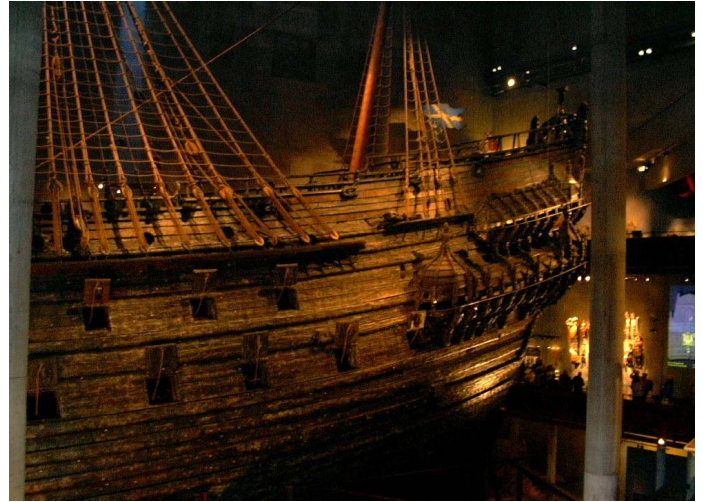
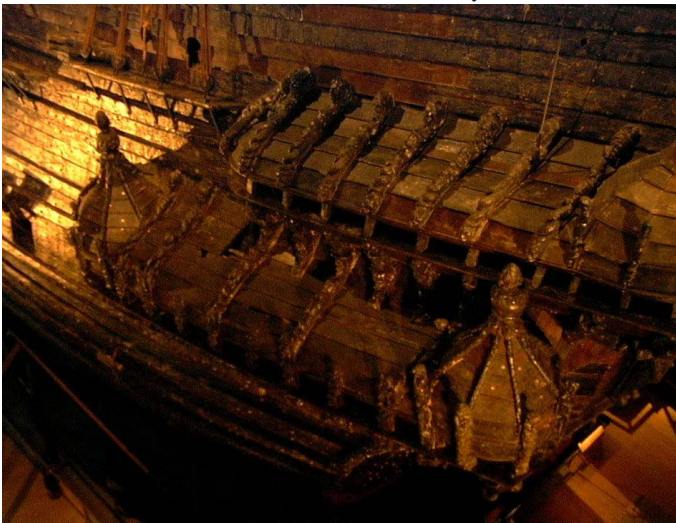




*Preserved Hull of the 64-gun Warship "Vasa" in the Vasamuseet, Stockholm, Sweden, May, 2003.*



*Preserved Hull of the 64-gun Warship "Vasa" in the Vasamuseet, Stockholm, Sweden, May, 2003.*



*Detail of the Preserved Hull of the Warship "Vasa", Vasamuseet, Stockholm, Sweden, May, 2003.*



*Detail of the Preserved Hull of the Warship "Vasa", Vasamuseet, Stockholm, Sweden, May, 2003.*



*Illuminated Fountain in the Drottningsgatan, a Main Street in Downtown Stockholm, Sweden, May, 2003.*



*Social Time. Music Duo Entertains in a German Bar, Stockholm, Sweden, May, 2003.*



*Rugged Cliffs at Pokeshaw; a Typical Chaleur Bay Seascape, New Brunswick, June, 2003.*



*The Local Longliner Fleet Prepares to Leave for the Evening Fishing Catch, Caraquet, NB, June, 2003.*



*Pioneer House at the “Village historique acadien” near Caraquet, New Brunswick, June, 2003.*



*Shingle Making – a Traditional Craft Demonstration, “Village historique acadien”, NB, June, 2003.*



*Inside the Pioneer House with its Basic Kitchen, “Village historique acadien”, NB, June, 2003.*



*Spinning and Weaving Were Part of Everyday Life, “Village historique acadien”, NB, June, 2003.*

This turned out to be our last extreme long distance driving vacation from home, as future trips usually combined a fly-and-drive arrangement. With our hotel reservations in place, we started the journey across country to Palmerston and then on Hwy. 9 through Orangeville and Newmarket to the back roads taking us south where we joined the fast multi-lane Hwy. 401 at Courtice and a stopover in Cornwall. As in our last visit to New Brunswick in September, 2000 (see this chapter), the road journey continued through Montréal and, after connecting to Route 20 (Autoroute Jean-Lesage portion of the TCH) on the South Shore, continued to Rivière-du-Loup. This is where the TCH turns south and the coast road becomes Route 132, along which we continued to Rimouski for an overnight stop.

At Sainte-Flavie, we then traversed the interior of the Gaspé Peninsula by following Route 132 along the Matapédia River valley in the opposite direction to our last journey in June, 1999 (see this chapter – Gaspé Peninsula trip). We crossed the Québec/New Brunswick provincial border at the Restigouche River and entered the city of Campbellton. It was time to stop for a break and the nearest coffee shop was one of the Tim Hortons chain of outlets. New Brunswick is Canada's only official bilingual province and it was with bemused interest that we observed another customer in the coffee shop reading an English newspaper while at the same time conversing with a companion in French.

As time was of the essence to reach Caraquet – our next port of call – we travelled east on Hwy. 11 to bypass several coastal communities and the city of Bathurst. Just before Janeville, Hwy. 11 replaces the original Hwy. 134, also known as the “Acadian Coastal Drive.” We stopped at Pokeshaw to admire and photograph the Chaleur Bay seascape and continued to our hotel in Caraquet. There were signs all around that we were now truly on the Acadian Peninsula as the patriotic Acadian flag was flying everywhere. In the evening after dinner, we strolled to the government wharf and watched the late day longliner fishing fleet leave port and sail away to be silhouetted by the setting sun.

The following day was bright and sunny, ideal for our visit to the *Village historique acadien*. The entrance to the village was by a rustic lane where we met a lone traveller, who appeared to be a ‘man of the road.’ Evidently part of the ‘living history’ museum, this individual engaged us in conversation before we entered the collection of structures that recreated the Acadian way of life before and after the British forcibly removed the Acadians from their settlements. This is known as the Expulsion of the Acadians (1758). Similar to another New Brunswick pioneer museum – King's Landing Historical Settlement (see Chapter 10) – interpreters in period costume were on hand to demonstrate traditional crafts and skills, as well as upholding the ancestral culture of the Acadians. Working farms and tradespeople at work, such as the blacksmith, shingle maker and printer were fully accessible. Domestic life was replicated by guides involved in cooking, baking and weaving demonstrations in the simple shingle covered farmhouses.

The Acadian Peninsula stretches out into the ocean; terminating in two islands – Île Lamèque and Île Miscou. A side trip on Hwys. 11 and 113 took us to the tip of Île Miscou to see the picturesque lighthouse built in 1856. Lobster and herring fishing is the mainstay industry in the area and subject to the whims of the harvest and market prices. Layoffs and worker grievances were common. Before our visit, a major dispute had erupted at a fish processing plant in the town of Shippagan near Île Lamèque, and the building was gutted by protesters. We saw the burned out shell when returning to follow the “Acadian Coastal Drive.”

Hwy. 11 now hugged the southern coastline of the Acadian Peninsula and, after crossing the River Miramichi, the “Acadian Coastal Drive” changed to Hwy. 117 and passed through several fishing villages to Kouchibouguac Bay. There we stopped at Kouchibouguac National Park for a picnic and stroll along the deserted beach and extensive hiking trails. The huge park provides protection to several at-risk species but, as we found out, the natural environment also harboured some of the largest and most voracious blackflies and mosquitos we have ever encountered. It was impossible to picnic on the trails because of the pesky bugs, so we took to eating in the confines of the car.

The “Acadian Coastal Drive” again changed to Hwys. 505 and 475 as it made its way to Bouctouche, where we stayed for two nights at a guest house converted from the former presbytery. Our room was on the top floor of this rambling building, and excellent evening meals were served in the old refectory.

The next day was spent exploring a conservation area known as the K.C. Irving Eco Centre. An extensive network of boardwalks and belvederes snake across the sensitive sandbanks and beach area called in French, *La Dune de Bouctouche*, where park rangers describe the flora and fauna protected there; especially the endangered piping plover and other seabirds. The conservation area was made possible by the philanthropic efforts of the industrialist K.C. Irving, and a bronze statue of him standing on a plinth of large rocks is there in recognition of his generosity.

The sunny weather that had blessed us thus far on the vacation gave way to fog, low clouds and rain. This was unfortunate as we were to cross the Northumberland Strait on the celebrated Confederation Bridge. Following the “Acadian Coastal Drive”, again changing to Hwys. 530, 133, 15 and 955, to Cape Jourmain, we stopped for a photo opportunity with the full length of the bridge mostly in view (part was obscured by fog). Construction of the eight mile (13 km) long bridge finished in 1997 and the cost was being recouped by charging a toll. The bridge carries the TCH and terminates at Borden-Carlton on the P.E.I. side. There is a static exhibit to show visitors a typical cross-section of the concrete box girder structure. The remainder of the drive took us along the TCH to Charlottetown. Regardless of the rainy conditions, we spent some time walking around the historic section of the city and admiring the classical façade of the Confederation Building, as well as the attractive clapboard or brick rowhouses and solid sandstone commercial blocks in the downtown core. As a souvenir of the trip, and a reminder in general of our vacations “down east”, we bought two coloured prints of East Coast outpost scenes in an art studio. Later, they were framed in Gode-rich and still hang proudly in our entrance hall.

**T**he inclement weather hadn’t dissipated and, after staying overnight in Charlottetown and starting our homeward journey, we were faced with another dismal drive across the Confederation Bridge. Not that we could see anything as the walls on both sides of the bridge were too high and obscured the view of any shipping traffic on the Northumberland Strait. Arriving on the New Brunswick mainland, we continued on the TCH to Moncton and eventually to our hotel in Fredericton, the provincial capital.

Québec City was our final main destination of the vacation and that meant following the “River Valley Scenic Drive” – briefly stopping at the Hartland covered bridge – to Edmundston and the New Brunswick/Québec provincial border. Then continuing to Rivière-du-Loup and Route 20 (Autoroute Jean-Lesage),



*“La dune de Bouctouche”, Part of the K.C. Irving Eco Centre, near Bouctouche, NB, June, 2003.*



*The Old Presbytery, now a Guest House, Bouctouche, New Brunswick, June, 2003.*



*Confederation Bridge as Seen from Cape Jourmain, New Brunswick, June, 2003.*



*The Eight Mile (13 km) Long Confederation Bridge, View Looking Towards P.E.I. from NB, June, 2003.*



*Heading West on the Confederation Bridge Towards New Brunswick from P.E.I., June, 2003.*



*Barry Poses with the Static Exhibit of a Cross-Section of the Confederation Bridge, NB/P.E.I., June, 2003.*



*Dufferin Terrace and the Chateau Frontenac Hotel, Québec City, Québec, June, 2003.*



*The Lower Town ("Vieux Québec") Looking Towards the Chateau Frontenac, Québec City, QC, June, 2003.*



*"Rue Petit Champlain" Pedestrian Precinct in the Lower Town, Québec City, Québec, June, 2003.*



*Place Royale. Refurbished Buildings in the Heart of the Upper Town, Québec City, Québec, June, 2003.*



*Champion Antique Graders on The Square, Canada Day Parade, Goderich, Ontario, July, 2003.*



*Barry and Jeff Hodges Stand behind Anders, Tomás and Rolf, Benmiller Inn, Goderich, ON, July, 2003.*

eventually crossing the St. Lawrence River on Route 73 to our hotel in Sainte-Foy, a western suburb of Québec City. The provincial government tourist guide book listed several restaurants in the immediate area and we assessed a few of them, but came to the conclusion that the hotel's 4-diamond rated restaurant was probably the best bet. It was a wise decision and we had a wonderful, impeccably served evening meal.

The weather had improved considerably and, after confirming the municipal bus transportation schedule to downtown Québec City, we set off for the day. We arrived at the central bus terminal, which hadn't changed from previous visits and was still the haunt of many of the city's homeless and undesirables. After passing through Porte Saint-Jean, one of the principal gates of the old walled city, we continued exploring the Upper and Lower Towns under cloudless skies. Lunch was served *al fresco* at Le Vendôme, one of our favourite restaurants. Further wanderings took us to the city's signature tourist sights such as the Château Frontenac hotel; Place Royale; Rue Petit Champlain, and the Québec provincial parliament building or *Assemblée Nationale*. At Place Royale the exigencies of the hot afternoon meant an ice cream cone was in order. We bought a couple of cones from a vendor in one of the tourist shops and, as we were consuming the refreshing ice cream, a lady approached us and asked if we spoke English. She was desperate for an ice cream and wanted to know where we bought ours. We pointed out the shop and she went away happy.

By late afternoon we had walked a considerable distance on the old city's cobblestone streets and steep inclines. Arriving at Porte Saint-Louis, another of the old walled city gates, we continued along Grande Allée, a wide thoroughfare lined on both sides with taverns and bistros decorated with gaily coloured umbrellas and awnings. It was at one of the sidewalk cafés that we ate a modest meal and watched bemused by the almost continuous stream of holidaying schoolchildren heading for the nearby McDonald's hamburger restaurant. So much for *québécois* fare. The return bus journey to the hotel was routine and we decided to take some snacking nuts and a bottle of wine back to our room. The neighbourhood "Metro" food supermarket provided us with both items and we finished the day by sipping the wine and watching a magnificent sunset from the comfort of our balcony.

Our Québec City visit now having come to an end, we left Sainte-Foy on Route 540 to Route 40 (Auto-route Félix-Leclerc) and crossed the St. Maurice River at Trois Rivières. After passing through Montréal, we joined Route 20 and the fast multi-lane Hwy. 401 at the Ontario/Québec provincial border heading to Cobourg. There we spent overnight at the Woodlawn Inn – another member hotel of the Inns of Ontario group – before continuing home on the back roads to avoid Toronto and the busiest part of Hwy. 401.

### *Summer blends into autumn*

**M**any of the regular summer activities around town encouraged resident and tourist participation. Sunshine and warm temperatures helped draw big crowds for the annual Canada Day festivities, which included the popular civic ceremony and parade. As usual, the Champion antique graders were a mainstay exhibit, and other participants, such as the "Carry on Cloggers" from nearby Clinton, added their unique brand of music and movement. The town also played host to an event featuring the massed pipe and drum bands from the area. An extension to this entertainment being the weekly performance of the Celtic Blue Highlanders 'piping down the sun' every Friday evening at the waterfront Rotary Cove.

During the first full week of July, 2003, a small team from Volvo CE in Eskilstuna visited the Technical Publications Department to further help us with our familiarisation of the PROSIS/GLOPPS/ALLADDIN programmes. The team consisted of three familiar faces: Anders Östring, Tomás Cedarqvist and Rolf Lindgren. Dave Long looked after their wellbeing as visitors, and later we returned the Swedes' hospitality and wined and dined them at the Benmiller Inn. The trio, being completely bilingual, were quite independent and rented a car to travel around. We enjoyed their company and they gained some experience of the Canadian way of life. In future years there were to be additional visits from Volvo CE personnel, so this was a good trial run.

I had been using my Lumix DMC-LC20PP-S digital camera for seven months and was gradually becoming familiar with the benefits of this new method of taking photographs. However, on July 28th, 2003, a major problem occurred and I was unable to download the digital images from the camera's memory card to the Macintosh computer. The retail outlet was unable to help me so I contacted Panasonic Canada with the complete story. After some e-mail troubleshooting, it was suggested that I send the faulty unit to a service centre for repair. As the camera was still under warranty this was the best course of action. It took a full two months before the repaired camera was returned, but the two replacement printed circuit boards seemed to resolve the problem. The camera is still used on occasions despite being superseded by a Nikon Coolpix model S6500 that I bought in 2014.

Thursday, August 14, 2003 was a day to remember. Many of the office workers were bent over their computer terminals and there was an atmosphere of diligence. Precisely at 4:10 p.m., a major power failure plunged everywhere into darkness and there was a cumulative cry of despair as unsaved data vanished from the computer screens. The entire factory and office building was affected as production ground to a halt and safety lights illuminated the fire escape routes. Soon, reports came through by phone that the power outage was quite widespread. A general evacuation was made and, eventually all the employees were allowed to go home. Nobody knew how long the interruption was going to last, but more disturbing news began circulating that a huge area was affected. As the hours went by and emergency measures fell into place it became clear that the national electricity distribution grid was severely compromised. We were concerned as to our dinner reservation at Hessenland Country Inn, but since the meal of the evening featured the celebrated Mongolian Grill that was cooked *al fresco* and on a barbecue heated by propane gas, there was no problem.

Listening to battery powered radios we heard that a cascading outage had spread across all of Ontario; Michigan; Ohio; Pennsylvania; New York; New Jersey; Connecticut, and Massachusetts. This ripple effect wasn't easy to fix and it took a long time for the utility crews to bring everyone back online. This had to be done carefully to prevent major overloads. In fact just before breakfast and power had been restored in town, the act of starting machinery at Volvo put a strain on the local grid and the system crashed again. Nevertheless, all unionised personnel came in because the collective agreement stated that any production stoppage beyond their control meant union members were entitled to a minimum of four hours wages just by reporting for work.

The Technical Publications Department continued being absorbed in the Customer Support entity and one of the moves was to be represented on the Engineering & Publications Global Management (EPGM)



team. Four times a year, the team met at a different location; often at a facility in Sweden or at least once in another country to underscore cultural differences. It was decided that the team would come to Canada for its 2003 global meeting. The visitors from Germany, Korea and Sweden were welcomed by Ray on September 21st, 2003, and fêted in Toronto, Niagara Falls and Goderich.

Vintage machinery of two different types came to town in late summer. The local classic car club organised a rally and dozens of old automobiles were exhibited on Courthouse Park. However, more spectacular was the visit of a steam locomotive pulling seven carriages (cars) on an enthusiasts' trip from Guelph through Stratford to Goderich. There was much anticipation as Essex Terminal Railway Company's No. 9 engine, blowing its steam whistle, came down the line to the 1906 Grand Trunk Railway (GTR) – later Canadian National – station at the end of East Street. There was a huge crowd, together with the Celtic Blue Highlanders pipes and drums, that welcomed the passengers, and the station was decorated with flags. There was a terrific interest in the locomotive and, fortunately, the weather brightened up during its brief stay. For the return journey, the railway company used a modern diesel to haul the train back to Guelph as there was no facility to turn the steam locomotive around at Goderich.

October, 2003, proved to be a month of variations, including an unexpected health issue. Cousin Don Jr. called to say that there would be a family gathering at his house. We went to London and were welcomed by Don Jr. and Claire, and also met most of their family: Brent (son); Shannon (daughter); Brad (son-in-law); Paige (granddaughter), and Evan (grandson). Also at the reunion was Paul Yaroshak and his new wife, Sue-Ming. Paul is the son of my cousin Anne, sister to Don Jr., and was working in Peru where he met Sue-Ming. At the time, I was looking (and feeling) rather scruffy as I was growing a full beard for a fancy dress Halloween party at the end of the month.

Not long after, I came down with an illness. It was a bout of pertussis (whooping cough or '100-day cough') and may have been caught from germs circulating in the office. While it wasn't serious, the persistent cough was irritating to me and annoying to others. In the end I went to the local medical centre and received an inoculation to boost the vaccination I had had as a child. The condition eventually ended, having run its natural course.

The fancy dress Halloween party was held at Daniel's restaurant in the nearby community of Clinton. We had got to know the owners, Daniel and Linda, and one of their waitresses, Annarike, reasonably well, so when the Halloween event was planned we knew it would be a good time. As fancy dress went, we didn't have much to go on, but decided on a couple of simple costumes that Monica could make. The Halloween theme, of course, meant something sinister – with me in the costume of Merlin the Sorcerer, and Monica disguised as The Spider Lady. Appropriate material was sourced from a fabric shop. Merlin was clothed in a flowing, black kimono with witch's hat, and Monica's long, black robe was covered with silver spider webs. Since Merlin was a bearded character, I looked for a fake beard in a novelty shop, but anything was rather expensive for a one-time occasion. So, I decided to grow a natural beard, which was both authentic and cost nothing. For accoutrements to the costumes, I found a suitable wooden staff, and Monica sported a velvet headband that incorporated a black spider. Outside the restaurant were intricately carved pumpkin 'Jack 'o lanterns', and guests arrived in all sorts of colourful costumes to compliment the party atmosphere.

This year's autumn was particularly colourful and we made most of the opportunities for hiking along the local trails and also to the Maitland Cemetery where we inspected our columbarium niche. The sunny November weather also encouraged us to stay for a short while at the Millcroft Inn and appreciate the autumnal colours in the Caledon Hills: also to visit the Dufferin County Museum and Archives on Hwy. 89 near Rosemont. The modern museum complex resembled a cluster of farm buildings, including a barn and silo tower. Inside were many exhibits indigenous to the area, as well as a special display of 'whirligigs', or different types of weathervanes and other whimsical objects that rotated in the wind. From a series of windows at the top of the silo tower visitors could view a wide panorama of the countryside. At the Millcroft Inn, we booked into one of the 'croft' units; even upgrading to one equipped with an outside hot tub. This was a novel feature that I thoroughly enjoyed. Following a dip in the hot tub, the day was rounded off in front of a roaring log fire and eating a bedtime snack of pumpnickel bread with smoked Gouda cheese, mini-carrots, celery sticks and a bottle of full bodied red wine from Harrow, Ontario.

## *Conflict with management*

Towards the end of 2003, the order backlog at Volvo Motor Graders Ltd. was dwindling and there was the ever present possibility of a production slow down and a company-wide temporary layoff. This situation was indicative of a soft global market for motor graders and, in the face of fierce competition, any potential order was seized upon. As in the past, the company laid off personnel until the order backlog was healthy enough to warrant recalling workers. A decision was made to extend the Christmas shutdown, beginning on December 10th, 2003, similar to the identical situation in 2001 (see earlier in this chapter).

Being a shop steward for Local Lodge 1863 I could exercise my 'super-seniority' rights and remain at work while my colleagues were temporarily sent home. This immunity clause was not popular with management. Following a departmental meeting concerning the consequences of the extended shutdown, my supervisor, Ray, asked me to remain in his office to discuss the situation. Referring to clause 14.03 – the 'super-seniority' rights in the collective agreement – Ray suggested that it would be unwise for me to exercise the rights and implied that taking advantage of clause 14.03 would be unfair in a working team environment; adding some profanity to his argument. I didn't answer or react to this, in my opinion, a demeaning act.

During the course of conversation, this incident was later described to the other office union committee members at a management/union meeting. On the insistence of the office union chairperson I reiterated the incident to company officials. Ed Gooyers, vice president of operations, decided to investigate the complaint. Now, some might say it was good to air the grievance. However, I knew this would only open up old wounds with Ray and somewhat regretted confiding with my union colleagues. At the time I considered being 'transparent' was the thing to do, but now everything had backfired on me and there were going to be some serious consequences.

It took nearly two weeks before the situation was resolved. Jason Klassen, vice president of CST, was Ray's supervisor and evidently they met behind closed doors to clarify the situation. Clearly Ray had overstepped the mark, especially where the use of profanity was concerned. A resolution in the form of an apol-



*Essex Terminal Railway Company's No. 9 Engine Enters the GTR Station, Goderich, ON, Sept., 2003.*



*The Steam Train Welcomed by the Celtic Blue Highlanders Pipes and Drums, Goderich, ON, Sept., 2003.*



*Family Gathering in the Garden of Don and Claire's House in London, Ontario, October, 2003.*



*Barry and Cousin Don Jr., at Don and Claire's House in London, Ontario, October, 2003.*



*Monica and Barry Dressed for the Halloween Party, Daniel's Restaurant, Clinton, ON, October, 2003.*



*Fall Colours in the Maitland Valley near the Golf & Country Club, Goderich, Ontario, October, 2003.*

ogy was considered the best way to bring the incident to a close. Ray invited me into his office for a private talk, and it was clear he was uncomfortable as we discussed the situation. This turned out to be a meaningful one-on-one conversation in which Ray verbally apologised for his "... flagrant disregard to the Volvo ethic of respect for the individual." The air was cleared without any animosity – which was a huge relief – and Ray extended his hand for me to shake in a gentlemanly manner. This being done, we continued going forward in a positive direction.

Nevertheless, there were still some unpleasant fallout to come. On December 27th, 2003, Ray issued a memorandum to all parties signifying a satisfactory conclusion to the matter. An immediate red flag was raised because the office union chairperson had not been present at the one-on-one discussion. This then put me in the union's 'bad books.' In fact, John Anderson, the union president, raked me over the coals by blatantly saying to my face, "Well, I'm not happy!" To which my reply was, "And I respect that, John." Later, the annual performance review listed constructive criticisms by Ray, including the comment, "We both need to improve our mutual trust as much as possible", which compelled me to 'buck up.' In the Employee's Comments section was the notation: "Solid commitment to work up to impending early retirement release in 2006." Clearly, my goal of early retirement was becoming more of a reality.

## *The Royal Ontario Museum and SAE activities*

**O**n November 22nd and 23rd, 2003, we aimed for a weekend break to visit the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. The museum was showcasing a major Art Deco exhibition, and a minor display of the works of Beatrix Potter, the celebrated English writer of children's stories with their animal characters. Staying at the Holiday Inn hotel in the district of Yorkdale, we were able to use the Toronto underground (subway) train service to take us downtown. The massive museum building contained a cornucopia of artifacts, ranging from dinosaur skeletons to a collection of stuffed native bird species. The Art Deco exhibition featured items of furniture and clothing, plus interior décor and photos of iconic buildings such as the Chrysler Building in New York City. The temporary Beatrix Potter gallery chronicled her life and described many of the different animal characters, including the well known Peter Rabbit whose statue welcomed visitors at the entrance door.

Seven events, including a golf tournament, were organised by the SAE Southwestern Ontario Section in 2003. Among the guest speakers at five of the events was "Land Speed" Louise Ann Noeth, who described her adventures as a land speed record holder and photojournalist. A lecture on racing stock cars was also on the agenda, and this appealed to engineering students at the University of Windsor. There were presentations on exhaust emission standards and automotive parts supply. Meeting the 2003 SAE international president, Dr. Jack E. Thompson, was a very special occasion that included honouring the Section's most senior member, Lorne C. Elder, with an SAE Achievement Award. Added to the mix was a plant tour of Volvo Motor Graders Ltd., and I acted as one of the guides, having done it before when the company was still Champion Road Machinery Ltd. (see Chapter 9).

As previously stated, the cost of the new colour laser printer was partially covered by the receipts from publishing the SAE Section's newsletters for 2003. In general, the hobby business was financially healthy.

## *Changes at Volvo for 2004*

The snowfall that started late in December, 2003, continued through Christmas and New Year's; then well into January and February, 2004. Goderich received significant amounts and the town's snow clearing crews were hard pressed to keep the roads and pavements (sidewalks) open. There were, however, benefits as walking around provided an endless panorama of pristine whiteness both in the town and on the nearby trails. We particularly enjoyed hiking across the Menesetung Bridge and along the Tiger Dunlop Trail in this winter wonderland.

For Monica's 65th birthday, which coincided with Valentine's Day, we celebrated both occasions at Bailey's fine dining restaurant on The Square in Goderich. As an extension to the weekend we stayed two nights at the Millcroft Inn, and incorporated a hike at the nearby Mono Cliffs Provincial Park. Later in the month we explored a different network of trails; one that followed the Grand River in a recreational area known as RIM Park. RIM stands for Research in Motion, a major electronics company based in Waterloo, Ontario. The company was the largest financing donor, and the park contained a sportsplex, the heritage Mennonite Martin farm and a golf course. The wide asphalt trails attracted hundreds of hikers, walkers, joggers and cyclists.

There were two upper management changes at Volvo Motor Graders Ltd. In the February, 2004, edition of the company's monthly newsletter, it was reported that Per Alm would resign as vice president of finance and CFO; leaving Volvo Motor Graders Ltd. for the position of CFO - Region International. His replacement after March 1, 2004, was Muriel Huyghebaert. More importantly, the April newsletter announced that Anders Larsson would be leaving as president and CEO on May 24, 2004. He moved to become senior vice president of product, technology and industry, and was replaced by Patrick Olney, the vice president of finance and CFO previous to Per Alm in 2001, and interim CEO between Scott Hall and Anders in 2000.

Operational Development (OD), the corporate process launched in 2002, was increasing awareness of the Core Values of Safety, Quality and the Environment. These company goals, nurtured in OD co-worker seminars, were having a direct impact on other performance measurements such as the Employee Satisfaction Index (ESI) and the Volvo Attitude Survey – now called the Volvo Group Attitude Survey (VGAS). VGAS-2004 participation surpassed the previous year and reached the targeted response rate of 80%.

The heavily rumoured physical move of the Technical Publications Department to the Customer Support Team (CST) division of Volvo CE became a reality in the early part of May, 2004. New furniture had been delivered to the Distribution Centre building – now renamed Volvo Customer Support – on Huckins Street, and people were assigned their spots on the floor plan. We now reported to the new overall supervisor, Jason Klassen, vice president of CST, who had risen through the ranks as parts marketing regional manager and parts sales manager.

Around late May/early June, CST in Goderich became responsible for Compaction Equipment (CPE), a revised product line that had grown from the 2002 re-acquired assets of SuperPac, the production of which had moved from Cambridge, Ontario, to the Volvo CE factory located in Asheville, North Carolina.

Heading the new CPE team was Gerry Bender, who relinquished his position as general service manager for motor graders. Gerry needed team members and started to actively recruit personnel using the standard internal hiring practice where union jobs were concerned. Since CPE technical publication support was required, a technical writer's job position was posted. Seizing on this opportunity, I applied and, since Gerry and I got along very well, was granted the job. Ray had got wind of this and called me into his office for a private chat, ostensibly wanting to confirm that I would be transferring to CPE. Although my departure would create a void, he didn't dissuade me from making the move. Gerry then expanded his team and hired Susan Huff, Neil Verbruggen, Peter Fryer (June) and Ben Graf (November). In the meantime, Ray filled the void I created by hiring Wayne Collington, together with a new technical illustrator, Rick Ernst.

The SuperPac range of self-propelled road rollers represented something of a departure for me after twenty-eight years working with motor graders, but it was also a refreshing change to learn about a new product. Neil Verbruggen was the resident expert having worked at SuperPac for many years both as an assembler and a service advisor. He and I (and later, Ben Graf, another service advisor) worked hand in hand writing operating, maintenance and service procedures for the road rollers – now being modified to the new Volvo standards. Gerry had specific ideas about handling CPE product support, and we had to adapt our work strategy by, in his words, "... hitting the ground running."

To further my product knowledge it was agreed that Neil and I would visit the factory in Asheville and establish contacts there; together with a familiarisation of road roller manufacturing, assembling and testing. The trip was organised and Neil and I travelled to Toronto on June 27th, 2004, staying overnight in an airport hotel. The next day we flew from Toronto to Charlotte-Douglas International Airport, a familiar destination for me. A curious incident happened before we left Toronto. When we were lining up to clear U.S. Customs and Immigration, I noticed the name of the person in front of me on his carry-on baggage tag. It read Dennis Vollmershausen. At one time – 1997 to 1998 – Dennis was the president and CEO of Champion Road Machinery Ltd. before moving on to new horizons. I introduced myself and we had a short conversation in the queue.

At Charlotte, Neil rented a car for our overland journey to Asheville. He said to me, "Have you ever ridden in a PT Cruiser (the model of car)?" I said I hadn't, and Neil replied, "Well, now you will." After lunch at the Cracker Barrel restaurant, we arrived at the Volvo N.A. corporate offices in the Asheville suburban community of Skyland and met product specialist, Roberto Bogdanoff. Neil demonstrated his training CD to Roberto for possible use on a future Mexico training trip. We then continued our tour of the corporate office and met/re-acquainted marketing and product support personnel, and finished by visiting the training facility and two service methods bays.

The next day was a busy one and we fulfilled the main purpose of the visit by meeting parts support and engineering personnel at the Asheville factory and office complex. A tour of the factory included viewing the hydraulic excavator, front end loader, skid-steer and SuperPac assembly lines; also the roller drum testing and RND facilities. We also met key SuperPac personnel, Ray Gallant, Jeremiah Mull, Gustavo Casagrandi and Alice Courtland and, with help from Susan Nelson, were able to correct a lost Intranet connection with the Asheville terminal server. The afternoon was spent at the Volvo test site where I oper-



*Monica Stands in Snowdrifts after a Major Blizzard, Goderich, Ontario, February, 2004.*



*Barry and Monica before Valentine's Day Dinner at Bailey's Restaurant, Goderich, ON, February, 2004.*



*Bank Barn on the Heritage Mennonite Martin Farm, RIM Park, Waterloo, Ontario, February, 2004.*



*General View of the Reservoir at the Morrison Dam Conservation Area near Exeter, Ontario, May, 2004.*



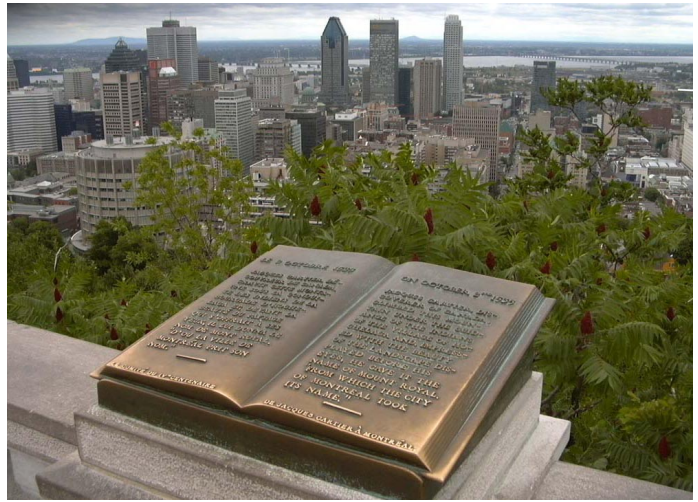
*Monica Poses for Lunch at the Kettle Creek Inn, Port Stanley, Ontario, June, 2004.*



*Barry Operating a SuperPac Model 8400 Road Roller at the Test Site, Asheville, North Carolina, June, 2004.*



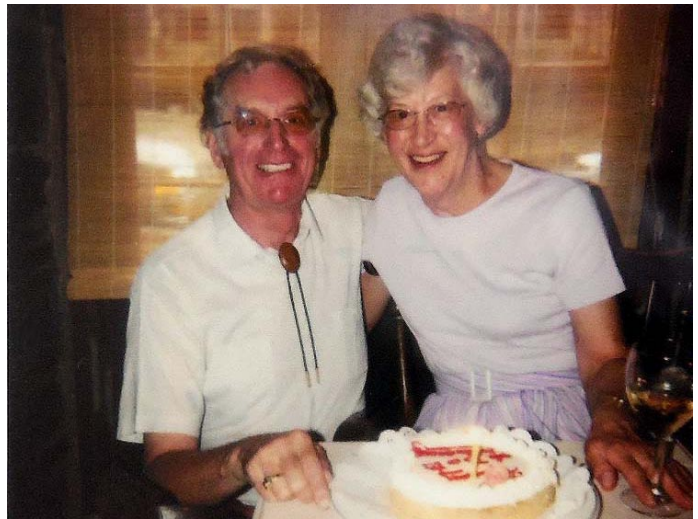
*Renovated Ramparts of 18th Century Fort Chambly, Chambly, Québec, July, 2004.*



*General View of the Montréal Downtown Skyline from the Top of Mont-Royal, Montréal, Québec, July, 2004.*



*Place d'Youville in Old Montréal and Location of Gibby's Restaurant, Montréal, QC, July, 2004.*



*Barry and Monica Celebrate their 30th Wedding Anniversary, Montréal, Québec, July, 2004.*



*Exterior of the Olympic Park with the Stadium Tower and Vélodrome, Montréal, Québec, July, 2004.*



*Interior of the Lachine National Historic Site and Fur Trade Museum, Montréal, Québec, July, 2004.*



ated a SuperPac Model 8400 road roller to gain some hands-on experience. Remainder of the day was spent with engineering personnel and generally becoming familiar with the Asheville plant, together with obtaining an electronic pass for security clearance. An enjoyable dinner was eaten at “Fishbone”, a seafood restaurant, and the return trip to Goderich was the reverse journey via Charlotte and Toronto.

Another organizational change was the Volvo CE divestment of the compact road graders (C-Series) product line. On September 3rd, 1993, the Bud Lee Company in Charlotte, North Carolina, had been bought by Sequoia Associates Inc. as an addition to the Champion range of motor graders. On July 1st, 2004, the Abernathy family purchased and took over ownership of the manufacturing facility in Charlotte – together with the Champion name and branding rights – from Volvo CE.

Despite all the upheavals of job relocation and new direction, Monica and I found time to enjoy several hikes in and around Goderich: including the Sifto Loop portion of the Tiger Dunlop Trail, the Sharpe’s Creek stretch and the far end of the Goderich to Auburn Rail Trail (GART). The Morrison Dam Conservation Area near Exeter has trails and boardwalks that provide opportunities to observe wildlife and flowers and is a firm favourite with us. Another diversion was spending two days in Port Stanley at the Kettle Creek Inn where, on June 14th, 2004, we celebrated Monica’s 30th anniversary of emigration to Canada

## *Vacation in Montréal*

Another very important anniversary was on the horizon. Consequently we decided to slip off for a week to Montréal – where our Canadian adventure started – to celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary. The *en route* and destination hotels were booked and we left Goderich heading across country to Palmerston and then on Hwy. 9 through Orangeville and Newmarket to the back roads taking us south to Courtice. After joining the fast multi-lane Hwy. 401, we stopped for the night in Cornwall. In the morning we crossed the Ontario/Québec provincial border where the freeway changes to Route 20, then on to the junction with Route 10 (Autoroute des Cantons-de-l’Est) and across the Champlain Bridge. Routes 133 and 112 took us to Chambly, an old community in terms of Canadian exploration and settlement, where we stopped for refreshments and visited the two local historic sites of Fort Chambly and the Chambly Canal.

We now had to be mindful that speaking French was expected when communicating with local people. For refreshments we found a Tim Hortons coffee shop and I placed our orders with the girl behind the desk in fairly slow and precise French. Fortunately her (as it turned out relatively bilingual) supervisor was listening and made sure our orders were correct. I then asked for directions to the fort and they were somewhat understood as the reply was coherent. After lunch we made our way to the fort, which is a National Historic Site run by Parks Canada; the same as the Chambly Canal.

Fort Chambly is a massive stone fortification that has been renovated to show visitors what life was like on the early 18th century frontier; days when there was a constant struggle between the French, English and indigenous peoples. A strategic site was chosen to control the Richelieu River from invading forces trying to capture Montréal, and Fort Chambly evolved from an early wooden stockade to the current stone structure. Now, visitors are entertained by soldiers in period uniforms performing drills and musket firing practice.

The Chambly Canal was constructed about 1843 to bypass a series of rapids on the Richelieu River between Chambly and the next important town of St-Jean-sur-Richelieu. This was in the days of heavy water-borne commercial traffic between Canada and the U.S.A. One of the best preserved features is the canal lock that now allows the passage of recreational vessels.

From Chambly we now drove to our hotel in Longueuil by way of Routes 112, 116 and 134 to Rue Saint-Charles and the Sandman Inn, which was previously the Holiday Inn and the hotel I first stayed at when arriving in Canada on Sunday, November 4th, 1973 (see Chapter 7). We were allocated a room on one of the higher floors and overlooking the St. Lawrence River; so this brought back memories of virtually the same outlook from our 1509-385 Place de la Louisiane, apartment window (see Chapter 7). The main convenience of the hotel was its proximity to the Longueuil Métro station and access to the city of Montréal using the underground (subway) trains. The evening meal was somewhat enlivened when we decided to eat at one of the Old Longueuil restaurants on Rue St-Charles. This part of the street was trendy with a number of sidewalk cafés and bistros. Having chosen a table *al fresco*, we exchanged some small talk and waited for a waiter. Service was not forthcoming and we detected a little reluctance; probably as we had been overheard speaking in English. Longueuil is known as a staunch Francophone enclave. However, we were eventually approached and, once I started conversing with polite French phrases, the frostiness was eased and we had a nice and relaxing dinner.

The next day, our anniversary day, was bright and clear. After breakfast, we walked to the Longueuil Métro station and bought a multi-day pass that allowed us unlimited rides on the underground trains. We were anxious to travel downtown to see some of the old haunts, although being aware that changes must have happened since our last visit. The Métro seemed the same, although definitely aging and starting to look a bit shabby. However, the sights, sounds and smells of the underground complex remained the same. The short run from Longueuil to the Berri-de Montigny interchange brought us close to downtown.

A short walk down Rue Berri brought us to the waterfront where a landscaped pathway led us to the end of the Victoria Quay and the signature clock tower that welcomed all ship traffic into the Montréal docks. Retracing our steps to Rue St-Paul, we entered the vast domed building of Marché Bonsecours, then continued to Place Jacques-Cartier and the heart of the Old Montréal quarter with its many stone buildings and main tourist area. Further along Rue St-Paul we saw the lofty façade of the Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours basilica. Nearby was Place d'Youville; one of the best preserved collection of stone buildings. We were more than pleased to note that "Gibby's" – an old favourite fine dining restaurant – was still there, and decided it was definitely the place where we would celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary.

We returned to the hotel and changed for our dinner date, then travelled downtown and once again strolled along the cobblestone streets of Old Montréal to Place d'Youville. Even for a Monday evening the restaurant was crowded, but we succeeded in securing a table. I casually mentioned to our waiter the reason why it was a special occasion. Remarkably at the end of the main course, the waiter arrived with a whole cake, complete with candle and anniversary message piped on top – compliments of the restaurant. Additionally, the waiter took an instant photo of the happy couple and the cake. We ate what we could but, since we weren't able to refrigerate the remainder with its fresh cream topping, we reluctantly left the cake there.

Leaving the restaurant, the balmy night encouraged us to continue wandering along the old streets which were alive with pedestrians and the occasional tourist calèche. Other restaurants were equally busy; the light from their dining rooms shining out the characteristic open casement windows, and a muted hubbub of French conversations and background music pervading the air. When we arrived at Place Jacques-Cartier there were jovial crowds enjoying themselves at the many patio bars lining the square. Also there were the ‘human statues’; several artistes disguised as stone or gilded statues, who stood motionless, as curious onlookers threw loose change into the ‘statue’s’ hat or bowl. At one end of Place Jacques-Cartier we admired the Hôtel de Ville de Montréal (City Hall) that was floodlit to emphasize its grandeur.

A cloudy and humid day greeted us the next morning and, after breakfast, it was time to explore Île Sainte-Hélène (St. Helen’s Island). Together with the neighbouring island, Île Notre-Dame, this was the site of “Expo ’67” – also known as “Man and his World” (“*Terre des hommes*”) – the World’s Fair that I went to during its exhibition in 1967 (see Chapter 4). Leaving the Île Sainte-Hélène Métro station we could see that most of the “Expo ’67” pavilions had gone, but at least two of the more outstanding buildings remained. The modern glass and steel French pavilion had been repurposed and now housed the Casino de Montréal. The mighty geodesic sphere, that originally was the U.S.A. pavilion, stood not far away. Now containing a research facility for the Environment Canada weather bureau, the sphere retains its interconnecting and self-supporting web of tubular struts less the Plexiglass panels. Another lasting monument to “Expo ’67” was the giant stainless steel abstract structure – the universal symbol for the exposition. The extensive network of pathways through Parc Hélène de Champlain were well used by recreational walkers, joggers and cyclists. At one point we discovered the Casernes (Barracks) of Fort Sainte-Hélène where a squad of re-enactors dressed in period uniforms were rehearsing military drills.

From Île Sainte-Hélène, we took the underground train downtown and, as we were feeling hungry, worked our way to the city’s modern, wide boulevards looking for a snack bar. Our preferred choice was one of the universal Tim Hortons coffee shops identified by its unique sign. As we strolled along St. Catherine Street – the main shopping artery – we noticed some of the large department stores had either changed ownership or simply disappeared, which was a pity as they always exuded a charm of yesteryear. No Tim Hortons sign was readily apparent and we believe other coffee shop chains, such as Starbucks, had the monopoly and held sway in downtown. We finished our stroll where St. Catherine Street met Atwater Avenue and, after determining that the “Bali-Hi” cocktail bar still existed, returned to Longueuil from the Atwater Métro station. When relaxing in our hotel room, we watched the river traffic from the window and, in particular, the lake freighters that called into Goderich harbour; some of the ships passing through had familiar names.

Montréal’s changing skyline was evident at ground level, but fully appreciating the extent of this evolution meant scanning the horizon from the city’s highest points – the belvedere on Mont-Royal and the top of the Parc Olympique (Olympic Games Park) Stadium tower (last seen in 1976 shortly after its completion). We were determined to find the Mont-Royal belvedere, but first set off for the Oratoire St-Joseph-du-Mont-Royal (St. Joseph’s Oratory of Mount Royal), an important Roman Catholic national shrine. The huge domed basilica dominates Westmount Summit and attracts millions of visitors and pilgrims from all over the world. After visiting the shrine, we continued walking up the hillside road to the top of Mont-Royal where

we eventually located the belvedere – a semicircular plaza with a chalet and snack bar – for refreshments and views across the city. Many new high-rise towers had sprouted, and Place Victoria, Place Ville-Marie, and the CIBC Building no longer commanded the skyline as I remembered them in 1973 (see Chapter 7).

Accessing the nearest Métro station meant following the paths and steps down the slope of Mont-Royal until we reached the McGill University campus. University Avenue led us to the McGill Métro station and the underground trains to Longueuil. It had been a tiring day, but the excitement wasn't over. At the hotel we noticed that crowds of people were congregating in the outside parking lot. We found this curious and followed suit. As dusk settled we realised why there were so many onlookers. Suddenly the sky was lit up with colourful, exploding firework bomb bursts. On certain nights during the summer, the massive firework display was discharged from La Ronde – the original amusement park feature on Île Sainte-Hélène.

Our final full day in Montréal centred around Parc Olympique de Montréal (Montréal Olympic Park). We had watched the construction taking place from our apartment window, but left the city before the 1976 Olympic Games took place. Now a tourist attraction, the sports complex welcomes visitors to tour the various facilities. Dominating the site is the Olympic Stadium and Tower. The tower incorporates the mechanism deploying and retracting a special awning that covers the opening of the stadium during inclement weather. There is also a viewing gallery at the top of the tower, and access is by a unique rack and pinion lift (elevator) that slowly progresses up and down the inclined tower. We went on this and, from the observation deck, could see the whole of downtown Montréal and Mont-Royal, the South Shore (Rive Sud), East Montréal and the Laurentian Mountains to the north. We also looked down on the Olympic Stadium, the Olympic Pool building and the noted Vélodrome. Nearby were the two pyramidal blocks of the Olympic Village – the athletes' dormitories – now converted to apartments.

Inside the Olympic Pool building was the venue for all swimming and diving competitions. The ultra-modern concrete and glass structure contained the Olympic size swimming pool and a separate diving pool. Tiers of seats overlooked the competition areas in great sweeps, and both natural and artificial light illuminated the huge hall. A conducted tour of the Olympic Stadium showcased the 'Big-O', as it is informally called. The cavernous stadium, with its grassed pitch marked for baseball, was ringed with seats in blocks of different colour to indicate the various prices. One could imagine a packed stadium and the atmosphere generated by hordes of excited sports fans.

On the following day it was time to make a start our homeward journey. The nice weather had deteriorated, but we hadn't finished our sightseeing and the forecasted rain wasn't going to stop us visiting the Lachine National Historic Site next to the Lachine Canal, which is also a National Historic Site. In the 17th century, the area was important as a transfer point for the fur trade. A stone warehouse, built in 1803 by the Northwest Company, has been converted into a museum. Artifacts such as bales of furs; pelts hanging from the walls; a selection of animal traps, and examples of goods traded to the indigenous peoples provided tangible exhibits of the world of the voyageurs and fur traders. Unfortunately, the incessant rain spoiled an outside visit to the remnants of the original Lachine Canal, and so we resumed our return journey along Route 20, crossing the Ontario/Québec provincial border where the freeway changes to the fast multi-lane Hwy. 401, and continuing to Port Hope.

Port Hope is an established municipality in Southern Ontario's Northumberland County, and it was there that we stayed at the Lantern Inn – another member hotel of the Inns of Ontario group – located adjacent to the main bridge into downtown and spanning the Ganaraska River. It was a pleasant stopover and we resolved to return one day and explore Port Hope more thoroughly. Back on Hwy. 401, the homeward journey retraced our route to Bowmanville and the back roads taking us north to Hwy. 9, Newmarket, through Orangeville to Palmerston and across country to Goderich.

## *Fire! Fire!*

While we were away, there was excitement in Goderich when one of the downtown stores was destroyed by a major fire. The conflagration happened in the morning of July 14th, 2004, and started in an upstairs apartment above the Triangle Discount store on the corner of The Square and North Street. A large crowd gathered to watch the volunteer firefighters of the Goderich Fire Department tackle the blaze. At first, only smoke appeared from under the roof; then flames broke through the roof in a giant fireball as the asphalt shingles ignited. One of the firefighters on the aerial ladder was lucky to escape the mass of flames. Soon, the entire roof was engulfed and the fire spread rapidly. Eventually the first floor collapsed into the store below and debris was strewn into the road. After a great deal of effort and with support from the neighbouring Clinton Fire Department, the blaze was brought under control and extinguished. Brick walls saved the next door buildings, but smoke damage was heavy and residents in the Circle Park Suites were evacuated.

## *Visit to Fort Erie*

Fort Erie is a historic town at the southern end of the Niagara River directly opposite the bustling city of Buffalo in New York State, U.S.A. The historic site there is the reconstructed Fort Erie, scene of the bloodiest battle fought on Canadian soil. Every year there is a weekend re-enactment of the siege of Fort Erie put on free of charge by enthusiasts and volunteers dressed in period costumes and uniforms. Historically, the fort was the first of a string of frontier strongholds and featured in the War of 1812. We decided to visit the fort and watch some of the battle re-enactments. The drive from Goderich is Hwy. 8 east to Shakespeare and Hwy. 59 to Woodstock. Hwys. 2 and 53 lead to the fast multi-lane Hwy. 403 and, at Ancaster, Hwy. 20 continues to Fonthill. We stayed overnight at nearby Welland and the following day took Hwy. 58 south to Hwy. 3 then east all the way to Fort Erie.

After arriving, we followed one of the costumed re-enactors into the fort where the red uniforms of the British troops brightened up the otherwise grey, overcast day. The soldiers were being mustered following news of the invading U.S. forces. Outside, we positioned ourselves to see the ranks of blue uniformed American soldiers advancing to the beat of drums across the field in front of the fort's ramparts. The British sent a few snipers to engage the enemy and the first shots were fired. The U.S. soldiers then made a coordinated attack and the air rang with musket volleys as gunpowder smoke wafted across the battlefield. Eventually the Colonial forces won the day and captured the fort. The defeated British troops then left the fort with muskets reversed, and the U.S. Stars and Stripes flag was raised above the ramparts.

There was now a hiatus representing the American occupation, and visitors could enter some of the fort's buildings, including the officers' quarters with authentic artifacts such as furniture and possessions typical of the more wealthy personnel. Outside was a huge encampment of sutlers and indigenous people, who stayed over two nights in their tents, wigwams and enclosed waggons. Cooking over camp fires and living as they did in 18th century Upper Canada.

As the afternoon wore on, the audience was advised that a contingent of British and Canadian soldiers was on its way to recapture Fort Erie. The measured ranks of redcoats and other regiments formed up on the battlefield, together with a field gun battery complete with a 12-pounder cannon. Despite some sniping from mercenaries hiding in the undergrowth, the main force unleashed several volleys of musket fire and a few rounds from the cannon. With drums beating, the thin red line slowly advanced – its colours flying in the centre – leaving behind several 'casualties.' More action resulted in a stalemate and the attacking army wheeled around and retreated to fight another day.

At this time we really hadn't done our homework thoroughly and, concluding this was the end of the display, elected to return home. Truth be known was that more mock battles were played out both in the evening and on the following day. The evening battle, itself, simulating the fierce and disastrous siege. A further engagement in the morning between facing armies, resulted with the victorious British entering the fort and running up the Union Flag of the day. Subsequently learning this, we made sure to return the following year; not only to visit the museum and enjoy all the battles, but also to experience the evening guided tour by lantern-light of the fort's infirmary, barracks and other quarters.

## *Hiking around Ontario and visits from friends and relatives*

As the nicest time of the year approached, we had the pleasure of a visit from our old friends from Coventry, Roger and Susan Moore. They were on holiday in Canada specifically to see Stephen and Erin, who were living in Waterloo, Ontario, and Erin's parents. However, arrangements were made for Roger and Susan to rent a car and drive to Goderich. They arrived at our home and, after the initial welcome, we all went for lunch at the "Park House" tavern. Their last trip to Canada was in July, 2002, so we had an enjoyable few hours reminiscing and walking around town.

One of the nicest beauty spots during the autumn is Point Pelee National Park near Leamington, Ontario. We had visited this southernmost part of mainland Canada several times before at different times of the year. Popular with bird watchers during times of migration, another fantastic sight in the park is the mass assembly of monarch butterflies, using the sandy promontory as a point of navigational reference on their flight south to Mexico. As well as a hike along the trail to the end of the sand spit, we appreciated the park's wetlands by strolling the boardwalk and viewing the extensive reed marsh from the top of the observation tower. Nearby was Rondeau Provincial Park with its small population of white tail deer, and a walk on the sandy beaches there completed our hiking excursion of this part of the Lake Erie shoreline.

Locally, the autumn foliage colour change was at its height around the second week of October and we decided to look at some of the bright red, orange and yellow maple leaves at a place new to us but within a



*Fire Erupts at the Triangle Discount Store on North Street and The Square, Goderich, ON, July, 2004.*



*Aftermath at the Triangle Discount Store on North Street and The Square, Goderich, ON, July, 2004.*



*British Troops Muster in Readiness for the Defence of Fort Erie, Ontario, August, 2004.*



*U.S. Soldiers Fire a Musket Volley as they Attack Fort Erie, Ontario, August, 2004.*



*British Troops Surrender and March with Reversed Muskets from Fort Erie, Ontario, August, 2004.*



*British Troops and Field Artillery Counterattack to Try and Retake Fort Erie, Ontario, August, 2004.*



*Roger Moore and Monica inside the "Park House" Tavern, Goderich, Ontario, September, 2004.*



*Barry at Southernmost Point of Canada, Point Pelee National Park, Leamington, ON, September, 2004.*



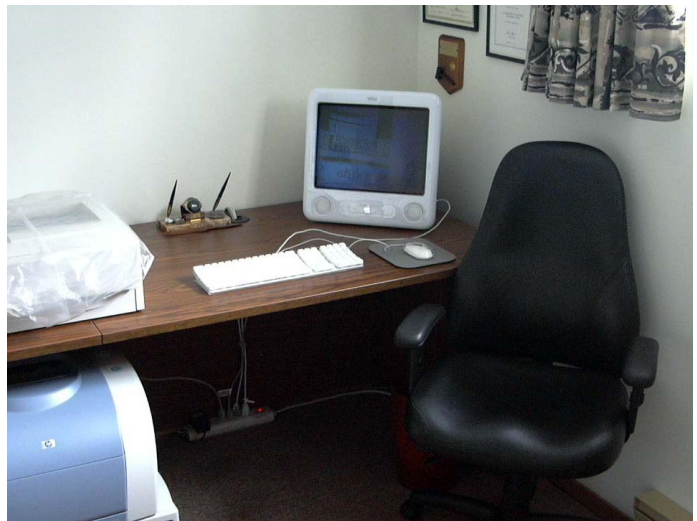
*Huron County Gravel Road Leading to Little Lakes, near Auburn, Ontario, October, 2004.*



*19th Century Ball's Bridge Spanning the Maitland River near Little Lakes, Ontario, October, 2004.*



*A Saw-Whet Owl Resting in the Maitland Woods, Goderich, Ontario, November, 2004.*



*Monica's New Apple Macintosh eMac G4 Computer, Goderich, Ontario, December, 2004.*



short drive in Huron County. The area, familiarly known as Little Lakes, is part of the Maitland Block tract of land. Spanning the Maitland River nearby is historic Ball's Bridge, the last remaining functional 19th century steel truss bridge in the county. After parking we hiked along the gravel Little Lakes Road and admired the riot of colour surrounding us and Little Lakes, two bodies of water at the end of the road.

One of our last hikes before the arrival of winter weather was to the Maitland Woods, an area of natural beauty at the south end of Goderich. There are several accesses to the trail system and the one we chose took us through a small grove of cedar trees. Normally aware of the sounds of the forest, we were alerted to a great deal of chatter from a flock of agitated chickadees – small birds that favour cedars for their habitat. The reason for all the excitement was the presence of a saw-whet owl that had invaded the chickadees' territory, and they were scolding the larger bird. Apparently this is a common occurrence. The trail was well known to us and, although all the deciduous trees were bare, it was a very nice hike. A few days later and further afield we stayed two nights at the Millcroft Inn. The window of our 'croft' unit looked out onto a small patio and wild undergrowth. Overnight we had a sprinkling of snow that made everything look magical and this was enhanced with the stealthy appearance of a white tail deer. The nearby Mono Cliffs Provincial Park hiking trails beckoned us and, from the Niagara Escarpment lookout, the surrounding Headwaters Country hills stood out when the sun broke through the patchy clouds.

Not long after my 31st anniversary of emigration we had a visit from my cousin, Don Jr., and his wife, Claire. It was rare that they travelled to this part of Ontario but, as avid golfers, they had the opportunity to play at a course near Kincardine, a town just north of Goderich, and so diverted to see us on their way home. As usual we had a nice time reminiscing and catching up on each others' news.

### *Volvo Compaction Equipment is disbanded*

**B**arely six months since Compaction Equipment (CPE) Customer Support was established, news came that a major restructuring was going to take place in the CPE division. Probably not content with the aged SuperPac designs, Volvo CE had tasked their engineers to create a brand new product line as original Volvo machines. I believe the engineering was carried out in a French facility. The upshot was, however, a complete overdesign that took far too long and cost far too much. The cost overrun crippled the entire project and, coupled with lagging sales and non-profitability, on December 13th, 2004, the Volvo board of directors decided to mothball SuperPac production and disband product support: effectively making all CPE personnel redundant. Even though service calls were still answered by Neil Verbruggen and Ben Graf, the remainder of the team, including myself, faced permanent lay off.

The saving grace was a revised motor grader already on the drawing boards. To make the product compliant with ever-changing and strict emission control regulations, particularly in Europe, there was a constant effort to modify the diesel engine and uphold one of Volvo's Core Values – Environment. The next design phase ( Tier III) was given the model code P6631. More than just the engine was changed when the new G900 Series was scheduled to be unveiled in June, 2005, as the first 'all-Volvo' motor grader from the ground up. Having learned extensively from the "Voice of the Customer" marketing campaign, the G900 Series incorporated many refinements, including Volvo power components (Deutz diesel engine; 11-speed

transmission and ZF final drive); a completely redesigned cab and engine compartment sheet metalwork; improved front axle, and Metric frame. The Goderich factory was updated to accommodate new manufacturing and 'cell build' techniques.

Although slated for launching in mid-2005, actual production machines wouldn't roll off the line until January of the following year; giving time to deplete the outstanding G700B orders and garner a backlog of G900 commitments. Also, product support in terms of technical publications needed to be available for the first pilot units. Luckily for me, Wayne Collington had suddenly quit and Ray was able to convince upper management and union officials that I could be redeployed into Wayne's vacated technical writer's position and concentrate working on the Operator's Manual. Thus avoiding a messy 'bumping' procedure that I was entitled to exercise due to seniority rights (see Chapter 10). This strange twist of fate – given our roller-coaster relationship – speaks volumes for Ray's contribution to mend fences. In fact, we joked about the transition when, during the redeployment negotiations in his office, we simultaneously remarked to each other with a laugh, "Here we go again!"

Similar redeployment under Ray's supervision were also made for Gerry Bender, Susan Huff and Peter Fryer. This made it a very difficult situation for Gerry, since he and Ray were never on good terms. Right from the start it was (correctly) assumed that Gerry would leave at the first opportunity, and his rapid departure to an automotive company was of no surprise. Peter Fryer was nearing the mandatory retiring age of sixty-five, and so he just worked his time until being pensioned off later in 2005. Susan Huff continued in a clerical capacity right up to the time when the company doors closed (see Chapter 13).

Further to my reinstatement and successful 'burying of the hatchet', the time came for the annual performance review. Considering the unglamorous report of last year resulting from the conflict with management, I was pleasantly surprised with Ray's 2004 assessment as described in the Overall Evaluation Performance section. "I was extremely pleased to welcome Barry back to our team providing his wealth of knowledge & experience. His efforts towards the P6631 Project responsibilities assigned will be pivotal to our success in preparing quality launch materials on time. Barry's constructive criticism is welcomed in his reflections in our OD & Department Teams. I'm also depending on Barry to help mold Mike Rompf as a Tech Writer. I appreciate Barry's help as our most senior Pubs guy. Barry & I have successfully buried our former negative feelings and established a trusting relationship satisfying our mutual goals." In the Employee's Comments section I noted: "Maintain quality work output commensurate with new product up to impending early retirement release – expected July, 2006."

Retirement was just a matter of time and opportunity considering that Volvo offered periodic 'golden handshake' packages, as senior personnel were expensive to maintain on the payroll in terms of wages, holidays and benefits. Already such programmes were being implemented, but as yet I couldn't satisfy the package's basic requirements of sixty years of age and thirty years continuous service. In the meantime, the union collective bargaining agreement had been watered down and now a 'two-tier' wage structure had been put into place where new hires were paid far below the rate of veteran employees working in the same classification. Another nail in the coffin and a homage to the 'Volvo Way' corporate philosophy. No small wonder then, that retirement incentives helped to reduce the cost of manpower.

## *Monica's new computer*

After some consideration we decided to upgrade Monica's personal computer equipment from the venerable Apple Macintosh IIVX to current technology standards. Staying with Apple products, we bought a new Apple Macintosh eMac G4/1.25 GHz model from the local dealer, MicroAge BASICS - Bluewater Office Equipment Ltd. on November 25th, 2004. In January, 2005, both the stand-alone hard disc drive and the Macintosh IIVX computer were completely retired and given away to a neighbour. Printing capabilities remained the same with both Hewlett-Packard laser printers.

During initial setup, however, it was found that the optical mouse supplied with the equipment was defective. The fault consisted of a sticking action when operating the mouse which prevented efficient control for mouse-reliant operations. Unfortunately, the local dealer was not an authorized Apple Service Provider and the defective part had to be returned using Apple's warranty procedure. A replacement mouse was supplied free of charge, and we resumed using the eMac until a catastrophic failure later in its life obliged us to take it to the town's e-waste disposal site.

## *White Christmas and fewer SAE events*

Winter's presence was felt earlier in 2004 than the previous year. Significant snow fell on November 25th (my 59th birthday) and later on December 23rd. The arrival of winter weather altered the landscape in the Maitland Woods, and an enjoyable trudge along the trails and boardwalks revealed wild animal tracks and fantastic shapes where the snow had fallen and accumulated on tree limbs. The assured 'white' Christmas period, spent at home, included the annual Norris and Shirley MacEwen's Boxing Day family party and New Year's Eve celebration at Hessenland Country Inn.

There were fewer SAE Southwestern Ontario Section events for 2004, but they included two very interesting plant tours. The Ford Motor Company's St. Thomas Assembly Plant visit was an instant sellout, and the Cooper-Standard Automotive NVH Control Systems factory tour was also popular. Apart from viewing the Ford manufacturing and assembly procedures from the beginning to when the final product was driven off the line, a number of cars were selected as police interceptors and a company project engineer explained the modifications. Cooper-Standard produced a wide range of automotive isolation mounts and suspension components with an emphasis on advanced electronic engineering designs for automotive and aerospace applications. Guest speakers rounded out two other events, which were as diversified as rocket technology and preparing for a Formula 1 race (presentations also aimed to benefit SAE Students). The Section also recognised its secretary, Allan Ball, with an Outstanding Young Engineer Award. Allan worked as a project engineer at Volvo Motor Graders Ltd.

Similar to the previous two years, my hobby business was subsisting largely on the periodic publishing of the SAE Section's newsletter. This trend was to continue as no new assignments were to materialise until the beginning of 2007 and, by then, the Ontario provincial government registration had expired, signifying the end of my desktop publishing activity at home.

## *Gearing up for project P6631*

**E**xtrême pressure was now being put to bear on the design and prototyping of the model P6631 – the first ‘all-Volvo’ motor grader from the ground up. The Goderich and Volvo CE international design engineers collaborated to create a machine having features common with other Volvo CE products to take advantage of economies of scale. The procedures used by the Service Methods technical writing team and my involvement with producing the Operator’s Manual also used company-wide practices. Of course, critical feedback from the “Voice of the Customer” marketing campaign was a driving force behind the development process. Additional personnel was hired in 2005 to supplement the manpower and we welcomed two seasoned CST employees, Kenth Bergkvist and Mikael Andersson, from Eskilstuna, Sweden. Kenth became a good friend and we still correspond (in Swedish) to this day. Dave Long’s Service Methods technical writing team was augmented with master mechanic, Roy Gutmanis and apprentice, Gary Matheson. Mike Rompf, too, was honing his technical writing skills under Dave.

As so often happens in a confined working environment, the situation of conflicting personalities becomes an issue, and Gerry Fernandes and Rick Ernst, two of the technical illustrators, were starting to wear on each other. The supervisor’s quick remedy for such a situation is to separate the individuals from their adjoining workplaces. This is what Ray did and the bickering subsided. I then occupied Rick’s vacant workstation and sat opposite Gerry. The physical move was beneficial to me as now I had a large window nearby instead of being in the bowels of the office.

Gerry’s troubles weren’t over, however. Being a chain smoker, Gerry would find any excuse to disappear for a puff on his cigarettes. By law, smoking was banned in the building, and designated times and areas were arranged for those who smoked. Despite these concessions there was a certain amount of abuse such as spending extra time away or even the occasional sneaky smoke at inappropriate times. Gerry sometimes did the latter.

One time, Ray detected that someone had been smoking out of bounds. “I smell smoke!” he said and, naturally, accused Gerry of breaking the rules. This meant that a verbal warning was warranted and Gerry was summoned into Ray’s office for a closed door dressing down. Under the union collective bargaining agreement Gerry had his own rights and any reprimand would be witnessed by me as the office union shop steward. Ever since my confrontations with Ray, he has been careful with any disciplinary actions. His first words were, “I hate doing this shit, but I have to be fair with everyone.” He then explained the reasons for the company’s smoking policy and the implications for breaching it. Gerry was crestfallen and mumbled something like, “I think it’s a double standard.” After Gerry had left the office, Ray asked me if he had conducted himself satisfactorily in the eyes of the union. I said that the mild reprimand was in order and no abuse of authority had happened. Gerry was very careful afterwards to follow the rules concerning smoking.

At the same time as the P6631 project was starting to accelerate, the current G700B Series of motor graders was gaining popularity and major orders started to flow in. At the beginning of 2005, the rewards of Operational Development (OD) and participation in OD co-worker seminars helped put Volvo Motor Graders Ltd. at the head of the pack within the Volvo CE organization for superior product quality.

## *Winter wonderland and a special open house*

There having been no shortage of snow during the winter, we enjoyed a few outings that included a hike on the local trails in the Maitland Woods. The deep drifts and picturesque snow sculptures were quite a sight. Later during the Easter long weekend we visited Niagara Falls to see the cataracts in a frozen state; the last time having seen this was in 1977 (see Chapter 8).

The slow drive across country brought us to Hwy. 3 just outside Port Colborne; then along the Lake Erie coastline to Crystal Beach and our hotel in Fort Erie. In Niagara Falls, nothing had changed on Clifton Hill with its wall to wall amusement arcades and tacky tourist traps, but a fair number of visitors were seen strolling along the promenade and viewing both the American Falls and Canadian Horseshoe Falls. Of the new developments, the most outstanding was the new Niagara Casino that now nestled among the other high-rise buildings. We explored the gaming hall, but the noise and smoke drove us out; not even attempting to try our luck. Also we were not impressed with our lunch – considering the meagre amount of food vastly overpriced – but the evening meal was predictable at one of our favourite restaurant chains, the “Outback Steakhouse.” The frozen falls were particularly attractive being illuminated both by floodlights and a large, full moon. We were plagued with bad luck at the hotel when, after bedding down for the night, a team of boisterous juvenile hockey players and their mainly drunken parents invaded the other rooms on our floor. The noise was intolerable and we were obliged to complain to the hotel staff. Fortunately, the front desk clerk was sympathetic and found us alternative accommodation elsewhere in the building.

While in the area we took a tour around some of the local communities, but the March drabness due to no foliage and traces of snow made it a disappointing drive. This convinced us not to stop at any of them when we anticipated our next visit to Fort Erie in August and the weekend War of 1812 siege re-enactment.

The Masonic society is represented in Goderich by Maitland Lodge No. 33 A.M. & A.F., housed in an elegant brick building on West Street. The Italianate style façade of the 1913 building is striking as befits the dignity of the order, regardless of the perceived mysteries surrounding Masonic rites. In May, 2005, the Maitland Lodge opened its doors to the general public to help dispel some of the enigmas, and Masons were on duty to explain the rituals and trappings of Freemasonry; the progression through the ranks and the meanings of the symbols on display in the temple. A courteous tour of the *inner sanctum* revealed the thrones of the various Worshipful Brothers and other items associated with the society.

Other entities also occupy the Masonic building, one being the Menesetung Canoe Club – an old Goderich institution. In the past, there was a fashion for gentlemen to belong to a canoe club as an outlet for ‘men-only’ pursuits. At the same time as the Maitland Lodge opened its doors, the Menesetung Canoe Club welcomed visitors to see its *raison d’être*, and club members explained things about the establishment’s activities. Notably were the billiard (pool) tables and card playing facilities, as well as the cozy lounge with its emphasis on ‘clubbable’ comfort and relaxation. The lounge was decorated with masculine etchings and items such as early percussion hunting rifles, spittoons and various trophies. The Goderich club is run under strict guidelines to preserve an air of formality and comradeship. In 2011, the F3 tornado destroyed much of the Masonic building (see Appendix 4), but the building was reconstructed and continues to flourish.

## *Springtime in Ottawa*

Springtime in Ottawa is always a nice time of the year to visit the Nation's Capital, The last time we were there was in the autumn of 1999 (see earlier in this chapter) when the foliage was a totally different colour. Now the newly sprouted leaves were well developed and a fresh green tinge covered the city's parks and open spaces. From Goderich we headed across country to Palmerston and then on Hwy. 9 through Orangeville and Newmarket to the back roads taking us a short journey through 'cottage country' to Port Perry. There we joined Hwy. 7A and continued on Hwy. 115 to Peterborough and an overnight stop at the Holiday Inn. The second day was spent following Hwy. 7 (TCH Southern Route) and continuing through the typical rocky Canadian Shield scenery of pine forests and lakes to Perth. The last leg connected us with the fast multi-lane Hwy. 417 that eventually took us to the maze of downtown streets and the Holiday Inn where we were booked into a room on the 14th floor overlooking the major landmarks.

Ensclosed in a downtown hotel meant that all the prime cultural attractions were within walking distance and there was no need to use our car. The first full day was hot and very humid, so we thought it would be good to visit an air-conditioned museum. We went to the newly opened Canadian War Museum, which was on our list of things to do anyway. It is a huge museum, and although we were there over six hours, we managed to go through only three of the four main galleries, and to have a quick look at a large display of military vehicles in another. However, we enjoyed what we did see and thought it all very well presented and informative.

With the following day being clear and sunny, it was perfect for outdoor activity, so we spent the morning walking around Parliament Hill and other nearby places of interest. Obviously, we had seen most of them before, but it is always nice to revisit favourite spots, and there had been some changes in the six years since we were last in the city. The Byward Market District now covers a much larger area and is the usual mix of restaurants, trendy boutiques and small shops. We had lunch on the patio of "The Aulde Dubliner Pub", which to our delight had both draught Guinness for me and Irish cider for Monica. We then went for a walk along the recreational trail that runs beside the Rideau Canal. It was very pleasant and we would have liked to have gone further, but a lack of time and energy forced us to turn around after going about two miles (just over 3 km).

Unfortunately, the clouds gathered overnight and the sky looked quite threatening the next morning, so it was another good day for visiting a museum. We went to the Canadian Museum of Civilization located in the Hull area of the city of Gatineau, Québec, on the opposite side of the Ottawa River to Parliament Hill. This was mainly a continuation of our previous visit in 1999. Back then, one of the permanent exhibitions – a journey across Canada from east to west and through 1,000 years of history – was incomplete. It went only as far as the prairies, but we were so impressed by the journey across the eastern half of the country that we wanted to complete the trip to the west coast. We were just as impressed on our second visit, as the western half of the journey was finished right up to the Pacific coast and included many artifacts of the fledgling industries, such a salmon canning, that grew up and flourished. Dioramas depicted the development of the western provinces as the railway opened up the interior, and the extraction of natural resources brought wave upon wave of immigrants that settled on the land and in the expanding communities.



*Monica on the Maitland Woods Trail with Some of the Snow Sculptures, Goderich, ON, January, 2005.*



*The Clifton Hill Tacky Tourist Traps, Niagara Falls, Ontario, March, 2005.*



*The Frozen American Falls as Seen from Canada, Niagara Falls, Ontario, March, 2005.*



*Niagara Casino, the Newest High-rise Building in Niagara Falls, Ontario, March, 2005.*



*Interior of the Maitland Masonic Lodge No. 33, A.F. & A.M., Goderich, Ontario, May, 2005.*



*Interior of the Menesetung Canoe Club Lounge, Goderich, Ontario, May, 2005.*



*View of the Downtown Skyline from our Hotel Room, Ottawa, Ontario, June, 2005.*



*Destroyed German Tiger Tank Diorama at the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, Ontario, June, 2005.*



*Market Building and Market Stalls, Byward Market District, Ottawa, Ontario, June, 2005.*



*Rideau Canal with its Promenades and Tourist Boats, Ottawa, Ontario, June, 2005.*



*Curvilinear Architectural Features of the Museum of Civilization, Hull, QC, June, 2005.*



*Barry and Linda McNair (née Pinner): Ex-Laycock J.M. School Classmate, Kleinburg, ON, June, 2005.*



It was now time to head back home, which was to return to Peterborough where the overnight stay was again at the Holiday Inn. The sunny evening beckoned us to walk along the hiking trail adjacent to the hotel. It was an abandoned railway track with several truss bridges over the Otonabee River and brought us to the Peterborough hydraulic lift lock. When exploring the neighbourhood we discovered Market Hall, an interesting heritage building now repurposed as an art centre and community events venue, and a fine dining restaurant on Water Street called “38 Degrees” where we enjoyed a delicious meal.

Although we didn’t know it when we planned our trip, stopping in Peterborough gave us the opportunity to have lunch with an old school classmate whom I hadn’t seen for forty-nine years! By using the Internet, I made contact with three of my former pals and, while two still live in England, Linda McNair (née Pinner - see Chapter 2) lives with her husband, Jim, in Kleinburg, which is a suburban village located northwest of Toronto. Anyhow, we received an open invitation from her to visit them anytime we were in their neck of the woods. On our way home from Peterborough we were fairly close to where they live and we had a very nice visit. However, because they lead a very different lifestyle to us, it’s unlikely that our paths will cross again. It so happened that Linda emigrated to Canada at the tender age of 17. She married Jim and raised a family of four while building up a steel supply business started by Jim. The successful venture has enabled them to ‘live the high life’ that included extensive world travelling and owning secondary homes.

In July, the Port of Goderich was again visited by a representative ship of the Canadian Forces as part of a ‘goodwill’ tour around the Great Lakes. The Halifax Class frigate, *HMCS Toronto*, entered the harbour and tied up near the grain handling terminal. The streamlined vessel with its quick-firing gun was bedecked with streamers of colourful flags that hung limp in the sultry weather as it opened its decks to the public. Similarly to visiting predecessors: *HMCS Terra Nova*, *HMCS Cormorant* and *HMCS Saguenay*, the ship also acted as a recruitment centre.

## *A second visit to Fort Erie*

The weekend after the Civic Holiday (the public holiday in August for Ontario and some other provinces) saw us revisiting Fort Erie and the re-enactments of the War of 1812 battles. Last year we had neglected to fully research the event and missed some of the engagement highlights. This time by staying two nights in Fort Erie we witnessed all the action. The same as last year, enthusiasts dressed as sutlers and soldiers camped outside the walls of the restored frontier fort; living as the pioneers did in 18th century Upper Canada. The huge encampment also included a large contingent of First Nations people.

During the weekend, the soldiers fought four separate engagements that depicted the seesaw action of the actual war’s progress. The fort, which was the strategic focus, changed hands twice as muskets and cannon belched smoke and fire in the ‘gentlemen’s war’ of the day. The evening engagement, simulating the fierce and disastrous siege, was the most spectacular as pyrotechnics were liberally used for effect. The lantern tour of the fort’s interior showed the aftermath of the battle in the form of the makeshift infirmary where ‘wounded’ soldiers were being treated (right down to the rough amputations performed without anaesthetics); the rival generals negotiating a surrender, and the guardhouse where ‘prisoners of war’ were incarcerated (and abused) by the victorious soldiers.

## *The Lancaster returns and another open house*

**O**n Sunday, August 14th, 2005, Sky Harbour Airport was abuzz with activity. Even though it started cloudy, a fine, sunny day was forecasted and large crowds were expected to attend the Goderich Air Show. The capacity crowd was there to see the Canadian Warplane Heritage “Mynaski” Lancaster, or ‘VeRA’ as she was affectionately called – from the identification letters V-RA, fly in from its base at Mount Hope Airport, Hamilton, Ontario.

The first aircraft to arrive was a giant Canadian Armed Forces C-130 Hercules cargo carrier, which landed on the main runway and taxied to the airport apron. The local general aviation pilots displayed their aircraft and the aero modellers club put on a demonstration as we anticipated the arrival of the Lancaster, last seen here on September 18th, 1999 (see earlier in this chapter). As the clouds cleared, all ears were listening to the terminal building’s ground-to-air intercom as air traffic control tracked the progress of the four engined bomber. Precisely as the sun broke through the dissipating clouds we could hear the unmistakable sound of the Avro Lancaster’s powerful Rolls-Royce Merlin engines. She made a flyover with bomb bay doors open and tilted to one side so we could admire her characteristic silhouette. An instant applause broke out and soon we could see the aircraft land on the main runway and taxi towards the airport terminal.

A jubilant crowd surrounded the Lancaster when it came to a rest and the chocks applied. A beaming flight crew lent out of the windows and acknowledged the throng below. The aircraft was ‘home’ again and, as an added interest, for a modest fee of \$5.00, visitors could climb a short ladder into the nose and progress through the fuselage from the bomb aimer’s station, through the cockpit, mid-upper gun turret, back to the rear gunner’s station and out the side door. I was not going to miss this opportunity and also made sure I sat in the pilot’s seat to get a real feel of the sheer size of the bomber. All too soon it was time for ‘VeRA’ to fly back to Mount Hope Airport, but not before she made several passes over the appreciative crowd and the roar of her four Merlins was lost with her final departure flypast.

Following in the footsteps of the Maitland Lodge Masonic building open house, the Huron Historic Gaol threw its doors open for the general public to inspect the gaoler’s residence, cell blocks and exercise yards of the solid stone structure built 1839-41. Costumed guides explained the life and times of the jail’s history, including the first Huron County Court and Council sessions, and the last public hanging in 1911. The Victorian interior of the gaoler’s residence was furnished with typical household trappings of the era. Walking through the octagonal shaped building core with its cell block offshoots provided a glimpse of the Spartan existence faced by the inmates and ‘turnkey’ (gaoler’s assistant). A visual presentation described the unsuccessful attempted escape by James Flennikan in 1941 and his hammer blow attack on turnkey, Kearwood “Kip” White, that resulted in the turnkey’s death. Kearwood was the father of my old colleague, Howard “Kip” White, at Champion (see Chapter 8). Heavy, barred cell doors and exposed communal toilet were standard features in the closely segregated cell blocks. The outside yards provided the means for basic exercise, and meals were plain and not very nutritious. Inmates ranging from first offenders to crazed psychopaths were incarcerated over the life of the jail, which was decommissioned in 1972. Following a hard-fought campaign in 1973 to save the jail from partial demolition and adapt it into a museum, the facility was declared a National Historic Site on July 5th, 1975 and an official plaque erected by the federal government.

## *Late summer travels*

In late September we decided on a few days away to take advantage of the prevailing glorious weather. About this time of year, monarch butterflies congregate *en masse* at Point Pelee National Park near Leamington, Ontario, as part of the annual migration to their winter habitat in Mexico. The young butterflies, having developed through their gestation period and gorged on milkweed – a prime source of food, were preparing to leave the southernmost part of mainland Canada. We were disappointed not to see clouds of these insects as our timing was somewhat inaccurate, but there were enough to appreciate a sight of hundreds of them in one place. We hiked from the parking lot to the promontory's sandy tip and, following a picnic lunch, went to the Visitor Centre. There we watched two very interesting videos on the history and future of the park. A large exhibition area had recently had all its displays updated and we found them very informative. Before leaving the park, we did one last hike along the boardwalk.

Having spent overnight in Leamington, the return journey home was envisaged as a leisurely one that incorporated a cross country drive through Essex, Chatham-Kent and Lambton Counties. A slight diversion took us to the hamlet of Mitchell's Bay on Lake St. Clair. As we were exploring the community on foot, we noticed a great deal of activity from camouflaged dressed individuals armed with shotguns, and also the presence of pontoon-type watercraft. It turned out that duck hunting season had begun and these were some of the first wildfowlers. We didn't feel too comfortable and decided to leave town, eventually making our way to the familiar Hwy. 21 that would lead us back to Goderich.

Heading north, Hwy. 21 took us to Oil Springs, a town famed for being the origins of the Canadian oil industry. A replica of the first successful commercial oil well, drilled in 1857-58, was one of the exhibits of the Oil Museum of Canada; a small collection of memorabilia associated with the discovery, pumping and refining of the local crude. Wellhead pumps dot the countryside as the local crude reservoirs are still viable and help to supply the complex of oil refineries known as "Chemical Valley" near the border city of Sarnia.

It was a pleasure to enter Goderich on Hwy. 21 South as the town's gateway sign, which I had helped design and implement with the Communities in Bloom (CiB) subcommittee, was now complete. Apart from the welcoming sign and stone wall, the landmark also featured an antique horse-drawn Champion grader and a ship's anchor; both signifying the town's association with the road grader manufacturing and maritime industries. As specified by the subcommittee, the sign was illuminated at night and beautified with an irrigated flower bed. Furthermore, in September, 2005, the Goderich CiB was awarded a recognition certificate for 'Best Gateway Sign' from the CiB judges.

## *Work and early retirement related matters*

The union collective bargaining agreement was due to expire on June 30th, 2005, but a contract must have been signed as no industrial action came about despite the initial impasse and threat of either a strike or lock out. The main reason was the scheduled launch of the P6631 pilot units (now officially branded as the G900 Series) and Volvo CE was in no mood to jeopardise the programme.

Although the Technical Publications Department was meeting its deadlines, additional pressure was put on Dave Long's Service Methods technical writing team. The team was plagued with certain setbacks, including the pre-production G900 Series machine used for experimental purposes sitting idle. There was a fear of missing the target date and management was aware of this situation. At a Service Methods Cross Functional Team strategy meeting early in September, Ray came storming in unannounced and vented his disappointment and frustration at the team members. This rant took us by surprise and was very embarrassing, particularly for our Swedish CST guest workers, Kenth Bergkvist and Mikael Andersson. Not long after, Ray relented and issued an apologetic memo, but the intent was to remind the team that, with only seven weeks to complete an accurate Service Manual, efficiencies had to be found. Later in the same month I completed the G900 Series pilot unit Operator's Manual and this was welcomed as a step forward for CST in its technical publication support.

Before the end of December, 2005, CST's efforts to meet its expectations for the G900 Series production machine launch in the new year were fulfilled. This was a major milestone and everyone, including the rank and file, was congratulated by upper management. So, my final hurrah before retirement from the Volvo Motor Grader CST Technical Publications Department was to know with satisfaction that an Operator's Manual, completed by myself, accompanied the first G900 Series production machine (S/N 39300).

The opportunity for early retirement finally happened when the company offered another package early in 2005. To be eligible, an employee had to have 90 points – the usual combination of age and years of service – by February 28th, 2006. I could only muster 89 points and thought that I was out of luck again, so it was a big surprise when I was actually offered an early retirement package. Apparently, the company had a predetermined number of employees that it wanted to reduce the workforce by through voluntary early retirement. When fewer people than expected applied, the eligibility requirements were modified to include employees reaching the age of 60 by February 28th, 2006, and I could now apply. After getting the initial offer, it took about a month to receive all the information needed to make a decision and, after negotiating some key issues, I accepted the offer during the first week of December. I had enough accumulated vacation days due to negate me going back to work following the Christmas shutdown, and permission was granted for me to finish my time on December 21st, 2005.

The offer was made on November 4th, 2005, my anniversary of emigration, so it was a double celebration. Three weeks later, we celebrated my 60th birthday at the Benmiller Inn, which was to coincide with a wine tasting event. However, the event was cancelled because of the effects of a major winter storm. Despite that, we told the innkeeper that we would still visit for dinner. We had an excellent meal and so enjoyed ourselves that we were glad the wine tasting event had been cancelled.

This wasn't the end of the partying as the Technical Publications Department met at the "Park House" for a Christmas drink and the presentation to me of a retirement farewell gift, which was an official Volvo stainless steel chronograph – exactly what I wanted! On my first day of freedom from work, Monica and I celebrated with a gourmet dinner and a bottle of champagne. Lots of wonderful memories! Finally we continued the tradition of going to the Hessenland Country Inn for New Year's Eve; thus ending the year 2005 and entering into a brand new era driving a brand new 2006 model Pontiac Pursuit SE coupé.



*Avro Lancaster Bomber (VeRA) Arrives at the Air Show in Goderich, Ontario, August, 2005.*



*Barry Climbs Aboard Avro Lancaster (VeRA) at Sky Harbour Airport, Goderich, Ontario, August, 2005.*



*Cell Doors in One of the Jail Blocks, Huron County Historic Gaol, Goderich, Ontario, August, 2005.*



*One of the Multitude of Monarch Butterflies on its Migration, Point Pelee, Ontario, September, 2005.*



*Barry Poses with an 1858 Oil Drilling Rig at the Oil Museum, Oil Springs, Ontario, September, 2005.*



*The Finished Gateway Sign at the South End of Town, Goderich, Ontario, September, 2005.*



*Barry and Monica Celebrate Barry's 60th Birthday, Benmiller Inn, Goderich, Ontario, November, 2005.*



*Willie and Giesele, Barry and Monica at Hessenland Country Inn, St. Joseph, Ontario, December, 2005.*



*2006 Model Pontiac Pursuit SE Coupé. This Model Pursuit was Powered by a 2.2 litre Inline 4-Cylinder Sequential Fuel-injected Engine Coupled to a Manual Five-speed Overdrive Transaxle and Front Wheel Drive. The Colour was Described as Ultra Silver Metallic, and Standard Features Included Air Conditioning and Cruise Control. The CD Player was an Optional Extra and the Instrumentation Panel Had Basic Gauges. Photograph Taken Outside our Cambria Road Apartment, Goderich, Ontario, in December, 2005.*