

# CANADIAN IMMIGRANT

ARRIVE.  
SUCCEED.  
INSPIRE.

## FUSION

NEWS. PEOPLE. EVENTS.

### PROFILE

## CONSTABLE ANDREW ROSBROOK

Revitalized runner

**C**linically dead for seven minutes after having a heart attack while running a half-marathon in spring 2013, Constable Andrew Rosbrook recovered and even made it to his wedding just 20 days later. The English-born immigrant speaks about his second shot at life in Canada.

#### Tell us about the incident at the marathon in 2013.

I have been a competitive runner for most of my life. In recent years I had focused on very long races of up to 50 miles. On May 5, 2013, however, I was attempting to set a new best time for the half-marathon distance. During the race I felt physically fine, my legs felt strong and my breathing was light and even, but for some reason that I could not fathom, my pace was slow. I vividly remember every step of the race up to the 15-kilometre mark, after that I have no memory. Somehow I made it to beyond 20 kilometres and with about 500 metres of the race left I blacked out and collapsed, striking the road with my face. My left descending artery had become entirely blocked and my heart had stopped.



Constable Andrew Rosbrook on his New Life Mikey Marathon last year.

Fortunately, there were two doctors, a firefighter and an on-duty police officer in the crowd watching the race. They ran to my assistance and provided CPR and artificial respiration. When the paramedics arrived they managed to get my heart restarted using a portable defibrillator. The first real recollection I have after that is of waking up in hospital and discovering what had happened to me.

#### That must have been life altering for you ...

I now pay greater attention to my diet and make a special effort to defuse stress by adopting a more relaxed attitude to everyday trials and annoyances. As for running, it is one passion I was totally unable to abandon. I celebrated the one-year anniversary of my collapse by running from Ottawa to Toronto — a venture that took me eight days and saw me covering 470 kilometres.

#### Why did you run so far?

I undertook this enormous journey [called the New Life Mikey Marathon] to raise awareness for the necessity to have publicly accessible defibrillators commonplace in our communities and to raise funds for the charitable organization, the Mikey Network, which provides these defibrillators.

#### Tell us about your immigration journey.

I came to Canada in 1997. Ever since I was a child I had wanted to live in Canada having been drawn by my impression of its landscape, its culture and its people. When I first arrived in Canada, I was in awe of Toronto's architecture and the scenery of Northern Ontario. Shortly after arriving, I drove across the country and up to the Northwest Territories where I lived for a year. This reassured me and confirmed that I had arrived in a truly incredible, beautiful and diverse country.

#### Do you ever compare life in England to life here?

I have very fond memories of England, but Canada is where I belong. I have had such great personal and professional opportunities and successes here. I have thrived since coming to Canada and have done things that I may have been too hesitant to do if I still lived in England. For example, I found that when I suggested that I undertake my charitable run, most people's attitudes were tremendously positive and supportive; I did not encounter any cynicism or doubts. These are traits that I believe are fostered by Canadian society.

#### What are some tips that you would give other newcomers?

To newcomers, I say, be prepared to embrace Canadian culture as well as the opportunities available. Educate yourself as much as possible, with Canadian ways, Canadian laws, politics, sports, arts and the environment and plan to become a citizen. The second proudest day in my life was when I became a Canadian citizen; the proudest day was when my wife, who is originally from Taiwan, became one.

#### What's next for you ... any runs for the upcoming second anniversary of your heart attack?

My focus this year has been on family and career, but who knows what the future holds. 🍁

**skilled immigrant  
infocentre**

Vancouver Public Library Central Library, Level 4  
350 West Georgia Street  
Phone: 604-331-3603  
Web: skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca

**Employment information  
for career decisions**

**A free service for immigrants  
to British Columbia**