weeks ago he said wow you look so tired. I said “Mike – I’m neither angry nor tired - this is my face now!”.

If you aren’t an accountant or an estate executor you probably don’t know that when someone dies you have to prepare and submit in their final tax return. It is actually called “the Terminal Return”. Truth! When my mom died, my brother Art and I were executors and when we looked through our parents photo album, there are these wonderful black and white images but we don’t know their names or their stories. All of this got me thinking that it would be a good idea to have my celebration of my life before I’m dead.

Don’t worry, I don’t think this is an original idea.

Its not often I have a lot of people trapped in a room and I know I need to be either funny and brief in order to keep you in the room. Fortunately I know how to be brief.

I first want to say that I have had a great life. I got to go to University, travel the world, and do interesting work. I spent 10 years working in prisons and that experience shaped me like no other. My former boss and his wonderful wife Barb are here tonight. Don’t worry Henry I know you think you weren’t my boss but you were. Henry told us that the inmates were our business and not an interruption from our business. This has stuck with me my whole life. I remember thinking wow I am going to work with the worst people in Canada. People in Federal prisons. What I found out is that most of these guys were just like you and me but with crappier parents and maybe a learning disability and a mental health and addictions issue and personality disorder or two or three thrown in. But I stopped being afraid of “bad” people.

I had a few best friends through part of elementary school and all of high school. We would spend all day together at school and the come home at night and talk on the phone (in those days there was only one phone per household) until our parents kicked us off. As I get older, I realize that they hold memories of a time in my life that no one else has. Who else knows you when you are 12 or 15 better than you best girlfriends. Wanda Tom Donna Denise and Gord. I would not be who I am today without your help.

I met my husband Mike Mangan later in life. I was 33. I remember telling him I would never date anyone who was 40. That was really old. Now of course old is - like 70. There are a lot of Mangan’s here tonight. Some of them are even kind of famous. I’ve come to really like and respect them. Louise and Liz. Kate and Scott Neil and Kate Dan and Kirsten. Matt and Liam Pat and Penny, Tim and PJ . See! Lots of Mangans! (of course Andersons too Scott and Cheryl and Don). Mike is not only my biggest supporter, he is also just about the best person I know. Just ask his drycleaner. (Oh you’re Mike’s wife. You are so lucky. He is the nicest person in the world. – I get that a lot)

I read a quote once “Children get spoiled because you can’t spank Grandmas”. (or Auntie’s)I The chocolate fountain is in honour of all the kids here tonight.

Zach and Alex, Kian Logan, Isaac and Cleo Liam PJ Jude and Hayden. Kids just rule.

Uncle Ed is here tonight. He is our most senior and liveliest Uncle (and well the only one left – there’s that) and we are so glad because it gives us all hope. I’ve always thought that your cousins are your first friends. We were so lucky to grow up with our cousins. There were 9 of us. Val and Harriet and Ian are here.

It was also great to have an older brother and sister to break in your parents. By the time I came along, my parents were too worn out to discipline me so I was the spoiled one. My mom always used to say why cant you be a good little girl like your cousin Valerie. I guess I had a bit of a mouth on me. I do remember it getting washed out with soap. My brother and sister produced four wonderful nieces and nephews. I adore every one of them. Heather and Chuck Sheri Carrie and Mike.

Finally I want to thank my workmates, who were smart enough to show up for the Boss’s party. Greg, Janice, Marcus, Faris, Katarina, Chad, Jill, Clay. You make coming to work fun. My dance friends, Paul and Kathie and Mark. My adopted kids Aaron and Lauren. My most adored friend, Lauchie.

(I need a good closing)