

Champion goes public and I buy a new car

Further progress was being made by Sequoia Associates Inc. not only to modernise Champion, but also to make the company more attractive to future buyers. Already there were structural changes to the factory with the elimination of some cement block walls, resealing the floor and changing the paint scheme from green to grey. The assembly building was expanded for increased production capacity and the Kanban system, together with numbered stations, streamlined the assembly process. The Business Systems Department (later known as Information Technology or IT) added electronic mail (E-mail) capabilities to the company's computer network. This meant that employees using computer terminals in their line of work could communicate both internally and externally using E-mail. E-mailing was becoming more universal, so this was a logical step in business efficiency and a means of reducing mailing costs using Canada Post.

In May, 1994, Champion became a public trading company and was listed on the Toronto and Montréal Stock Exchanges under the symbol CHN. 3,520,000 shares, worth \$42,240,000, were raised through public trading (IPO). Employees were encouraged to participate in the share buying scheme at \$12.00 per share. Of course, this was a business ploy to make the company more 'marketable' and was a powerful incentive.

My 1988 Pontiac Grand Prix was still in good condition, but the desire to upgrade began to simmer and I started to look around for a new car. General Motors, the preferred manufacturer, didn't have any models that suited my specifications. However, Ford Motor Company had just released the all-new 1994 Mustang, and it looked stunning. With visions in my head harking back to the 1970 model Mustang Mach 1, I secretly harboured thoughts of owning its successor and possibly reliving those heady days. The usual initial enquiries with the local dealer and a test drive, together with reviewing the product literature and comparing features, convinced me that a part exchange (trade-in) deal was in the offing. So I negotiated with Craig Davidson of Suncoast Ford and took delivery of a new laser red metallic Mustang on July 4th, 1994.

Engineering wise, the biggest departure for me from the previous three cars was a return to rear wheel drive. Unfortunately there was no option. However, the emergency brake was, once again, activated by the more customary hand lever nestled behind the short-throw gear shift lever. The interior was well appointed; the driver and front passenger compartment with its wraparound 'cockpit' styling and central console appealing to my aviation thinking. A full array of analogue gauges was supplemented with the CB radio to provide an impressive display of instrumentation. The charcoal grey cloth upholstery for the ergonomic seats was also smart looking. Outside, the sleek, smooth lines echoed past Mustang features, such as the sculpted side imitation air intakes and a 'power bulge' bonnet (hood). All in all, a very desirable vehicle.

There was one unfortunate situation arising from the change of vehicles. My old Pontiac Grand Prix was much admired by Mike Eperjesy, a colleague at work. Mike and I had known each other for years and even worked in tandem to verify some of my earlier publication research. He had often asked me to let him know when the Pontiac was available for private sale. Mike was quite the wheeler-dealer, so I knew he would drive a hard bargain for the best price. My preference was to deal direct with the car salesman and that was what happened. One day in the office, Mike approached me and asked, "Is that your old car on the Ford

dealer's used car lot"? I replied, "Yes", and he walked away. From then on, he refused to speak to me, undoubtedly because I hadn't given him the opportunity to negotiate a private deal. It was some years later, after he had moved away from Goderich to work for Champion in Alberta, and on a routine factory visit did he condescend to have a conversation.

At one time, an armada of power boats visited Goderich. These were huge racing motor boats that made a great deal of noise and churned up the lake water in white wakes as they propelled across the outer harbour. I believe they were on a poker rally and were heading north from their last checkpoint in Bayfield.

Exploring 'out west'

Our 20th wedding anniversary on July 12th, 1994, was fast approaching and, as I was still obliged to take my summer vacation at the same time as the company annual shutdown period, plans were made to spend a special holiday 'out west.' The two weeks away would incorporate a tour of the Alberta and British Columbia Rocky Mountain national parks, and a direct flight from Toronto to Calgary, Alberta, was the first stage. When we arrived at Calgary International Airport, we were greeted by the city's 'official' ambassadors wearing their traditional white Stetson hats. After this reception, we rented a car for two weeks and drove to the hotel for our overnight stay. The following morning's breakfast was unique. Instead of using the hotel's dining room, we joined other guests in the outside car park where one of the special "Stampede Breakfast" events was happening. In the days of the annual "Calgary Stampede" most hotels organise a free, all-you-can-eat breakfast. This is just one of the festival's features, and consists of volunteers preparing an array of foods such as pancakes, sausages, beef patties and side salads. We certainly didn't go hungry that morning!

We started our driving trip heading west along the TCH (Hwy. 1) towards Banff National Park and the Rocky Mountain foothills. Our destination was the celebrated 600-room Canadian Pacific (CP) Banff Springs Hotel where we were to spend our 20th wedding anniversary celebration. The mighty bulk of the chateau style hotel was nestled at the base of a range of mountains, and we were fortunate to visit on a sunny day punctuated with white fluffy clouds. When we registered, however, we were a little dismayed when it turned out we were assigned to a room in the hotel's annex and not in the main building. It seemed that guests in large parties such as bus tours had priority. The room wasn't exactly the best accommodation either. It was located on the top floor and the small dormer window provided little ventilation. Under the sloping metal roof the room became hot. There was no air conditioning, and the only relief came from a small table fan that circulated the stifling air. Our impressions of CP Hotels didn't improve when we went for or celebratory dinner. There were a few different 'themed' restaurants in the hotel, including one with a German-inspired atmosphere. This appealed to us and we made the best of what was a disappointing *carte de jour*. The themed atmosphere, itself, was nonexistent, largely due to the many 'OTs' ('Other Tourists'), most of who were Oriental visitors. However, at least we could brag that we stayed at this iconic hotel.

Having now entered Banff National Park, the snow covered peaks began to appear as we travelled along the Bow Valley Parkway, past the rapids of Bow Falls, *en route* to Lake Louise. One of the most scenic and idyllic lakes – Moraine Lake – was nearby and, despite a cloudy sky, the majesty of the surrounding Valley

of the Ten Peaks was breathtaking. We were there on our own and in a picture perfect situation with the blue, placid lake; tall pine trees; rocky outcrops, and the towering mountain backdrop. No small wonder that the vista was chosen to grace one side of the Canadian twenty dollar (\$20.00) banknote (bill).

We stayed overnight in the town of Lake Louise, but not in the Château Lake Louise resort hotel. This huge complex was more geared for accommodating bus tours, so we found a small boutique hotel in the town itself. However, we visited the Château just to see it up close, and followed the walking trail around one side of the lake until dusk obliged us to return to the village. At this time my camera was having problems and, as it was important to photographically record this trip, I needed a new exposure meter battery. Fortunately, there was a photography shop in a nearby plaza that had the type of battery required.

If we thought that the mountain scenery had been outstanding at this stage of the journey we were mistaken. The next day's weather couldn't have been more perfect for travelling and viewing the awesome vistas along the Icefields Parkway (Hwy. 93). Chief among the icefields at the beginning were the Crowsfoot, Bow and Peyto Glaciers; their massive ice walls glinting in the sun. After cresting Bow Pass (6,785 ft. [2068 m]) we stopped at Peyto Viewpoint. Far below and stretching to the northern ranges was the icy blue water of Peyto Lake surrounded by an unbroken coniferous forest – the classic view of the Canadian Rockies. An amusing incident happened as I was taking a photo of this scene. To get a stable shot (there was a cool breeze blowing at the time), I stood with legs wide apart and my body supported against the viewpoint railings. Suddenly, I felt a presence between my legs. Shortly after we had arrived, a tourist bus stopped and opened its door to disgorge a tide of humanity. Like so many lemmings, the flow of excited, gabbling Japanese tourists swarmed up the steps to the viewpoint each eager to take as many photos as time would allow. One wiry, little man decided his best image could be captured while positioned between my outstretched legs. He came and went in a flash.

The Icefields Parkway continued north to the junction with the David Thompson Highway (Hwy. 11) at the outfitting settlement of Saskatchewan River Crossing. More exotic views came into view as we passed the Saskatchewan and Dome Glaciers leading to Sunwapta Pass (6,676 ft. [2035 m]) – the gateway to Jasper National Park – and the Columbia Icefield with its formidable Athabasca Glacier. Even in the days before the coining of the phrase “global warming”, it was abundantly clear to see the reduction in size of the glacier as it retreated over time. Year markers showed the limit of the glacier's leading edge, now far from the highway where they once met. The Athabasca Glacier is accessible on foot, as well as special all-wheel-drive tourist buses that travel on the surface of the river of ice. Walking on the surface meant being mindful of the dangers of falling into a crevasse. However, the unique experience of glacier walking attracted many curious visitors, including myself.

The remainder of the drive along the Icefields Parkway took us past magnificent peaks and waterfalls to the tourist town of Jasper, known for its luxurious Jasper Park Lodge. Here at the junction with the TCH (Hwy. 16 – Yellowhead Route) we headed northeast to Hinton and the Crestwood Hotel. On the way, we encountered several species of wildlife, including elk and bighorn sheep. Hinton is a whistle-stop on the main Canadian National Railway (CNR) line that also serves the local pulp mill marshalling yard (switch yard) and the sound of shunting trains continued through the night much to our annoyance.



The Banff Springs Hotel Nestled in the Bow River Valley, Alberta, July, 1994.



Monica Poses at Moraine Lake in the Valley of the Ten Peaks, Alberta, July, 1994.



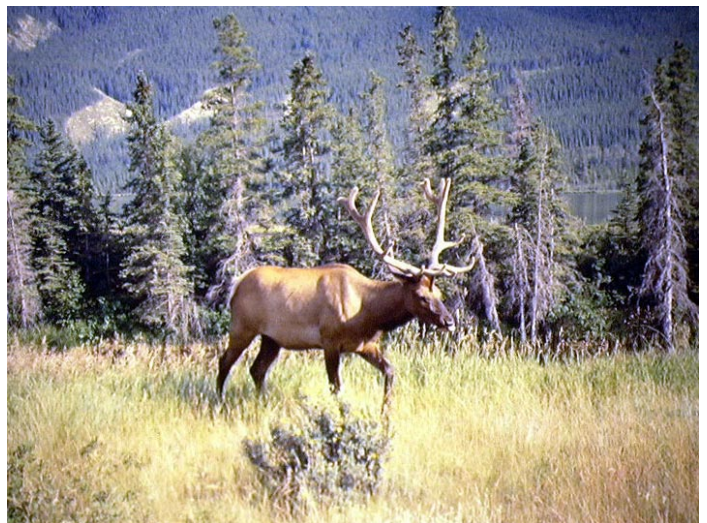
The Glacial Water of Peyto Lake, Icefields Parkway, Alberta, July, 1994.



Monica Poses with the Athabasca Glacier in the Background, Icefields Parkway, Alberta, July, 1994.



Barry Walking Somewhere on the Athabasca Glacier, Icefields Parkway, Alberta, July, 1994.



Wild Elk Roaming in Jasper National Park, Alberta, July, 1994.



Maligne Lake with Samson Peak in the Background, Jasper National Park, Alberta, July, 1994.



The Maligne Canyon Created by the Rushing Maligne River, Jasper National Park, Alberta, July, 1994.



Mt. Robson – Highest Peak in the Canadian Rockies, Yellowhead Highway, British Columbia, July, 1994.



Raw Power of the Athabasca Falls, Icefields Parkway, Jasper National Park, Alberta, July, 1994.



Kananaskis Country in the Rocky Mountains Forest Reserve, Alberta, July, 1994.



Turtle Mountain and Rocks from the Frank Slide, Alberta, July, 1994.

Using Hinton as a base, we explored some of the wild scenery in Jasper National Park and Mt. Robson Provincial Park. The broad Athabasca River reflected the snow capped peaks behind as we drove along Hwy. 16 to a turnoff leading us through the wilderness past Medicine Lake and Sirdar Mountain to Maligne Lake. Considered one of the jewels of Jasper National Park, Maligne Lake was, indeed, a picturesque and unspoilt glacial lake. At one end was the towering Samson Peak, and the still water was punctuated with islands sprouting tall, straight evergreen trees. A picnic lunch was made more interesting with the arrival at the table of scavenging Grey Jay (Whisky Jack) and Clark's Nutcracker birds. Then close by we heard strange squeaking noises and watched the antics of ground squirrels at play. The weather improved to a full sunny day as we retraced our steps through Maligne Canyon with its deep, eroded ravine and rushing waters of the Maligne River.

The Continental Divide is a shared border between Alberta and British Columbia, as well as Jasper National Park and Mt. Robson Provincial Park. Mt. Robson (12,972 ft. [3954 m]) is the highest point in the Canadian Rockies and is accessed from the east across the Yellowhead Pass (3,711 ft. [1131 m]). The drive along Hwy. 16 was typical alpine scenery and the vista of Yellowhead Lake called for a photographic stop. Following the Fraser River and Moose Lake, the road was hemmed in on both sides by tall pine forests. We said to ourselves, "Where's Mount Robson"? "It should be around here somewhere". Suddenly, at a bend in the road, the forest ended and receded as a vast grass field opened up to reveal the full magnificence of the snow capped peak of Mt. Robson. This huge monolith was awe-inspiring, especially as it stood stark against the azure blue sky with the occasional white fluffy cloud. The classic 'layered' appearance with snow lodged in ledges and faces and viewed with the glaciated valley in the foreground couldn't be improved upon as a photographic subject. We were totally amazed at this sight.

We had now reached the furthest point north of our journey and it was time to retrace our steps along the Icefields Parkway. Again there was much evidence of wildlife, such as a small herd of elk, along the highway. Under brooding Mt. Edith Cavell roared the mighty Athabasca Falls. We stopped to explore the hiking trail that led close to the brink of the 75 ft. (23 m) cataract. There was an observation bridge where visitors could wonder at the raw power and also the deep and craggy limestone gorge created by the eroding water. The Icefields Parkway scenery was equally as stunning when viewed in the opposite direction, so we had a fresh perspective of the peaks and glaciers as we travelled south to Lake Louise.

The last time we had seen the spectacular Spiral Tunnels was in 1978 (see Chapter 8) and, as we were in the vicinity, it was opportune to take the TCH (Hwy. 1) over the Kicking Horse Pass (5,403 ft. [1647 m]) at the BC/Alberta provincial boundary. On the special observation platform, visitors waited patiently for the mile-long freight train to enter the lower tunnel entrance and reappear at the upper tunnel exit (or *vice versa*) – both ends of the train in plain view.

Returning to Alberta, we headed east along the TCH to the junction with Hwy. 40 which took us through the beautiful and relatively unspoiled Kananaskis Country; part of the Rocky Mountains Forest Reserve. At lunch we stopped at Kananaskis Village, a recreation resort strictly controlled where development was concerned. The pleasant weather and alpine air convinced us to spread our picnic on a table in the village grounds near a hiking trail. As we were enjoying the lunch *al fresco*, a movement in the corner of my eye

caught my attention. Turning my head I noticed a grey/beige shape slinking across the trail. It was a wild coyote on the prowl. However, it avoided us and continued on its way. Travelling south, Hwy. 40 threaded its way through Peter Lougheed Provincial Park to a visitor information centre just before Highwood Pass. The area's unique flora and fauna was described, and certainly the alpine anemones were in full bloom. Highwood Pass (7,237 ft. [2206 m]) was a classic U-shaped glaciated valley surrounded by lofty peaks. As the road descended through the foothills, dark clouds gathered just as we were approaching High River. Suddenly we drove straight into a ferocious hailstorm. The noise from the hailstones was deafening and forced us to stop on the side of the road until the storm passed by. It was quite frightening and I was afraid that the windscreen (windshield) was going to shatter, but apart from some minor dents there was no other damage to the rented car.

The southwest corner of Alberta is an area of intense mining activity; particularly the coal deposits in and around Crowsnest Pass. We headed for the infamous Frank slide – a provincial historic site learned about in a reference book at home. On April 29th, 1903, a huge unstable mass of Turtle Mountain tore loose and rolled down the mountainside. The avalanche of rock obliterated much of the coal mining town of Frank and killed 70 people. Today, evidence of the rock slide and the naked face of Turtle Mountain are still very much apparent. A descriptive cairn commemorates the event. We then drove along Hwy. 3 (Crowsnest Highway) to Crowsnest Pass (4,580 ft. [1396 m]) at the BC/Alberta provincial boundary for a scenic lookout.

We stayed at Pincher Creek, but because of limited time decided not to visit Waterton Lakes National Park, which with Glacier National Park straddled the Canada/U.S.A. border. Instead we headed towards Fort Macleod on Hwy. 3 and then to the provincial historic site of Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump. This museum and archaeological site preserves the culture of early aboriginals and their method of killing large numbers of buffalo by driving them over a high cliff. A series of visual interpretations show how the herd was channelled using artificial means to the cliff edge where the beasts plunged to their deaths. When walking around the outside of the museum site we noticed a small group of people approaching us. To my complete surprise the lady in the group was Sharon Brown, a fellow employee at Champion! She was there with her fiancé and children from her first marriage. We all thought the chance meeting was a remarkable coincidence.

From Fort Macleod we continued east along Hwy. 3 through Lethbridge to Taber; then north on Hwy. 36 to Brooks. Nearby was Dinosaur Provincial Park, located in the rich fossil beds of the valley of the Red Deer River. All around, the natural landscape was one of arid 'badlands' with their characteristic eroded canyons and lack of vegetation. The park had a Field Museum that was well displayed with artifacts, complete dinosaur skeletons and life-size models. There were guided hikes of the fossil beds and we joined a group of visitors led by a knowledgeable ranger. He pointed out the ancient fossils in the rocks and provided a description of the prehistoric animals. One caveat was mentioned before the hike and that was for visitors not to disturb any of the fossils *in situ*. As is typical, somebody in the group ignored the warning and picked up a bone. The guide saw this and was furious. He told the perpetrator to, "Put the artifact back exactly as it was found"! Later we bought a small dinosaur bone souvenir that now adorns our collection of mineral pieces and shells from various parts of Canada. The town of Brooks is well known as an agricultural research centre and also for an unusual landmark – the Brooks Aqueduct. This two mile (3.2 km) long reinforced concrete structure used to take irrigation water to thousands of acres of farmland, but is now defunct.



Full Scale Diorama of the Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, Alberta, July, 1994.



Vista of the Dinosaur Provincial Park Badlands, Alberta, July, 1994.



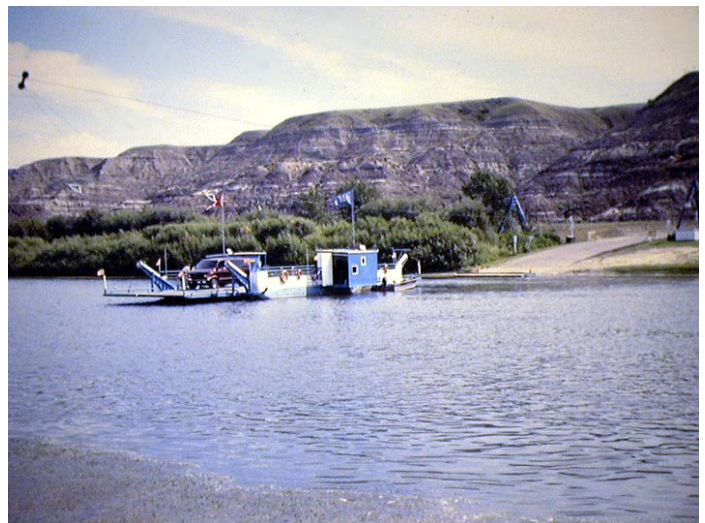
Fossil Bed of Bones in Dinosaur Provincial Park, Alberta, July, 1994.



Reinforced Concrete Pillars Supporting the Brooks Aqueduct, Brooks, Alberta, July, 1994.



Group of "Hoodoos", Curiously Eroded Columns of Rock, Drumheller, Alberta, July, 1994.



The Bleriot Ferry Crossing the Red Deer River near Drumheller, Alberta, July, 1994.

From Brooks, the TCH took us to the junction with Hwy. 56 north to Drumheller. The Royal Tyrell Museum contains a vast collection of fossils found in the “Valley of the Dinosaurs” part of Alberta’s ‘badlands.’ While the museum visit took up the best part of a day, equally as interesting was the surrounding countryside. It was very hot and the fierce sun beat down on us as we explored the local hiking trails. Fortunately our wide brim “Tilley” hats provided good protection, and we made sure to hydrate regularly with bottled water. Unusual natural features of the area are the peculiarly shaped “hoodoos.” These rock formations are the result of soft material being eroded to leave columns of harder rock, often capped with a wide, flat boulder that gives the columns a mushroom appearance.

There were vantage points along a scenic drive. From the Orkney Hill Lookout we could see the mile-wide valley and winding Red Deer River stretching to the horizon into the ‘badlands.’ Crossing the river to a parallel road on the other side was made on the Bleriot ferry. The flat-bottomed scow used an ingenious drive mechanism of ropes and pulleys to haul itself between the two docks. There were several photographic stops, such as at Horsethief Canyon, before returning to the cool comfort of the hotel room. On the last day, it was an easy drive back to Calgary International Airport via Hwys. 9, 72 and 2; returning the rented car, and flying back to Toronto for the homeward journey to Goderich.

Engineering activities

The year was busy with engineering activities; particularly where SAE and Champion were concerned. The SAE Southwestern Ontario Section had an ambitious programme of events – including a visit by the SAE international president, Randall (“Randy”) R. Richards on March 23rd, 1994. Randy was the keynote speaker at this event, which was held at “The Black Angus” steakhouse, London, Ontario. I organised a governing board meeting where we met Randy and also Antenor Willems, the SAE publicity manager. Randy also presented the Outstanding Young Member Award to Marcel Poernbacher, who took over as our treasurer on later governing boards. The programme of events included two major plant tours – Valeo Engine Cooling Inc. in Stratford, Ontario, and another at Champion. I had completed my term as chair and the position for the 1994-1995 section year was taken over by Andy vander Zanden.

To add to my engineering knowledge, I enrolled in a course on geometric dimensioning and tolerancing (GD & T) arranged by Conestoga College and taught in-house. At first, Ray wasn’t too happy for me taking time off work and attending the course, but I explained that GD & T shown on some of the engineering drawings needed to be fully understood. Eventually I completed the forty-four hour course from November, 1993 to January, 1994 without any further problems.

In August, 1994, the General Engineering Department underwent a physical makeover. The office cubicles were abolished with the removal of all partitions. Some personnel were shifted around, but this didn’t affect Technical Publications. We were spared, too, of a calamity when later in the month a major electrical malfunction to all the Engineering workstation computer power bars caused a panic in the office. Quick thinking to immediately disconnect the power supply at the main electricity contact breaker panel saved many of the computers from destruction; although a blue haze permeated throughout the room for a while. It was a close call.

The next quantum leap in Champion motor grader design was the Series IV machine. The new generation incorporated improvements derived from legislated diesel engine emission controls and a marketing campaign known as “Voice of the Customer.” Changes included: optional Moveable Blade Control System (MBCS); industry standard pattern hydraulic control levers; standardized front axle; improved hydraulics; 24 volt electrical system, and sloping nose. The first Series IV production machine was S/N 24736, built on October 17th, 1994. These product improvements, of course, had to be researched and incorporated into new technical publications, which meant additional job security for me. My weekly salary now was \$733.88.

This shot in the arm was in addition to my conversion of Bud Lee technical publications into the Champion format. The compact road graders (now branded as C-Series machines) were aggressively marketed and becoming more well known as a Champion product. On each information gathering trip to Charlotte my face was becoming more recognised by the workers there. We struck up a very good relationship and as well as mingling with the office personnel, I spend quality time with the shop floor workers. Two of the chaps became firm acquaintances: Allen Harris on the front axle assembly, and Roy Bebee, who welded small parts. Allen was a true ‘Southern boy’, and Roy; although from the north (Ohio), was tolerated by his ‘redneck’ coworkers. As my trips became more independent, it meant renting a car and not having to rely on others for transportation. Champion’s insurance coverage was good for rental cars and there was a wide choice of vehicles at Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. Remembering how to find Mount Holly Road proved challenging, and on one occasion I took the wrong turning and started driving on the Billy Graham Freeway in the opposite direction to that of my destination. Accommodation at the Fairfield Inn also changed as Dave Million rented a small apartment unit for himself and business guests. Being independent I could explore the city and locate different restaurants for my evening meal. Some had interesting names, such as: “Hillbillies” and “The Black Eye Pea.” There were a few shopping malls in and around Charlotte; including Southpark and Concord Mills, and often after dinner I would drive to Southpark and stop at the “Barnes & Noble” bookstore/bistro to look around the shelves and drink a late evening coffee.

Fall excursions and a ‘green’ Christmas

A colourful fall encouraged us out on day trips in and around Huron and Bruce Counties. Just after Thanksgiving Day the trees in Goderich were particularly brilliant in their autumn foliage. Fall turned into winter, but there was little snow on the ground and, as the weeks progressed, the prospect of a ‘green’ Christmas was a significant reality. On December 25th, 1994, the sun shone and the temperatures were mild enough for us to enjoy an afternoon cup of tea and slice of Christmas cake on the patio dressed in light shirts and shorts, and with our “Tilley” hat brim turned upright on one side *à la* Australia.

During the year, Roger and Susan Moore kept in touch and informed us of their children’s academic progress. Stephen had taken his G.C.S.E. ‘A’ level examinations and, following a short holiday in Devon with friends, he returned to part-time work before starting university in October. He was accepted at Portsmouth University for a four-year B.Sc. degree course in Applied Environmental Science. Lindsey also graduated from senior school and enrolled in a Hospitality course at Henley College. Together with practical experience working part-time as a waitress at the Allesley Hotel, she was enjoying her chosen field of study. It was good to know things were working out well for them as they had put in a great deal of effort.

Champion expands again, and a successful SAE event

Sequoia Associates Inc. continued looking for suitable companies to take over and incorporate their products under the Champion brand name. In January, 1995, Frink Canada, a manufacturer of truck-mounted highway snowploughs (snowplows), was bought up. The company assets included the factory building in Cambridge, Ontario, where there was surplus space. This was put to good use and the SuperPac self-propelled road roller assembly line was transferred there. Although the Frink trade name was retained on the product, as will be seen later in the year, the Ingersoll-Rand range of paving machines was renamed Champion Pro-Pav Series following the company acquisition.

A successful event organised in part by the SAE Southwestern Ontario Section took place on January 18th, 1995. Past chairman, Doug Hutchinson, arranged for the Motion Lincoln Mercury car dealership in London, Ontario, to sponsor a display of racing cars that could be viewed by the general public. Over five hundred people attended and many asked questions for the professional racing drivers on hand to answer. The event also enticed a representative from the SAE headquarters, and information literature helped to promote SAE public awareness.

Early spring trip to England

In what was becoming an annual ritual, we visited England for two weeks in March, 1995. The first five days were spent with Dad and Kay in Potton, Bedfordshire, and we noticed some deterioration in Kay's health. On one occasion Dad wanted me to take us all to a specific jewellery shop in Bedford. Apparently Dad had presented Kay with an expensive brooch, but when Kay tried to fasten the pin, it broke off. Dad decided it was because of faulty manufacture and wanted to return the item to the jewellers with a complaint. After a session in the shop – and I cannot remember if the situation was resolved to everyone's satisfaction – we returned to the car in the multi-storey car park. Kay was somewhat disoriented and had to be guided to her seat in the car. Later, we visited a garden centre and Kay asked Dad to buy a specific item which Dad balked at. So Kay became huffy and, when we returned home, refused to come out with us for dinner. In the end Monica and I went out alone and ended up at the "Rising Sun" pub. From then on, relationships became strained and following another incident that involved spilled milk (which I put down to Kay's disoriented condition) dictated that we should leave as soon as possible.

On our May, 1993, trip in and around Ironbridge, Shropshire, we visited several museums in the area using a special 'passport.' The 'passport' was still valid and so we returned to Ironbridge and accessed other museums on the list. In the small hotel where we stayed, the guest rooms featured a decorative open fireplace. The fireplace opening was flanked with several ceramic tiled panels that extended to the mantelpiece. These ceramic features were made locally as a spin-off industry and many of the intricate designs could be seen as artifacts in the Jackfield Tile Museum. The hand made glazed tiles were a product of Maw & Co.

From Ironbridge our next destination on this vacation was the ancient city of Chester, founded by the Romans. We found a nice B & B for accommodation and then explored the city centre that's completely



SWONT Section Governing Board and SAE President Randy Richards, London, Ontario, March, 1994.



Barry Presented with SAE Section Chairman's Award by Andy vander Zanden, Goderich, September, 1994.



Typical Rural Fall Scene in Bruce County, Ontario, October, 1994.



Monica and Barry Enjoy Tea and Cake on the Patio, 'Green' Christmas, Goderich, Ont., December, 1994.



Barry Sits beside the Hotel Room Tiled Fireplace, Ironbridge, Shropshire, England, March, 1995.



"The Seasons", Hand Made Ceramic Decorative Tiles, Ironbridge, Shropshire, England, March, 1995.



Half-timbered Buildings at Watergate, a Gate in the City Wall, Chester, Cheshire, England, March, 1995.



View of the Cross and "The Rows" Pedestrian-only Precinct, Chester, Cheshire, England, March, 1995.



The 13th Century Castle and Mediæval Town Walls, Conwy, Wales, March, 1995.



The Old Stone Bridge, a Beauty Spot in the Vale of Conwy, Betws-y-Coed, Wales, March, 1995.



Looking Across the Vale of Conwy to the Snowdonia Range, near Betws-y-Coed, Wales, March, 1995.



At Home with Roger, Lindsey and Susan Moore, Allesley Village, England, March, 1995.

surrounded by Mediæval walls. The late afternoon and evening were sunny and ideal for perambulating. Just before crossing the River Dee, we stopped for a short while in a field-like common area called “The Meadows” where several cows quietly grazed almost in the heart of the city. The vista across the river was made even more serene with the virtually silent passing of a rowing coxed eight ‘shell’ on the placid water. Finding our way to the nearest access to the city walls we passed a terrace of Mediæval half-timbered houses in excellent condition. Another such building was the “Bear and Billet” pub with its ‘black and white’ beamed façade clearly seen from the wall rampart. The Eastgate, surmounted by an ornate clock, is one of the entrances to the traffic-free pedestrian precinct – reminiscent of the one in Coventry. The precinct is unique, in that the Mediæval buildings that make up most of the structures contain a continuous balcony on the first floor with access steps at various intervals. Known as “The Rows”, they provide a sheltered passageway for pedestrians. The light was starting to fail and light rain was falling, so we found a pub for dinner. Before returning to the B & B for the night, Monica made use of the public telephone charge card we had bought by calling her old friend, Jean Smallman, in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, for a long chat.

Using the Chester B & B as a base for two nights we made a day trip into Wales. A road followed the coastline of the River Dee estuary and the Irish Sea through the seaside towns of Prestatyn, Rhyl and Colwyn Bay. We crossed the River Conwy estuary and stopped in the Mediæval walled town of Conwy to admire the towering 13th century castle and early 19th century bridges. Souvenirs of the Welsh visit were two bone china coffee mugs adorned with Celtic patterns and produced at the nearby Tywyn Pottery. Penetrating inland, we drove through the Vale of Conwy to the quintessential Welsh resort town of Betws-y-Coed (House of prayer in the wood). The town is nestled in the foothills of Snowdonia National Park and is noted for several beauty spots; including the stone bridge and picturesque waterfalls such as Conwy Falls and Swallow Falls. In the distance, the misty outline of the Snowdonia Range was discernable. Returning overland to Chester took us through communities with enchanting Welsh names; and eventually through Ruthin, Mold and the Wales/Cheshire border.

The next stop was Coventry, but on the spur of the moment we decided to drive to Skegness, Lincolnshire, on the East Coast. The straightest route was through Cheshire, Derbyshire and the Peak District National Park; then Nottinghamshire and the city of Lincoln to Skegness. Finding the seaside resort damp and deserted at this time of the year, we turned south through Boston to Grantham and Leicester before arriving at Coventry. The evening was a great social occasion as we visited Roger and Susan Moore at their home in Allesley Village. Our goddaughter, Lindsey, was also at home so we were able to get up to date with her studies and future aspirations. Stephen was not at home as he was well on his way through his first year at Portsmouth University and, at the time, was studying (cramming) for his examinations.

The remainder of the holiday was spend with Monica’s cousin, Trecia, and her husband, Reg, at their home in Ley Hill, Bucks. There were occasions to go out and explore the locality, as well as partaking in pub lunches and watching home movies. These 8 mm films were taken by Trecia’s father – Uncle Tom Haggerty – and the collection had made its way into Trecia’s possession. There was one film in particular that Reg insisted we watch. He knew that it showed Monica wearing a canary yellow raincoat and sporting a hat, and the footage elicited quite a few comments. Nearby was the house and business of Trecia and Reg’s son, Ian, which we viewed as part of the neighbourhood explorations.

Champion expands again, spring happenings and a meso cyclone

On May 12th, 1995, Sequoia Associates Inc. purchased the asphalt paving division of Ingersoll-Rand in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania. The product was renamed Champion Pro-Pav Series and all models were marketed by Champion Road Machinery Ltd., which now provided a complete range of equipment needed to build a road from scratch and keep it maintained. There were also ambitious plans to relocate the factory, although still within the Shippensburg municipality. The need to transform Ingersoll-Rand's literature into the Champion format was not high on the agenda, and so only a certain amount of cosmetic work was done and I wasn't involved in that exercise. Further signs of the expanding company were to be seen in the hiring of more personnel, including William ("Bill") Legge as vice president of materials and information systems. Bill became part of the management team to argue strongly for changes when it was time to renegotiate the collective agreement. When I became more involved as a shop steward for Local Lodge 1863, Bill was present at most meetings between the company and the union. Also, Champion started trading on the U.S. NASDAQ exchange – symbol CRMLF – in June, 1995.

Early in May, an unusual visitor came to town. The Goderich Exeter Railway (GEXR), a subsidiary of the American company, RailTex, had taken over the defunct Canadian National Railways (CNR) track that terminated at Goderich. Among the various RailTex rolling stock was a special passenger carriage that featured an observation deck – also known as a dome car. This dome car was called the "Silver Palace", and it was brought to Goderich as part of a nationwide public relations exercise for RailTex. Displayed outside the vintage 1906 Grand Trunk Railway station building, the shining stainless steel carriage, built in 1948, was luxuriously furnished inside and harked of days gone by when the railway was a prime mode of transportation. It was similar in appearance to the CNR 'Dayliner' diesel train that used to serve Goderich's passenger traffic before it became unprofitable to run.

Towards the end of the month, the local Dutch community dedicated a special fountain in the Liberation Memorial Park to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Holland by Canadian soldiers. The fountain's shape was that of the five petal points of a tulip combining the representation of people with joined hands and outstretched arms and, at a given moment, started gushing water. With the many blooming tulips in the flower beds, the park became a colourful oasis at one of the entrances to downtown.

A short trip to Lake Erie in June took us to several of the small communities along the shoreline. One of the more picturesque towns was Port Rowan where assorted adjoining boathouses jugged out into the lake to form its own quay. Later in the month, a major refurbishment of a vintage P51 Mustang fighter was completed by Sky Harbour Refinishing Inc. I made sure to drive to the Goderich airport and position my Ford Mustang alongside its namesake aircraft for a novelty snapshot.

Thursday, July 13th, 1995, was a day to remember in Goderich. An unsettled air mass dominated the weather and thunderstorms were predicted. When I left the office in the evening and walked home, the air was still and heavy. The colour of the sky turned yellow and appeared ominous. I thought it was prudent to disconnect all electronic devices, and when visiting my elderly neighbour, Mary, to advise her to do the same, the sky became even more oppressive. I said to her, "This doesn't look good."



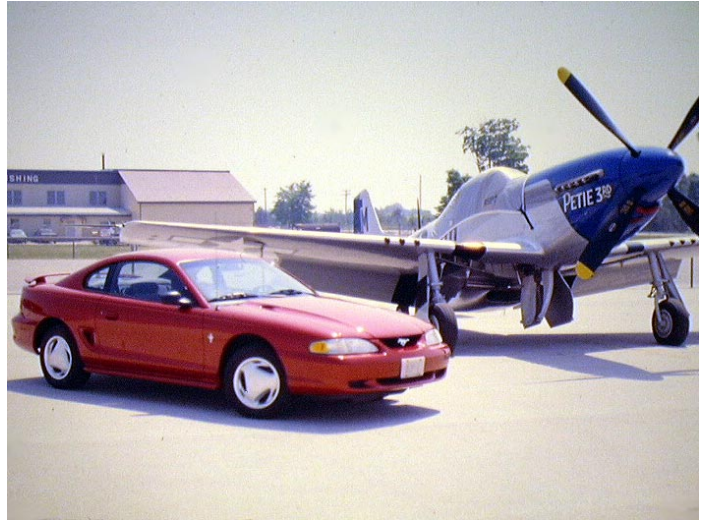
Monica and the RailTex "Silver Palace" Dome Car at the 1906 Station, Goderich, Ontario, May, 1995.



The New Dutch Canadian Liberation Memorial Park Fountain, Goderich, Ontario, May, 1995.



Boathouses – a Shoreline Feature at Port Rowan, Ontario, June, 1995.



Barry's Ford Mustang and a Repainted P51 Mustang, Sky Harbour Airport, Goderich, Ontario, June, 1995.



Damage from the Meso Cyclone Complex (MCC) Wind and Rain Storm, Goderich, Ontario, July, 1995.



Damage from the Meso Cyclone Complex (MCC) Wind and Rain Storm, Goderich, Ontario, July, 1995.

After dinner, the stillness of the air became stirred with the beginning of a weather front that passed across the lake, and high-flying clouds scudded across the sky at an increasing speed. The first signs of a major windstorm were the violent movements of treetops as hurricane force gusts bent them over. The sky darkened sufficiently enough to energise the street lights and the air was filled with flying foliage and other debris. At the height of the tempest, Monica and I (together with Jimmy and Sammy) took refuge in the bathroom as it was the safest room in which to shelter. Fearing the possibility of a tornado developing, I gingerly looked out to from time to time to check on the storm's progress as the wind gusts increased in intensity and lay waste the trees that were in full leaf. Any weak bough was no match for the ferocity and the first victim nearest to us was a substantial limb of the century-old maple tree opposite the apartments. As it fell it landed across the overhead power cables that led to our building, and the force nearly wrenched a utility pole out of the ground. The outcome if this was a complete power cut to the apartments and this situation wasn't resolved until 10 a.m. the next day when the hospital, which is on the same circuit, was reconnected. Other live power cables fell to the ground, but the possibility of electrocution didn't deter curiosity seekers from driving around the neighbourhoods. I tried stopping and explaining to people but, as they completely ignored the danger, I gave up in the end.

The amount of foliage and broken boughs built up in the roads and on properties until the storm passed over. Then people gradually emerged to survey the damage as well as perform some clean up work in the half-light. The town's work crews and private contractors were also active with chain saws, front end loaders and trucks. The fallen bough across from us was removed and the power cables secured.

The following day revealed the true savagery of the storm as I walked across town to inspect the house of some friends who were away. Not one neighbourhood was spared, and some on the lakebank fared much worse where large maple trees had been uprooted and lay crashed against heritage houses. Other trunks and large boughs had collapsed on parked cars, and overhead power cables were hanging down everywhere. The sound of chain saws was much in evidence as work parties cleared the debris. My friends' house had escaped major damage; although a tall fir tree on the property had lost the top third of its growth. The telephone rang while I was inside the house. It was my friend trying to contact someone as he had heard about the storm. I was able to alleviate any fears of property damage, and later his daughter and friends visited to take over the security of the house. I returned home, taking several photographs on the way, and noticed that out-of-town contractors and neighbouring municipality work crews were helping to clear the fallen trees.

The sudden ferocity of the storm had people wondering what type of weather system hit the town. The following week's Goderich Signal-Star newspaper carried a feature section called "Blown away! – the big storm of 1995", in which an interview with personnel from the London, Ontario, weather office of Environment Canada revealed that the storm was categorised as a Meso Cyclone Complex (MCC). The weather event started in Minnesota and travelled east across Michigan and Lake Huron; gaining force on the way and developing wind gusts up to 76 mph (122 km/h), as well as dropping approximately 5 inches (127 mm) of rain. A tornado was ruled out as a possible attendant phenomenon.

For Monica and I the situation came at a bad time as we were just about to leave on our two week trip to Newfoundland and Labrador. Fortunately we were not adversely affected now that power had been restored.

Adventures in Newfoundland and Labrador

The only time we had visited Canada's easternmost province, Newfoundland and Labrador (N.L.), was a day trip on the ferry from North Sydney, Nova Scotia, in 1976. On that occasion we had intended to take our rented car by ferry to the island of Newfoundland, but as we hadn't made an advanced reservation there was no room for an additional vehicle. However, for this vacation we decided to fly direct from Toronto to St. John's, the N.L. provincial capital, and renting a car there.

The flight took only a few hours and once we arrived at St. John's International Airport we rented a car and headed west on the TCH (Hwy. 1) towards Clarenville just south of the Bonavista Peninsula. At Clarenville we encountered a problem. As usual we had pre-booked all our accommodation and, at Clarenville, the hotel was the Holiday Inn. Arriving at the hotel we met Joan, the receptionist, and stated our name. Joan looked but was unable to find us on the guest list. We mentioned that we had made reservations at this and other Holiday Inns for the vacation, and that our names should be listed. Following another search, Joan discovered that for some reason all our Holiday Inn reservations had been cancelled. This didn't bode well. However, now we were treated to the typical Newfoundland laid-back and helpful attitude. Although we were nonplussed at this situation, Joan just took it in her stride and was able not only to secure a room for us in Clarenville, but also to ensure we had rooms at the other Holiday Inn locations.

After settling down in our room, we decided to go into Clarenville for an evening meal. We asked Joan for a recommended restaurant where we could sample the local fare. Now, it's well known in Canada that conversing with a native Newfoundlander or Labradorian was challenging due to the distinct and different dialects of the province. Certainly to the untrained ear, the provincial 'twang' had colourful expressions and vowel shifts that demanded concentration. So, when Joan recommended us to visit "Tilley's Restaurant", her directions included such phrases as "... take a lift ...", meaning, of course, to *take a left*. Attuning our ears to the accent was also necessary when ordering our meal at "Tilley's", a nondescript building on the main road leading into Clarenville. The lady taking the order repeated "... cahd tongues ..." for our request of *cod tongues* – a N.L. delicacy – and delicious they were, too, complete with an accompaniment of tartar sauce.

A long trek to Deer Lake was anticipated for the following day. The rugged scenery of the island of Newfoundland – sometimes called the "Rock" – became all too apparent as we progressed along the TCH. Yet the variety, ranging from dense forests to the occasional seascape, made the journey more interesting. Fortunately the sometimes unpredictable N.L. weather was in our favour and only a slight mist prevented otherwise clear views. A short stop at Joey's Lookout above the community of Gambo provided a respite. The remnants of the Newfoundland Railway tracks and bridges could be seen in the distance. Long since defunct, the route has been preserved as a recreational hiking, all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile trail, now known as the "T' Railway Provincial Park." The remainder of the day's drive took us through Gander with its extensive airport that was important as a staging point during WW II, and later as a refuge for many of the U.S.A. inbound flights that were redirected because of the terrorist activities of September 11th, 2001. Then passing through the twin communities of Grand Falls-Windsor that was dominated by the vast pulp and paper mill complex with its great piles of spruce pulpwood destined to become newsprint or craft paper for packaging. Finally to Deer Lake and the entrance to Gros Morne National Park.

The next day was bright and sunny as we headed from Deer Lake along Hwy. 430 into the Long Range Mountains of the Great Northern Peninsula. These ancient mountains reared up from the flat valley floor around Bonne Bay and, from Rocky Harbour to Cow Head, emerged from the sea as vertical cliffs. One of the many lighthouses that dot the N.L. shoreline could be inspected at Lobster Cove Head. The slender, white painted tower was connected to the lightkeeper's house; now a museum.

Towards the north of Gros Morne National Park is the entrance to Western Brook Pond, the most spectacular part of the reserve. The area is ecologically sensitive; therefore, any tourist traffic is strictly controlled. A special Parks Canada boat takes adventurers into the Western Brook Pond Fjord, and then only able-bodied hikers are allowed to follow experienced guides to the top of the encircling fjord where a fantastic view is guaranteed. Because of the popularity of the trek, a passage on the boat has to be booked well in advance. We had failed to do this so couldn't take part in the expedition. However, all wasn't lost as a substantial boardwalk from the trailhead to the boat jetty brought us to a vantage point for viewing the entrance to the Western Brook Pond Fjord. The almost cloudless sky meant that the sun shone on the landscape to reveal the stark, vertical mountainsides soaring out of the fjord water.

A short way north of the Gros Morne National Park boundary is The Arches Provincial Park. More of a curiosity, the main feature is the huge slab of rock pierced by water eroded arches that gives the park its name. We continued on Hwy. 430 as it hugged the coast of the Great Northern Peninsula, watching for signs of whales and noting the occasional vegetable allotment that sprouted up along the way. These plots are typical of N.L. outpost life where any piece of arable land is put to use; and potatoes, carrots, onions and cabbage, when combined with salted pork, produce a staple delicacy known as 'Jigg's Dinner.' Our next overnight stop was at Hawke's Bay.

Another full day of driving lay ahead and lunch was eaten in a motel restaurant at the quaintly named community of Plum Point. Then we turned inland and travelled east towards the next largest community, St. Anthony. Here we spent two nights, because we needed one full day to explore the highlight of the vacation – L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site. This is the location of the first Viking settlement in North America, *circa* 1000 A.D. In the evening we ate at "The Lightkeeper's Seafood Restaurant."

An early morning mist swirled around the bays and coves, but it didn't deter us exploring a network of boardwalks and belvederes on the St. Anthony rocky shore called Fishing Point Park. A sense of eeriness prevailed as the headlands disappeared and reappeared, and the surf boomed against the cliffs below. The salt sea air was most invigorating. L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site is administered by Parks Canada and, at that time, was early in its development as a prime tourist attraction. A modern interpretive centre documents the activity of a Norwegian archaeological team that discovered the remains of a Viking settlement *circa* 1000 A.D.. Various artifacts found onsite substantiated the presence of Europeans. After browsing through the museum, visitors follow a pathway across the heathland to the site of a replica Viking longhouse. The sod roof structure is accessed through a wattle fence. Inside this windowless mound can be found the huge wooden beams holding up the roof, together with the basic furnishings and trappings typical of communal dwellings. A replica longboat, known as a *knarr*, can be inspected to see the shipwright's work. By now, the site is fully developed, complete with enactments of Viking life by costumed characters.



Barry and the Long Range Mountains of Gros Morne National Park, Lobster Cove, N.L., July, 1995.



Lobster Cove Head Lighthouse and Lightkeeper's House in Gros Morne National Park, NL, July, 1995.



Looking at the Entrance to Western Brook Pond Fjord in Gros Morne National Park, N.L., July, 1995.



Water Eroded Rock at The Arches Provincial Park, Great Northern Peninsula, N.L., July, 1995.



Wattle Fence and Replica Sod Roofed Viking Longhouse, L'Anse-aux-Meadows, N.L., July, 1995.



Monica with a Replica 'Knarr' Viking Longboat at L'Anse-aux-Meadows Nat. Hist. Site, NL, July, 1995.



Fishing Stage and a Fishing Boat; a Typical Outport Scene at Cow Head, N.L., July, 1995.



The Flat-topped Tablelands of the Long Range Mountains near Bonne Bay, N.L., July, 1995.



General Streetscape with Houses, Trout River, N.L., July, 1995.



Crow Head near Twillingate with an Iceberg in the Distance, N.L., July, 1995.



Fishing Stages and Fisherman's Store on the Waterfront of Herring Neck, N.L., July, 1995.



The Silent Witnesses Memorial near Gander International Airport, N.L., July, 1995.

Having travelled the length of the Great Northern Peninsula it was time to retrace our steps along Hwy. 430 towards Rocky Harbour. The day dawned beautifully and a clear, blue sky welcomed us as we drove past the small outports, stopping from time to time to take photographs. These communities, subsisting only on fishing and other seafaring work, were remarkable given their remoteness. The sprinkling of bright painted houses were somehow connected to the ever present government dock. Lobster traps, fishing nets and boats of various shapes and sizes all formed part of the scene. *En route* we noticed the shape of a minke whale that spouted as it swam along parallel to the coastline. Once again we entered Gros Morne National Park; stopping briefly at Cow Head to take photographs, and continued to Bonne Bay where this part of the Long Range Mountains is called the Tablelands. At Norris Point a bank of sea fog started penetrating inland giving an eerie appearance of the Tablelands ‘floating’ on the cloud of mist. After the extensive drive we had a well earned rest at a small hotel in Rocky Harbour.

Bonne Bay and the surrounding Tablelands were especially scenic and we drove ‘around the bay’ taking in the delights of the wilderness and occasional seascape. From Wiltondale, Hwy. 431 winds its way south of Bonne Bay and terminates at Trout River. This was a great opportunity to stop and explore a typical N.L. outport and perhaps rub shoulders with the locals. It wasn’t long before our presence was noticed and we were approached by an older lady who just wanted to pass the time of day. Her countenance was as expected of a person having lived a harsh life. Below an untidy mop of white hair, the ruddy and wrinkled complexion radiated a cheerfulness accompanied by an almost toothless smile. However, her strong dialect was almost unintelligible and, after a brief exchange of niceties, she continued walking on her way down the dirt main street. It was time for lunch and we found a small business that seemed to be everything from a convenience store to a coffee shop down by the harbour. On the menu was grilled capelin, which is a sardine sized fish and considered a N.L. delicacy. The fish was served whole as a plateful and, as I wasn’t sure if the heads were edible, I left them after eating the rest of the ‘mess of capelin.’ Our next port of call was Gander and, thanks to Joan in Clarendville, an assured room at the Holiday Inn. Getting there meant taking Hwy. 430 to Deer Lake then driving the TCH east past Grand Falls-Windsor to Gander.

A whole day was spent on an excursion to the small town of Twillingate, whose intriguing name is an Anglicised version of Toulanguet, the French word given by early Breton fishermen. From Gander, Hwy. 330 took us to Gander Bay South; then Hwy. 331 to Hwy. 340 at Boyd’s Cove where we crossed over Chapel Island to New World Island and the hamlet of Hillgrade with its charming white wooden church. Twillingate, itself, lies between North and South Twillingate Islands, and the road ends at Long Point from which visitors can enjoy magnificent seascape views and get up close to the lighthouse. Not far away at Crow Head we saw one of the last stragglers of the giant icebergs that float by; brought down from Greenland on the southerly flowing Labrador current. One of the largest buildings in Twillingate is the Masonic Temple, a two storey wooden structure with a tower and cupola. Scattered around Twillingate are small outports, each with their own individual charm. In particular at Durrell and Herring Neck we took advantage of the excellent weather to photographically record the serenity of these hamlets before returning to Gander.

The Bonavista Peninsula contains a couple of national historic sites which encouraged us to visit on our way back to Clarendville. Before we left Gander, however, we made a side trip to see the Silent Witnesses Memorial. This bronze statue of a soldier holding the hands of a boy and a girl, marks the spot where, on

December 12th, 1985, a plane crash occurred that took the lives of 256 service personnel of the American 101st Airborne Division. From Gander, the TCH again took us through Terra Nova National Park and, at Port Blandford, we headed east on Hwy. 233 to its junction with Hwy. 230 and the old settlement of Trinity. The community is dominated by St. Paul's Anglican Church, a huge wooden structure with a landmark tower and steeple. The churchyard contained many graves of early settlers, and the streets were lined with houses of interesting Second Empire architecture.

A short drive took us to Port Union, which was a model community born out of the Fishermen's Protective Union headed by Sir William Coaker. A collection of row houses was purpose built for members of the fishermen's cooperative and are preserved as part of a National Historic District. The union didn't amount to much of a political force, but it did bring the plight of fishermen exploited by unscrupulous merchants to the public's attention.

At the end of the road is Cape Bonavista and its enormous red and white painted lighthouse. This important beacon has a varied history dating back to 1842. It was in 1497 at Cape Bonavista that the Venetian navigator and explorer John Cabot (Giovanni Caboto) in his ship "Matthew" made landfall as the first European to step foot on North American soil since the Vikings *circa* 1000 A.D. A bronze statue of Cabot and memorial plaque mark the spot of his exploit. The nearby town of Bonavista plays an important part in the N.L. fishing industry and is home to a large fish processing plant. However, the town appeared to us as being somewhat down at heel; certainly not a thriving community. There was promise of some regeneration as Parks Canada was at that time engaged in the full restoration of a group of buildings called the "Ryan Premises." As a future National Historic Site it would eventually tell the story of the N.L. fishery and educate visitors into the 'truck' system of barter between the fishers and merchants. From Bonavista, we took Hwy. 235 to its junction with Hwy. 230 and made our way back to Clarenville and the Holiday Inn.

Joan was still there as the quintessential friendly receptionist and, when she knew we were heading for St. John's, she insisted that we should visit the Hibernia Project deep sea oil drilling rig construction site at Bull Arm. A short distance along the TCH and virtually opposite the oil refinery at Come by Chance, Bull Arm is a sea inlet and part of Trinity Bay. A visitor's interpretive centre described the construction of the special Hibernia Project platform. The massive concrete Gravity Base Structure (GBS) was being built in the shelter of the deep inlet. A forest of cranes moved the vast amount of concrete needed as the GBS gradually grew out of the water. Manpower and supplies were transported in special ferry boats. The huge chains used for anchoring the GBS at the drilling site snaked their way on one of the holding yards. At another area, the enormous steel fabrication of the 'topsides' or living quarters and drilling platform was taking shape. When completed, the 'topsides' would be married to the GBS and towed out to the drilling site. The biggest floating crane in the world was there to assist where necessary.

Again thanks to Joan, our St. John's Holiday Inn room was secured for the next four days. The provincial capital city is located on the Avalon Peninsula and we were to become familiar with many of the community names as we explored this most densely populated part of N.L. St. John's deserved a thorough visit; from its deep historic roots; its involvement in the Second World War and its future potential prosperity as a major player in the 21st century oil and gas boom, there was much to learn.



St. Paul's Anglican Church; the Principle Building in Trinity, N.L., July, 1995.



Typical Second Empire Architecture Building Seen in Trinity, N.L., July, 1995.



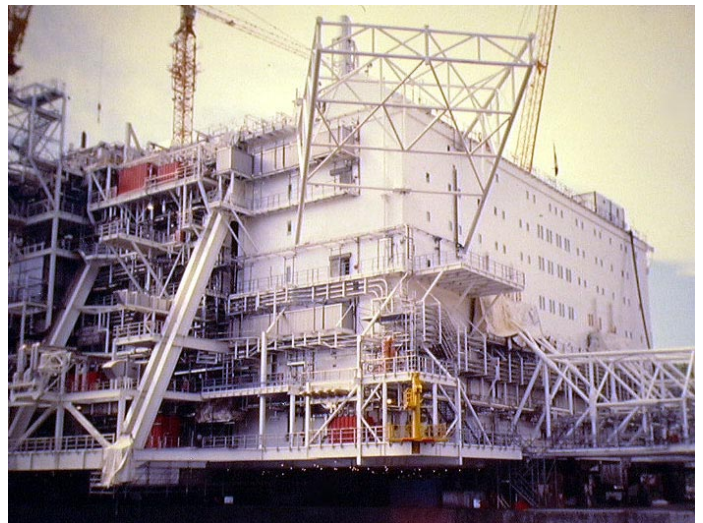
Row Houses and General Store Built for the Fishermen's Cooperative, Port Union, N.L., July, 1995.



Cape Bonavista Lighthouse and Lightkeeper's House at Cape Bonavista, N.L., July, 1995.



The Hibernia Project Gravity Base Structure under Construction at Bull Arm, N.L., July, 1995.



The Hibernia Project Topsides under Construction at Bull Arm, N.L., July, 1995.



Typical Multicoloured Rowhouses on Gower Street, St. John's, N.L., July, 1995.



Students in Period Military Uniforms Prepare for the Tattoo on Signal Hill, St. John's, N.L., July, 1995.



Cabot Tower on the Summit of Signal Hill Overlooks the "Narrows", St. John's, N.L., July, 1995.



Cape Spear Lighthouse at Cape Spear National Historic Site, N.L., July, 1995.



Quidi Vidi Harbour, a Quiet Backwater of St. John's, N.L., July, 1995.



Commissariat's House, one of the Preserved Historic Buildings in St. John's, N.L., July, 1995.

Indeed, St. John's, nestled in a deep sheltered harbour, can boast as being North America's earliest permanent settlement, after John Cabot anchored there on St. John's Day in 1497 and claimed the island of Newfoundland for England. Much of the downtown has remained intact since the disastrous fire of 1892. There are three main streets running parallel with the harbourfront – Water Street, Duckworth Street and Gower Street. They are located on a steep hill, so the side streets take some effort to walk up and down. However, each street has its own charm as the wooden rowhouses are gaily painted in different colours; often referred to as “Jelly Bean Row” emulating the vibrant colours of the popular confection sweet. Water Street is the main commercial thoroughfare, lined with shops, banks, government offices and cafés. The city has many different restaurants, but we discovered “Classic Café” – a gem on Duckworth Street – for dinner.

The following day dawned bright and sunny so we continued exploring the sights of St. John's. The principal attraction is Signal Hill National Historic Site. This huge monolith with sheer cliffs guards the approaches to St. John's Harbour (known as the Narrows). A gun battery was established to reinforce the natural defence capability. Now called the Queen's Battery, it served as a backdrop to a military tattoo performed for tourists. Students dressed in period army uniforms and accompanied by a military band practiced precision marching and musketry drills. It was followed by an artillery demonstration. After watching the tattoo, we climbed to the top of Signal Hill and visited the Cabot Tower which is a small museum with artifacts related to the first successful trans-Atlantic radio transmission received by the radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi.

We had lunch where I tasted ‘fish and brewis’ (pronounced: fish and brews) – another N.L. staple food consisting of a mixture of hard bread and cod pieces that have been boiled and served with pork scrunchions – for the first time. The rest of the day was spent at Cape Spear National Historic Site. This headland is the most easterly point in North America and has two lighthouses; one which is currently active, and the original large structure, similar to the one at Cape Bonavista, used as a Parks Canada interpretation centre. The cape is popular for photographing the dawn sun, and it was a focal point for tourists aboard “Scandena”, a two-masted schooner that sailed by the cape while we were there.

Several nearby small outports became established at the same time St. John's was developing. Among them were The Battery and Quidi Vidi Village. Quidi Vidi sprung up on the rocky foreshore of a neighbouring inlet and harbour to the Narrows. The charming village seems remote from the bustling city not far away and has become popular with artists: the once abandoned church having been converted into a private residence. Some of the older fishermen's buildings have since been taken over by a craft brewery, the Quidi Vidi Brewing Company. Due to its strategic position, a small battery and garrison guarded the area and costumed guides provided information on the history of the restored barracks and fortifications. St. John's became the colonial centre for military, religious and government activities, therefore several important administration buildings, such as the Colonial Building, Government House and the Commissariat's House came into being. Other principal buildings in the city are the Confederation Building; Newfoundland Museum, Memorial University; Anglican Cathedral and the Roman Catholic Basilica.

Of the many natural attractions on the Avalon Peninsula, one of the most picturesque and interesting is at Cape St. Mary's. The Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve is a provincial sea-bird sanctuary where murrens,

kittiwakes and gannets nest in huge colonies safe from humans and other predators. Once more the weather was ideal as we left St. John's and drove west on the TCH to its junction with Hwy. 100. This road took us to Placentia, an historic community first settled by the French, and continued south following the coastline to a scenic lookout at Gooseberry Cove Provincial Park. Just beyond the outport of St. Brides a side road ended at Cape St. Mary's. The imposing rocky shoreline consisted of sheer cliffs and, from a distance, visitors had their first look of Bird Rock. Thousands of sea-birds were wheeling around and the headland appeared white with the concentration of the colonies.

A rough hiking trail directed visitors to the cliff edge vantage point where uniformed guides answered questions and maintained crowd control. The latter was necessary to prevent people wandering too close to the colonies and causing undue stress to the sea-birds. Bird Rock, itself, was an isolated outcrop where the different species lived in separate areas; mainly dominated by Northern Gannets who occupied the top section of the rock. The noise was considerable, and birds returning with a catch of fish homed in directly to their frail nests of twigs and other scavenged material. The return hike was through pasture land where what first appeared to be small rocks or boulders were, in fact, sheep grazing on the lush grass that was interspersed with large clumps of blooming irises.

The return route to St. John's took us around the rest of the southwestern peninsula by way of Hwy. 92 and, at Salmonier, Hwy. 90 to the TCH. We were to return to Salmonier on a later trip to N.L. to visit the Salmonier Nature Park and the wild animal and bird rehabilitation service practiced there.

Our final day in St. John's and the surrounding area included another overland drive. Hwy. 10 follows a convoluted route along the Atlantic Ocean coastline with its many inlets and headlands. Part of the route is called the Irish Loop Drive as many of the communities claim a direct Irish heritage with the first settlers. Bay Bulls is noted for whale watching, and further south is the Witless Bay Ecological Reserve; another sea-bird sanctuary which is specific to the Atlantic Puffin. Around lunchtime we arrived at the historic community of Ferryland. In 1621, the British Lord Baltimore established a settlement at Ferryland. It proved to be a successful colony and much of the original signs of habitation have been preserved. An active archæological dig was in progress, and many of the unearthed artifacts displayed in a small onsite museum. We experienced a novel lunch served in the refectory of a local convent.

We had anticipated reaching Trepassey and even beyond, but so much time was spent at Ferryland and, with the weather starting to deteriorate with sea fog, we aborted the drive in favour of retracing our steps to St. John's. Before abandoning the journey, however, we progressed a short way and, as the road turned inland, it traversed an area known as the Barrens because of the sparse tree vegetation. However, this landscape is ideal for herds of native caribou, and we were fortunate enough to see some of these timid animals before leaving the area.

It was now time to fly back to Ontario, but in two weeks, we had covered a large amount of territory from one end of the island of Newfoundland to the other. Of course, there were many more places to explore. However, over the years, we visited other parts of the "Rock", with the exception of the remote South Shore outports accessible only by boat and a few isolated communities on the Great Northern Peninsula.



The Cliffs and Bird Rock at Cape St. Mary's, N.L., July, 1995.



Close up of Bird Rock Showing the Northern Gannet Colony, Cape St. Mary's, N.L., July, 1995.



Archæological Dig at Lord Baltimore's Ferryland Settlement, N.L., July, 1995.



A Small Herd of Caribou Graze on the Barrens near Trepassey, N.L., July, 1995.



Employees of the Engineering Department Gather around a Brand New Series IV 720A Motor Grader, Barry is Standing in the Back Row, Third from the Left, Goderich, Ontario, August, 1995.



The Opera House Building in Downtown St. Marys, Ontario, September, 1995.



The Grand Trunk Trail Bridge over the River Thames, St. Marys, Ontario, September, 1995.



Trecia, Reg and Monica in the Grounds of Benmiller Inn near Goderich, Ontario, September, 1995.



Roy Bebee clowning around with "Hooters" Girls, Charlotte, North Carolina, September, 1995.



Monica and Barry on Barry's 50th Birthday, PWH, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, November, 1995.



Monica, Barry, Jimmy and Sammy on Christmas Day, Goderich, Ontario, December, 1995.

The rest of the year 1995

Champion's Series IV motor graders had been in production for nine months and was proving to be a worthy successor to all previous generations. In fact, the model lineup had been selected by the editors of Construction Equipment magazine as one of the top 100 most significant products of 1995; thus earning the company a special crystal award. To recognize the efforts of General Engineering and Technical Publications in the development of the current design, Dave Ross, vice president of engineering, organized a souvenir photo opportunity outside the Technology Training Centre building on August 25th, 1995. My weekly salary now was \$741.38.

September was shaping up into a glorious month of late summer/early fall weather. This called for the occasional trips to visit some of the boutique hotels in the Inns of Ontario organization. One such hotel was the Westover Inn located in the Perth County town of St. Marys. Known as the "Stone Town" because of the many houses and commercial buildings built of limestone from local quarries, St. Marys, which is served by the Upper Thames River, is an attractive community just to walk around. Downtown there is an imposing stone building that once was the Opera House, and all around are large Victorian houses signifying the early prosperity of the town. Another feature is the railway trestle bridge spanning the river. This bridge is similar to the 1907 Menesetung Bridge in Goderich and carries the Grand Trunk Trail now that the railway no longer exists. We were disappointed in the Westover Inn's accommodation and dining, so on the second night we tried "Damens", a restaurant in the old Opera House building, but were even less impressed with the service and fare.

Monica's cousin, Trecia, and her husband, Reg, visited Canada to see us and some old friends of Trecia's parents. We met them at Toronto International Airport and brought them to Goderich where they stayed for a couple of days. Because Trecia was interested in the Mennonite way of life, we took them to the farmers' market at St. Jacobs where the Mennonite community has a big presence. As it turned out, the reality of the Mennonite culture didn't match Trecia's personal impressions and for her the trip was something of an anticlimax. As a measure of compensation, we all went to the Benmiller Inn for lunch before they left.

Work on the Champion C-Series motor grader technical publications was ongoing, which meant additional information gathering trips to Charlotte, North Carolina. The usual transportation was flying to Charlotte then renting a car. Accommodation at the small apartment guaranteed my independence and I continued eating evening meals at different restaurants. One time, I asked Roy Bebee if he wanted to share a meal with me at "Hooters", the eating place with scantily-clad waitresses. He readily agreed and we headed off for a fun evening. Roy was a sort of lone wolf and overlooked at work, but his sense of humour got him along and we hit it off just right. At the end of the meal he bought a souvenir "Hooters" T-shirt and clowned around with the girls as his photo was taken.

It was my half-century birthday so we decided to 'push the boat out' for a memorable celebration. One upscale hotel that we knew about was the Prince of Wales Hotel in the old section of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. The last time we had been there was in 1986 when we attended the wedding reception of David and Sheila Eadie. Suitably dressed for the occasion, we left our well-appointed hotel room and made our way to

the dining room. We were escorted through a piano bar to our table where we proceeded to order a sumptuous dinner and wine accompaniment. There was an element of disappointment, though, as the genteel atmosphere was spoiled by a nearby family with unruly children. The following morning's breakfast, served in the solarium, was some measure of recompense, but in general we were not terribly impressed with the overall standard and, since then, have never revisited the hotel.

Reviewing the year's freelancing activities revealed a profitable picture with substantial receipts, particularly from Sky Harbour Aircraft Refinishing for paint scheme renditions and publishing SAE newsletters. Miscellaneous jobs also amounted to several hundred dollars in revenue. The Apple Macintosh IIVX computer was working well; although the StyleWriter inkjet printer needed a repair in September.

Sporadic letters from Roger and Susan Moore contained both general news and accounts of their children's post-secondary education. Their son, Stephen, had successfully passed the first year's examinations and had started his second year at Portsmouth University, together with a change of residence. He was now sharing a large house with three girls and one other fellow. Our goddaughter, Lindsey, was now in her final year's study at Henley College and holding her own. An increasing workload at the Allesley Hotel and The Brooklands, an exclusive hotel nearby, was helping her gain experience as well as adding revenue to her private bank account.

Christmas was spent at home as we enjoyed traditional fare. However, the New Year's celebration took a different turn as we stayed overnight at the Hessenland Country Inn and participated in the festivities. An excellent meal was followed by entertainment and dancing. One of the highlights of the New Year's décor was a specially commissioned ice sculpture created by a new up-and-coming business called "Iceculptures" from the nearby village of Hensall..

A journey into American colonial history

Not a great deal of activity occurred in the first two months of 1996 as we weathered yet another typical Canadian winter in Huron County. There were the usual heavy snowstorms that prevented us from venturing far afield. In February on the other side of the world in tropical Thailand, Champion's Italthai facility opened a second factory at Mahachai, approximately 40 km south of Bangkok, for motor grader assembly. An estimated six machines per month were projected to supply the local market.

At the end of March we started a journey through the U.S.A. to destinations in the heart of colonial America. The trip wasn't without its fair share of frustration where accommodation was concerned. Similarly to the problems associated with our Holiday Inn hotel reservations in Newfoundland and Labrador the previous year, this irritation haunted us at the locations we had booked. We crossed the Queenston Heights Bridge to the border crossing and made our way to the Niagara Falls, New York, downtown Holiday Inn. There we were told that our reservation didn't exist, and that perhaps we were booked into the Holiday Inn at a second location in the city. A quick phone call revealed this not to be the case. After much deliberation we were assigned a room in the first hotel, which was more convenient for the main tourist attractions. We ventured to see the American Falls, which in March was still frozen to a certain extent.

No actual route from Niagara Falls, New York, to Williamsburg, Virginia, has been recorded. It is assumed that the three day road trip took us the quickest way through Pennsylvania and Maryland to Virginia.

Williamsburg is located in the Colonial National Historical Park just north of Newport News and Norfolk. Although a prime tourist attraction, care has been taken not to over-commercialize the essence of this American national treasure. The city fathers have tried to keep the colonial atmosphere alive in the historic area with dirt roads and the preservation of period buildings. Horse-drawn coaches, gigs and carts plied up and down Duke of Gloucester Street and visitors strolled along the wooden sidewalks past clapboard residences and the Raleigh Tavern. Costumed guides representing citizens of the day were strategically positioned at buildings – such as the apothecary’s house with its telltale sign – to answer questions from the tourists. Beyond the townsite, a full-scale windmill and representative farmstead showed visitors how the early colonists were self sufficient in raising livestock and producing flour. Inside some of the buildings, visitors could see the shoemaker and other tradespeople at work using traditional skills and materials.

Not all the buildings were modest in appearance. The Governors Palace, which stood in its own extensive grounds of manicured topiary, was a substantial three storey brick structure surmounted by a tall cupola. The sumptuous interior indicated the governor’s standard of wealth, and visitors were guided through various rooms including the huge kitchen where a live cookery demonstration took place.

The weather was in our favour and the clear, crisp early spring air provided good photography opportunities. In the evening, a special event known as “Beating the Retreat” took place. Before this, however, costumed interpreters encouraged visitors to participate in a mock trial using colonial laws in which the accused was escorted to the court house and cross examined. I joined the volunteer jury that had to deliver a verdict and, despite the bedlam in the courtroom, the accused was sentenced accordingly. The colourful “Beating the Retreat” involved marching minutemen who paraded on a grassy field to the tunes of fifes and drums and ended with the ceremonial lowering of the national flag.

Williamsburg takes its name from William III, king of England at the time of colonization. Together with his wife, Mary II, as joint sovereign, they gave their name to the College of William and Mary, which is a liberal arts university located in Williamsburg. Chartered in 1693, it is the second oldest university in the U.S.A. and the first to establish a law school. The substantial brick building was designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

Not far away from Williamsburg is a living reminder of the old days of slavery. At the four hundred year old Carter’s Grove Plantation, visitors can imagine the lifestyle of a tobacco plantation owner, his family and the estate’s slave labour. Costumed interpreters enacted the daily life of an indentured black slave and the humble existence that the slave force endured. The slave quarters were basic dwellings and the guides demonstrated how slaves and their families survived at a subsistence level.

Two other historic attractions in the Colonial National Historical Park were the reconstructed pioneer settlement of Jamestown, and Yorktown where the English forces under General George Cornwallis surrendered to General George Washington; thus ending the American revolutionary war. After driving along the

scenic Colonial Parkway, we stopped at the Jamestown settlement information centre. Here we learned about the ill-fated attempt at colonization and the legend of the First Nations princess, Pocohontas, who became quite a celebrity in England. Inside the information centre was a model of the Jamestown settlement that gave a good impression of the extent of the colony. From there, visitors moved outside to the actual reconstructed site (originally known as Fort James). A collection of daub and wattle buildings with steep pitched roofs; including the prominent church, were enclosed by a high wooden palisade. The 1601 colony suffered through disease, famine, severe winter conditions, internal bickering and hostile natives, and was all but abandoned until relief finally arrived. As a measure of self-protection, the pioneers used flintlock rifles, and a costumed guide provided a demonstration of firing the black powder gun. Nearby, the Powhatan Indian village had various interpretive sites; one showing the traditional way of making a dugout canoe using fire and crude hand tools. Down by the water, two reconstructed galleons were at anchor to give an idea of the type of vessels used by the colonists of the chartered Virginia Company of London when crossing the Atlantic Ocean.

The eastern extension of the Colonial Parkway led from Williamsburg to Yorktown. The American revolutionary war battlefield and Yorktown Monument testify to the town's long siege and the eventual capitulation of the British forces. An interpretation centre displays relics and dioramas of the battle. Despite the siege and other catastrophic events, many of the original buildings survive, including the Nelson House and the Dudley Dugges House, both being fine examples of the Georgian style of architecture.

The return route from Williamsburg has not been documented, but it is known that the trip took us along the scenic Skyline Drive in Virginia and continued through West Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York State. From Williamsburg, the logical route was by Interstate highway I-64 and bypassing Richmond to Charlottesville. Just west of Charlottesville, the highway connects with the Blue Ridge Parkway, which changes its name to Skyline Drive as it meanders northeast following the Blue Ridge Mountains; a part of the Appalachian Mountain chain. In early April, the trees were still leafless so the drive provided a virtual uninterrupted vista of the surrounding landscape. We were at a fairly high elevation and traversed passes such as Swift Run Gap (2,400 ft. [731 m]) and bypassed peaks like High Knob (3,587 ft. [1093 m]) and Stony Man Mountain (4,010 ft. [1222 m]). Far below was the Shenandoah Valley, nestled in the Shenandoah National Park. We also encountered areas where late winter snow hadn't melted and deer could be clearly seen browsing for food. Lookout belvederes were constructed in places of particular scenic beauty.

Champion consolidates and a summer vacation 'out west'

The previous year's acquisition of the asphalt paving division of Ingersoll-Rand was now complete and, on July 18th, 1996, Champion opened its new Pro-Pav Series manufacturing facility in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. The 50,000 sq. ft. (4645 sq. m) factory had the capacity to assemble seven different models of asphalt paving machines, together with their many variants. To help with the consolidation, Dennis Vollmershausen was hired as vice president of sales and marketing on an interim basis. Dennis had a heavy equipment executive background and had been the president and CEO of Timberjack Inc., another company owned by Sequoia Associates Inc. Later in the year, Dennis ascended through the executive ranks.



Partly Frozen American Falls, Niagara Falls, New York State, March, 1996.



Raleigh Tavern, Duke of Gloucester Street, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, April, 1996.



Governors Palace, Front Elevation, Williamsburg, Virginia, April, 1996.



“Beating the Retreat” Ceremony, Williamsburg, Virginia, April, 1996.



Reconstructed Village of Colonial Jamestown (Fort James), Virginia, April, 1996.



Monica Poses at One of the Scenic Lookouts on the Skyline Drive, Virginia, April, 1996.



Mark and Barry, Clown School Graduation Event, Goderich, Ontario, June, 1996.



Monica and Entire Length of Upper Waterton Lake, Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta, July, 1996.



The Prince of Wales Hotel and Upper Waterton Lake, Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta, July, 1996.



The Cataracts of Cameron Falls, Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta, July, 1996.



County Court House and the Three Sisters Peaks, Fernie, British Columbia, July, 1996.



Barry at the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel, Cranbrook, British Columbia, July, 1996.

Of the summer activities, a passing mention has to be made of the endeavours of my ex-colleague, Mark Russell, who had been permanently laid off from Champion in 1990. Mark had many artistic aspirations; including professional storytelling and clowning. Unfortunately, these fantasies didn't help finance the home front and soon the family split up. Surviving on state benefits and meagre savings, Mark tried his hand at clown school. At the end of the course, the school organised a graduation ceremony and I went along to provide Mark with morale support. Dressed in mismatched clothes and made up in 'whiteface' style, he put on a reasonable act; although he didn't pursue the cause any further.

It was about this time that I recorded my weekly salary for the last time and, as of midyear 1996, the figure was \$756.38.

We had visited Alberta and British Columbia just two years before, but the lure of the west enticed us to, once again, set our sights on a similar vacation. This time, however, we intended to fly to Edmonton, the Alberta provincial capital, and rent a car for our overland journey. Edmonton International Airport is located some way south of the city limits near Leduc, the town famous for the first successful major crude oil strike in Alberta (1947). After picking up the rental car, we proceeded south on Hwy. 2 to our hotel in Red Deer.

The weather was warm and sunny – ideal for the drive on Hwy. 2 through the bustling metropolis of Calgary as far south as Fort Macleod and the Crowsnest Highway (Hwy. 3). Then west to Hwy. 6 and Pincher Creek, our base camp for three days. In 1994, limited time restricted our visit to the area, so we made sure this was an opportunity to explore Waterton Lakes National Park. Combined with Glacier National Park in Montana, the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park straddles the Canada/U.S.A. border and is renowned for its scenic beauty. We were not disappointed, and the perfect weather emphasized the grandeur of the lakes and surrounding mountains. Even the short drive from Pincher Creek to the park boundary revealed a beauty of its own as the prairie blended into the foothills.

The park was established in 1895 and features the Prince of Wales Hotel – a seven storey châteauesque building with multiple dormer windows – commanding an outlook of Mount Blackiston (9,645 ft. [2940 m]) and the entire length of Upper Waterton Lake. There are three principal lakes in the park: Lower, Middle and Upper Waterton Lakes. Only the Prince of Wales Hotel, camping and a tourist lodge at Waterton Park townsite, the steamer *International* and canoe rentals at Cameron Lake represent commercial interests; thus ensuring the park's pristine character. Just outside Waterton Park townsite we saw the cataracts of Cameron Falls and explored a side trail at Red Rock Canyon. At one point, the Akamina Parkway leading to Cameron Lake was blocked by a herd of wild mountain sheep. Other flora and fauna seen were the interesting looking flowers of the bear grass, and several juvenile elk.

Heading for British Columbia on the Crowsnest Highway (Hwy. 3), we once again stopped at the Frank slide provincial historic site; then continued to Crowsnest Pass (4,580 ft. [1396 m]) at the BC/Alberta provincial boundary. The economy of many of the communities in this area depends on the extensive coal deposits that are extracted using both conventional underground and open-pit mining methods. Sparwood is such a company mining town dominated by the world class Kaiser Resources complex.

A short way along the road, we stopped for lunch at the attractive town of Fernie. An amusing incident occurred when we entered a small delicatessen to order sandwiches for lunch. When approached by a lady server we immediately deduced, given her first words, that she hailed from England. Monica stated her request of “A roast beef sandwich on whole wheat bread”. The lady replied, “Why don’t you just say brown bread, like we used to back ’ome”. The sandwiches proved delicious when eaten outside in a small municipal park: the county court house and the Three Sisters mountains making an impressive backdrop.

From Fernie we continued to the junction with Hwy. 93; then via Hwy. 95A to the city of Cranbrook – a jumping off point for the nearby Fort Steele Heritage Town. Cranbrook is host to the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel with its large collection of passenger rail cars built in the 1920s for the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and in the 1900s for the Spokane International Railway. Cranbrook was chosen by the CPR as the administrative centre for the railway’s Crowsnest Pass route, and took advantage of the major mineral (silver-lead-zinc) strike and boom times at the turn of the twentieth century. We heard about a German-style restaurant in the neighbouring community of Kimberley. Located 3,661 ft. (1116 m) above sea level, it is Canada’s highest city and a popular winter sports venue with a decided Bavarian atmosphere. We were not disappointed with the cuisine that was very authentic.

Fort Steele Heritage Town is a recreation of frontier life in the East Kootenay region during the gold rush days of the 1860s, together with examples of turn of the twentieth century buildings. Previously known as Galbraith’s Ferry, its importance declined when the CPR bypassed the former boomtown in favour of Cranbrook. A whole day was spent touring the restored and reconstructed buildings that included the first North West Mounted Police post in British Columbia, stores, churches, school, hotel, workshops and private houses. A theatre put on “Gay Nineties” performances and a closed loop railway provided steam locomotive excursions. Other tourist rides included an open wagon pulled by Clydesdale horses and a stage coach.

From Fort Steele, we headed north on Hwy. 93/95 following the Kootenay River valley. At Radium Hot Springs we entered the Kootenay National Park taking Hwy. 93 *en route* to the TCH (Hwy. 1) and Lake Louise, Alberta. Lofty, snow clad mountains reared up on both sides of the road as we traversed Sinclair Pass (4,875 ft. [1486 m]), viewed the awesome Marble Canyon, and crossed into Alberta at Vermillion Pass (5,371 ft. [1637 m]).

The visit to Lake Louise was a repeat of our 1994 stay there. At that time we were unable to photographically record the scenery due to low light conditions and malfunctioning cameras. We stayed overnight in the same small boutique hotel as two years previous. After breakfast, we walked to the Château Lake Louise resort hotel and followed the trail around one side of the lake to capture those all-important photographs as wisps of low cloud hung over the mirror-like water and the sun highlighted the snow clad peaks behind.

Leaving Lake Louise for our next destination of Revelstoke, BC, we headed west on the TCH over the famed Kicking Horse Pass (5,403 ft. [1647 m]) at the BC/Alberta provincial boundary. This was also crossing the Continental Divide and entering Yoho National Park. Brilliant weather enabled us to enjoy the mountain scenery, and we stopped briefly at the incredible Spiral Tunnels where a special observation platform provided visitors a means of viewing freight trains entering and leaving the tunnels. A side trip was



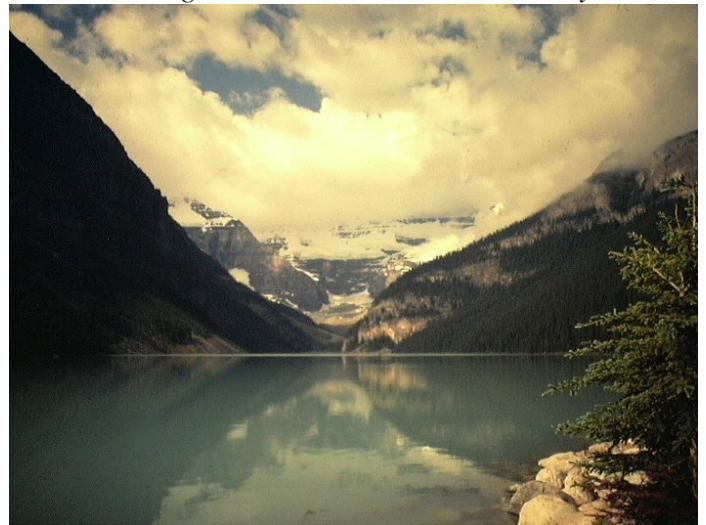
General View of Restored Buildings at Fort Steele Heritage Town, British Columbia, July, 1996.



Monica and Boomtown False Fronted Stores at Fort Steele Heritage Town, British Columbia, July, 1996.



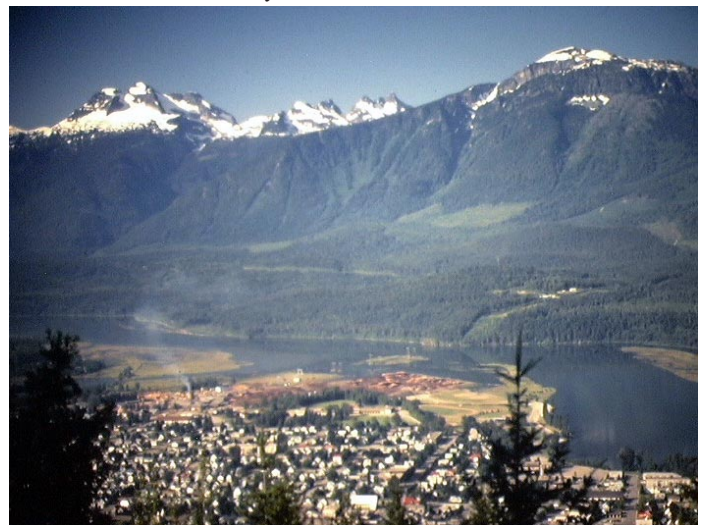
Following the Kootenay River in Kootenay National Park, British Columbia, July, 1996.



The Canadian Rocky Mountains Surrounding Lake Louise, Alberta, July, 1996.



Monument at Rogers Pass, Glacier National Park, British Columbia, July, 1996.



Looking down on Revelstoke from the Summit of Mount Revelstoke, British Columbia, July, 1996.



Lone Butte Hotel, Built in the 1920s, Lone Butte, British Columbia, July, 1996.



Looking down Main Street in Barkerville Historic Town, British Columbia, July, 1996.



Canadian Gold Claim Tunnel and Adit in Barkerville Historic Town, British Columbia, July, 1996.



Restored Miners' Cabins in Barkerville Historic Town, British Columbia, July, 1996.



Orthodox Church and Buildings, Ukrainian Cultural Centre near Edmonton, Alberta, August, 1996.



Peasants Dancing, Ukrainian Cultural Centre near Edmonton, Alberta, August, 1996.

made to Emerald Lake; a typical icy blue alpine lake set in a glaciated valley and dominated by an unbroken evergreen forest and soaring snow capped mountain ranges. The TCH now carved its way through the Columbia Mountains and the scenery maintained its awe as we entered Glacier National Park and Rogers Pass (4,363 ft. [1330 m]), which was a natural rest stop and opportunity to admire the amazing mountain-scape of classic snow clad peaks. Driving through the Monashee Mountains, we continued to Mount Revelstoke National Park and our hotel in Revelstoke for a well earned night's sleep.

The following day's journey was going to be extensive, but the beautiful sunny morning enticed us to drive to Mount Revelstoke. From the main car park, we hiked to the summit to admire a spectacular view of the city of Revelstoke and the surrounding countryside, which included the valley of Lake Revelstoke with the Monashee Mountains beyond. The hike was made even more enjoyable as carpets of wild flowers – such as the glacier lily – and an assortment of gold, white and red blooms prevailed in the lower latitudes. The TCH wound its way through the Districts of Sicamous and Salmon Arm on the shores of Shuswap Lake and eventually to the city of Kamloops. Just west of Kamloops, the Coquihalla Highway (Hwy. 5) – a modern, dual-carriageway (divided highway) road – takes the bulk of traffic south to Vancouver, and the TCH continues to Cache Creek, our overnight stopover.

Now began our trek through the British Columbia Interior. Heading north on the Cariboo Highway (Hwy. 97), our first stop was at Lone Butte near the District of 100 Mile House. Once the largest settlement in the area, one of a few remaining relics of the boom times is the Lone Butte Hotel dating back to the 1920s. 100 Mile House grew as a community from a staging post on the Cariboo Wagon Road that started at Lillooet, 100 miles to the south. Hwy. 97 continues to Williams Lake roughly following the same path as the Cariboo Wagon Road; then aligns itself with the Fraser River, where we arrived at Quesnel for a two night stay.

This part of the British Columbia Interior is known as the Cariboo Plateau, and the area was opened up in 1862 following the discovery of gold at Williams Creek by Billy Barker. We had read about Barkerville Historic Town and devoted an entire day experiencing the life and times of the 'Cariboo gold rush'. Barkerville boasted itself as the largest tourist attraction in western Canada. The provincial government decided to restore the dilapidated community to how it appeared in its heyday, and reconstructed an entire frontier town, complete with gold mine and a main street lined with period buildings. Costumed interpreters were on hand to provide information or display the trade skills found in such a community.

A photographer's paradise, we wandered throughout the 'living museum'; in and out of various structures on the main street. One of the principal buildings was the Theatre Royal, and a theatrical troupe entertained the audience with Victorian music hall type acts. Inside the House Hotel was a traditional honky-tonk saloon, and visitors could buy refreshments made from frontier recipes. Progressing along the wooden sidewalk we came across the Chinese section of town. The Chinese population was important and influential in Barkerville. They were a ready source of labour for the gold mines, and some were astute business people who established a laundry and the Kwong Lee Company, a general store that sold groceries, clothing, hardware, and mining tools. Outside the wooden building identified with a flag bearing Chinese characters, a flight of steps led from the dirt road to the interior of the store that was filled with general merchandise.

Barkerville grew up on the banks of Williams Creek, and its genesis, the gold mine, together with the adit (entrance), tunnel and water sluice, had been reconstructed to give visitors an idea of the gold seekers' working conditions at the time. For accommodation, basic wooden cabins housed many of the transients. Inside they were sparsely furnished and equipped with a wood burning stove for cooking and heating.

Just before the gates closed, members of the theatrical troupe dressed in Victorian clothes progressed along the wooden sidewalks of the main street and sang a medley of songs. It was a full day of walking, photography and absorbing information. I realised as we were leaving that I had lost my camera's lens cap so returned and looked around, as well as reporting the loss. Unfortunately it was never found.

From Quesnel we continued on Hwy. 97 to Prince George, a city with a high proportion of First Nation inhabitants. It was now time to head east and, at Prince George, we drove along the TCH (Hwy. 16 – Yellowhead Route) following the Fraser River and the Cariboo Mountains as far as McBride. The next day dawned absolutely cloudless and we couldn't wish for any better driving conditions as we continued on Hwy. 16 towards Tête Jaune Cache, then entering the Canadian Rockies foothills at Mt. Robson Provincial Park. Conversely to our previous visit two years before, the monolithic Mt. Robson (12,972 ft. [3954 m]) appeared in full view when approached from the west. Even though I had photographed it before, the ideal conditions compelled me to capture the snow capped peak once again as we stood and admired the highest point in the Canadian Rockies.

Crossing the Continental Divide and BC/Alberta provincial boundary at the Yellowhead Pass (3,711 ft. [1131 m]), we also entered Jasper National Park. It was now an effortless journey through the park and descent into the prairies towards Edmonton, where we would spend the last days of our vacation.

Of the many tourist sites to visit in Edmonton, one of the most interesting is the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village ("The Village"). Similar to other 'living museums', the concept consists of restored authentic buildings and a staff of costumed interpreters. In this case, the open air museum portrays a timeframe of between 1899 and 1930 when Ukrainian immigrants settled the land in Alberta. We were staying on the east side of Edmonton in the suburb of Sherwood Park and within easy access to The Village, which was situated on the TCH (Hwy. 16 – Yellowhead Route) just east of Elk Island National Park.

By necessity, much of the museum revolves around agriculture because the pioneering Ukrainians were people of the soil. Therefore, many of the restored buildings depicted the Ukrainian way of life on the farm. The earliest settlers lived in sod roof huts but, as they prospered, their lifestyle improved to include more substantial houses and commercial buildings. Many of the onsite structures were moved from their original locations and restored to the period of time that The Village is set in. Also figuring large in the settlers' daily life was the influence of traditional values, education and religion. Of the last two, the schoolhouse and at least three Orthodox churches provided ample evidence of the educational and spiritual ways of this closely knit community. The churches, characterised by their silver onion shaped dome, had stunning interiors rich in colour and detail; with icons of saints, statuary and elaborate woodwork. An interpretive guide was on hand to explain the intricacies of the Orthodox Eastern Church, its beliefs and the part religion played in daily life.

Also similar to other pioneer museums we had previously visited, the costumed interpreters remained *in character* and performed their rôles as if frozen in the 1899 and 1930 time period. Which meant we had to assume a similar attitude when asking questions, knowing that the answers would not be a modern day interpretation.

Signs of prosperity showed in the guise of automobiles and trucks at the village garage with its old style pumps. Of course, the fruits of the farming community's labours had to be gathered and shipped to wholesalers. So important features of the village were the grain elevator and the railway station, both well preserved. A contingency of villagers waited for an imaginary train and these brightly costumed interpreters suddenly burst into action and performed folk dances on the station platform as a lone musician with an accordion played old traditional melodies.

No visit to Edmonton should neglect going to the West Edmonton Mall (WEM). The WEM, opened in 1981, was at one time the largest shopping mall in the world; having more than 800 stores and services. The cavernous building boasted many unique features, including a full-size water park with a wave generating machine and genuine golden sand beach with palm trees. Tens of thousands shop at the WEM every day and, as a souvenir of my visit, I bought a lapel pin made of pewter in the shape of a traditional First Nation's design of the sacred raven symbol. The pin now adorns my wide brim "Tilley" hatband.

It was now time to return home and so we dropped off the rental car at Edmonton International Airport and flew back to Toronto, then driving back to Goderich. Thanks to almost perfect weather throughout the holiday, we can look back on a most enjoyable vacation

Corporate and other moves at Champion

Several corporate changes took place at Champion in an effort to become more efficient. Head office activity needed to move from Goderich to a more centralized location as the company's business acquisitions were scattered across Ontario and Pennsylvania. The top two executives, Art Church and Scott Hall, together with their assistants, ensconced themselves in a new corporate office suite in Waterloo, Ontario. The day-to-day running of the Goderich operation now fell to Dennis Vollmershausen, who was promoted from his interim position as vice president of sales and marketing to executive vice president and general manager in November, 1996.

Other moves were taking place as personnel came and went. The initial stages of incorporating SuperPac, Frink and Pro-Pav products into the generic Champion technical publications format was now complete. However, improvements to all Champion products was ongoing which meant additional manpower was needed to keep up with the changes. My supervisor, Ray, decided to hire a second technical writer and the successful candidate was my namesake, Bruce Page, who joined us on October 15th, 1996.

Bruce had a varied background in heavy equipment and spent a number of years as an operator; then taking over the product support job at Teledyne Industries in the town of Meaford to the northeast of Goderich from my ex-colleague, Bill Barlow. Despite his lack of formal qualifications, Bruce blended in well and

showed an aptitude where computerisation was concerned; having been used to word processing work. A married man with three daughters, Bruce was younger than me by some years. Living in Meaford, he faced a formidable daily commute until such time as he found a bachelor apartment in Goderich. Eventually, the whole family moved into a large country farmhouse just north of town.

One of Bruce's talents was drawing cartoon characters, and he was extremely good at using a specific art-based computer programme called Adobe Illustrator. He soon became involved with the company in-house newsletter and many of the front covers were adorned with his artwork. Bruce and I became close colleagues and, as the coincidence of our last names and working in the same department wasn't lost on other workers, we soon became to be known as the 'Page brothers.' Another endearing thing was that Bruce was also an Apple Macintosh user at home. However, his equipment was lacking a quality printer. It so happened that I had negotiated a good deal with a local Apple computer dealer, Advanced Technologies Inc., for a new monochrome laser printer – a model Hewlett-Packard 6MP – which left the inkjet StyleWriter redundant. Later in the year, Bruce bought the old printer from me. The laser printer took a hefty bite out of my hobby company's bank balance (\$1,523.75). Fortunately the year's relatively good receipts, mainly from Sky Harbour Aircraft Refinishing for paint scheme renditions and publishing SAE newsletters, helped cushion the large financial outlay; although I was far from breaking even.

We still maintained correspondence with our friends Roger and Susan Moore and, apart from the regular news and all-important 'correspondence chess game' moves, we learnt about the progress in their children's academic careers. Stephen had passed his second year's examinations and was gaining industrial experience with a one year placement at Redland Technology in Horsham, Sussex. Lindsey had been accepted for a two-year HND (Higher National Diploma) course in hotel catering and management and now commuted to Henley College in her own car (Talbot Horizon, an 18th birthday present). Later in the year, Lindsey gained a four month placement working at a family-run hotel near Munich, Germany. This was a terrific opportunity for her and paved the way for the possibility of a more ambitious working assignment; that being selected for a six month contract at the Château Lake Louise resort hotel near Banff, Alberta, Canada.

With the onset of winter, we continued with our day-to-day routine. My 51st birthday was celebrated at home with a delicious fondue dinner. Christmas was also spent *à la maison* where we enjoyed a large roasted turkey, the traditional annual gift courtesy of Champion. Percolating in the background, however, were changes to the company that were going to have far reaching effects. In February, 1997, an event happened that – although anticipated – struck like a thunderbolt and which will be described in the next chapter (Chapter 12).