

# Chapter 4

## *Into the workforce*

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Secondary school days were over and, with the results of the school leaving examinations still unknown (they would be announced in the following September), the drive was on to search for employment. Before embarking on that, however, time was set aside for a vacation with a difference. We were to go as a family on our first European holiday. The year was 1962.

### *The Spanish Costa Brava*

Escaping to the Continent for two weeks was my parents' wish as they desperately needed a change of scenery. Money was still tight so we had to make do with a shoestring budget holiday. We also teamed up with Aunt Win and my cousin Ian and, after some research it was decided that a package holiday to the Spanish Costa Brava would be affordable; the holiday carrier being a company called "Blue Cars". Today, this vacation would be dubbed "the holiday from Hell".

Preparations beforehand included applying for passports; although I think my parents already had valid passports. Dad was now in a more responsible job that required him to travel to France once in a while, and Mum had gone to Holland with Aunt Win to visit Dutch Resistance people associated with Uncle Keith's exploits during the Second World War. I still had to go through the motions of procuring a passport photograph, an endorsed application form and the inevitable wait at the Passport Office in Petty France, City of London, for the finalised document. Once all the paperwork was completed and the fees paid, we eagerly packed our bags in anticipation of a trouble-free journey.

The first leg was by motor coach from the Victoria bus terminus to Southend airport. This was to be my baptism of fire where flying was concerned. The Channel Airways tail-dragger, piston engine plane was a disappointment as I had been expecting something more exotic – probably as a result of reading too many "Flight International" magazines and my exposure to the latest civilian aircraft at Farnborough air displays. After a noisy 'hop' over the North Sea, we landed in Ostend (Oostende), Belgium, passed through Customs, and met our courier and the more roomy Continental motor coach. The party of holidaymakers – a cross-section of typical English tourists – was assured that the virtual nonstop journey through Belgium, France and Spain would be competently handled by the two professional drivers (both named André); one driving during the day and the other during the night.

We all took our places and it started off as a jolly crowd all looking forward to the sun-drenched beaches pictured in the glossy brochure. I was still prone to travel sickness and this malady did not help during the long road trip. Nevertheless we continued to the French border. Just before arriving at the Douanes, the relief driver started to walk along the coach and placed cartons of cigarettes in the luggage rack above each

passenger. We all expected that this was a ‘perk’ and the smokers on board were delighted. However as the French customs officers came aboard, they ignored the cartons during their inspection. After being cleared, the coach started to move away and we saw the driver casually slip the officers a carton of cigarettes. A short while later, the relief driver walked along the coach and retrieved all the cigarette cartons. Evidently this was a prearranged dodge to smuggle smokes over the border and reward the French customs officers.

The flat landscape of Flanders gave way to more undulating countryside as we progressed through Lille, Reims and to the second largest French city of Lyon. As the day wore on, the initial jollifications wore off. A certain amount of boredom set in as conversation flagged and the unappetising box lunch produced little relief. A problem developed as the coach wasn’t equipped with a toilet (washroom). No matter how much we tried to communicate that it was important to stop, the driver was adamant in continuing. Not until one of the male passengers threatened to relieve himself in a plastic bag did the coach finally stop at a rest area.

Evening fell and the drivers exchanged positions. We had noticed, however, that the relief driver hadn’t been snoozing during the day, so we were concerned about how alert he would be during the night driving section; some of it when traversing the Pyrénées mountains. After a brief stop in Nîmes – the iconic Roman built Pont du Gard aqueduct being floodlit – the coach continued through Montpellier and Perpignan to the Spanish border. The semi-reclining seats helped a little to coax the passengers to sleep: all except those in the front seats who spent most of the night prodding the driver whenever his eyes rolled up and drowsiness took over. After dawn, we finally descended the Pyrénéan foothills to the town of Gerona and our destination on the Costa Brava, the fishing village and proto-tourist resort of Lloret de Mar.

Although the Mediterranean coast had lured sun-worshippers and well-heeled tourists for several decades, it wasn’t until the 1950s/1960s that a mass-tourism industry opened up. As more disposable income became available to the average working man, travelling abroad on budget style holidays became very popular. It was no longer the realm of the rich. Opportunistic companies started to develop obscure coastal fishing villages into tourist Meccas by building hotels and establishing entertainment facilities. Transportation methods were improving with more luxurious long-distance motor coaches and cheaper fares for the expanding airline services. Host countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea welcomed the influx of visitors and tourism rapidly became one of the top industries for employment and cultural revenue.

The Spanish Costa Brava was the nearest affordable destination for sun-hungry Brits. No longer confined to the traditional English seaside resorts accursed with unreliable weather, travelling to exotic places with assured hot, sunny conditions became ‘the thing to do’ and even promoted bragging rights. However, other traditions die hard, and it was amusing to see the proverbial British tourist with rolled up trousers and head covered with a handkerchief knotted at each corner paddling in the shallow water on a Spanish beach.

Lloret de Mar was a primitive fishing village and the new hotels that had sprouted along the mean streets had little or no sophistication. We arrived at our allocated hotel and eventually settled down; Dad, Ian and I in one room, and Mum and Aunt Win in another. We were soon to discover the many inadequacies of the building; the main one being a restricted and unreliable water supply. Electrical outlets were rudimentary and the power was of a different voltage which rendered any English appliance, such as a hair drier, inopera-

tive. Air conditioning was nonexistent so everywhere was stifling and we longed for the cool evenings when windows could be thrown open to air out the stuffy rooms. Plumbing, too, was substandard and toilet flushing didn't always perform as expected. Since the village was not connected to a fresh water source or any form of sanitary treatment, the hotels had to rely on water delivered to their cisterns by tanker truck, and raw sewage was discharged directly into the sea near the beach. Once, when water was not available for three days, the toilets became clogged and tourists roamed around unwashed.

Yes, we were assured of incessant sunshine – a main drawing card of the holiday – but the pale-skinned Brits were unused to the fierce Mediterranean sun. Unwary tourists suffered terribly with sunburn and sunstroke and there were several casualties in our party. Different food, of course, also took its toll, and there were numerous cases of 'gyppy tummy' or 'Montezuma's revenge'. Most were unprepared for the inevitable soft rolls, jam and strong coffee every day for breakfast; strange preparations for both lunch and dinner, and rather unpalatable *vin de table* to drink.

Despite the downside to the vacation, there were also some bright spots. This part of Catalonia is rich in history and culture so a number of excursions were made available. Among these were shopping and exploration trips to the city of Barcelona, other nearby resorts such as Tossa de Mar, and to a pseudo collection of historic buildings at a significant tourist trap called the "Spanish Village". The coach journey there was long and tedious and I certainly suffered from travel sickness with much vomiting en route. At the lunch stop we took our box lunches and sat in a small park. As soon as we started eating the sandwiches and fruit we were accosted by small and ragged-clothed children. They said nothing but stood close in front of us and held out their hands, obviously begging. They persistently stood and stared until we relented and gave them some food. But as soon as we did this they scurried to their parents, who were loitering nearby, relinquished their begged goods and returned for more. Nothing would deter them; they clung to us like limpets until satisfied with their panhandled goods.

Night life at the resort was another attraction. To get to the more expensive hotels where floor shows and entertainment were staged, however, meant walking through mean, unpaved and dimly lit streets. Walking in groups tended to send a message to would-be muggers lurking in the shadows that the tourists were not easy prey. However, it was interesting to observe the Spanish people congregating at each others' doors, gossiping and enjoying the cool night air. Once at the cabaret, the tourists sat at small tables and were plied with more substandard *vin de table*.

The floor show began with various turns of traditional flamenco dancing – all performers dressed in lavish costumes and entertaining us with remarkable footwork skills and flourishing *valencias*. The show was punctuated with musical and vocal numbers; one young lady soloist was a class act, singing a lament and handing out single carnations to selected males in the audience. I was fortunate to receive one of the tokens and, of course, the proverbial photograph was taken for subsequent sale. Being singled out by this attractive singer made me, as a shy and retiring sixteen-year old, feel quite important and somewhat emboldened me to look for other conquests. We had befriended another couple, John and Pam with their teenage daughter, Prunella. However, nothing came of my advances with Prunella, despite my father's encouragement.

Cheap and plentiful beer and liquor also provided an escape from the culture shock. A popular evening excursion was to visit local *bodegas* (wine vaults) and sample various wines and liqueurs from vats lining the walls. Each visitor was given a sampling glass and then allowed to taste as many different alcoholic beverages as they liked. Needless to say there were those who overindulged and became raucous – an embarrassment to us as Brits, and a source of amusement to the locals,

The motor coach trip home was probably as hair raising as the outbound journey, albeit we travelled a slightly different route through central France. We bypassed Paris and could see the Eiffel Tower faintly in the distance. There was a collective sigh of relief when we arrived in London, and a vow that any further offshore holidays would be more carefully researched. For myself, despite my original pessimism of foreign travel, I appreciated the experience and it probably ignited my latent *wanderlust*.

## *Seeking employment*

It wouldn't be until September, 1962, before I knew the results of my school leaving examinations. All I had to help promote my abilities were two testimonials – one from my Headmaster and the other from the head of technical studies – and one G.C.E. 'O' Level certificate in the subject of art. Not a great deal of ammunition when applying for a job. This was also at a time when a glut of school leaving 'baby boomers' was looking for employment and the competition would be greater than normal.

Experience at work wasn't altogether new to me. Previously, my father had tried to encourage me to work as casual labour and bring home some cash to help Mum with the family expenses. A few of my friends did paper rounds and Phil Davies worked in Crossman's record shop near Pugh Brothers hardware store in Holloway Road. Dad finally found me a Saturday job at the Woolworths department store located in Chapel Market. Paperwork had to be completed and a National Insurance number assigned. This meant going to the Labour Exchange building and being issued with my 'cards' for the employer to add the insurance stamps.

I reported for work early and met Mr. Barnes, my supervisor. No first name terms – he was to be referred to only as "Mr. Barnes". To say the least he was tyrannical; holding sway over all the lowly personnel. My duties were specifically to help keep the store clean and perform any odd jobs.

At the back of the store was a device called a baling machine. This was basically a large press that compressed a stack of disassembled cardboard boxes into a cubic bale for recycling. One of my jobs was to collect the cardboard packing boxes and break them down flat, then stack them in the baling machine under the big ram that descended on a worm screw. There were no safety features on this machine – no PANIC button, no guards, etc. Once the bale was compressed to the appropriate size, four lengths of wire were manually installed around the bale and secured. The ram was fully retracted and I had to physically move the bale to a loading dock for collection. Not being very robust, this chore took a lot of effort. The day consisted of a great deal of mindless 'grunt' work such as sorting out returned empty pop drink bottles into their relevant crates for refunding. At certain times of the day, I was required to sweep all the floors and dispose the accumulated rubbish. Initially, my technique of sweeping wasn't to Mr. Barnes' liking – not



vigorous enough. So after a lecture I put more muscle power into my sweeping to satisfy him. This routine was necessary at the end of the business day after the doors were locked. Following my sweeping, another employee applied a liquid disinfectant (probably carbolic acid) onto the wooden floorboards and mopped up the excess. I could hardly wait for knocking off time as I was absolutely exhausted – all for one pound (£1/0/0d) a day gross, or 17/6d take home pay.

One unusual event happened. I was instructed to deliver a coffee table to Mrs. Sanderson in Lewis Buildings, Liverpool Road. Lewis Buildings consisted of the blocks of flats next door to where I lived. The table had a glass top and the legs had been removed for ease of packaging. I was obliged to carry the package all the way from the store along Liverpool Road to Lewis Buildings – a distance of over a mile – and the package was very heavy. After eventually reaching my destination in a state of exhaustion, I knocked at the door and Mrs. Sanderson opened it. At the same time as I delivered the package, a youth appeared behind Mrs. Sanderson. I immediately recognised him as an old schoolchum, James “Sandy” Sanderson, and said, “’Allo, Sandy. How are ya!” Only a few years ago, we reconnected on the Internet and have corresponded regularly ever since, but try as he might, “Sandy” couldn’t remember that incident.

After a few Saturdays, my mother started to become concerned with my exhausted condition as a result of the day’s work. She was even less pleased when I told her that one of my duties was to take the daily cash takings to a nearby bank. The money was put into a locked attaché case and strapped to my wrist. Mum envisaged that I would be robbed; perhaps injured, and was seriously considering that I should give up this job. However, things came to a head when the store’s management wanted me to work full time during my school holidays. Mum told me to refuse this request and I was summarily fired on the spot (“We’ll have to give you your cards” is the euphemism) – actually much to my relief.

The time had come to seriously look for full time employment. I was prepared to go out on a limb and started a writing campaign to try and secure an interview for a position in the field of commercial art, or perhaps an entry level job as, what my father termed, a technical clerk. These were the days before counselling and learning job interview skills. It was very much the case of ‘flying by the seat of your pants’. A smart appearance and attentiveness were considered major selling points: academic qualifications were desirable but not necessarily essential. It was a different world.

My father encouraged me to write my letters of application to manufacturers. After sorting out the names of prospective employers, it was a question of writing my request in longhand and await the replies. In all about thirty letters were sent out and most of the replies were negative. Some expected me to continue to art college and obtain higher qualifications specific to the realm of commercial art. I had two positive replies. One was from STC (Standard Telephones and Cables) and the other was from C.A.V., the automotive electrical and electronics company.

STC was a leading firm in telecommunications with its head office located in Southgate, North London. I had been granted an interview for a technical clerk’s job and so I went at the appointed time. What I wasn’t prepared for was to be interviewed by a man who was completely blind. The entire affair was unnerving as I sat across from him and looked into a pair of spectacles with completely frosted lenses that hid his unseeing

eyes. He gave me an oral mathematical test, which I flunked, and ended the interview. I was not accepted, but it was good experience. I did have a second string to my bow, however, and visited the C.A.V. offices in Acton, West London. The meeting was cordial, but the job vacancy was that of a technical writer, with no illustrating involvement. I was also unprepared for this misunderstanding and actually broke off the interview myself. The peculiarity of this situation is that five years later I embarked on my chosen career in technical authorship, an apprenticeship that could have begun at C.A.V.

It was back to square one and prospects weren't looking very bright. In fact I was on the brink of taking any full time job just to bring home some money instead of idling away and hoping for the best from my unsolicited letters of application. One morning I happened to be walking along the high pavement of Upper Street near the Angel when I noticed the employment agency, Brook Street Bureau. On an impulse I entered and enquired for any vacancies. I was told there was a junior clerk's job available in the head office of a firm in City Road called International Harvester Company of Great Britain Limited. I said I was interested and, following a phone call, it was agreed that I should see the office manager later that afternoon.

I was quite excited when I returned home for lunch. Then I remembered that I had to change into a clean shirt and wear my new suit so that I could be presentable at the interview. Arriving at the predetermined time, the receptionist directed me to Mr. Dick Elliott, the office manager. We had a short conversation and then I met the personnel manager, Mr. David Margow. Again the conversation was cordial and eventually he summoned "The Sergeant". A short, balding and rotund man in a commissionaire's uniform arrived and announced himself as Fred Varnell in charge of the mailing department. I followed Fred downstairs and he showed me the workings of the mail room. There were other lads there, together with a middle-aged fellow called Jack Delaney. After some instruction I returned to see Mr. Margow and, following a few routine negotiations, decided to take on the job. The starting wage was a princely £6/12/3d per week.

This wasn't exactly a stellar start, but it was employment and it allowed me to keep my options open. Curiously enough, this lowly beginning was a good grounding into work ethics and values, and an extension to the 'school of hard knocks'. The mail room junior was the lowest position on the totem pole, but I did notice potential advancement and later was rewarded with opportunities to rise through the ranks.

## *My years at International Harvester*

**F**red Varnell was a true cockney. Born and bred in London's East End, he faced near-poverty and received his primary education in the Stepney Ragged School. He joined the British Army at an early age and served in Ireland during the troubled times of the Easter Rebellion of 1916 and the 1918 uprising. He told us of horrific scenes of carnage and the street battles in Dublin. Eventually Fred became a quartermaster sergeant and, even though long demobbed, exercised authority over his underlings in the mail room as if he was still in the Army. Gruff and definitely no nonsense.

Work in the mail room was no picnic. Fred ran a tight ship and barked orders as if on the Army parade ground. My self and the other juniors jumped to fulfil these orders otherwise Fred would growl a threat of "I'll report you to Mr. Elliott". There was a constant turnover of the junior boys as the more senior ones





*Mum on the Main Beach at Lloret de Mar, Costa Brava, Spain, 1962.*



*British Tourists Visit the "Spanish Village", a Collection of Replica Important Buildings found throughout Spain, Costa Brava, Spain, 1962.*



*International Harvester Company of Great Britain Ltd. Head Office Building, 259 City Road, Finsbury, London, 1965.*



*Sales Promotion and Merchandising Services Department, 259 City Road, Finsbury, London, 1967.*

applied for available positions in the company. In general there were four juniors at one time and, together with Jack, we made an efficient team; the mail room being an important cog in the company's head office machinery. Not only was it responsible for the smooth flow of incoming and outgoing mail, but duties as messengers and odd job 'gofers' also played part in the daily routine.

An early start to the day meant catching the bus and clocking in ready to distribute the mail that had arrived from the Post Office. Fred and Jack would sort the mail, first placing the confidential unopened envelopes into appropriate pigeon holes built into a wooden rack. The remaining envelopes were fed through the electric letter opener and Fred would read the contents and place the correspondence in its assigned pigeon hole. When this exercise was over, the mail was conveyed from the pigeon holes to concertina pocketed docket carriers. Each junior had a docket carrier and was required to visit the various secretaries and departments to deliver the mail. It took a while to learn all the different names and, in the beginning, I had to 'shadow' another junior to learn the ropes. There were departments on both the ground floor and the second floor so a certain amount of agility was required. In the basement was a warehouse, cafeteria, boiler room, small print room, and an extension for the service school.

The day usually went by quickly in this fast-paced working environment. Not only did we have to deliver the mail, but also to collect the various pieces of correspondence at non-specified times. Next door to the mail room was the Telex room and there was the constant chattering of the Telex machines operated by Renee and Irene. In the days before the Internet and e-mail, Telex messages were a cost-effective way of sending information around the world. It was important to distribute these messages during business hours.

Tea and lunch breaks were taken in the cafeteria where we lined up for the drinks and meals that were subsidised by the company. It was also a good opportunity to mingle with other personnel on neutral territory and I got to know many of my co-workers this way. Back in the mail room, if it became a little more relaxed we would be regaled by stories from Jack – a true Londoner, who continually made and smoked his 'roll your own' cigarettes that contained a strong shag tobacco. Jack used to work for the Midland Railway and, in the days of horses and carts, travelled all over London delivery loads. He recalled many an adventure and kept us spellbound. Fred, too, sometimes lowered his guard and told us of his hard upbringing and parts of his Army career. He had married a Dutch lady, Mijette (or Miz, as she was known), and settled down in his old neighbourhood of Bethnal Green, East London. Both Fred and Jack rented flats in the Guinness Trust Buildings located in Columbia Road. Sometimes we had other casual visitors such as Jack, the night watchman, and Harry Webb, the company chauffeur. Harry was a character – he had a face with cherry-red cheeks and a terrific sense of humour. He was an ex-Metropolitan policeman and spun many stories when he was 'on the beat'; especially in hardened criminal areas such as Praed Street, Paddington, where he encountered 'ladies of the night' who shouted, "'Allo, Luv, want some of this?" and raised their skirts to reveal naked genitalia. He also had an inexhaustible supply of 'blue' jokes.

The mail room team could augment their basic wages with opportunities for overtime work. At least once a month we had to send out special mailings of service related literature. These publications had been printed in the basement print room and were then mailed out to the company's dealers and distributors worldwide. Each dealer had a specific number of assigned copies and Fred called out this number for the



lads to peel off from the stack of printed sheets. Multi-page publications were stapled together using an electric stapling machine. I remember one evening after we finished overtime, Harry Webb came in for a chat. He mentioned that if any of the lads were interested, the company car was in the warehouse and we could take a close look at it. We knew it was something special and Roger and I went down to where it was parked. International Harvester was a U.S. company and the top executives based in the London head office were Americans and used to American cars. Consequently, the company car was a 1962 full size model Pontiac Parisienne. It appeared enormous – all bonnet and boot, as we used to say – and was loaded with chrome trim; four headlights; equipped with a V8 engine, power steering and an automatic transmission. Harry asked if we would like a short ride in it, so Roger and I said OK and sat in the huge back seat as Harry took us around the block. We marvelled at the effortless power steering and absence of manual gear-changing. The following morning I surreptitiously mentioned to Fred how nice it was for Harry to give us a joy ride. Fred was furious at me as any leakage of the incident could've led to Harry being given the sack (be fired). When Roger arrived for work, Fred told me to warn him to keep mum about the episode.

The mail room juniors were often called upon for messenger duties. The lads relished this part of the job as it gave them a little freedom outside the office. By using public transport, we were often required to visit imposing buildings in the City of London, mainly to collect Bills of Lading or Letters of Credit. The Board of Trade building or the Port of London Maritime building were usual destinations. Petty cash expenses for bus fares were dispensed by Fred out of a special change purse he carried in his pocket.

Despite Fred's crusty nature, his heart was in the right place and, in private, he championed any reform for alcoholics. One morning I noticed he was agitated about something and he asked me if I wouldn't mind going to his flat and retrieving Miz' valuable rings as workmen were expected to visit. I went there and found the rings before the workmen arrived. Visiting the Guinness Trust Buildings was also worthwhile as one time Jack became ill and couldn't work. He lived on his own with minimum resources so the lads decided to each donate a few shillings and I would buy Jack some fruit and vegetables then deliver them. I was able to fill a carrier bag and took them to Jack's flat. He was very surprised and grateful for this gesture.

Being a neophyte in the working world, I wasn't prepared for the varied personalities, politics and gossip of an office environment. But I soon learned how to be discreet and even a little condescending when the need arose. These were the days when a dress code was expected: business suits, collar and tie for men, and conventional attire for females. Some of the young ladies did sport current mode, which included mini-skirts that guaranteed to turn heads. Secretaries such as Rita, Anita and Valerie were particularly attractive and this wasn't lost on the playboys in the office. There were dominant personalities, mainly department heads such as Mr. A.J. "Pat" Keefe (Parts Department) and Mr. Vivian (Accounts), and less authoritative managers like Mr. John Carroll (Service) and Mr. Mike Bowen (Sales Promotion and Merchandising Services). "Pat" Keefe, in particular, could be very obnoxious and rarely smiled. Other extrovert types were obvious and held jobs befitting their character. The product specialist, Chris Marshall, was unmistakable and even trainee marketing executive, Trevor Stewart-Smith, who was the typical public schoolboy, stood out in the crowd. The typing pool consisted of several teenage girls overseen by a rather dragon-like female supervisor. One day when I was delivering mail, a typist slipped me a note that said: "*The girl next to me likes you. Do you want to date her?*" I was flummoxed knowing that it was dodgy to become involved with a



fellow employee. Despite being persistently asked, I had to decline the offer. Pity, really, as the girl seemed innocent, but shy.

All the time I was working in the mail room I was keeping my eye out for advancement opportunities. The job meant mobility around the office and I was able to learn the functions of the departments and get to know the managers. It was a recognised fact that the mail room was a springboard for promotion and department managers tapped into this resource. One of my previous colleagues, Mike Murphy, had already moved up into the Service Department as a junior clerk. Another promotion opportunity came his way and he suggested I apply for his old job. Mike and I had been good mates and I was pleased that he was climbing the ladder as he came from humble surroundings and lived in Feltham, Middlesex, which was quite a commute into central London every day. I could also see that the Service Department had other connections, specifically with technical publications, including illustrating, that were produced at the company's Doncaster, Yorkshire, factory. I spoke with the chief clerk, John Coleman, and made an application. In April, 1963, I was transferred to the Service Department as a junior (filing) clerk and given a £2/0/0d raise in pay.

Again, this was an entry level job. Not particularly onerous, but I had to shoulder a certain amount of responsibility for the smooth running of archiving the department's correspondence and other documentation. I worked with three women, Olive Lane, Ellen Blackwell and May, all reporting to John Coleman. The department was managed by Mr. John Carroll, assisted by Mr. John Brooks. Other functions dealt mainly with customer support issues and these were fielded by troubleshooters Bill Davis, Dick Carr, and Lionel Gidney. Andrew Bowyer and Sheila Parfett handled the service reports and warranty claims, and were assisted by a visiting trainee from Ghana, Kwesi Affum-Appea. Other personnel were typists Sandra Krait and Ruth, and the technical publications crew of Leo DeSouza, Mavis Gambrill, and Sheilagh McLellan, supervised by veteran George Smith, who also looked after the running of the print room with Maria, Mary and Margaret. The service school, headed by Bert Arnold with assistance from Mike Murphy, was an important part of the department. Dovetailed into the organisation were the territorial service supervisors, Harry Bean, John Beaumont, Ian Brewster, Tony Gibbs, Dennis Kirby, Tony Smith, Tony Tyblewski, and college graduates, Bob Lemon, John Loader, Roger Mason and Colin Ward.

The filing system was straight forward with file folders stacked in filing cabinets. There was an area for correspondence and a larger section for service report and warranty claim forms. The form consisted of the original and five carbon copies of tissue-thin paper and blue in colour. The fifth carbon copy was often unreadable and, later, this was remedied by providing details on a special paper original and reproducing copies on a 3M "Thermofax" machine – an early attempt at photocopying. The mundane daily activity was sometimes broken when a correspondence 'paper trail' was required.

Early in my tenure a tragedy befell the department. Mr. John Brooks suddenly died of a massive heart attack. I believe he was well liked and it took a while before his replacement was hired. This was a young and dynamic executive called Mike Croome who became equally as popular.

As in all office settings, personality conflicts are bound to arise. A female junior clerk, Betty, replaced Kwesi Affum-Appea. Betty was a responsible person, but tended to irritate some of the other women with a

'know-all' attitude. The situation didn't improve when it was revealed that Betty, a Caucasian, had a Negro husband and a half-caste son. Rumour had it that she had been abused by her husband and that he had even left her. There were often heated conversations between Betty and Ellen. Other women were equally as backbiting, and John Coleman, who incidentally was Caucasian with a Negress wife, had to often intervene and defuse the scenes. I think to prove a point that she was a single mother trying to bring up her son as best as possible, Betty brought him into the office for all to see. Certainly, despite his colour, he was tidy and well mannered and we all drew a different conclusion from our earlier perceptions.

Time marched on. People came and went and, during the next year or so, Brian Edworthy, Susan Corfield, Hilary Curtis, Bill Miller, Stan Sweetman and trainees David Butterworth, John Fleming and Jake Vowels joined the group. For a short while in 1964 we had a Swiss visitor, Peter Bernhardt, learning the procedures. Peter and I became good friends and he introduced me to the Swiss restaurant, "Schmidt's", in London's Soho district. Socially, the department personnel came together at the Christmas party, usually at the "Blue Boar Inn". Another time to mix socially with colleagues and dealer mechanics was after week-long courses put on in the service school by Bert Arnold and Mike Murphy. The company bought tickets for West End shows and expenses paid for a hearty dinner beforehand. A couple of the shows I saw were Lionel Bart's "Blitz" and the stage version of "Camelot".

Of course, I was continually looking to rise through the ranks and, with the departure of Andrew Bowyer, a vacancy occurred that I took advantage of. Processing service bulletins and warranty claims was more than a basic clerical function. Apart from receiving and sorting the forms, a certain amount of correspondence was entered into with the dealers submitting the claims. The typing was done by a junior typist and any questions arising from the service reports were handled by the resident technical troubleshooters. I applied for the job and was the successful candidate. So in December, 1963, I started as the editing clerk and now drew £9/14/3d a week in wages.

Bill Miller took over from me as the filing clerk and I had to train him before taking up my new duties. Bill was quite the character: a down to earth individual, but had a keen sense of humour and liked to play practical jokes. He eventually went somewhere else in the company and his job was taken over by Harvey Seitz, a young Jewish lad with a permanent broad grin.

As personnel changed, I was introduced to a new junior typist, Susan Corfield, whose name rang bells. It was she, however, who clarified the mystery by saying, "I know you!" I was completely caught off-guard, especially when she expected me to recognise her! "Don't you remember me?" "We used to sit beside each other at Laycock Juniors." Well, you could've knocked me down with a feather. But the memories soon came flooding back and we joked over some of the 'old days'. At seventeen, she had blossomed into an attractive young lady with raven black hair and a pert smile. She also had a strong personality and someone not to be trifled with. A couple of times I received a stern tongue-lashing for being too demanding of her workload.

Dealing with the paperwork gave me a good grounding about the design and engineering built into the company's products. The machines varied from farm tractors and implements to heavy construction equip-

ment. International Harvester had factories in Doncaster (Wheatley Hall Road and Carr Hill), Bradford (the old Jowett car factory at Idle) and Liverpool (Speke - assembly only, no manufacturing. At one time it was used to re-assemble International Loadstar trucks imported as knock-down units).

I visited the Doncaster factory and offices as part of my training and orientation. This was exceptional as I had never had the opportunity to travel far on company business. The trip was arranged so that I went to Doncaster by train and stayed overnight before returning the following day. The train left Kings Cross Station on a bright, sunny day and I had a comfortable journey to my destination. After leaving Doncaster Station, I made my way to the Danum Hotel and checked in. All this was a new experience and I was given a nicely appointed room. I then made my way to Wheatley Hall Road and was introduced to my counterpart in the office. There was a tour of the offices, which included the Technical Publications Department where I made some subtle enquiries, and the promise of a shop floor visit the following day. With an eye of perhaps transferring to Doncaster at a later date, most of the evening was spent walking around the city and observing the local culture. I must admit that the Yorkshire accent was initially hard to understand and, to my untrained ears, almost like a foreign language. I suspect my cockney twang was equally as difficult for the Doncaster natives to comprehend.

Following breakfast the next day, I returned to the Wheatley Hall Road offices and met one of the apprentice technicians. We then made a tour of the shop floor where bulldozers were being assembled. The factory had its own foundry and machine shop so was fairly self-contained. The finished, painted products were shipped outside to a holding yard before being transported to the dealers. I came away suitably impressed and enjoyed another uneventful train journey home.

With no immediate prospects of a position in Doncaster, I continued working and waiting, but I really wasn't prepared to stagnate in the editing clerk's job. Eventually an opportunity to switch gears and climb another rung of the corporate ladder came about and, in July, 1965, I moved into the Sales Promotion and Merchandising Services Department as an advertising clerk that paid me £11/15/6d a week.

The job exposed me to another facet of the running of a company – Marketing. My boss was the amiable, pipe smoking Frank Hollis; a veritable storehouse of knowledge where print advertising and relations with the press were concerned. I worked with Margaret Keane, who was the daughter of one of the company executives, and we were responsible for tracking all the company's press releases and also for collecting and compiling any information in trade magazines related to both our company's and competitor's products. Although a change of pace, the job still had its limitations.

I had been in constant touch with George Smith, who headed the Service Department's technical publication group, as I knew he was reaching retiring age. George's departure and Leo DeSouza's promotion created a vacancy and I applied for Leo's old job in November, 1965. I was back in the Service Department and my first foray into technical publications; now earning a princely £12/14/11d a week.

The close-knit working environment was exceptionally pleasant and I blended in well with Leo, Mavis and Sheilagh. Our projects consisted mainly of interpreting technical information received from the Engi-

neering Department in Doncaster and producing service bulletins, service newsletters and similar publications. We also coordinated with the field service group to provide the technicians with the latest operation and maintenance information.

Information gathering was just the tip of the iceberg. We were also responsible for processing, printing and distribution. The paper trail from the Engineering Department usually began as a Doncaster Works Decision (DWD) and we had to derive information such as design, part number and engineering drawing changes that were then incorporated into a relevant service publication. Sometimes rudimentary drawings accompanied the text we produced. All this experience fuelled my interest into perhaps pursuing a career in technical publications.

Compared with the quality of the product user and service manuals, our bulletins and newsletters were inferior in appearance and cheap to produce. The print medium used was the Gestetner stencil. This was a thin page of wax covered paper with a backing sheet that was inserted into a typewriter. When the typewriter keys struck the thin page they cut through the waxed surface. The typed page was installed on a Gestetner printing machine and the text transferred by way of the ink roller and impression drum onto plain paper sheets fed into the machine. The same technique could be used to create simple illustrations as the waxed surface was scored with a stylus, compass and a special texture simulation tool. Although the print room was the domain of Maria, Mary and Margaret, sometimes I was allowed to operate the printing machine.

Life in the department was, in general, both challenging and light hearted. Leo, who originated from Goa – the small Portuguese colony on the west coast of India – was easy to get along with; although he was a shrewd individual. The principal typist, Mavis, was the proverbial gay divorcée. She loved the good life and many rumours surrounded her relationships with the fellows of the field service group. The likes of Tony Smith and Dennis Kirby were often on the prowl when not out on territory, and this fed the gossip-mongers with ready ammunition. Sheilagh was the other typist. Again, an amiable colleague who served the department well until she went away on maternity leave. Her position was then occupied by Susan Corfield. One time, Leo invited Susan and I to his house in the Sydenham/Crystal Palace area of South London where Leo's Asian fiancée prepared a traditional Indian dinner. It was the first time I had eaten poppadums.

Nothing was transpiring from the Technical Publications Department at Doncaster in terms of job opportunities and, in any case, the company's sales were lagging. In the latter half of 1966 it was announced that there would be redundancies and redeployment. There were to be some changes in production, particularly at the Speke, Liverpool, works. The much touted introduction of International's range of Loadstar trucks failed to break into the UK and European markets and eventually the knock-down units ceased to be imported, which meant the doors closed at Speke. Both Bradford's Idle factory and Doncaster's Wheatley Hall Road plant were scaled back as some of the less profitable models were discontinued. Personnel throughout the UK was affected with natural attrition and surplus jobs being axed – including mine.

The saving grace was that one department's loss became another's gain. The company needed to recover its market share which meant increased advertising and, with my writing skills, I was able to negotiate a redeployment back into the Sales Promotion and Merchandising Services Department. Apart from securing





*International Harvester Company of Great Britain Ltd., Service Department Christmas Party, 1963.  
 Clockwise L to R: Mike Croome, Mavis Gambrill, Tony Smith, Tony Gibbs, Sheilagh McLellan, Barry Page,  
 Ian Brewster, Harry Bean, Kwesi Affum-Appea, Leo DeSousa, Andrew Bowyer, Lionel Gidney.*



*International Harvester Company of Great Britain Ltd., Service Department Christmas Party, 1964.  
 Clockwise L to R: Jake Vowels, Tony Gibbs, Tony Tyblewski, Bill Davis, Barry Page, Sheilagh McLellan, Kwesi Affum-Appea, Bob Lemon.*

*Clockwise L to R: Lionel Gidney, John Fleming, Susan Corfield, John Loader, Peter Butterworth, Bill Miller, Sandra Krait, Mike Murphy.*



employment, the move also provided a boost in wages to the tune of £15/14/0d a week, and I was still living at home with total independence. A year later, however, the winds of change were to blow; primarily arising out of the frustration of stagnating in a job without future prospects.

Management found me a job assisting in the advertising section. I helped two of the advertising salesmen, Brian Randall and Tony Crome, firstly with general run-of-the-mill jobs then later in a more responsible position as advertising copywriter. This became a job I enjoyed as it was creative and, above all, gave me the opportunity to visit a print shop outside of the company. This was an old-established firm called Shaw & Blake in the Chancery Lane/Fetter Lane area of the City of London. I was always welcomed there by the manager and we had many philosophical talks over a cup of tea. Shaw & Blake provided quality offset printing of sales promotion newsletters sent out to International Harvester's dealer network. The sounds and smells of this print shop, tucked away in some Dickensian alleyway, was unmistakable.

There were also limited offset printing capabilities in our own print room. The copy was typed on special paper 'plates' and either Maria or Margaret would operate the press. Our typist at the time was Mary Butterworth, who jealously guarded her job and, at one time, rebuked me for using her electric typewriter. Mary was an extrovert and spent some time as an artist's model – specialising in nude life poses. Another fairly obvious co-worker was Peter Kendzior, the Merchandising Services supervisor. Peter was an American straight out of Texas and his deep Southern drawl could be heard all over the office.

**I**nternational Harvester was a worldwide manufacturer with affiliated companies around the globe. In 1967, I was still a young man, barely twenty-one years old and single, and the state of the economy in England at that time was quite precarious. I doubted there were any future prospects in my current job and I made a point of attending a public information session at Ontario House in London. This event showcased the advantages of the Canadian lifestyle and was intended as a means of attracting prospective immigrants to the province of Ontario. Since the possibility of emigration rated high on my wish list of self-improvement, this event reinforced such a desire. The exposition used a liberal amount of visual media to emphasise its selling points. Films, dioramas and a copious amount of brochures painted an extremely rosy picture of prosperity. I came home with a large collection of literature and continued to look into the possibility of leaving the Motherland. I distinctly remember one time when, on a particularly sunny and warm day, I took refuge in Highbury Fields and became absorbed in the contents of the brochures while sitting on a park bench under the London plane trees in the central avenue,

It so happened that International Harvester had an affiliated company in the city of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, where farm equipment was manufactured for the North American market. I started making subtle enquiries as to perhaps transferring to a similar job there and approached Mike Bowen, the blustery and friendly manager of the department, for a letter of introduction to his counterpart – a certain Mr. Buckingham – at the Canadian facility. With the momentum up and running, it seemed opportune to strike out on a serious job hunt across the Atlantic and this letter may be the trump card.

The wheels were set in motion and I started writing to my Canadian relatives and mentioned my impending visit. They all lived in Ontario: Dad's eldest brother, Don Sr., and his wife, Kath, and their two

children, Don Jr. and Anne. Financing the flight was a bit of a challenge, and I sent over Sterling money orders for conversion into Canadian dollars to support myself during the anticipated three week visit; otherwise I was welcome to stay at my relatives' homes as a guest. At the beginning of August I embarked on this adventure – described in detail later – in the hopes of starting a brand new life.

Despite a cordial interview with Mr. Buckingham and the supporting testimonial of the letter of introduction, I was advised after I had returned home that no openings were available. Largely because Canada was going through a mini-recession and many companies, including International Harvester, had instituted a temporary hiring freeze. I had built my hopes up and this was a significant blow, but I wasn't deterred and continued to look for other emigration possibilities.

Clearly it was time to move on elsewhere. Living at home was convenient; I had my freedom and friends, and London still provided unlimited opportunities for entertainment and cultural pursuits. However, I was stuck in a rut and sorely needed to find a serious career path. It seemed another job solicitation writing blitz was in the offing; this time concentrating on the technical publications aspect. Again, my father, who was now well established in the world of automotive service, came to the rescue with the names of prospective companies. One of these carried a well respected name – Coventry Climax Engines Limited – a firm that engineered and manufactured, among other products, high-performance racing car engines.

The upshot of my enquiry was an invitation for an interview with Mr. A.E. Harman, head of the Technical Publications Department for the fork lift truck division. It was a sunny day when I drove to the city of Coventry and the company's offices in Kingfield Road. After meeting Mr. Harman, we conferred with his superior, Mr. Ivor Cox, and they both explained the job description for a vacant technical writer's position. Of course, I was able to produce school leaving certificates and examples of my technical publications and advertising copywriting documents produced at International Harvester. My responses to their questions must have been favourable as Mr. Cox offered me the job and a weekly wage of £20/0/0d. This was unbelievable! The chance to start a new career in earnest; an impetus to move away from home, and an increase of £4/6/0d per week – all good signs pointing to a prosperous future. I accepted there and then and, following my resignation from International Harvester, prepared myself for the transition into the unknown.

### *Teenage angst and girlfriends*

**M**y mid-to late-teenage years were no different to those of most of my contemporaries. Growing pains and hormone imbalance were typical, and awkwardness with the opposite sex somewhat obvious. I wasn't shy in the company of girls, just hesitant and perhaps a little too courteous. I was more interested in chumming around with my mates than dating girls.

My first serious foray, however, was in the spring of 1963 at a dance and social function held at Barnsbury Boy's Camden Road school. One of the main organisers was the school's metalwork master, Mr. George Bean, who also acted as M.C. His son, George Bean Jr., was the leader of an amateur rock-'n-roll group called "George Bean and the Runners". The evening progressed with the usual pattern of girls and boys congregating on opposite sides of the hall; then with the prompting of the M.C. and the loud renderings

from the band, some of the girls took to the floor and danced a few numbers among themselves. Then the more adventurous of the lads started to drift over to the waiting girls and the dance floor slowly began to fill with jiving couples. Once the ice was broken things became easier. Lighting in the hall was relatively low, but sufficient enough to discern each others features so one could be judicious when choosing one's partner. I was doing the rounds with another lad (Tony Shoulders, I believe) and we came across a couple of lonely looking girls and struck up a conversation. I wasn't known for having the gift of the gab and even the small talk was somewhat stilted. Subject matter was also limited and trying to find a common theme was challenging as I really wasn't interested in popular culture such as trends in fashion and entertainment. However, I discovered that both of the girls were the nieces of Mr. Harry Godsall, the head of technical studies at Barnsbury. As mentioned elsewhere in this memoir, Harry and I got along really well and he did write a convincing testimonial for me. One of the young ladies was called Pamela Corti and she lived in Rainham, a suburb between Dagenham and Aveley, Essex. We seemed to mix well and remained in each others company for the rest of the evening. As a consequence we started writing to maintain the friendship. However, keeping in personal contact proved insurmountable due to distance. I had no means of private transportation and getting to and from Rainham entailed a complicated trip by bus and rail. After a series of lukewarm letters lasting three months, Pam called off the friendship as she had eyes for someone else who lived nearer to her. Not too surprising and, as my father said, "There's plenty more fish in the sea."

Another encounter was a blind date set up by my good friend Phil Davies. Phil had shown a keen interest in an ex-Laycock girl, Doris Stothard, and had got up the nerve to ask her out. For a while things seemed quite rosy. Doris lived in Liverpool Buildings on the Liverpool Road block and I remember seeing her fresh for a date with Phil, dressed to the nines – including copious make-up, cotton gloves, Juliet cap, etc. – every inch the prim and proper miss. For his part, Phil would also be quite dapper.

Anyhow, somewhere along the line, Phil decided that it would be nice to make up a foursome and he got wind of a young lady just right for me. A clandestine arrangement was made whereby we would all meet at Alexandra Palace for a spot of roller skating on the rink there. We duly made our rendezvous, but I was quite crestfallen when meeting my blind date – certainly she was no oil painting! Despite some stalwart attempts by Phil in trying to 'get things going', the episode fizzled significantly after I had escorted the young lady home. In the meantime, Phil had a good thing going with Doris, but the affair didn't last long and eventually they went their separate ways.

My mother was something of a matchmaker, too. In 1964, she was well established in a civil servant's job at the Board of Trade Exports Division. Among her co-workers was a teenage girl called Carol Capon, and Mum conspired to get me and Carol together. It was a bit of a clumsy arrangement, but I agreed and went ahead to buy two tickets for a West End show. Something happened and the date was postponed so I had to sell the tickets (fortunately, Phil and Mike decided to take them off my hands). The next attempt was meeting up at a cinema that was showing "Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines". Everything fell into place and, after the movie, we moved on to a fine dining restaurant to continue the date. Over dinner, conversation became awkward and one-sided as I tried to sustain communication, but to no avail. As we waited at the bus stop in virtual silence it was definitely the end of the road for this relationship and a later handwritten note from Carol confirmed this. Mother agreed with me that "... the sparks didn't fly."

At International Harvester, my work with Tony Crome brought me into contact with the Sales and Marketing division and, in particular, dealing through one of the secretaries, a young lady named Pat Duggan. Pat and I struck up a friendship as we had at least one thing in common – our cars. I drove a fire engine red coloured Morris Mini and she had an Austin Mini. Hers was blue in colour with a white roof, which she said was painted by a previous boyfriend so as to make the car look like the Mini Cooper rally model. As time went by we started dating, much to my parents' chagrin who knew that it was a dodgy thing to be closely associated with a co-worker, but it didn't faze me. There were other warning bells, too, as I had heard some malicious gossip about Pat's alleged flirtations.

One particular outing we had was a visit to the "Swimming Pool Holiday Camp" somewhere on the South Coast. Pat and her mother went there regularly, so the three of us spent one Saturday at the resort. The day was sunny and a plunge in the lido pool was welcome. A niggling problem then arose. At age twenty, I did not possess a robust physique. Neglect of physical education during my formative years, primarily due to the effects of the road accident, meant that muscular development was virtually nonexistent. My skinny frame was not to Pat's liking and precipitated our break-up, which she announced over the phone on the following day, citing the reason as a significant personality conflict – although I knew the truth.

Her phone call was like a bolt from the blue and knocked me for six. An immediate gloominess set in and although my mother was sympathetic, Dad was less sorry about my dejection as he had forewarned me ages before about relationships with one's co-workers. To his credit, however, Dad suggested later in the day that he and I should go for a drive and have a man-to-man talk. The drive, itself, was aimless; merely acting as a vent for my despondency. We were proceeding on the busy North Circular Road when a moment's inattention aggravated the situation. The traffic was slowing down for a red light and I failed to brake in time, resulting in a minor collision with the car in front. After untangling the wreckage, damage to my Mini amounted to a broken fog lamp and dented bumper – the other, more robust car sustained only scratches. Although information was exchanged, Dad convinced the other driver that further action was unnecessary and took over driving home. My disconsolation soon wore off and Dad was able to replace the broken parts at discounted cost by using his connections in the motor trade.

A silver lining did emerge from my relationship with Pat. One of her pastimes was ballroom dancing and she introduced me to the recreation: even showing me the basic steps. Following our break-up I continued persevering with the footwork and found an outlet for this newly-acquired interest at The Regency Dance Studio. The academy was located above Burton's tailor shop in Islington High Street and operated by two fellows, Ron Heydon and Reg Jones. Apart from learning the techniques of both strict tempo and Latin American dance routines, there was also the camaraderie of other students and the opportunity to mix at the studio's social functions. Ballroom dancing was big business and even highly competitive at professional levels. It was a popular holdover from the war years and even brought into the home by such television programmes as "Come Dancing", featuring the renowned Victor Sylvester orchestra. I was also attracted to the air of elegance, with ladies in gorgeous dresses and gentlemen resplendent in tuxedos or tails.

I spent several evenings during the week learning how to master the waltz, foxtrot and quickstep either in group sessions or as an individual student. There was a natural progression through the standards laid





*Barry Wearing White Tie and Tails. Photo Taken in the Living Room of 120 Liverpool Buildings, Islington, London, 1965.*



*Barry and Dawn Newman – Gala Night at The Regency Dance Studio, Islington High Street, Islington, London, 1965.*



*Award Winners at The Regency Dance Studio, Islington High Street, Islington. London, 1965. Studio Owners and Dance Instructors, Ron Heydon and Reg Jones on Extreme Left and Right Hand Sides.*



down by the International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA), and bronze, silver and gold medals, together with advancements through the various 'gold bar' levels, were attained at proficiency tests overseen by IDTA judges. It was always a gala affair when these awards were presented, and the aim was to encourage the quest for higher qualifications or competition prizes. Although my tenure at The Regency Dance Studio wasn't very long, the seed had been sown for future enjoyment and socialising. As soon as I moved away from home to start my new job at Coventry Climax Engines Limited, I made it a priority to seek out a similar dance studio in a strange city where new friends with a mutual interest could be made.

In my late teenage years, socialising often amounted to hanging out with my two stalwart friends, Phil Davies and Mike Stewart. A regular kibbutz for 'the three amigos' would be at Phil's parents' house where part of the basement had been transformed into Phil's 'pad'. Phil was an accomplished handyman and since his father, Herbert, owned and operated Davies Builders Merchant shop in Holloway Road, Phil was able to buy his materials cheap. He had another source as he worked at the Cooperative Wholesale Society's department store in Camden Town as a window dresser and could buy items using his employee's discount. After fitting out his little apartment, Phil would invite Mike and I for Monday evening visits listening to the latest records and enjoying a cup of tea and biscuits supplied by his mother. We also joked around, talking about old school days and sometimes more serious philosophical subjects.

As soon as we attained drinking age, it wasn't unknown for us to visit different pubs in and around the neighbourhood. Also going further afield to establishments 'up West' and to some unusual taverns such as "The Prospect of Whitby", a pub of notable ill repute in London's seedy East End Wapping district and overlooking the River Thames. Often frequented by petty criminals and rugby club members, the 'spit and sawdust' environment was unique and, as the evening wore on, became more and more crowded, smoky and raucous. After cruising around a few of the local pubs such as "The Albion", "The Highbury Cock" and "The Alwyne Castle", we tended to gravitate to a bar away from the mainstream. It was "The Compton Arms" and tucked down Compton Avenue behind Compton Terrace. This quaint, almost countryfied, pub was operated by a couple of rather effeminate men, but the brews were tasty and the atmosphere cosy unlike the over-decorated large saloon bars of other public houses. Either "The Compton Arms" or the "Camden Head" (in Camden Passage just off Islington Green) – another favourite – became the regular rendezvous for the three of us whenever I returned for a weekend in London after having moved to Coventry.

There were days when we went out together, sometimes buying a London Transport "Red Rover" ticket and exploring the capital city using buses and the Underground system. On one trip we ended up in South London's Woolwich district and visited the "Cutty Sark" clipper ship, then found the pedestrian tunnel under the Thames and walked through to the north bank. A pub crawl through the West End started at "The Grapes" – or the "Rapes" as we called it because at one viewing point "The G..." in the outside sign was obscured by another sign. Working our way through the sleazy Soho district, we might have slipped into an Old Compton Street strip club for a quick show, then it was progressing to Piccadilly Circus and Trafalgar Square, finally ending up outside Westminster Abbey for a mug of tea at Barclay Brothers' refreshment stand. The late night mobile café attracted down-and-outs and other shabby individuals, but it was a bit of London's social fabric. Time to go home often meant missing the last bus and walking the rest of the way, then creeping as quiet as possible into the flat so as not to wake my sleeping parents.



*Philip Davies and Michael Stewart. Photo Taken in Philip's Basement Room, 344 Liverpool Road, Islington, London, 1963.*



*Philip Davies, Barry and Michael Stewart – the 3 Amigos. Photo Taken in Philip's Basement Room, 344 Liverpool Road, Islington, London, 1963.*



*Carol Capon, Barry's First Big Date. Photo Taken in the Board of Trade Offices, City of London, 1964.*



*Barry at Age 19. Photo Taken in the Small Bedroom at 120 Liverpool Buildings, Islington, London, 1965.*

It wasn't all fun and games, however, as I had challenged myself to earn the G.C.E. 'O' level qualifications that I had failed at school; namely mathematics and physics. I enrolled myself for these evening courses at the City College for Further Education near the Barbican Development, City of London. The mathematics course was taught by my old school third form master, Mr. D. Leff, or "Jeff" Leff as he was known at school. I concluded that I was still unable to grasp the subject and effectively dropped out, although continuing with my studies in physics and actually sitting the 1965 examination paper. Although the result was a failure, I endeavoured to continue for a third attempt after leaving home.

## *Wanderlust and a brush with romance*

**M**y father's job prospects had improved and, in 1960, he became employed as a wholesale service representative at Henley Motors based near Great Portland Street in central London. Although his job was onerous and entailed much travelling in a specific area, he enjoyed it and derived many perks; especially at Christmas when gift giving from his business associates was very generous. A increase in his weekly wage also meant an uplift in our standard of living and Mum would ensure that the family domestic budget contained a little set aside for our annual holiday. Having had a taste of a Continental vacation, which were becoming more affordable, plans were made in 1963 for a holiday in Rimini on the Italian Adriatic Coast with – according to the glossy travel brochure – the promise of side trips to picturesque locales.

At first I wasn't too enamoured with such an exotic holiday. The previous year's fiasco was still fresh in my mind, but Mum was of the opinion that with the benefit of hindsight we ought not make the same mistake again. For instance, there would not be any overland journeying and, now that short-haul flying was becoming commonplace, transportation to and from the destination was less complicated. The die was cast and in due course we set off for Rimini.

The holiday was more enjoyable than the Spanish adventure, and I was exposed to yet another culture regardless that the trip smacked of a 'package tour'. Days on the beach were typical – trying to sunbathe in rented chairs and little cabanas, but plagued by hawkers, the most persistent being ice cream vendors. The night life in the resort hotels was also stereotypical. However, at least two side trips were educational and remain pleasant memories.

First of these excursions was a visit to the Republic of San Marino. This autonomous region is dominated by the fortified hill of Monte Titano which appears on the Republic's specially printed postage stamps. I had several of the stamps in my old collection. Taking the cablecar to the top was breathtaking and the view of the hilltop castles – there are three of them – was most rewarding.

The second side trip was a day out to Venice. It started with an early morning phone call and, after breakfast, departure by long-distance motor coach to this tourist Mecca. The weather was good and, with the exception of a prearranged gondola ride, we were left to our own devices. The gondola ride was a most pleasant experience and the gondolier pointed out various points of interest (speaking in Italian, of course,





*Dad and Barry in front of the Arch of Triumph Dedicated to Augustus, the First Roman Emperor, Rimini, Italy, 1963.*



*View of Two of the Three Fortresses on Top of Monte Titano, Republic of San Marino, Italy, 1963.*



*Bridge of Sighs as Seen from a Gondola during a Canal Tour of Venice, Italy, 1963.*



*St. Mark's Cathedral Located Next to the Doge's Palace in the Piazza San Marco, Venice, Italy, 1963.*

but we could understand some of the descriptions by recognising the well known places). It was interesting just to stand in St. Mark's Square and admire the Doge's Palace and other architectural landmarks. We also walked over the Bridge of Sighs – having previously been rowed beneath it – and admired the Grand Canal and all the aspects of this city built at sea level. A visit to the Mureno glass factory was also memorable.

Rimini, itself, had Roman roots and ruins, including the Arch of Triumph dedicated to Augustus, the first Roman emperor. The main town square was dominated by a bronze statue of Pope Paul V, and it was in Rimini that I was first introduced to the quintessential Italian *pizza*, now recognised as a staple fast food snack throughout the world.

The following year didn't feature a Continental holiday but, in 1965, I wanted to once again head to the Mediterranean. Mike Stewart and I decided to share expenses and, since Mike was learning the Spanish language as a hobby, we opted for somewhere in Spain. After some deliberation, an affordable destination was Majorca in the Balearic Islands and the tourist resort of C'an Pastilla not far from the principal town of Palma de Mallorca.

The resort was popular with many Continental Europeans as well as the proverbial British holidaymaker looking for an inexpensive sun, sea and sand vacation. There was a sprinkling of French, Italian and mainland Spanish, but the predominant nationalities were the British, German and Scandinavians. There was a heavy German tourist presence in our hotel and, in the mingling of guests at breakfast I noticed a rather attractive young lady among the German contingency. I'm not quite sure how we connected, but she had a good command of the English language and we conversed about things in general. We also shared some excursions beyond the resort which kept us close together and I was particularly drawn to her animal magnetism. Certainly you could say that I was smitten by her; although nothing romantic actually materialised, just a strong bonding. I learned that her name was Heidi Neuhahn and she lived in a small town near Düsseldorf, Germany. It was quite heartbreaking for me when she left to go home so early in the relationship, but we promised to write to each other. Since that August in 1965, we have kept in touch by letter or e-mail, even though it may be just one communication a year at Christmas.

The two week holiday was punctuated with short trips to beauty spots and night clubs. Cape Formentor at the north of the island was a rugged seascape, and an excursion to the Caves of Drach proved interesting although it was a typical 'tourist trap'. Perhaps this was my first experience going underground into natural grottoes, and I enjoyed the descent past strategically illuminated stalagmites and stalactites to a huge cavern where a procession of small craft containing musicians drifted lazily across a subterranean lake. Of course, the local culture of folk and flamenco dancing – accompanied by guitar and castanet music – and singers featured on the agenda, and we were not disappointed with the high calibre of night club cabarets and evening outdoor performances. Visits to some of the *bodegas* (wine vaults) and liqueur tasting events were very popular with the British tourists despite a few ugly scenes where those who had overindulged became obnoxious and generally lowered the tone.

Another spectacular trip was to see a bullfight at the Palma de Mallorca *Correda*. Deep down, I detested going to a 'blood sport', but also felt it necessary to satisfy my curiosity. There were some big names on the





*Heidi Neuhahn at the “Rostro” Street Market, Palma de Mallorca, Majorca, Spain, 1965.*



*Barry on the Main Beach at C’an Pastilla, Majorca, Spain, 1965.*



*Heidi and Barry on the Hotel Entrance Patio, C’an Pastilla, Majorca, Spain. 1965.*

roster so the arena held a capacity crowd. We saw more than one bout – probably three – and each time the bull was engaged by the various team players (picador, banderillero and the matador) the crowd showed its excitement with an ever increasing staccato of “*Olé!*”, which became infectious even to the non-aficionados. It was sad, of course, to see the final *coup de grâce*, but the bulls were specially bred for the spectacle and the meat of the carcass was distributed to the needy poor of the city.

My correspondence with Heidi inspired me to make an effort to learn something of the German language. Fortunately, a G.C.E. ‘O’ level course was available as an evening class at the Highbury Evening Institute. The Institute was, in fact, housed in Laycock School, my old primary school, so was very convenient. I needed to persevere for one year before taking the examination – successfully acquired in the summer of 1967 – but at least I could practice when writing to Heidi. Another practical test would be to visit her in Germany, so I proposed this idea and it was readily accepted by Heidi and, it appears, also by her parents. Plans were made for a short four day visit during the Easter weekend of April, 1966.

I could see that my parents were anxious to dispel any romantic notions – citing impracticalities and, to a certain extent, immaturity. After all I had only just passed my twentieth birthday and, in their eyes, I had much to learn about *les affaires de cœur*. I must admit I still had my head in the clouds and this trip was going to either make or break any ambitions of a romantic relationship.

The journey started with a short-haul flight from London (Heathrow) to Düsseldorf (Lohausen). It had been arranged that I would stay at the home of Heidi’s parents in Wülfrath-Rohdenhaus. I was met by Heidi and her parents, who greeted me with typical Germanic reserve, but who genuinely wanted to offer hospitality to a stranger. Herr Wernher Neuhahn and Frau Erika Neuhahn were middle class people who, it transpired, had fled to the West with their family from Leipzig in Eastern Germany before the borders were sealed by the Communists. Herr Neuhahn was a teacher by profession and an accomplished piano player. His wife was a typical *hausfrau*, and there were three offspring: Heidi, Karla and Hans-Wolf. Herr Neuhahn was also conversant in English; perhaps not as well as Heidi, but good enough to maintain a reasonable conversation. Their home was a large, detached house at the top of a hillside road called Angerweg. At the bottom of the hill was an industrial complex composed primarily of a cement factory that was very noisy and shrouded in steam and smoke.

My four day visit was a mix of sightseeing and cultural education. This being my first visit to Germany made a huge impression into the Germanic way of life and the rich history that was preserved. The Neuhahns went out of their way to show me many different aspects of their Westphalian district, and following the stop at their house, we continued on a short tour into the *Ruhrgebiet* or industrial heartland of Germany. *En route* we stopped at Balderney See, a man-made lake on the River Ruhr used extensively for water sports and leisure boating. Nearby was a stately home called Villa Hügel. Beyond was the giant industrial city of Essen; typical of a ‘steel town’ and dominated by the Krupp Company’s smelters, mills and factories.

Day two introduced me to the cleaner and more progressive city of Düsseldorf. Showing few scars of the Second World War, it was refreshing to stroll down Königsallee – the wide main boulevard familiarly known as the “*Kö*” – with its fashionable shops and sidewalk cafés. Old and new were evident with the



modern skyscraper of the Thyssen-Haus and the twisted spire of the ancient St. Lambertus Church. The Kaufhof department store rivalled anything similar found in London, New York and Paris.

We continued north out of the city to Kaiserswerth and the ruins of *Barbarossaspfalz*, an ancient castle. Then returned to Düsseldorf and crossed the River Rhine to another industrial town, Neuss-am-Rhein, where International Harvester has its German factory. The return journey took us through the rural settings of Benrath to view *Schloß Benrath*, a rococo style stately home, and the Neanderthal Valley where bones of the legendary caveman were discovered. Near the caverns visitors can see a lifesize statue that pays homage.

During my stay, I mentioned that I was fascinated with the ingenious monorail at Wuppertal. It was Easter Sunday, however, and the traditional Easter egg hunt was *de rigueur*. The entire family and I had fun searching for the colourful wrapped candy eggs in the house and the garden. It was planned to venture into the Bergisches Land hilly countryside to the south and stop at Wuppertal. This city, nestled in the valley of the River Wupper, consists of several communities combined into one municipality. Heidi and I took the *Schwebebahn* (monorail) train from Vowinkle to Elberfeld. It was quite an experience as the structure is suspended above the river for a significant part of its entire length. The remainder of the trip through the Bergisches Land took us to Solingen, the German city equivalent of Leeds where quality cutlery is made; a spectacular view of the Müngstener Brücke; finishing at Rhemscheid, and returning along the same route.

My last day was the most extensive as Herr Neuhahn had scheduled a visit to the ancient city of Köln (Cologne). There was little evidence of the widespread destruction caused during the Second World War and, of course, we focused on the great Gothic cathedral landmark of the city. On the return journey to Düsseldorf-Lohausen Airport, we stopped at the small town of Zons on the banks of the River Rhine. The Mediæval stone walls that circumnavigate the town are virtually intact and a decided throwback in history.

It was time to leave Germany and, at the airport, Herr Neuhahn commented, “*Alles gute muss beendet*” – “All good things must come to an end”. The Neuhahns had been excellent hosts and really made my visit a pleasure. It was also a bittersweet farewell as it was logical to see that my relationship with Heidi would go no further than being kept at arm’s length, and I eventually bowed to this inevitability. We continued to correspond – as we do to this day – and despite going our separate ways have maintained a lasting and sincere friendship. Later in life, Heidi married a policeman, Jürgen Wittstock, and raised a family of two sons, Marc and Lars. They settled in the dormitory town of Grevenbroich near Düsseldorf.

Looking back on those four days, I learned a great deal about German culture and everyday way of life. There were lighthearted experiences, and some a little embarrassing when minor *faux pas* were made. For example, we all went to a local restaurant and I was recommended the local delicacy known as *Eisbein mit Sauerkraut*. Essentially a complete hock of pork served with pickled cabbage. The hock consisted of bone and meat surrounded by the fatty tissue and skin. The amount of meat was enormous and I consumed as much as I could, leaving the remainder with the fat and skin. The waiter collected the plates, looked at me and made what appeared to be a disparaging remark. No doubt that not eating all of the meat was an insult to the chef! Germany, like all Continental countries, has a unique aura about it. Walking down the street, the sights, sounds and smells were definitely Germanic and smacked of orderliness. The small amount of the





*Heidi, Frau Erika Neuhahn, Hans-Wolf (Heidi's Brother) and Herr Wernher Neuhahn at the Balderney See, Westphalia, Germany, 1966.*



*Length of Track of the Suspended Monorail Railway (Schwebebahn), Wuppertal, Westphalia, Germany, 1966.*



*Peter Bernhardt and Barry at the Summit of the Kitzbüheler Horn Mountain, Kitzbühel, Austria, 1966.*



*The Birthplace of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, (Mozarts Geburtshaus) on the Getreidegasse, Salzburg, Austria, 1966.*

language that I had learned did come in handy from time to time, either as a stilted conversation or when reading signs and menus. I think making an effort to communicate in the native tongue put me in good stead even if my pronunciation was not quite accurate.

Later in the year (June/July, 1966) I spent a second short holiday in Europe and elected to visit yet another German speaking country – Austria. This was something of a whirlwind tour of the Tyrol region based in Kitzbühel, one of the renowned Alpine winter sports resorts. The vacation was punctuated with excursions to historical towns and places of scenic beauty. High on the must-see list were Salzburg and Innsbruck and, in general, the weather was kind most days which helped with the transportation and quality of viewing from the motor coach windows.

Kitzbühel was central to the excursions and the trip to Salzburg meant a brief crossing of part of Bavaria, Germany, which included a distant view of Hitler’s *Kehlsteinhaus* “Eagle’s Nest” retreat at Berchtesgaden. A fine rain greeted us at Salzburg, but that didn’t dampen the day and visits to *Mozarts Geburtshaus* (birth place of the composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart) and *Festung Hohensalzburg*, the imposing castle that overlooks the town and accessible by a funicular railway, were considered highlights.

To the west was the city of Innsbruck and the ancestral residence of the Tyrolean sovereigns known as *das Goldenesdächl* (the little golden roof) with its pure gilded architectural feature created for the Holy Roman Emperor, Maximilian I. A side trip outside the city took us to the *Europabrücke*, a modern contemporary-designed motorway bridge (2,549 ft. [777 m] long and 620 ft. [190 m] high), built between 1959 and 1963, that garnered many architectural awards. The destination of the Brenner Pass (4,494 ft. [1370 m]), however, was singularly disappointing and poor viewing conditions didn’t help the situation.

With the exception of the visit to the Grossglockner mountain and glacier, all the scenic sightseeing was accomplished on relatively clear days. I had made a previous arrangement with Peter Bernhardt, the Swiss chap who did a work study at International Harvester, to meet him at the hotel in Kitzbühel. Peter lived in the Swiss town of Chur and it wasn’t very far for him to drive to Kitzbühel where he stayed overnight. The following day we both took the cablecar to the summit of the Kitzbüheler Horn for a spectacular view over the surrounding countryside. More stunning Alpine scenery was seen at the Krimml Falls double cataract.

The hotel’s location encouraged a certain amount of independent hiking on nearby trails. I remember on one such ramble meeting a mountain peasant-type farmer, complete with cockaded Alpine hat, *lederhosen* and ornate cherrywood pipe. We exchanged the standard “*Gruss Gott!*” salutation and I wished I had taken a photograph of this grizzled gnome. He was priceless.

Tyrolean culture was lost on a number of the British holidaymakers; especially where unfamiliar food was concerned. However, in the evening we toe-tapped to the rhythm of local musicians, singers and an excellent group of *Schuhplattler* dancers, whose brand of entertainment was readily identifiable to the Brits.

The hotel’s guests came from all over the world in general and Europe in particular. There was a fair smattering of Germans, Dutch and Scandinavians, and I met a number of interesting individuals. In a motor

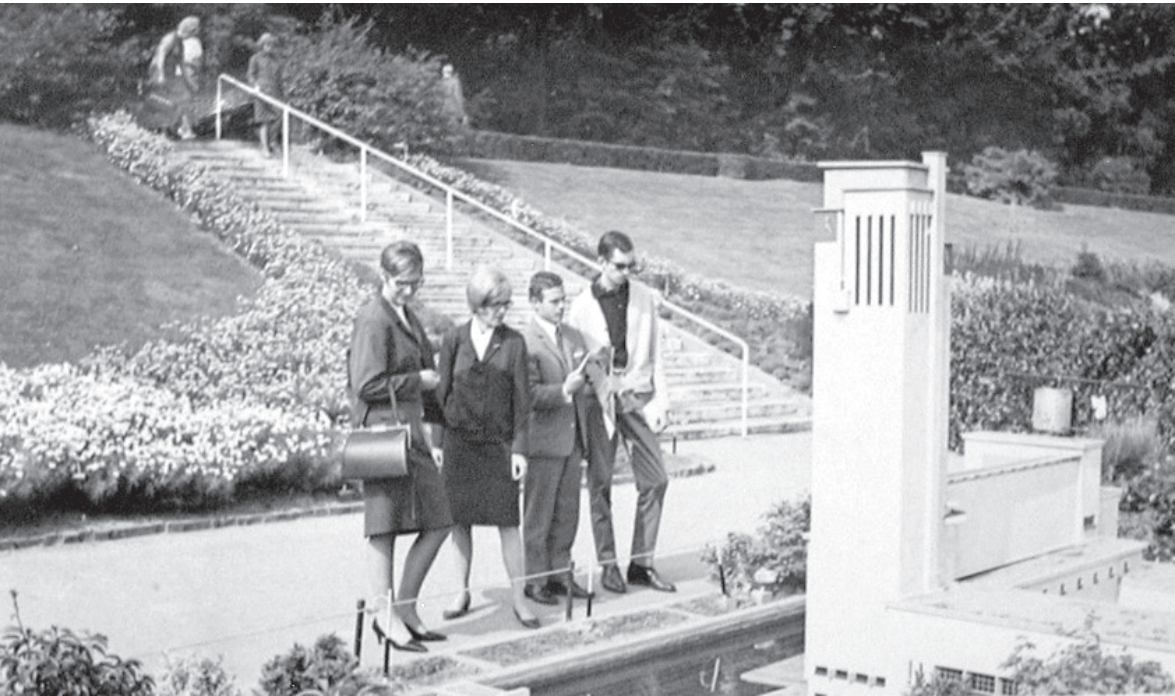




*One of the many Double Drawbridges that Span the Canal System in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 1966.*



*The Cheese Market. Focal Point of the Cheese Exchange Showing the Traditional Cheese Porters and Skid, Alkmaar, The Netherlands, 1966.*



*Winnie – Companion of Lydi and Adri Van Dyke – and Barry Visit some of the Accurate Scale Models of Prominent Buildings of The Netherlands. These are Displayed in a Park and Flower Gardens at “Madurodam”, Scheveningen, near The Hague, The Netherlands, 1966.*



coach party of Dutch tourists I had a meaningful conversation with Adri and Lydi van Dyke. We exchanged addresses and, in September, 1966, I visited the Netherlands for the first time.

This was my second ‘non-packaged’ trip overseas, which meant organising flights and a hotel through a travel agent. The BEA flight from London (Heathrow) to Amsterdam (Schiphol) was straight forward, as well as the land transportation to the Centraal Hotel on Rembrandtplein – a large plaza in downtown Amsterdam. Adri and Lydi were there to meet me and introduced me to a young lady companion, Winnie.

Adri, Lydi and Winnie were perfect hosts and escorted me around the usual tourist sights of Amsterdam. These included the *Rijksmuseum*, home to many art masterpieces; the most impressive of which was Rembrandt’s *De Nachtwacht* (the Night Watch), which is a huge canvas that occupies virtually a complete wall in one of the gallery rooms. A tour of the Amsterdam canals by tourist boat revealed the amazing drawbridges and waterside properties with their traditional Flemish style façades. Another imposing building was the *Concert Gebouw* or principal concert hall with its prominent classical portico.

Our visit wasn’t confined to Amsterdam as my hosts were pleased to show me more of the culture and traditions of the Netherlands. A side trip was made to the nearby town of Alkmaar – home of the cheese market, a major tourist destination. We weren’t disappointed with the attraction with its straw-hatted porters carrying their cheese laden skids to the weighing scales; at the same time being entertained by the magnificently ornate and animated street organ with its characteristic piping sounds. Further on, we visited the small coastal communities of Volendam and Monikendam where time seems to have stood still and traditional costumes, complete with wooden clogs, were still worn everyday. A large part of the Zuider Zee (now called the IJsselmeer) has been drained to produce reclaimed land (*Polderland*) and a Dutch engineering marvel is the huge causeway that separates the IJsselmeer from the North Sea. The road on top of the causeway leads to a tower halfway along the dyke where observers can see salt water on one side and polders/fresh water on the other. Last but not least was a drive to the Dutch city of Den Haag (The Hague) and its neighbouring seaside resort of Scheveningen. The main attraction there was *Madurodam*, which is a collection of scale models of many important Dutch buildings set in a vast park with colourful flower gardens.

There was one unfortunate episode during my stay in Amsterdam, however. At this time, there was a certain amount of civil disobedience being mounted by a renegade group of students and anarchists – the self-styled “Provos” identified by their ‘skinhead’ appearance. One evening I was strolling around the Rembrandtplein when I encountered a squad of riot police that was on its way to disperse a group of demonstrating Provos. The police were in no mood to treat the demonstrators with kid gloves and, armed with batons made of thick, heavy plaited leather, they waded into the crowd without mercy. This was no place for a bystander to be caught up in such a fracas so I quickly turned on my heels and headed in the opposite direction back to the hotel.

Earlier in this chapter I had described my desire to emigrate and pursue a new life. Attending the information session at Ontario House fuelled this desire and, with my current employer having connections in Canada, it was logical to investigate further. In August, 1967, with my suitcase packed and carrying a letter of introduction, I boarded a BOAC VC-10 jetliner bound for Montréal Airport.



*Cousin Don Jr. and his Wife, Claire, with their Children, Baby Shannon and Brent, at their Don Mills Apartment, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 1967.*



*Barry and Cousin Don Jr. Photo Taken in Don and Claire's Don Mills Apartment, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 1967.*



*The Old City Hall where Cousin Don Jr. Worked in the Ontario Correctional Ministry, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 1967.*



*The New City Hall – Indicative of Modern Building Architecture in Downtown Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 1967.*



After an uneventful trans-Atlantic flight, I landed in Montréal and was met by my uncle, Don Sr. The first part of the three week vacation was spent with my cousin, Don Jr., his wife, Claire, and their two small children, Brent and baby Shannon. Don Jr. and family lived in an apartment in a high-rise tower in the northern district of Toronto called Don Mills. It was an eight hour journey by car from Montréal to Toronto, so with the effects of jet-lag and the long drive, I was quite exhausted when we arrived at Don Jr.'s place. Everybody was very hospitable and even though Don Jr. was working during the day, Claire helped me negotiate my way around the city using the buses and subway (Underground) systems. Where possible we had time together and explored parts of the city; at the same time Don Jr. and Claire explained to me various aspects of local culture. Experiencing the Canadian lifestyle first hand this way was a definite advantage.

Not only did I have the opportunity to absorb the local atmosphere, but also to visit tourist destinations outside the city. The obvious main attraction was Niagara Falls. To get there from Toronto meant travelling along one of the super highways and bypassing the city of Hamilton where I was to meet my contact, Mr. Buckingham, at International Harvester. The visit to Niagara included the obligatory walk along the promenade for a close-up view of the Canadian or Horseshoe Falls, and a bird's eye look from the top of the observation tower. Watching the Spanish AeroCar suspension gondola travel over the whirlpool and rapids of the Niagara River, and a stroll over the Rainbow Bridge into the U.S.A. were also part of the visit. But the main street (Clifton Hill) with its cheap and gimmicky side shows, waxworks and fast food outlets cheapened the place and put it on a par with Blackpool, Southend or Brighton.

My memory is somewhat hazy where the interview with Mr. Buckingham is concerned, except that it was a cordial meeting. The factory and offices were nestled on the industrial waterfront of this 'steel town' characterised by the airborne pollution from several blast furnaces and foundries. Parts of the city that I had already seen, especially on the hillside of Hamilton Mountain, however, were relatively affluent and there were other cleaner neighbouring communities such as Burlington. No firm commitment was made after our talk, but that I would be advised by mail by the time I had arrived home.

The next phase of the holiday was to visit my other cousin, Anne, in the Northern Ontario city of Sudbury where she lived with her husband, Jim, and young son, Jamie. This meant a long-distance bus ride and I was met by Anne at the Sudbury bus terminal. Sudbury is a wide open mining town; reminiscent of an American "Wild West" boomtown. The city's prosperity is founded on a huge deposit of nickel ore and the extraction of other precious metals such as gold and silver on a smaller scale. The International Nickel Company (INCO) mine and smelter dominated the community with two high chimneys belching out toxic smoke, steam and other fumes that wafted over the northern forests. The acid rain fallout from these fumes caused irreparable damage to the environment and the depletion of trees and other growth made the surrounding area look more like a barren moonscape. Added to this were the slag heap tailings. However, some parts that were not in the path of the toxic fumes and acid rain were attractive in their own way. One such area was Lake Ramsey, and I stayed at Anne and Jim's house that was built on the rocky shores of the lake.

Life in the rugged north was tough. After a hard day down the mine or in the hot, stifling smelter, the workers would often drift into the many bars in town. I soon discovered that the alcohol laws in Ontario were somewhat Victorian in nature. Bars or taverns were mainly a masculine domain. However, to accom-



moderate female customers, a separate room for ‘Ladies and Escorts’ was provided; otherwise it was the ‘Men Only’ bar room. It was waiter/waitress service – no ordering from the bar and no walking around with a drink in your hand. If you wanted to move to another table, the waiter/waitress took your glass, not you. Each time you ordered, you would pay the waiter/waitress on the spot, and include at least a 10% tip. Closing time was up to 2:00 a.m. so a great deal of alcohol was consumed with some brawling consequences inside and out. As the song “Sudbury Saturday Night” goes, it was notorious as a raucous occasion.

If the draconian laws for licenced premises weren’t bad enough, buying beer or liquor was as idiotic. Only Ontario provincial government liquor stores could sell alcoholic beverages. The store was an anonymous building and inside was a large room with a long counter attached to a wall with several grilled windows. Opposite was a shelf and pads of order forms with pencils. A list of products hung from the wall. Each customer was required to fill out a form with the required product(s) and place the form, together with personal identification showing date of birth, through the window grille to a clerk sitting behind. The clerk would then take the order to the warehouse staff, return with the product(s) in a plain brown paper bag and await payment. Beer and liquor were not permitted to be drunk or displayed in public – the plain brown paper bag had to be intact and preferably hidden when being transported from the liquor store to home.

The existence of INCO was felt everywhere as the company attempted to be a model corporate citizen. The wellbeing of the city was riding on its back, and a flourishing infrastructure of retail outlets, shopping plazas; housing estates; high-rise apartment buildings; urban highways and a large regional hospital testified to this affluence. There was no mistaking its omnipresence, though, as the company’s mighty machine worked day and night. It was at certain times during the night, however, that there was a free spectacle when the red hot slag from the smelter’s furnaces at Copper Cliff was taken to the tailings in huge hoppers on a railway track. At a predetermined point, the hoppers would pivot one by one and discharge the glowing slag down the inclined heap. The discharge times were announced on local radio and attracted large crowds.

Anne’s husband, Jim, was very active as the coach of the Columbus Checkers ice hockey team. So I was introduced to that quintessential aspect of the Canadian way of life. The same as with English soccer, Canadians are fanatical about ice hockey and learn the sport from an early age. Minor and professional leagues carry the usual rivalries and fan base, and a high speed, hard hitting ice hockey game is a thrill to watch.

After a few days in Sudbury, the rest of the vacation was spent at my uncle Don Sr. and aunt Kath’s apartment in the Canadian capital city of Ottawa. Uncle Don Sr. was a caretaker (superintendent) of a high-rise apartment-hotel building in Lisgar Street near downtown Ottawa. I said goodbye to Anne, Jim and Jamie, and took the long-distance bus from Sudbury to Ottawa. The long-distance bus service in North America is geared for cheap travel and is very efficient. Companies such as Greyhound maintain a huge fleet of highway motor coaches and the timetables are punctual. I was going to use these buses on the last few days when travelling between Ottawa and Montréal and visiting the World’s Fair called “Expo ’67”.

Being the Nation’s Capital, Ottawa is dominated by the federal government. It is also the location of the country’s Supreme Court of Justice, home to the Governor General – the Queen’s representative – and many foreign embassies and legations. It is also a tourist haven and spectacular events such as the Changing of the



*View of the Canadian or Horseshoe Falls Taken from the Top of the Observation Tower, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, 1967.*



*The Two Chimneys of the INCO Nickel Smelter. In the Foreground are the Hopper Cars Carrying Hot Slag that is Discharged on the Tailing Piles, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, 1967.*



*Barry Standing Beneath "The Big Nickel", a Landmark Erected by INCO as a Monument to the Nickel Mining Industry, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, 1967.*

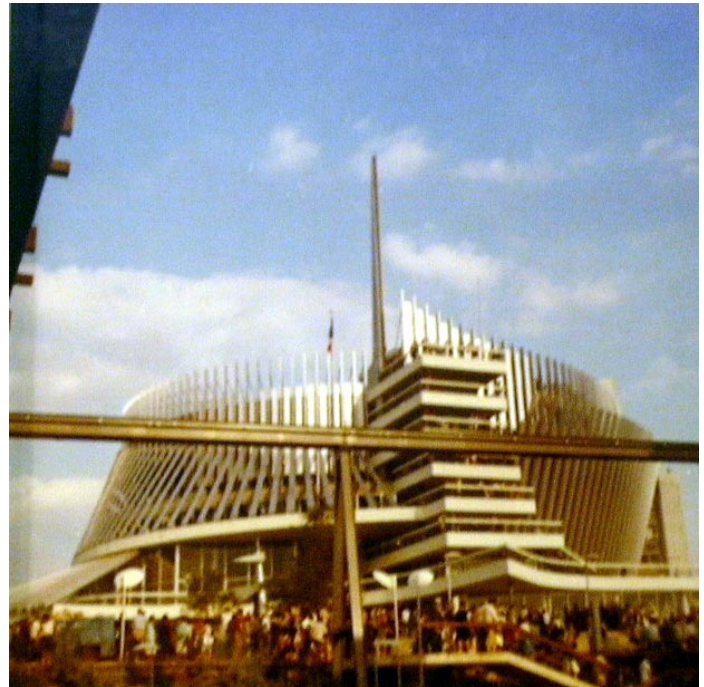


*The Main Block of the Canadian Parliament Buildings Showing the Peace Tower, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, 1967.*





*View of the British Pavilion, “Expo ’67” World’s Fair, Located on Île Ste. Hélène, Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1967.*



*View of the French Pavilion, “Expo ’67” World’s Fair, Located on Île Ste. Hélène, Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1967.*



*U.S.S.R. Pavilion seen from inside the U.S.A. Sphere, “Expo ’67” World’s Fair, Located on Île Ste. Hélène, Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1967.*



*View of “Habitat ’67” Complex, “Expo ’67” World’s Fair, Located on Île Ste. Hélène, Montréal, Québec, Canada, 1967.*



Guard on Parliament Hill are popular attractions. There are also tours of the Parliament Buildings and, when the House of Commons is sitting, visitors can watch the question period debate from the public gallery. There are many museums to explore as well as the National Mint and Art Gallery. For those interested in the performing arts, the National Arts Centre is a complex of theatres set close to Bank Street, which has several blocks of traffic-free pedestrian precinct – the first that I had ever seen. Across the Ottawa River and surrounding the city to the north are the beautiful Gatineau Hills, which are ablaze with colour during the autumn and a natural magnet for artists and photographers.

“Expo ’67” – also known as “Man and his World” (“*Terre des hommes*”) – was a huge exposition constructed on Île Ste. Hélène (St. Helen’s Island). The island is one of several located in the St. Lawrence River between the main island of Montréal and the Rive Sud (South Shore). With its World’s Fair status, countries from all over established their pavilions which ranged from the modest to the gigantic. Among the biggest were the geodesic sphere of the U.S.A. and the modern glass and steel structures of France and the U.S.S.R. Visitor access was by showing a specially printed passport that could be validated with a stamp from each country, and on-site transportation was by means of shuttle trailers (ballades) and monorail trains.

An extended schedule of buses running between Ottawa and Montréal meant that travelling between the two cities was relatively easy. The buses were crowded with visitors from many countries and all kinds of languages could be heard. After arriving at the Montréal bus terminal, the best way to the “Expo ’67” site was by taking the subway (Underground) train to Île Ste. Hélène station. The Montréal subway was a revolutionary subterranean railway as the trains ran on rubber tyres and not on conventional tracks. It was a clean, ultramodern and efficient people-mover.

Once at the exposition site, visitors toured the various pavilions to experience the history; culture; cuisine and entertainment of different countries. Technological achievements and natural wonders, too, were displayed: for example, the Russian exhibit of space satellites, and a portion of the Great Barrier Reef at the Australian pavilion. Another feat of technology, in this case architecturally, was the renowned “Habitat ’67” complex that appeared to be a random piling up of concrete boxes, but were in fact individual self-supporting apartment units – an ingenious method of efficiently using restricted space for real estate.

The entire exposition did a remarkable job of shrinking the world – as well as proclaiming the 100th anniversary of the Dominion of Canada – onto a few hectares of land. Today, some of the pavilion buildings still exist. The U.S.A. geodesic sphere is used by the government agency Environment Canada for weather research, and the futuristic stainless steel structure that represented France now houses the Montréal Casino.

Visiting two major Canadian cities and experiencing the Canadian way of life first hand only reinforced my desire to emigrate. I felt comfortable and knew I could adapt to this environment without any problems. The sixty-four thousand dollar question was, of course, whether I would be successful in securing the job at International Harvester in Hamilton. Everything hinged on the letter to be sent to me, but, as previously mentioned, the letter of rejection dashed my hopes for a quick final touch to all my efforts. Nevertheless, I was still resolved to move on and, on November 5th, 1967, I left the nest to follow a career that by sheer chance was waiting in the wings.

