

Chapter 7

Emigration

There was no feeling of euphoria as the Air Canada airliner flight AC867 crossed the North Atlantic Ocean *en route* to Montréal's Dorval Airport. Any notion of excitement heading towards a new life overseas had been tempered by the emotional farewell. My parents were understandably downcast and that in itself was cause for depression. Worse, though, was not being able to say goodbye to Monica, who, for reasons unknown at the time, didn't appear even up to the last boarding call. The flight continued and my mind slowly oriented to the formalities of arrival and immigration control.

United Aircraft of Canada Limited (UACL) had provided me with documents and, after the airliner had landed at Dorval Airport, I collected my luggage and reported to Canada Customs, Immigration and Manpower to obtain clearance. Following the entry interview and verification, I was handed that all-important piece of paper – the pink-coloured Canadian Immigration Identification Record form IMM 1000. This document was proof of my legal position and was required when applying for a Social Insurance Number and any other federal government benefit. Now fully cleared and with all my worldly possessions in two suitcases I passed through the doors and into the Arrivals concourse where I was to be met by a UACL representative.

I waited in an obvious place and looked around. Few people were in sight as arriving passengers and welcoming friends slowly dispersed and only airline or airport personnel circulated around. Time was ticking by and still nobody with a UACL placard was apparent. I then decided to enquire with the information desk officer, who made an announcement over the public address system. After a while and a second announcement it was obvious that there was no welcoming committee. I had been left in the lurch.

Several factors were now at play. The psychological effect of the emotional goodbye; the seven hour flight; the stress associated with immigration clearance, and the five hour time difference (jet lag) all conspired to bring about a mental and physical draining of my constitution. Not being met at the airport was the final straw. I had to resolve this situation and decided that the best way was to at least find a roof over my head and get a good night sleep.

I left the climate controlled Arrivals concourse into a dark and bitterly cold November evening and walked to the nearest taxi rank (stand). I asked the cabbie to take me to a hotel that he could recommend and sat in the back of the taxi. After we drove away I explained my situation and the job I had secured. He continued driving then had an idea; stopping at a nearby telephone booth. When he returned he told me that he had called a particular hotel that was near to my new place of employment. As I was not thoroughly conversant with the geography of the Greater Montréal Area I went along with his thinking and eventually we arrived outside the Holiday Inn hotel in Longueuil, a community on the South Shore (Rive Sud) across the St. Lawrence River from Montréal. The cabbie ushered me into the hotel foyer and I paid my fare. The

sad part about this episode was that after all the cabbie had done for me, I gave him a totally inadequate tip – a mere two dollars (\$2.00). I can only attribute this to my fatigued mind and lack of experience calculating a suitable gratuity. Curiously enough when I booked into the hotel, I was informed by the front desk clerk that my name was already on their reservation list and that I was expected to lodge there. It appeared that if I had been met at the airport, my escort would have brought me to the Longueuil Holiday Inn in any case.

There was one thing left to do before retiring to bed. To make sure that I arrived punctually in the morning it was prudent to reconnoitre the area on foot and find out exactly where the UACL office building was located. I determined the direction and set off walking along Rue St. Charles, the main street of Longueuil. Although I was wearing good serviceable clothing, the raincoat (my only topcoat) was entirely inadequate to protect me from the brisk, cold wind. I continued along Rue St. Charles until it became Boulevard Marie Victorin and found the UACL office building. At least I knew where to go in the morning, but by the time I returned to the hotel I was frozen to the marrow.

A new office and apartment

The night passed peacefully and after breakfast I was ready to introduce myself at UACL. The walk along Rue St. Charles was altogether different in the daylight. Now I could absorb the ambience of the community and the indicative French Canadian atmosphere. From the modern skyscraper hotel the road transformed to older properties, including what appeared to be original settlers' stone cottages going back centuries. The huge Roman Catholic basilica dominated a major road intersection and neighbourhood shops identified in French terms, such as *dépanneur*, dotted the main street. These shops were soon to become very familiar.

I entered the UACL office building foyer and introduced myself to the receptionist. She called an extension and the personnel manager came to greet me and we both walked to his office. There he formally welcomed me to the company and organised the standard employment documentation as well as a photograph for my security pass. The next step was to meet my new boss and a quick orientation of the factory.

The office building was a three storey structure added to the front of Plant No. 1. It overlooked two highways, the river and the eastern end of the city of Montréal. The Technical Publications Department was situated on the top floor. We visited the head of the department, Mr. Callum Keane, in his office and, during our conversation, I mentioned that I wasn't met at the airport and was left to my own devices. To which Callum said, "Well, at least you used your head". This probably put me in good stead from the onset. Next came the brief orientation of the shop floor and meeting other key personnel; Mr. Ed Whyte being one of the other senior supervisors.

I then spent the rest of the day sitting at a vacant desk and blending into my new surroundings, eating lunch in the cafeteria, and reading company literature. The coffee vending machine was located nearby and this is when I learned the standard Canadian phrase, "Double-double"; meaning a coffee laced with two measures of cream and two measures of sugar. I stuck to strong black coffee with two measures of sugar as I found the cream unpalatable.

Before being assigned a job or added to a team of colleagues, I was introduced to Ken Boris. Ken was a bilingual employee whose job was to help new hires integrate into the community and, in particular, provide immigrants with knowledge of the local customs and culture. One of the priorities was to ensure new employees had a place to live; this being important for any attendant wives and children. The company kept a list of addresses where newcomers could be billeted, or real estate agents should buying a house be an immediate requirement. In my case I just needed a simple bachelor apartment preferably within walking distance of the office.

The next move was to view some of the local apartments for rent. Ken drove me around areas of Longueuil, but after looking at a few properties I settled on a furnished basement flat with shared kitchen, laundry and bathroom facilities. The basement is a standard feature in most Canadian houses. In this case, the property was called a duplex (semi-detached) and the ground floor and second storey were occupied by the Desmarteaux family. Although M. Desmarteaux knew a little English, Mme. Desmarteaux spoke only French, so Ken negotiated the deal and I was given a key to the back door. I was then able to check out of the hotel and move into 160 Boulevard de Normandie.

With the onset of winter, Ken considered it prudent for me to buy some more serviceable clothing, which included a leather overcoat with a detachable lining and the ubiquitous rubber galoshes (overshoes). I also bought some thermal underwear and heavy-duty mitts. These proved to be worthwhile purchases as the cold weather began in earnest.

Back at the office, I was introduced to one of the section leaders – a short, wiry Scot called Bob Muir. A canny Glaswegian, he was also pugnacious but had a sense of humour. I was to be assigned to section coordinator, Mike Finley and his small team of writers consisting of Harry MacIntosh, David Klinger and Doug Hyde. After spending fruitless time reading company literature I was anxious to get my teeth into something so I was pleased that this development had taken place. There was a focus on the JT15D-1 turbo-fan engine, and the overhaul manual needed to be revised.

Hospitalisation

However, another development was taking place – one beyond my control. As the first week went by I started to feel unwell with flu-like symptoms and extreme lethargy. Before I left England, I was experiencing lethargy and attributed the condition to ‘burning the candle at both ends’. Clearly this wasn’t the reason as the weariness continued and I wasn’t being overactive. In the second week of my employment another health problem began as I noticed that I had a urine abnormality. I mentioned this to Mike Finley and he decided it would be advisable to see a doctor. After being examined it was recommended that I should visit a hospital for further tests as the condition could be related to a kidney infection. Rather than the regional Longueuil hospital I was assigned to the Montreal General Hospital where there were specialists.

This was a remarkable turn of events so I packed a small overnight suitcase and Mike drove me to the Montreal General Hospital. I was examined by no less than four different house doctors, who concluded that

I should be admitted for observation. I was then sent to a four-bed semiprivate ward on the 16th storey and spent the best part of a week undergoing blood tests and electrocardiogram examinations. I was also put on a fat-free diet.

I had excellent treatment in the hospital and it seemed there was an inexhaustible supply of nurses who made sure that daily routines, patient comfort, refreshments and personal hygiene needs were handled in a professional manner. Some of the nurses I got to know on a first name basis and one, Ann Kuklierus, introduced me to Montréal hotspots, the “Bar-B-Barn” restaurant and the “Bali-Hi” cocktail bar. However, I had to endure my other ward companions who were decrepid individuals, mainly insomniac and often raving. I did have the occasional visit from two office colleagues and also received a signed get-well card.

At length I was discharged as an out patient and decided to make my way on foot through downtown to familiarise myself with the street names and geography of the city. Not a great deal had changed since my last visit in 1967; including the public transit system of buses and underground Métro trains (subway). I arrived back at my apartment and found a mountain of mail including a letter from Monica. The contents were straight from the heart as she poured out her grief and the reason why she was unable to say goodbye at the airport. In a series of misadventures trying to negotiate her way to and around Heathrow Airport, Monica lost valuable minutes and just couldn't reach the departure lounge in time before my last call. The poor girl was in a state of panic and couldn't even make out my parents in the crowd, so had to resign herself to the fact that I was gone. Her return journey to Coventry was filled with emotion and after arriving home she just ran to her bedroom and cried her little heart out for hours on end until finally being consoled by her mother. She eventually telephoned my parents to explain the situation and this eased her pain, but it was a dreadful time and until my first letter arrived she was totally downcast.

Following this came a swift exchange of letters. I explained that my illness was finally diagnosed as a form of mononucleosis and not infectious hepatitis as previously considered. With the hospital stay and convalescence, however, I had lost two weeks of work, but at least I was feeling much better. Monica expressed her relief, and also described the worsening industrial unrest in the UK as the electrical workers and coal miners were working to rule. This led to scheduled power cuts and other inconveniences.

Labour unrest and a lonesome Christmas

As it turned out when I returned to work, I was informed that there was union unrest at UACL. The shop floor hourly paid workers were contracted under a collective bargaining agreement between UACL and Local 510 of the United Auto Workers of America (UAW). This agreement was expiring and new expectations by the company were not being well received by the union rank and file. There were even rumours of immediate strike action and the atmosphere was becoming tense.

This was the situation that my ex-Rolls-Royce colleague, Colin Simco, who was following in my footsteps, faced more or less on his arrival. He was staying at the Longueuil Holiday Inn as I had done and we met soon after he had settled in his room. Of course, I had to broach the news to him about the labour issue, but he took it in his stride.

Colin was one of a number of new employees from the UK, and another chap, who became a regular companion, was the Liverpudlian, Alan Ford. Ken Boris found accommodation for them; with Colin renting an unfurnished bachelor apartment and Alan billeting as a long-term guest with a middle aged English-speaking couple. The newcomers were introduced to their supervisors and working surroundings and, at the end of the day, we casually met to discuss our first impressions. As a bit of a pathfinder I was able to give some advice on the local culture and finding one's way around the city, especially using public transport since none of us had a vehicle of any description.

I was now expected to produce some work results and was given minor assignments to help me become familiar with the company's products, geography of the worksite, and personnel in ancillary departments. The sprawling complex consisted of several factories and offsite facilities, and a company taxi system was used for inter-plant transportation. Security was tight and all employees were issued with a photo-ID pass. I was also getting to know other colleagues in my department, which was fully self-contained and subdivided into the usual components of writing, illustrating and editing. The workforce was cosmopolitan with people hailing from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales; plus English-speaking French, German, Spanish, Greek, Polish, Lithuanian and Filipino nationals. Bilingual French Canadians, too, were much in evidence.

With the onset of the Canadian winter we were guaranteed one thing – snow, and lots of it! Already there had been two major snowfalls and the temperature was dropping every day. Knowing that snow would be a dominant feature for the next four months, it was gratifying to learn that the company had its own ski club. This meant that instead of cursing the weather here was a means of enjoying it and, having skied in Austria the previous February, I was eager to reconnect with the sport. Initially I had considered just renting equipment, but after speaking with the club's leader, Jacques Circé, I decided to buy the basic items of skis, poles and boots. Jacques told me that the best outfitter was Bernard Trottier's store on Taschereau Boulevard. Using public transport, Colin and I made our way to the store where we were confronted with a vast array of skiing equipment. I finally settled for a pair of Fischer Impulse skis with Salomon bindings, plus poles and the current trend in high-impact plastic ski boots. Carrying everything back on the bus was challenging so I was pleased that Colin was there to help. I also bought a ski jacket, ski pants, toque (hat) and sturdy gloves.

The need for personal transportation was becoming more acute. Even though the public transit system was efficient and cost-effective, it was also restricted to the urban areas. I was looking for more travel independence and that meant having my own vehicle. There were, however, at least two major hurdles to overcome beforehand: learning to drive on the right-hand side of the road, and passing the driving test. I figured that one way of acquiring experience was to rent a car on a quiet Sunday and just drive around to become acclimatised with the different 'feel' of North American driving techniques. Most cars had automatic gearboxes (transmissions), and that was another challenge as I had always been used to a manual (stick shift) gearbox. Colin decided to come along as copilot and I rented a small car from Avis Rent-a-Car for a few hours. Fortunately, the city's 'checkerboard' street layout made for easy navigation and the wide, one-way boulevards had little traffic to cause unexpected problems. There was just one occasion when I inadvertently drifted onto the left-hand side of the road, otherwise I became confident about the practical driving test. I did, however, have to memorise the many aspects of the "Highway Code" where the theoretical part of the test was concerned.

I had already acquired a temporary driver's licence and now started actively searching to buy a car. The quest was to look for a secondhand Ford Mustang, which to me was the quintessential North American automobile. The easiest way out of negotiating a deal was to ask Ken Boris if he knew of any private sales available. Being a local lad and a bit of a wheeler-dealer, he soon tracked down a possible vehicle and arranged for a test drive meeting with the owner, M. Sirois. It was during the evening after work that Ken took me to meet M. Sirois and show me the car. In the low evening light the orange-red coloured Mustang certainly looked an impressive machine. We drove out to the main highway (Route 3) and Ken asked me to stop on the hard shoulder. He looked around for the all-clear and then told me to tramp down heavily on the accelerator pedal. At once the car lurched forward and soon we were travelling at high speed as the automatic transmission shifted through the gears and the massive V8 engine whined like a Rolls-Royce Merlin. Ken then said. "I think you'd better slow down as we're doin' 120 miles per hour now!"

I was convinced to buy the car and started the bargaining process with M. Sirois. We settled on \$2,000, which was probably high but Ken considered it a reasonable going price. A pair of studded snow tyres on separate rims and some other accessories such as a racing steering wheel and ram air scoop were also included. Later in the week, I saw the same car in the daylight parked on Rue St. Charles. As I casually looked over the vehicle I noticed some defects that were not apparent in the evening's gloom. Most glaring were the rusted areas and some bodywork perforation. I mentioned this to Ken and it was decided to renegotiate the deal. M. Sirois was understanding and eventually dropped the price to \$1,800. Ken also knew a local panel beater (body shop) that could patch up the car at reasonable rates.

Financing the deal meant taking out a loan. This was done at the Bank of Montreal where my current account was registered and, with cheque in hand, I visited M. Sirois' home to finalise the deal. M. Sirois was a young bachelor and lived with his mother. He also spoke fairly good English and we got along well. During the visit, his mother cooked us a nice lunch and we all had a friendly chat around the kitchen table. Previously, I was able to arrange insurance coverage through UACL and its broker, Morris & Mackenzie, so could drive the car and be street-legal. When I left I shook hands with M. Sirois, whose parting statement I considered most reflective: "It doesn't cost anything to say 'Thank You'".

The car – properly identified as a 1970 model Ford Mustang Mach 1 sports coupé – was now my pride and joy. I felt more than a little smug when Colin, Alan and I arranged to meet at the "Bali Hi" cocktail bar after work for a drink. I had already introduced Colin and Alan to the bar – located in the Alexis Nihon Plaza not far from the Atwater subway station – and said that I would meet them there later. I then secretly drove over and parked outside the plaza building. After our socialising and it was time to leave, my two companions automatically headed for the subway turnstiles when I mentioned that there was an alternative way of travelling home. I then steered them outside to the Mustang and relished in seeing their initial reaction, which was clearly one of jaw dropping envy. "I'm green", said Colin, as we cruised down St. Catherine Street and over the Jacques Cartier Bridge to Longueuil.

In the run up to Christmas the office started to take on a festive mood. UACL had extended the Christmas vacation break, which meant twelve days off work, including weekends. At a Christmas draw I won a token that could be redeemed for food, and also a bottle of Scotch which was a door prize at the departmen-

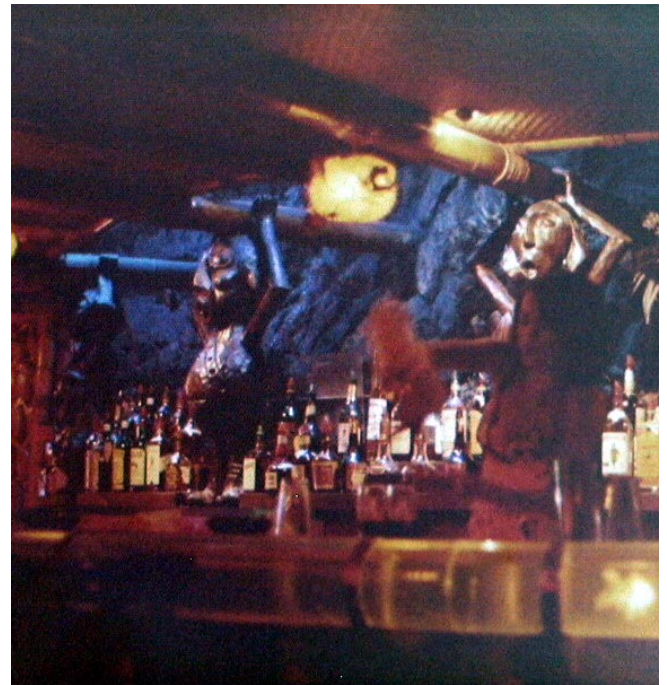


1970 Model Ford Mustang Mach 1 Sports Coupé. It was Powered by a 428 cu. in. Cobra Jet V8 Engine with a 4 Barrel Carburettor (Carburetor).

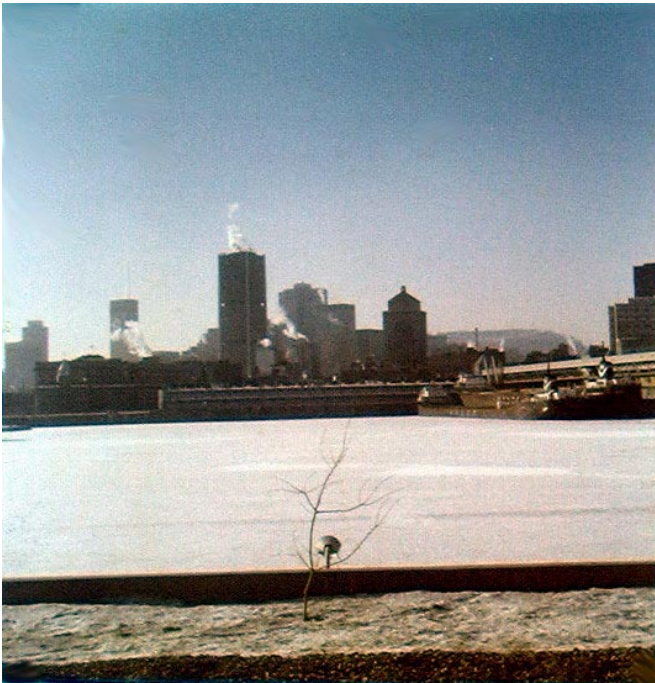
Photograph Taken outside the Apartment Building in Rue de Roussillon, Longueuil, Québec, in the Spring of 1974.



Digging out the Ford Mustang after a Snowfall. This Chore was Typical and a Shovel was Essential. Place de la Louisiane, Longueuil, Québec, 1975.



Interior of the “Bali Hi” Cocktail Bar Showing the Exotic Décor and Aquarium that Surrounded the Bar. Montréal, Québec, February, 1974.



Panorama of the Montréal Downtown Skyline. View Looking North Towards Mont-Royal with the Port of Montréal in the Foreground and the River St. Lawrence Covered in Ice, February, 1974.



Office Tower Block in Downtown Montréal. View Taken from an Entrance to the Métro or Underground (Subway) Train Station with Art Nouveau Decorative Ironwork, February, 1974.



Place d'Youville in Old Montréal. Original Stone Buildings with a Modern Office Tower Block in the Background, February, 1974.



Jacques Cartier Bridge. A Road Link between the Island of Montréal and the South Shore (Rive Sud). View Looking North, February, 1974.

tal party. Other private parties seemed to materialise and Ken Boris invited me to one at his duplex home. I drove there and indulged in the festivities where lots of beer was flowing. Outside, a winter storm was raging and, by the time I left, snow accumulation on the roads was significant. On the way home, however, somebody decided to open the door of a parked car directly in my path and I couldn't prevent a collision. I stopped and inspected the damage to the Mustang. It was considerable with major deformation to the near-side front wing (fender), front valance and headlamp surround. The wing was forced back onto the front tyre and there was a broken bracket and possibly some front chassis (frame) distortion. The other car fared just as bad as the door was virtually ripped off its hinges. It wasn't long before the police arrived and information exchanged. I was mobile, but only just, and limped back to my apartment. Although no charges were laid or a road breath test conducted, I was somewhat concerned with any legal outcome given the severity of the collision and the insurance company's reaction. Later I was to find out firsthand how the Québec judicial system, which is based on laws peculiar to the province, worked in a court setting.

It didn't take long for the word to spread and the following day Ken nicknamed me "Crash". I then had to organise the insurance claim and the repair. I used the same body shop that had previously worked on the car, but because of the holidays everything was delayed and I was without transportation (including public transit) throughout the Christmas period. The only way I could get around was by using 'shank's pony' and the winter weather made this difficult. Both Colin and Alan had made plans to return to England for Christmas, so the prospect of a companionless holiday was very real indeed.

To make sure I had sufficient food for the holidays I redeemed my winning token for a 3-1/2 lb. (1.6 kg) chicken and other provisions. There was plenty of time for me to prepare the chicken, which I stuffed, and then roasted in a foil envelope. Despite going by the recipe, however, the result consisted of some under-cooked parts and minimum 'browning'. The days dragged by and my only entertainment was derived from a transistor radio; there being no TV in the apartment. I walked the empty streets for a while, but the extreme weather curtailed any significant distance on foot. By and large it was a miserable time. In hindsight I should have rented a car and headed south for a week or so, but that possibility just didn't cross my mind at the time and, with no credit rating, I was ineligible to apply for a credit card.

Fortunately I had been receiving regular correspondence from Monica and others so I whiled away the time handwriting replies. The news from England wasn't very encouraging as the threat of a three-day workweek was becoming a reality; the unions and government not being able to resolve the work to rule situation. The impending strike action at UACL, however, was looming on the horizon. Already there had been minor acts of sabotage and even a physical assault, and the company was preparing for a protracted dispute. Increased security measures, including the unprecedented use of new technology with CCTV cameras and videotape recording, underscored how serious the company was in the face of industrial unrest.

As relations between UACL and Local 510 rapidly deteriorated, the inevitable breakdown of talks propelled the union members into finally going on strike. On Monday, January 4th, 1974, picket lines were set up outside all the company's entrances. The Longueuil municipal police force had a presence there but it was merely a token gesture and nonunion workers still had to run the gauntlet through crowds of strikers. This was the beginning of a strike that was to last twenty months.

As January wore on, the strike was having an effect on the nonunion workers' morale and production output. Striker militancy threatened all employees who reported to work, and extreme reactions in some cases involved overturning cars entering the plants and jostling pedestrians who chose to brave crossing the picket lines on foot. I saw cases of outright vandalism as strikers used discreet methods to damage cars, such as pulling out tyre valve stems using strong pliers and breaking the side mirrors with large ball bearings hidden in their snow mitts. One of our senior supervisors, Jack Watanabe, had a close encounter when his car was attacked and was visibly shaken when he entered the office. Some of the newcomers were caught up in the mêlée and Alan Ford received an eye injury that became permanent.

The company was determined to keep production rolling and assigned some office staff to shop floor duties – essentially using strike breaking 'scab' labour. I was sent to Plant No. 4 and the Nondestructive Testing Department, working on lowly jobs under my foreman, Dick, and another employee, Yvan Sirois (Sirois is a common Québécois surname). The daily dodging of the strikers was no fun. They took our photos as we entered the gates; gathered around and intimidated; threw chunks of ice and generally made crossing the line a dangerous hazard. As I lived not far away, my landlord was becoming nervous that if I was followed home his property might be vandalised. The only consolation to the situation was a company incentive to grant all salaried employees a 6% pay raise.

Despite being wrenched from my technical writing assignments, shop floor work was a useful experience. Dick had me perform all kinds of tasks, ranging from daily floor sweeping to the actual nondestructive testing routines. The most important test was crack detection and two methods were used – Xyglo dye penetrant and magnetic particle inspection (Magnaflux). Xyglo dye penetrant was used for inspecting non-ferrous alloy cylinder housings. Each housing was de-greased using a solvent and the excess solvent removed with a high-pressure air jet. The housing was then dipped in a bath of Xyglo emulsifier. After draining surplus emulsifier, the housing was transferred to a lightproof booth where the emulsifier glowed a bright greenish-yellow colour under ultraviolet radiation to reveal any cracks, which were indicated using an indelible marker. Magnetic particle inspection on ferrous items used a magnetic field to excite iron particles in a solution which showed up imperfections that could be detected using black light. The ferrous items were then demagnetised. Another job was the opposite to being nondestructive when failed or substandard parts, such as bearings, were deliberately destroyed using a grinding wheel to prevent them being reused.

Towards the end of the month I decided to make plans for a trip back home. For economical reasons I booked a British Airways package deal known as a "Mini Show Tour" that included flights, bus transfers, hotel accommodation and four London West End theatre show tickets. The one week excursion was cheaper than a regular scheduled return flight. Excitedly I informed Monica of the details and that it would be timed to include her birthday on February 14th – St. Valentine's Day. Monica's reply indicated her own excitement to the upcoming visit and plans for a major get-together with friends and family were firmly arranged.

Until the anticipated vacation it was business as usual trying to cross the picket line unscathed. The militancy reached such a point that the Québec provincial police riot squad was dispatched and UACL requested a court injunction to limit the number of pickets. It then became a cat and mouse game whereupon I entered the gates to Plant No. 4 from various directions trying to confuse the strikers.



Aerial View of United Aircraft of Canada Limited's Plant No. 1 and Corporate Office Building Facing Boulevard Marie Victorin, Longueuil, Québec.



Mass Meeting of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 510 Members During the Prolonged Strike. Placard Translates "[We are] United Against United", Longueuil, Québec, January, 1974.

Mtl Gazette - June 1, 1974

Strikers block traffic

Unofficial truce at UAC plant

By IRWIN BLOCK of The Gazette

An unofficial truce, backed by two court injunctions, went into effect yesterday outside the labor strife-torn plants of United Aircraft in Longueuil.

Police reported only one minor incident in the morning when strikers abandoned about a dozen vehicles on Marie Victorin Blvd., paralyzing traffic for an hour.

The vehicles, which were towed away, were left near an adjacent company and apparently did not violate the injunction issued Thursday by Mr. Justice Rene Duranceau of Superior Court.

Local 501, United Auto-workers Union, has been on strike since Jan. 7 in a dispute punctuated by charges of violence and intimidation from both sides.

CAST OUTBURST

The interim injunctions impose a ban on all picketing and forbid United Aircraft from threatening, intimidating or molesting workers. Hearings are scheduled for Thursday.

Referring to yesterday's incident, union spokesman Jean-Marie Gonthier said "this was the last outburst before we calm down and obey the law. A lot of our guys hadn't even heard of the injunction until noon."

Company spokesman Lachie Chisholm spoke of a general demerence in "daily psychological intimidation of people crossing the picket lines — not so much the actual event but the thought of what might happen."

The injunctions were issued following reports of two incidents this week, one involving an elected union official and the other a non-union salaried employee. No charges have been laid in either case.

On Monday afternoon, striking unionist Marcel Hamel was "assaulted by three company goons" outside plant 4 and was treated for a broken nose at Charles LeMoine Hospital, Gonthier charged.

Salaried employee Barry Page of the product support division said he was "attacked by three strikers" Thursday morning as he was reporting for work at plant 4. After a series of blows, he returned home with a cut face.

There are 5,600 employees at United Aircraft and about 2,500 are hourly paid production workers and union members. About 200 production workers are not union members.

The rest of the work force consists of salaried employees and some of them, such as Page, are filling in for the strikers.

Page is a technical writer who normally prepares brochures on engine specifications for the publications section of his division.

Since the strike began, Page occasionally is "reassigned to other areas of product support, which could include the shop," the firm spokesman said.

"He's a scab like any striker who goes back to work," said the union spokesman.

PRODUCTION LEVEL

"They have a job in the plant and have no business performing our jobs. We will not allow the shirts to be torn off our backs."

Gonthier said that a list of all employees who are crossing picket lines is posted at the union office on St. Charles St.

"We list them by department and we ask the guys to contact them and get them to come out."

About 200 production workers who are not union members are also reporting to their jobs and maintaining the level of production at 25 per cent of what it was before the strike started.

"Our only aim is to convince them to join us — you don't make a union member by breaking his leg," he said.

RAND FORMULA

Compulsory dues check-off for all production workers, as stipulated in the Rand formula, is one of the issues in the strike. It would affect the 200 employees who are not now union members.

Gonthier insisted, however, that this was secondary to the main salary question. The company has offered an hourly wage increase of \$1.23 for employees earning an average of \$3.82 an hour.

In its last demand, the union asked for \$1.95 over three years with cost of living adjustments every three months of one cent for every four-tenths of a percentage increase in the consumer price index.

A telegram was sent to Premier Robert Bourassa yesterday by employees who have been "temporarily assigned" to work at plant 4, demanding "police action and protection."

Chisholm said the telegram was signed by 200 employees and cited 33 cases of physical assault and 20 instances of cars burned as of last week.

Replying to union charges of company intimidation of strikers, Chisholm said, "I don't think it's based on facts."

Article from the Montreal Gazette Newspaper Describing the Court Injunction Levied Against Picketing and Other Interference. On this Day, I was Assaulted by Union Militants before the Injunction Came into Effect, Longueuil, Québec, June, 1974.



Barry and Monica's Engagement Announcement. Photograph Taken at 305 Broad Lane, Coventry, February 14, 1974.



Guests at Barry and Monica's Engagement Party. Photograph Taken at 305 Broad Lane, Coventry, February 14, 1974.



Barry and Monica's Engagement Announcement with Monica's Parents. Photograph Taken at 109 Birchwood Avenue, Hatfield, February, 1974.



Barry and Monica's Engagement Announcement with both of their Parents. Photograph Taken at 109 Birchwood Avenue, Hatfield, February, 1974.

Engagement

Of course, the trip to England couldn't come fast enough; especially given the prospect of being reunited with Monica, family and friends after a three month absence. The overnight British Airways flight BA600 was routine and arrived at London's Heathrow Airport on Saturday, February 9th. Following Customs and Immigration clearance, passengers on the Mini Show Tour were taken by bus to various hotels in London and I had been allocated a room at the Bedford Hotel in Southampton Row near Russell Square. Monica had knowledge of this through our letter exchange and made her own way from Coventry to the Bedford Hotel. When I arrived, there was an emotionally-charged greeting and it was clear that we had both missed each other immeasurably. Monica booked into the hotel as a guest and we spent the rest of the day and the next catching up with news and discussing future plans. Also we were able to arrange the theatre tickets so that we could see two shows together. The productions were: "Sleuth" at the Fortune Theatre, and "Gypsy" at the Piccadilly Theatre.

Clearly the love bonds between us were stronger than ever and on Monday I finally 'popped the question' which was willingly accepted without hesitation. The excitement was palpable and, of course, we didn't waste time informing our parents and then buying the engagement ring. The following day we visited my Mum and Dad and on Friday, Monica, I and our parents celebrated at a 5-star restaurant near Hatfield.

The rest of the week was a whirlwind of visits and the two theatre shows, culminating with our engagement party at Monica's parents' home in Coventry. The ladies got together and arranged the food and drink buffet, and close friends were invited to what was to all intents and purposes a combination birthday and reunion party. My best friends, David and Susan Cross, however, were not surprised when the announcement of the real reason was made. We were swamped with congratulations and the party was a roaring success. Later the news made its way along the social grapevine and, after my departure, Monica received many more congratulatory cards and phone call messages. On February 16th, the official press announcement appeared in the Coventry Evening Telegraph.

After all the euphoria, the time came for me to return to Canada. It had been a wonderful week and now Monica and I had a lifetime ahead together to grow and prosper. We had discussed tentative wedding plans and, of course, I had to make the all important enquiries to initiate Monica's emigration strategy. As her fiancé I was in a very good position to provide sponsorship and help accelerate the emigration process. In due course, I wrote a promissory note that was approved by J.P. Rita Bibeault as a sworn affidavit and which proved to be a key document in the never-ending stream of red tape required by the federal authorities.

The flight home was interesting as I sat next to Mme. Sévigny, wife of the political figure, M. Pierre Sévigny. We had an excellent conversation in which she described many of the global journeys with her husband; including a memorable one to Machu Picchu, the legendary Inca city in Peru. We arrived back in frigid temperatures and it took a while to dig out the Mustang and coax it into life. The situation at work hadn't improved and morale was low. The recent new hires were even more downcast as winter weather and homesickness took its toll. After a great deal of soul searching, my friend, Colin, decided to cut his losses and started to make plans to return to England. However, we were to have a final fling before his departure.

The end of bachelorhood

Montréal in the 1970s was a city full of life. Depending on your cultural tastes, there was something for everyone regardless of ethnic origin. Although deeply rooted in French history and subsequent Québécois heritage, the city exuded a cosmopolitan atmosphere reinforced by the small established enclaves of various nationalities. Neighbourhoods colloquially known as “Little Italy”, “Chinatown” and “The Jewish District” blended into the predominantly French and English metropolis and each had its own distinctive character.

Colin and I spent as much free time together as possible in downtown Montréal. Often we would go to see a professional ice hockey game at the Forum, which was a stadium with a regulation size hockey ice surface and home to the local team called the “Canadiens”. The team’s nickname was the “Habs”, short for “Habitants”, a common description for the rugged French pioneering *émigrés*. Ice hockey games were fast and furious that emphasised the skill of skating and dexterous use of the hockey stick to control the ‘puck’ – a vulcanised rubber disc used for scoring goals in opposing teams’ nets. The Forum was located directly opposite the Alexis Nihon Plaza and, of course, it was obligatory for us to visit the “Bali Hi” cocktail bar after the game. The frequent schedule of the Montréal subway and buses was a definite bonus after having a few beers, and getting home using the transit system came automatically.

Although the “Bali Hi” was a preferred venue, we also discovered alternative drinking establishments. Among them were “The Hunter’s Horn” and “The Cock and Bull”; both pseudo English pubs but brimming with atmosphere. “The Cock and Bull” was frequented by students from the nearby McGill University and often we were accosted by young ladies, some a little worse for wear, and on occasions invited to obscure parties. I did take up one request to go to a students’ hootenanny at a private house on Île des Sœurs (Nun’s Island). This party had all the elements of a serious booze-up (known in Canada as a ‘drunk’) and the house was jam-packed with revellers. To make things even more interesting it appeared that I closely resembled a well known professional baseball player and some of the guests believed I was that person. It was a hard job to convince them otherwise, but I enjoyed the momentary spotlight.

One adventure that Colin and I had was when we decided to see a movie that was showing at a cinema in the Montréal suburb of Westmount. It was raining heavily so we drove to the cinema in my car. When we were in the cinema, the weather deteriorated considerably and a sudden drop in temperature caused a flash freeze of the wet roads so that driving was nigh-well impossible. With great difficulty we managed to reach the Atwater subway station and I abandoned the car so we could get home by public transport. I retrieved the car early the next morning before the parking restriction times came into effect.

Winter driving conditions were a constant challenge, even for those who grew up with them. I soon experienced becoming stuck in deep snow and the inevitable digging out remedy. One of the biggest disadvantages with the Mustang was its unequal weight distribution, with the front end being very heavy and the rear-wheel drive not working efficiently unless the boot (trunk) was weighed down with heavy objects. The automatic transmission didn’t allow for dynamic braking so a great reliance was put on the brakes. Defensive driving called for anticipating other road users’ actions and a longer braking distance.

The adverse weather conditions prevented me from driving far afield, but since Colin was set to return to England in mid-March I decided it would be beneficial to show him a little more of Canada and elected to take him on a visit to Québec City. The quickest way to drive there was travelling along the North Shore Autoroute (Route 40) to Trois Rivières and then on to Québec City. In places the Autoroute hadn't been completed so we were obliged to travel on secondary roads. On one particularly slippery section I lost control and entered into a spin. Luckily there was no other traffic around but the front end of the Mustang ended up well and truly buried in a snowbank. Fortunately there was no damage and after extricating the car we continued on our journey. We fulfilled the goal of visiting Québec City and started the return trip, this time by way of the South Shore Autoroute (Route 20). The journey was long and monotonous, punctuated with slow progress on icy patches in the dark, and I was relieved to see the familiar hill contours around St. Hyacinthe and St. Bruno-de-Montarville in the moonlight. We arrived home safe and sound but it was a white-knuckle ride for most of the way.

Colin's departure provided an opportunity in that I was able to take over his apartment lease which ran to the end of May. This represented a step forward leading up to eventually finding a place for Monica and I following our wedding. I was able to free myself from the confines of lodging with the Desmarteaux family and ease myself into true apartment living. This meant thinking about basic furniture and the incidental items required to set up a home. In her letters, Monica had already listed our engagement presents; many of which were welcome culinary oddments. In the meantime I moved into 203-555 Rue de Roussillon resigning myself to sleep on a borrowed bed with borrowed linen.

The strike at UACL had now entered its third month and a settlement was nowhere in sight. Every day it was employing a stratagem to outwit the strikers at the factory gate and, since I was now living within a stone's throw of Plant No. 4, I had to be particularly vigilant in case I was followed. The strikers were changing their tactics now that the number of pickets were restricted by law. One of the more insidious methods they used was filling plastic bags with brake fluid and throwing them over the parking lot fence onto nonunion employees' cars so that the bags burst on impact. The corrosive action of brake fluid on paintwork was considerable and led to a huge amount of damage and subsequent company compensation. Another incident was the dynamiting of utility poles carrying high voltage electricity cables to the workshops. The sabotage didn't work and power was never cut off as a consequence. There were strong rumours, however, that in the case of a protracted strike, UACL was prepared to close its doors in Longueuil and move the operation to Cincinnati, Ohio in the U.S.A.

One offsite incident with a Local 510 UAW striker happened when I was summoned to attend a judicial examination of discovery relating to my car collision before Christmas. This initial enquiry took place in the principal court house (*Palais de Justice*) in downtown Montréal. I waited outside the court room and spoke with my lawyer, who wanted to know some personal details including my work at UACL. When the lawyer left to prepare his case, I was approached by an individual who had been standing nearby. He had clearly overheard our conversation and asked my name. "If you're working at United Aircraft", he said, "Then you and I are on different sides of the fence"; his mean, piercing eyes issuing an unspoken warning. Fortunately, it didn't unnerve me as I underwent a cross-examination by the judge, who also listened to the argument of the other party's lawyer and reports from police officers. Except for my testimony, the meeting was con-

ducted entirely in French, providing me with a firsthand experience of the law as practiced under the *Code Napoléonique* used in the province of Québec. At the end of the session, the judge announced “Je délibérai” – “I will deliberate [over the matter]” – and his judgement must have been in my favour as nothing more was heard from the insurance company.

The *Code Napoléonique* is all-encompassing and wasn't making life easy where marriage contracts were concerned. Monica and I favoured a civil ceremony involving simplicity. However, arranging a civil wedding in Québec was becoming a bureaucratic nightmare with innumerable forms to fill; interviews; publication of banns, and an extensive waiting period depending on the wedding date. I sought legal advice on this.

In the meantime, Monica was having bureaucratic problems of her own where the emigration process was concerned. The situation was resolved a little later and, with the obligatory medical examination arranged, Monica could see some light at the end of the tunnel. Additional positive news indicated an improvement in the UK's industrial turmoil as the mandatory three-day workweek was cancelled following the coalminers' union settlement. The resumption of normal life patterns helped to reduce the pressure of extra would-be emigrants to Canada and the inevitable bottleneck of applications. With an interview date secured and the distinct possibility of a speedy process through the system, Monica was becoming more excited and looking forward to us soon reuniting.

These hopes were temporarily dashed at Monica's medical examination. Despite passing with flying colours through most of the procedure, the doctor couldn't approve the documentation due to Monica's persistent high blood pressure. This was a hereditary condition. Only after a few days on a course of medication could her blood pressure be reduced to an acceptable level, and the doctor's report was duly authorised with this information.

In anticipation of setting up our future home, Monica started to accumulate basic household items; many of which were engagement presents. For my part I started looking at other apartments, knowing that my lease expired at the end of May. I certainly wanted to move into something superior to the unit I was currently renting and, during my wanderings, I noticed that there were vacancies in a large high rise development called *Domaine d'Iberville*. I casually enquired at the rental office and was told there was a one bedroom unit available on June 1st. A quick look at the apartment satisfied my curiosity. The rent, however, was considerably higher than I was paying at that time, and I said I was interested but would like to think about it. The advice I was given by an acquaintance was that the rent charged wasn't extraordinary for that sort of accommodation. So I was convinced to take on the lease and duly returned to the rental office at *Domaine d'Iberville*. In the meantime another person had expressed interest in renting the same unit. It took some effort to persuade the rental representative that I was still interested and that I was first in line. Fortunately I signed the agreement before any other party could intervene and knew that the next step in securing a roof over our heads was achieved.

The firm's ski club outings helped pass away the rigours of the Canadian winter and we were fortunate to visit some of the well known resorts in the Laurentian Hills, Eastern Townships, and across into the U.S.A. to New York State, Vermont and New Hampshire. Luxury highway coaches meant comfortable rides

there and back – most appreciated following a day on the slopes as a snooze on the return journey invariably happened. I also met two other British newcomers on these excursions – Nick and Elizabeth Avery, who became good friends. Nick worked in the Process Engineering Department and was a graduate apprentice at British Aircraft Corporation in Bristol. Liz, a housewife but with a computer science background, was actively seeking employment and they lived in a maisonette in the South Shore suburb of St. Lambert.

The passage of April gradually transformed everywhere from winter to spring. The days were becoming longer and the strength of the sun stronger. Any residual snow was thawing and there were signs of trees and shrubs waking from their six month slumber. I discovered the early spring ritual of ‘sugaring off’ as this was the time when the sap from maple trees was collected and processed into maple syrup. My introduction to this practice was during an excursion, by rail, to the town of St. Albans in Vermont, USA, and attending the “Vermont Maple Festival”. Visitors had the opportunity to enter the woods, or ‘bush’ as it is known, and go to the ‘sugar shack’, which is a rustic building where the collected sap is fed into huge vats that are heated by wooden fires. The sap is processed and the end product becomes maple syrup. Afterwards, guests ate a lunch of New England stew. This was followed by the delicacy of ‘taffy on snow’, which consisted of hot maple syrup poured on fresh snow and eaten together with a donut and a pickled gherkin (dill pickle).

There had been a flurry of letters between Monica and I largely due to making sure that Monica’s emigration procedure was on track. With so much at stake it was very important to provide all the supporting documentation at the interview. Everything went according to plan and Monica was much relieved when the presiding officer affirmed that her application had been approved. Even the questionable hypertension condition listed in her medical report was not considered an impediment or technicality. Overcoming this final hurdle now paved the way for Monica to sever ties and prepare for her future life in Canada.

Meanwhile, UACL was still caught in the throes of the strike. The situation was at an impasse and the union members were becoming more frustrated seeing the company operating at a reduced level, but operating nevertheless. Despite the court order limiting the number of pickets, there were occasions when mass meetings were held outside the factory gates. On Thursday, May 30th, I carefully made my way through the back roads to report to Plant No. 4. On seeing a far greater number of pickets than usual, I tried to outsmart them by keeping on one side of the road ready to make a dash through the gates. However, I was spied and before I knew it I was approached by several strikers gesticulating wildly and shouting, “Allez!” “Allez!” – “Go away!” Unperturbed, I continued towards the factory gate, but was then intercepted by more burly strikers, one of whom lashed out with his fist that connected with my jaw. Somebody then physically pushed me to the ground and yet another delivered a kick to my leg. After rising from the pavement they gave me another shove that was sufficient enough for me to retreat and eventually return to the apartment. After inspecting the damage I dressed my wound. This was a cut at the peak of my chin, but was in reality the reopening of a previous injury – the legacy of hitting the ice rink surface during a pick up shinny hockey match – a cut that had required three stitches.

I then telephoned the company to report the incident and was summoned back to the office for a debriefing as the company wanted to amass as much evidence as possible to incriminate the union. In due course, I was required to attend a judicial enquiry at the *Palais de Justice* as described later. As a result of this inci-

dent and one other a few days previously, two court injunctions were imposed on both UAW Local 510 and UACL to cease and desist any picketing or retaliatory action. From then on, an unofficial truce reigned.

It was decided that my stint on the shop floor was to end and I was reassigned to my regular office job. Whereas some sympathy was offered by colleagues, there was a tinge of sardonic mirth from my supervisor, Mike Finley, who declared, “They [the strikers] kinda like you.” Not that the remark bothered me. In any case with the days ticking by towards Monica’s arrival much of my energy was being diverted to setting up the new home, and the respite from dodging the strikers was a welcome relief. More so now that I had taken up residence in the *Domaine d’Iberville* apartment, the address being 1509-385 Place de la Louisiane. The one bedroom unit was located on the 15th (top) floor of a high rise block that overlooked the St. Lawrence River. Through the lounge picture window and from the balcony, one could see part of Île Ste. Hélène (St. Helen’s Island) and the skyline of Montréal. *Domaine d’Iberville* itself was a complex of four buildings situated opposite a large shopping centre called Place Longueuil and not far from the Longueuil Métro station. The apartment buildings appeared to be well maintained and equipped not only with a large laundry room – complete with several washers and driers – but also with an indoor swimming pool and a sauna room. I never expected such luxury and considered myself very fortunate in finding this ‘starter home’.

It was common practice to renovate apartment units when there was a change of tenancy. So I was pleasantly surprised to find workmen painting the ceilings and walls, as well as stripping and re-varnishing the hardwood block floor. As soon as that activity was over I was able to coordinate the delivery of furniture; an important step considering I didn’t even have a bed to sleep on, and had to rely on the generosity of Nick and Liz who lent me their inflatable camping mattress. I did have entertainment, though, with the Quadraphonic sound system that I had bought some weeks previously. Nick and Liz also recommended certain furniture stores, such as The Danish House, as they, too, wanted to buy good quality items. I preferred modern, clean-line styled furniture, and teak was the material of choice. Some of the first pieces to arrive were the Scandinavian-made dining and bedroom suites. These were supplemented with a three-place sofa (Chesterfield) and matching armchair, large coffee table and sideboard ensemble, either made from teak or having teak accents. A large scatter rug and futuristic floor lamp completed the furnishings.

Excitement was now mounting as Monica resigned from her job and started preparing her luggage in earnest. Some of the wedding gifts and incidentals were packed in a cabin trunk and shipped independently on a freighter bound for Montréal. One slight hiccup was with the airline ticket as flights were busy and seats became quickly booked. However, Monica was able to finally secure a place on British Airways flight BA 609; due to arrive at Montréal’s Dorval Airport in the evening of Friday, June 14th, 1974.

When the big day came, I made sure that the greeting was memorable and problem free. Having bought an appropriate bouquet of flowers and arrived in good time I positioned myself in the Arrivals concourse. The flight arrived on time, but I knew there would be a longer wait than normal as Monica was processed through the landed immigrant procedure. Eventually Monica came through the doors of the Immigration Office, looking a little weary given the exertions of the flight and immigration interrogation. Of course, we were both overjoyed at the reunion and, after making up for the long absence of hugs and kisses, quickly made our way in the balmy evening air to the airport parking lot and then to the apartment. Once the initial



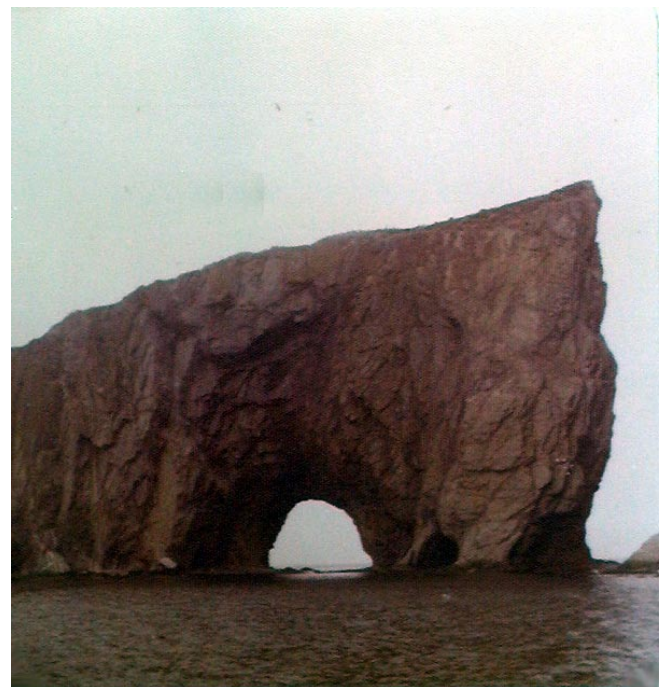
Monica's Arrival at Dorval Airport, Montréal, Québec, Friday, June 14, 1974.



Monica Outside the United States Post Office in the Hamlet of Coventry, Vermont, June 16, 1974.



Monica on the Quayside in Lévis, Québec, with the Québec City Skyline in the Background and Typical St. Lawrence River Shipping Traffic, June, 1974.



The Famous Rocher Percé (Pierced Rock) near the Town of Percé on the Gaspé Peninsula, Québec, June, 1974.

excitement had subdued, I then realised that I had not eaten supper and immediately felt the pangs of hunger. Despite her tiredness, Monica, bless her, summoned enough enthusiasm to cook me some slices of cheese on toast. Thus started our lives together in a new land with enormous possibilities.

Wedding bells

The weekend started off as something of a learning curve for Monica. Everything was totally new and I knew it would be a long time before she would be able to fully adapt to the Canadian way of life. So we took things in their stride and even managed to have some fun. We went out for a long drive and hopped over the border into the state of Vermont, where we stopped in the hamlet of Coventry – just in case Monica felt a little homesick.

We were still in a conundrum with the wedding plans as the civil ceremony laws in Québec were an impediment to the time-sensitive obligation that was part of Monica's emigration requirements and my promise as her sponsor. Legally speaking we were on the hook, and if we couldn't prove that we had married within one month of Monica's arrival she would be liable for deportation. It was important to find an alternative method and one that could be fitted into the time constraint. Fortunately, near the apartment building was St. Mark's Anglican Church; a simple, stone structure nestled in its own little parklike setting deep in the heart of Roman Catholic French Canadian Longueuil. We decided to explore the possibility of a small church wedding and spoke to the Rector, Reverend G.A. Long, who, after some minor interrogation, agreed to waive the banns and enjoin us in holy matrimony by special licence on the morning of Friday, July 12th, 1974. This was a considerable load off our minds and Monica then informed her parents so they could arrange their flights.

I had booked two weeks vacation following Monica's arrival to help her settle in her new surroundings, and it was a good opportunity to make an excursion beyond the Greater Montréal Area. I had considered exploring the Gaspé Peninsula and, after making the wedding arrangements, we packed our suitcases in the trunk of the Mustang and headed east towards Québec City. The journey was deep in the heart of French-speaking Canada so there were linguistic as well as cultural challenges to overcome. However, we managed to find hotel rooms and order meals without too much difficulty. Probably because we made an effort to communicate with the locals – even in rudimentary and often incorrect French – they gave a certain amount of latitude to our verbal requests.

The South Shore Autoroute (Route 20) portion of the Trans-Canada Highway (TCH) ended at Rivière-du-Loup where we made our first overnight stop. The commercial hotel offered basic accommodation, but after a long day on the road all we needed was a roof over our heads. We were amused to notice a single candle in a holder on the sideboard unit and assumed it to be the 'emergency lighting' in case of a power failure. The next day we pressed on and followed the coast of the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the town of Gaspé; en route stopping in the village of Ste. Flavie for lunch at a roadside fishing shack-cum-diner called "Capitaine Homard" (Captain Lobster). This was an experience eating fresh lobster chosen from a holding tank, then cooked to perfection and placed in front of you. Wearing a plastic bib and armed with claw crackers and a meat extracting fork, it was the only way to consume this crustacean delicacy. Years later, we

returned to find the shack had become a large eating establishment. Obviously, the proprietor, Capitaine Homard himself, had prospered in the tourism industry as the restaurant had become a dining destination of choice for tour buses.

The coastline was dotted with fishing villages and a few large towns. We would sometimes encounter banks of sea fog drifting in from the Gulf and they provided a new perspective on the everchanging seascape. The huge wind energy development at Cap Chat was an awe inspiring sight and could be seen from a long distance. Out in the Gulf, colourful markers indicated the location of fishermen's nets or lobster traps.

Rounding the peninsula, the rugged coast now faced the Atlantic Ocean and we were fortunate to see the famous *Rocher Percé* (pierced rock) without it being shrouded in mist. The road now followed the coast of the Baie des Chaleurs, again peppered with small fishing villages and communities linked to the forestry industry. The road turned north inland towards the Gulf of St. Lawrence and followed the valley of the Matapédia River. At this point it was raining and the road was being repaired, and our progress was delayed due to restrictions around a number of construction sites. By the time we arrived at Mont-Joli, the car was covered in mud and looked like it had just finished the East African Rally. Having fulfilled touring this part of rural Québec, we returned home at a leisurely pace and continued to fine tune the wedding plans.

With the approaching wedding day it became necessary to continue shopping for more household essentials. Chinaware; flatware; stemware; cookware; bed linen; curtains, and some interior décor items were sourced and bought mainly in the large downtown department stores. By the time Monica's parents arrived we had the basis of a comfortable apartment. However, we were minus one very important item – the wedding ring! On the eve of the wedding we scoured the jewellers on downtown's St. Catherine Street – the main shopping avenue – and finally found a suitable wedding band of the appropriate size just in the nick of time. Otherwise, Monica's mother was prepared to 'loan' her wedding ring in an emergency.

Friday, July 12th, 1974, dawned a beautiful, sunny day and it continued that way throughout the weekend. As I had used up my complete vacation entitlement, I decided to blatantly take the day off and bluff my reason on the following Monday. We wanted to maintain a low profile for the occasion so didn't broadcast the event except to a couple of close friends. Monica's parents were in attendance, of course, but for my parents it was financially prohibitive for them to fly to Canada and spend some time here, so they were missing from the entourage. We all arrived at the church, Monica wearing a white, full length wedding dress and sporting a picture hat, and I wore my best three-piece suit. The ceremony followed the traditional Anglican service of holy Matrimony with the recital of the wedding vows and the blessing and exchange of two rings. The simple ceremony – there were no bells, organ playing, bridesmaids or best man – finished with the signing of the official register.

When we emerged from the church to take photographs, we were surprised to see several women waiting outside. Evidently someone had leaked the news of the wedding and a few of my colleagues' wives decided to congregate and congratulate. As it turned out this was a good thing as they were able to take some group photos that otherwise wouldn't have been possible. I was particularly anxious to record the event on film and this was the first assignment for a brand new 35 mm SLR camera. Unfortunately I made a

cardinal error and failed to expose a test film beforehand, so my limited knowledge of this type of camera was my downfall. As I was blithely taking all kinds of memorable poses, I didn't notice that the film was not advancing in the camera. The result was a non-exposed film, and it was only thanks to the photos taken on the back up camera that we had any photorecording of the wedding at all.

Following the ceremony the four of us returned to the apartment for a buffet lunch. I had kept the honeymoon destination secret, but knew it was a long drive away and so we didn't linger too long as Monica had to change into her going away trousseau. Once everything was ready for the departure we left the apartment building and headed west along the TCH towards Toronto, Ontario. By the time we reached Toronto it was rush hour in the city and the multi-lane TCH (Highway 401 in Ontario) was particularly busy. I knew I had to exit the TCH onto the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) towards Niagara Falls, but due to driver fatigue and some navigation confusion I left the TCH at the "Queensway" exit. Once off the main highway and now deep in an industrial park, I realised my mistake and it took a long time trying to find a connection back onto Highway 401. Now back on track, we eventually took the correct exit and followed the QEW to Niagara Falls, which was my secret destination.

By the time we reached Niagara Falls, it was dark and we were both very tired. Not having booked a hotel room in advance, I decided to check into the first decent looking establishment, which turned out to be the golf-themed "Fairway Hotel". Not only were we tired, but also hungry. After securing the room, we walked along the street and came across "Mamma Mia's", an Italian restaurant with the slogan, "Good food is worth waiting for". Regardless, we were hungry enough to order, but then endured a long time before the meal arrived at our table. We weren't disappointed, though, and the slogan was true to its word.

The following day was spent in the "Honeymoon Capital of the World" with all its natural attractions and man-made gimmicks. Like most visitors we 'did the tourist thing' and strolled along the promenade to view both the American Falls and Canadian Horseshoe Falls. A walk up Clifton Hill took us past the tacky amusement arcades, fast food outlets and waxworks to Victoria Avenue. We then continued to the Rainbow Bridge that spans the gorge between Canada and the U.S.A. Crossing over the border allowed us to visit the American Falls up close and peer over the precipice. The hot, sunny weather seemed to be made for the occasion and certainly added to the pleasure of the honeymoon period.

Settling down to married bliss

Knowing that I had played hooky meant I had to face the music at work the following Monday. My supervisor, Mike Finley, didn't pull any punches with his verbal warning, but I wasn't in the mood to argue the toss and just gave a lame excuse of 'sickness'. It soon blew over and life carried on as usual. The strike was still percolating in the background even though it was now safe to enter and exit the company's property. But I was soon subpoenaed to the *Palais de Justice* to testify and give my account of the assault. This was a relatively nerve-wracking experience because the courtroom was crowded with striking members of UAW Local 510, who used the photographs taken of 'scabs' crossing the picket line to identify the testifying witnesses. When called, each witness had to quote their name and home address – important information for the strikers. Because I had recently moved I had to give my current address (or



Monica Outside St. Mark's Anglican Church on the Wedding Day, Longueuil, Québec, Friday, July 12, 1974.



Monica and her Mother Outside St. Mark's Anglican Church on the Wedding Day, Longueuil, Québec, Friday, July 12, 1974.



Monica and her Father Outside St. Mark's Anglican Church on the Wedding Day, Longueuil, Québec, Friday, July 12, 1974.



Monica and her Parents Outside St. Mark's Anglican Church on the Wedding Day, Longueuil, Québec, Friday, July 12, 1974.



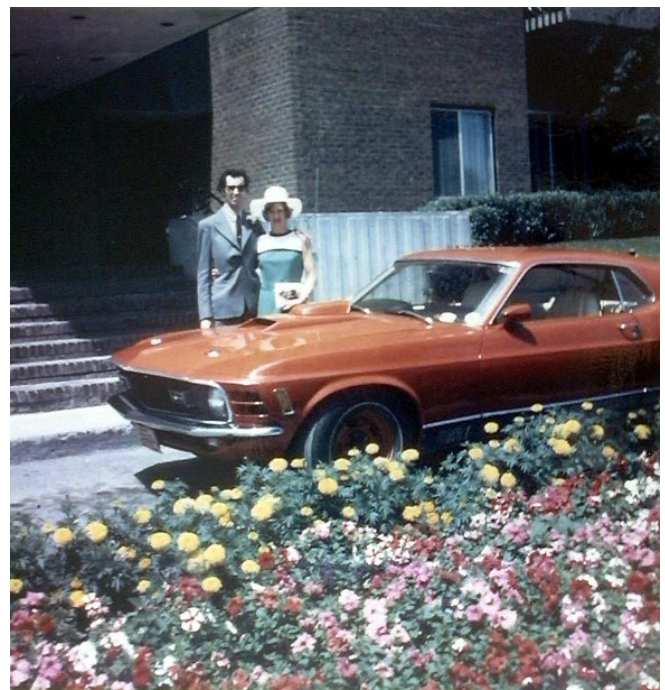
Monica and Barry Outside St. Mark's Anglican Church on the Wedding Day, Longueuil, Québec, Friday, July 12, 1974.



Monica, Barry and Monica's Parents Outside St. Mark's Anglican Church on the Wedding Day, Longueuil, Québec, Friday, July 12, 1974.



Rev. Long, Monica and Barry Inside St. Mark's Anglican Church Registry on the Wedding Day, Longueuil, Québec, Friday, July 12, 1974.



Monica and Barry Outside the Apartment Building at 385 Place de la Louisiane, Longueuil, at the Start of their Honeymoon, Friday, July 12, 1974.

risk perjury), otherwise I would've specified the previous apartment and given the strikers false information. The witness before me was Joe Penske, the company photographer; then it was my turn to take the stand. I was cross-examined by the two councils and provided them with a firsthand account; although I was unable to definitely identify my assailants as actual members of UAW Local 510. During this session it was the first time I had seen a videotape recording – a scene showing a confrontation between strikers and so called company 'goons' (thugs) outside one of the factory gates – used as visual evidence. Leaving the courtroom through a throng of strikers was a little uncomfortable, but I managed to escape without incident.

While I was at work, Monica was soon immersed in establishing a routine and finding her way around the apartment building. The majority of our neighbours were French Canadian professionals and most encounters elicited a polite "Bonjour", etc. Next door on one side, however, were two young Anglo-Canadians, John and Cheryl, whom we got to know beyond the "Hi" salutation. John was a lawyer. We were on good terms with the concière (superintendent) and his wife, whom we dubbed "Monsieur et Madame", and they made an efficient team; Monsieur always on hand to do odd jobs and Madame usually scrupulously maintaining the laundry room.

Two bonuses living in *Domaine d'Iberville* were the indoor swimming pool/sauna room and the convenience of André's *dépanneur* (variety store). I really enjoyed the heated swimming pool and, after a long day at the office, working out in the water was very therapeutic. The sauna, too, provided stress relief. Whereas in most of Canada wine and beer products are sold at regulated government liquor stores, in the province of Québec such items are also freely available for purchase at the local corner variety store. André's *dépanneur* was located in the basement of the apartment building and he did a roaring trade, especially in alcoholic beverages. This source of wine and beer was very convenient, particularly on a freezing winter day when a trip to the basement avoided having to battle the elements merely to buy a bottle of booze at the *Magazin des Alcools* (liquor store) in the Place Longueuil shopping centre.

The summer marched on and we continued an active lifestyle, often taking advantage of the public holiday 'long' weekends to travel around and explore the province. There were outings to the Eastern Townships; the Saguenay Region and a foray into Ontario to visit the Kingston area. The best known attraction there is Old Fort Henry, a massive stone fortification steeped in tradition where black powder re-enactments, such as the impressive "Beating the Retreat" depict frontier military life. Also nearby is the Thousand Island archipelago located at the eastern end of Lake Ontario where it drains into the St. Lawrence River. A popular tourist excursion is the 1,000 Islands Boat Tour where a sightseeing boat takes visitors on a mini-voyage to see some of the sumptuous homes built on private islands. The highlight is to see "Bolt Castle" an incomplete manor house built in the style of a Mediæval castle and kept semi-ruinous as a tourist curiosity.

One amusing incident happened when I was lucky at work to win a draw for two free tickets to a professional baseball game. The pro-team was known as the Montréal Expos and the home stadium or ballpark was called Jarry Park. I had often been to ice hockey games and was beginning to understand the rules and strategy. However, I was totally clueless about baseball. The tickets were in choice seats behind the home plate so Monica and I set off for the game. I was convinced that the Jean-Talon Métro station was nearer to Jarry Park than the Jarry Métro station, but when we arrived at Jean-Talon we discovered that wasn't the

case. Then we had to make our way on foot to the ballpark, arriving after the game was well underway and a few innings already played. The game's makeup was still mystifying to us – even its close resemblance to the English school game of 'rounders' didn't help. All that we could see were runs being scored and players being eliminated and we were none the wiser at the end of the game. In fact, the abruptness of the ending caught us completely by surprise as the fans started to leave *en masse*.

Late summer blended into early autumn (fall) when the weather was probably at its most appealing, which encouraged us to spend time outdoors and also at social gatherings. Weekend excursions took us into the picturesque areas of Upper New York State, Vermont and New Hampshire to view the spectacular scenery of maple tree leaves changing colour. Further north in the Gatineau Hills near Ottawa similar scenes were a feast to the eyes and it wasn't long before the entire Northeastern region of Canada and the U.S.A. was ablaze in colour ranging from golden yellow to deep crimson.

The brilliant colours looked even more glorious seen from above. A French Canadian colleague, Réal Cloutier, possessed a pilot's licence and owned his own aircraft. He kept the plane, a Piper Cherokee, at the nearby St. Hubert Airport and, one day in September, he invited me to fly around the local countryside and view the South Shore. He even allowed me to take the controls for a short while under his supervision – a satisfying experience.

Later in the fall, Monica and I travelled to Toronto and reunited with my cousin, Don Jr., his wife, Claire, and their two children, Brent and Shannon. This was the first time since my visit in 1967 that we had met face-to-face. A rendezvous had been arranged in downtown Toronto, and as soon as we saw Don walking towards us we recognised him – something in the Page mannerisms, it seemed. Don took us to their new house in a suburb called Bramalea where we met the rest of the family and enjoyed a happy reunion by catching up with all the events of the previous seven years. Don was well entrenched in his career in the Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services with an office in the old Toronto city hall building.

Not having a serious hobby at the time, I applied myself to an evening school course and chose a general interest subject – News and Feature Writing – taught at Concordia University. The course consisted of twenty hours of tuition held in the lecture rooms on the Sir George Williams campus and involved the techniques used for reporting newspaper interviews. The programme was intensive and, with the upcoming municipal elections, one of our assignments was to interview both a candidate and 'the man in the street'. I met the incumbent mayor, M. Jean Drapeau, and, on a dark street corner, managed to corral some people to interview. It wasn't a stellar end product, but I did receive a certificate of successful course completion.

My first anniversary of emigration passed with little fanfare; although traditionally Monica and I have always acknowledged the occasion by eating out and celebrating. As the days shortened and temperatures started to cool, social gatherings meant inviting friends to dinner as well as accepting reciprocal invitations. Close English companions were Nick and Liz Avery; Allan and Pat Ford; Roger and Madelaine Dodd, and later, Jimmy and Agnes Elder – a Scottish couple. We also patronised the Arthur Murray School of Dancing in downtown Montréal. Special social events such as fancy dress parties and formal evenings were organised and these occasions helped in the cultural adjustment; especially for Monica.



View of the Domaine d'Iberville Apartment Complex, Longueuil, Québec, July, 1974.



View from our Apartment Window Overlooking the St. Lawrence River, Longueuil, Québec, July, 1974.



Monica Snacks at a Picnic Area on the 1000 Islands Parkway near Gananoque, Ontario, August, 1974.



Bolt Castle on a Private Island in the 1,000 Islands Archipelago, Lake Ontario, August, 1974.



Firing the Noonday Signal Cannon from the Walls of Old Fort Henry, Kingston, Ontario, August, 1974.



Montréal Expos Baseball Team Playing at Jarry Park, Montréal, Québec, September, 1974.



Cousin Don Jr., Claire, Shannon, Brent and Monica when Visiting Bramalea, Ontario, October, 1974.



Monica and Barry Dressed up for a Social Evening at Arthur Murray's Academy, Montréal, Nov., 1974.



Monica and Barry Visit Barry's Grandma in her Flat at Christmas, Islington, London, December, 1974.



Barry, Monica and their Parents Meet at New Year, 305 Broad Lane, Coventry, December, 1974.



Place Ville-Marie During an Extremely Cold Period. Downtown Montréal, Québec, January, 1975.



Overlooking the Taschereau Boulevard Interchange During a Blizzard, Longueuil, Québec, Jan., 1975.

I was determined not to repeat the same type of Christmas as the previous year, so we decided to visit England and celebrate the Festive Season with our parents and old friends. Flights were booked and we left Montréal for London's Heathrow Airport. Of course, it was a joyous occasion and we managed to see all our friends and relations – including my grandmother in her new Council flat where she had been relocated as a result of the demolition of Liverpool Buildings. We visited my parents in Hatfield for Christmas, and both sets of parents and ourselves met at Monica's old Broad Lane home in Coventry where we spent the New Year holiday.

Shortly after returning to Montréal, the weather turned brutally cold with heavy snowfalls that paralysed the city. It was impossible to drive to work, but fortunately the office was still within walking distance so no time was lost. Unless it was really bad and radio broadcasts announced that the factory was temporarily closed, you were expected to make a supreme effort to attend work. Failure to show up meant docked pay.

The snow, however, had its compensations. Following a blizzard, we sometimes went downtown and roamed through the heated underground labyrinth of passages that linked the Métro with Place Ville-Marie and Place Bonaventure. After reaching the surface, it was like a winter wonderland and the squeaking sound of newly fallen snow beneath our feet as we tramped along St. Catherine Street was characteristic of these outings. Shops tended to stay open late in the evening and even though we were appropriately dressed for the outdoors it was necessary to dodge in the main department stores along the street just to thaw out. We developed a liking for winter activities and, even though I participated in downhill skiing, Monica preferred to stay off the slopes with the consequence that we both took to Nordic or cross-country skiing as a compromise. This was in the days before 'waxless' skis with fish scale bases. However, we didn't want to be too purist and use the traditional skis that required a preparation of tar on the base before applying the wax. The next best thing was the waxable ski with a synthetic plastic base. We both bought a pair of Karhu skis; tonkin poles; various waxes; wax remover; hand cleaning cream; scraper, and a snow thermometer.

First we had to understand the technique of applying wax to the ski bases: also the different types of wax – blue, red or purple – depending on the prevailing snow conditions. Then we learned the Nordic stride, which is the 'kick-slide' movement basic to cross-country skiing. Near the apartment building was a large, open area where we could practice and eventually we progressed to the trails in municipal parks. One such favourite was on Île Ste. Hélène and another at the park for the Colisée Jean Beliveau activity centre. Eventually we ranged further afield and found excellent trails at Mont St. Bruno-de-Montarville, a neighbouring community to Longueuil.

Canadians like to break up the long winter with festivals, and one of the oldest and biggest is the Québec Winter Carnival that's celebrated annually in Québec City. We decided to travel and experience the festival having heard so much about it. The trademark of the festival is its mascot, *Bonhomme Carnaval*, the larger than life snowman wearing the traditional Québécois *toque* and *ceinture flechée*. Other well known attractions of the festival are the ice palace; snow sculptures; the Dufferin Terrace *Glissoir* (longest toboggan slide in the world), and the extensive parade of decorative floats with the chosen Carnival Queen. The parade was held after dark, and the illuminated floats were ingenious. However, the temperature really plummeted and, despite wearing thermal underwear and adequate outer garments, we were frozen to the marrow.

Over the winter months I was also kept busy at home decorating the apartment. Several walls in the living room, bedroom and kitchen were accented with either paint or wallpaper. I remember the colours were strong – typical of 1970s trends – including orange and deep lilac, plus simulated brick patterns. Other bold designs were reflected in the area rug and bed linen. The Quadraphonic sound system, which also included a technical innovation at the time – the eight-track tape player – provided good radio and hi-fi entertainment. By choice we refrained from buying a TV set and, indeed, to this day have never had any desire to possess one. Entertainment outside the home was easy to find in Montréal, and live shows such as “Stompin’ Tom Connors” at *Place des Arts* or free orchestral concerts at the CBC *Salle Claude Champagne* auditorium satisfied our cultural pursuits.

Spring is in the air

The winter months were gradually waning and the first significant holiday of the year was the Easter weekend in March. Since Monica’s arrival she had been in touch with her cousin, Brian, who lived outside New York City, and it was arranged that Monica and I would visit Brian and his family during Easter. The easiest way to travel was by air from Montréal to New York, and Brian met us when we arrived at J.F. Kennedy Airport. Brian’s home was in the suburban town of Huntington on Long Island and he and his wife, Debbie, kindly accommodated us for the duration of the visit.

The Long Island Railroad connected many of the dormitory communities with New York City and we used the train service to and from Huntington and the city terminus at Pennsylvania Station. There were many things to see and do in the “Big Apple” and first we walked around Lower Manhattan admiring the cluster of skyscrapers – at that time dominated by the twin towers of the World Trade Center. After strolling along Wall Street we went to Battery Park and the dock for the cheapest ride in the world: the Staten Island Ferry; to New Jersey and back for ten cents and a great view of the Statue of Liberty. More awe inspiring views were seen from the top of the Empire State Building. It was a clear, crisp day and we ascended the building to the observation deck where we were able to admire the entire city below us on all four sides – an ambition fulfilled. We continued to explore Midtown Manhattan, taking in such sights as Central Park, the Rockefeller Center/Plaza and St. Patrick’s Cathedral. More panoramic views of the city could be seen from the observation deck of the Rockefeller Center/Plaza. At the base of the skyscraper was an outdoor ice skating rink, presided over by a giant gilded sculpture, and where food vendors plied their wares – including delicious freshly made pretzels.

We used the New York subway (Underground) system when travelling for some distance within the city. The subway, although well worn, dirty and noisy, was quite efficient and, to use up our purchased number of tokens, we went on several random journeys just for the ride. The subway train carriage interiors were decorated with the handiwork of graffiti artists, and each train was constantly patrolled by a policeman. One rather unsavoury neighbourhood where we alighted was Jamaica Road in the Borough of Queens where the subway came to the surface and continued on an elevated section of steel structures. This area was in direct contrast to the affluence of the wealthy parts of the city and everything was down at heel. We returned to Lower Manhattan just as evening was falling and admired the many bright lights of Broadway and Times Square before heading back to Huntington.



Barry Striding out on Cross-country Skis on a Trail near Mont St. Bruno, Québec, January, 1975.



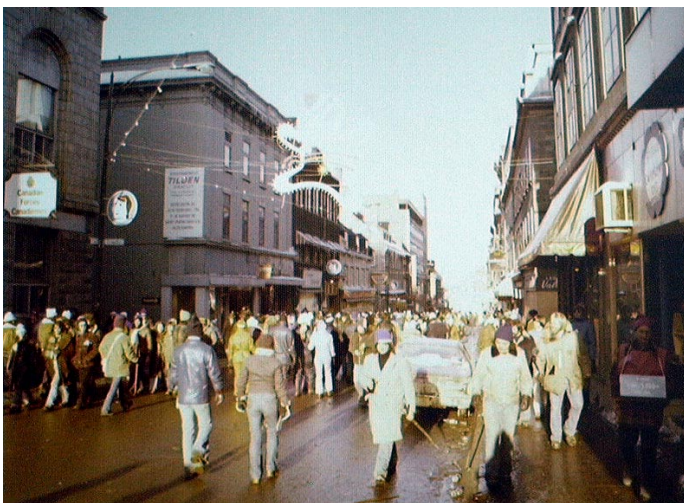
Monica Tries out her Cross-country Skis in a Park near our Apartments, Longueuil, January, 1975.



Exterior of the Forum Arena, Home of the Montréal Canadiens Hockey Team, Montréal, January, 1975.



The Montréal Canadiens and Opponents Face off at the Forum Arena, Montréal, January, 1975.



Decorated Street During the Québec Winter Carnival Festivities in Québec City, Québec, February, 1975.



Dufferin Terrace and the Château Frontenac Hotel During the Québec Winter Carnival, February, 1975.



The Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island as Seen from the Staten Island Ferry, New York City, March, 1975.



The Lower Manhattan Skyscrapers as Seen from the Staten Island Ferry, New York City, March, 1975.



View Looking Southeast Towards Lower Manhattan from the Empire State Building, NYC, March, 1975.



View Looking Northwest and Midtown Manhattan from the Empire State Building, NYC, March, 1975.



Assembly Hall Inside the United Nations Building, New York City, March, 1975.



Elevated Section of the New York Subway System, Jamaica Road, Queens, New York City, March, 1975.

The following day was also a sightseeing trip although an abbreviated one as we were flying back to Montréal in the evening. However, it was another opportunity to explore Manhattan's avenues and to wander around the prestigious stores such as Tiffany and Bloomingdale's. One organised tour we did was at the United Nations Building where we admired the clean-cut architecture and the assembly hall interior. Then it was farewell to the "Big Apple" and the flight home.

During the winter I had noticed signs that my pride and joy Mustang sports car was developing some major problems. I had already replaced all four worn out tyres with new Pirelli *Cinturatos*, and it was apparent the silencer (muffler) system was defective as fumes were entering the car. Even on some of the coldest days the engine was overheating and, during acceleration, some expensive sounding noises were coming from under the hood. I needed to look for a replacement vehicle.

Up until now, every one of my cars had been a secondhand vehicle and all had been expensive to maintain when paying out for fair-wear-and-tear repairs. In April, I decided to cut my losses and buy a new car. But which model? There were so many on the market that the only way to select the right car was to list my personal requirements and match them with the current products. As I had experienced some difficulties during the winter with the Mustang's automatic transmission, I elected to return to a manual gearbox. Also, it was at the time of the oil crisis, and the cost of fuel was increasing rapidly which made the Mustang's thirsty engine uneconomical; so reverting to four cylinders was a prudent decision. The predominant models were, of course, those made in North America – specifically General Motors, Ford and Chrysler products. Imported cars were selling well in North America and models from Europe and the Far East had cornered part of the market with some measure of success. This was largely due to domestic models having to be custom-ordered to include 'extra' features that were normally supplied as standard equipment on imported vehicles.

I had noticed that my supervisor, Mike Finley, was satisfied with a small imported car that he drove on long commutes every day. It was a Japanese car, a Datsun 710, which had the specifications I was looking for. He had bought it at a Datsun dealer in the municipality of Kirkland, a predominantly English-speaking suburb of Montréal, so I visited the agency to consider buying a similar vehicle. I explained to the salesperson that I was interested in buying a model 710 and, of course, trading in the Mustang. There were the usual preliminary negotiations as well as an evaluation of the Mustang. I really didn't expect a good estimated value and wasn't surprised that the allowance was a meagre \$250.00 – basically the cost of the new tyres that I had recently bought! However, scrap value was better than no value and it was an easy way of disposing the Ford. On the down side, the dealership had few remaining cars to choose from, and I was faced with only four-door saloons (sedans) in limited colours on the lot. I decided to take the plunge and selected a maroon coloured model. After signing the deal and arranging the financing, I received the keys of my first brand new car and said a fond farewell to the venerable 1970 Ford Mustang Mach 1.

In the time that I had owned the Mustang it provided moments of elation – I recall in particular cruising at 120 mph (193 km/h) along the Eastern Townships Autoroute (Route 10) and listening to "Love's Theme" on the radio at high volume – and disappointment, but I was pleased to have experienced possessing a true 'muscle car'.

As with any new car there's an unwritten rule that the vehicle should be 'run in'. In the old days it was a ritual – putting on a number of miles at a steady 30 mph and a notice in the back window: RUNNING IN, PLEASE PASS. Of late, new technology has obviated the need for such stringent measures, but it was prudent to coax the untried mechanicals on a long journey without straining the engine or running gear. I decided to 'run in' the Datsun on a weekend and, looking at the road map of the Northeastern U.S.A., pinpointed the town of Bar Harbor on the coast of Maine as a suitable destination.

With overnight bags packed, we set off at a leisurely pace and headed south to the Vermont border. We continued in search of U.S. Highway No. 2 and after joining it headed east through New Hampshire to Maine. The slow pace of the driving, together with the mountainous terrain, made for a long day and, by the time we had reached the small town of Skowhegan, it was time to look for a motel. We were still approximately 106 miles (170 km) from Bar Harbor.

In the morning we reviewed the situation and I blithely said, "It doesn't look very far on the map." So we continued to Bar Harbor; considering that the return journey would be well within our capacity. After reaching our destination and viewing it under not too ideal weather conditions, we retraced our route at the same leisurely pace. As the day wore on I realised that I had bitten off more than I could chew and, as darkness fell, we were far from the Canadian border. Eventually arriving home in the early hours of Monday morning, I wasn't very popular with Monica who had endured the marathon drive.

Springtime in Canada occurs almost overnight and, during the month of May, the sun gains strength and the buds begin to swell and open. This season is a nice one to visit Ottawa, the Nation's Capital, when the trees come to life and it's a pleasure to walk around the downtown area near the Parliament Buildings. We made a fleeting visit there when the Battle of the Atlantic ceremony took place at the National War Memorial – a very moving experience – and the sunshine beckoned us into the Gatineau Hills to admire the views overlooking the Ottawa River valley now starting to turn a pale green.

The uneasy truce between UACL and UAW Local 510 was still holding despite isolated incidents of harassment. However, on the evening of May 12, 1975, a group of 34 strikers in a heavy truck forced an entry into Plant No. 2 by ramming through the security gates. Their intention was to paralyse the factory and protest against the hiring of 'scabs' (strikebreakers) who were replacing employees on strike and maintaining production. According to eyewitnesses, the invaders wore Army-style steel helmets and gasmasks. They carried iron bars that were used to damage machinery and threaten workers. Eventually they were forced to leave by riot police officers in a violent confrontation. The invading strikers, called the '34 Charlies', were all fired by UACL.

My work situation changed slightly when section leader Bob Muir proposed that I should consider moving into the Technical Editing Section. Whether this was a 'behind the scenes' personnel shuffle or not, I don't know, but the suggested lateral promotion was recommended by my immediate supervisor, Mike Finley. Initially I was somewhat reluctant given that my chosen career was primarily in technical writing, but experience in another aspect of technical publications might also be an asset, and there was a salary compensation as my biweekly paycheque showed an increase from \$542.00 to \$594.00.

Although I wasn't enamoured leaving the creative world of technical writing to the passive environment of proofreading and review work, it didn't matter too much as I knew I was using UACL merely as a stepping stone in my career. The chance to list some diversification on my résumé might not be all that bad. I had to now work closely with a new team of colleagues, and my presence wasn't exactly welcomed by some of the veteran employees. I soon found out that personality conflicts were rife and particularly bitter among the female staff. The Technical Publications Department's second-in-command, Ed Whyte, was also our main supervisor, and reporting to him was Ray Mason. Under Ray were Bud Graham and myself as editors and several clerks and typists, namely Doris Grew, Vera McNulty, Françoise Paquette, Franca Vittese and Nicole. Two additional clerical assistants were to follow later.

The daily grind now included editing and correcting the writers' work, together with preparing the final camera-ready copy for eventual printing. One final step was to affix self-sticking mastheads to every page, and the chore of 'sticking little pieces of paper onto bigger pieces of paper' impelled me to start looking seriously elsewhere – preferably returning to technical writing.

It was about this time that every day I searched through the job vacancies in the national newspapers. One promising opportunity showed up in the Toronto Globe and Mail, and that was a technical writing job at de Havilland Aircraft of Canada in Toronto, Ontario. I applied and was granted an interview. Although the interview process was cordial and all expenses paid – including an overnight hotel stay – it appeared I didn't make it to the short list.

Monica hadn't been idle on the job front either. Indeed, we had foreseen the importance of her gaining 'Canadian experience' well ahead of time and, following a short-lived period at the Prudential Assurance Company, Monica was hired as an accounting assistant at "Sebastien's", a unisex clothing store on St. Hubert Street, Montréal, from October, 1974, until the business went into liquidation in February, 1975. Not being fluently bilingual was a handicap, but after a little searching, Monica was able to find a vacancy for a bookkeeper at the Clifton Management Company, a property management firm on Côte des Neiges, Montréal, and stayed with them from March, 1975, until one year later when we left for pastures anew.

Later in May, we elected to explore the Saguenay Region of the province of Québec. The Saguenay River connects Lac St. Jean to the St. Lawrence River and is well known for its impressive fjord-like scenery and opportunities for whale watching. We travelled the regular route to Québec City then to Baie-Ste-Catherine where a ferry that shuttles across the mouth of the Saguenay River becomes an extension to the road. On the other side is the hamlet of Tadoussac where there is an area of steep and high sand dunes (375 ft. [114 m]) overlooking the St. Lawrence River that are used by skiers in the summer. Wanting to see this I drove onto the stretch of sand adjacent to the dunes. Not realising the instability of the sand I quickly became bogged down and totally immobile. I had a snow shovel in the trunk and used it to try and free the wheels, but with little success. Monica then took over in the driver's seat and I pushed the car as she tried to drive. Not much was happening until two men arrived and eventually the three of us were able to push the car onto firmer ground. I had a few beers in the picnic cooler, so we were amply rewarded for our exertions. The rest of the trip was uneventful and we drove around Lac St. Jean stopping at Dolbeau, Roberval and returning to Montréal via La Tuque and Trois Rivières.

Exploring 'down east'

The latter half of 1975 turned out to be a series of excursions both near and far. Since our stay in Québec was anticipated as short-lived, we set out to visit the Canadian maritime provinces of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island (P.E.I.) and Nova Scotia. Thus ensuring a vacation in these provinces whilst we were domiciled on the eastern side of Canada. Again we took the South Shore Auto-route (Route 20) to Rivière-du-Loup, and then the TCH turned southeast towards the Québec-New Brunswick provincial border.

The northern part of New Brunswick, which is the only official bilingual Canadian province, is predominantly French Canadian with much influence coming from the original Acadian French settlers, whose culture is distinctly different to their Québécois cousins. Passing through Edmundston, then Grand Falls with its huge 80 ft. (24 m) cataract and hydroelectricity generating plant, the scenery becomes more pastoral and the TCH follows the wide Saint John River valley to the provincial capital of Fredericton. Approximately halfway down the valley is the town of Hartland, well known for two reasons. First is the McCain's french fries (potato chips) factory, a major part of McCain's Food Industries, and secondly the world's longest covered bridge. The 1,282 ft. (391 m) long wooden structure crosses the Saint John River on seven spans and has one vehicle traffic lane. A separate sidewalk is cantilevered on one side for pedestrians. Colloquially known as the "kissin' bridge", a favourite haunt of courting couples, Monica and I walked the entire length and stopped in the middle, both to admire the view and to partake in the traditional practice that gave the bridge its nickname.

From Fredericton, the TCH continues to the New Brunswick-Nova Scotia provincial border where it divides; the northeasterly section continuing to the ferry terminal at Cape Tormentine. At that time, two ferries connected P.E.I. with the mainland. Now the Confederation Bridge is the fixed link that replaced the Cape Tormentine-Borden ferry. The Wood Islands ferry still serves the Southern route to Caribou and New Glasgow. After crossing to Borden, our tour of P.E.I. was a rapid one that took us through the characteristic red soil countryside famed for superior potato crops, to the deserted sandy beaches of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and the provincial capital, Charlottetown. After traversing to Nova Scotia on the Wood Islands ferry, we headed east towards the causeway at Port Hastings that connects Cape Breton Island to the mainland.

Cape Breton Island had a great deal to offer with attractions as diversified as scientific, scenic and historic. We came across the scientific component with a visit to the Alexander Graham Bell Museum at Baddeck. The famous Scottish Canadian inventor performed many of his aeronautical experiments with kites in the area. The modern museum building, designed to echo Bell's tetrahedral shapes used for flight research, contained original items for his projects, such as the telephone, and other memorabilia.

We were lucky with the weather considering that this part of Nova Scotia is often fogbound in June. The bright, sunny day was a bonus for appreciating the rugged scenery of the Cabot Trail and the Cape Breton Highlands National Park. Gems of small fishing villages such as Grand Etang seemed to have been frozen in time, and picnic stops at picturesque overlooks on deserted roads imbued us with all the elements of fresh air and salt water. Further around the coast brought us to several coal mining communities and the New-



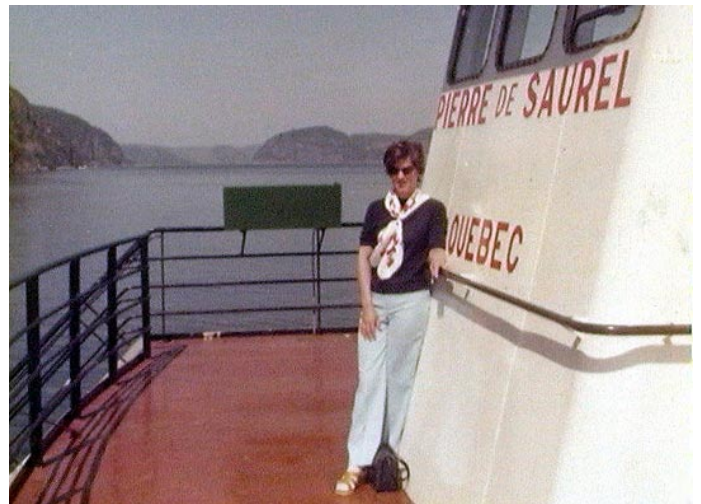
Barry Taking Possession of the Datsun 710, his First New Car, Kirkland, Montréal, Québec, April, 1975.



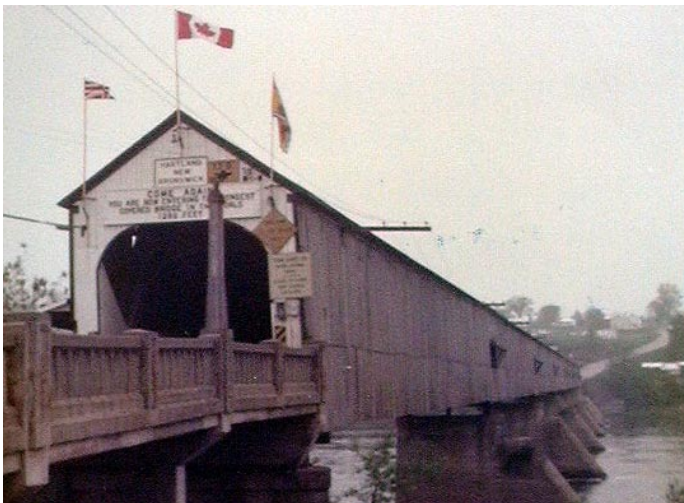
View of Parliament Hill and the East Block of the Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, May, 1975.



Two 'Paysannes' Removing Freshly Baked Loaves of Bread from a Roadside Oven, Québec, May, 1975.



Monica on the Ferry Crossing the Saguenay River, Baie-Ste-Catherine/Tadoussac, Québec, May, 1975.



The World's Longest Covered Bridge Spans the Saint John River, Hartland, New Brunswick, June, 1975.



Barry on Brackley Beach, Prince Edward Island, June, 1975.



The Alexander Graham Bell Museum, Baddeck, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, June, 1975.



Following the Cabot Trail through the Cape Breton Highlands National Park, Nova Scotia, June, 1975.



Picnic Stop on the Scenic Cabot Trail, Cape Breton Highlands National Park, Nova Scotia, June, 1975.



Soldier in the Uniform of the French Marine Corps, Fortress of Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, June, 1975.



Reconstructed Houses, Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, Nova Scotia, June, 1975.



Low Tide at the Bay of Fundy Exposing the Base of the 'Flowerpot Islands', New Brunswick, June, 1975.

foundland ferry terminus at North Sydney. Beyond was the road to the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site.

At one time the world's biggest historical reconstruction, the great Fortress of Louisbourg is now a major tourist attraction. Originally built by the French as a bastion against British control and expansion in the New World, the fortified garrison and settlement held a commanding position until captured by the British in 1745. The fortress changed hands several times afterwards, but was eventually razed in 1760 so that it could not again be used against British colonial interests. Today, before entering the fort at the main gate with its drawbridge, visitors are challenged by soldiers of the French Marine Corps. After being allowed inside the ramparts and reconstructed buildings, visitors are informed and entertained by costumed interpreters portraying the way of life in the early 18th century settlement. The whole project is brilliantly done and even walking down the dirt roads within the fort evokes a sense of having travelled back in time. Apart from preserving a significant historical structure, the project has been a source of employment to craftsmen, builders and local people in an economically-depressed area.

We then said goodbye to Cape Breton Island and retraced our steps west towards the town of Springhill. This part of Nova Scotia is well known for coal mining activities and one of the now worked-out mines has been adapted into a living museum. Visitors, dressed in protective coats, boots and hard hats, are taken down into the galleries by a guide and shown the conditions faced by miners every day. At one point, the guide asked everyone to turn off their hard hat lamp to fully understand total blackness, since nothing reflects from the surrounding coal. A scary experience.

Next we visited the Bay of Fundy where some of the highest tides in the world occur. The Rocks Provincial Park is located at Hopewell Cape in New Brunswick. This is one of the best vantage points to see the wonder of the high tides. At low tide, unusually shaped rocks, eroded by centuries of frost, wind and sea action, stand stark from the exposed sea bed. The incoming tide, rising as much as 40 ft. (12 m), gradually engulfs the lower part of the rocks leaving the tops to appear as vegetation covered islands. Their eroded shapes have earned them the nickname 'flowerpot islands'. Nearby in Moncton is a phenomenon called "Magnetic Hill", where allegedly you can drive to the 'bottom' of a particular hill, place the vehicle in neutral, and watch being pulled 'up' the hill. This is merely an optical illusion, but has become a popular tourist attraction for curiosity seekers. Also a tidal bore can be seen twice a day as it travels up and down the Peticodiac River.

After our Maritimes vacation, we continued taking advantage of long public holiday weekends to further explore the country. Much of the unspoiled scenery was to the north, and one trip in this direction took us into the resource rich area where various metal ores were extracted from the Canadian Shield. After passing through La Vérendrey Reserve with its picturesque drive in the lake and forest hinterland, we stopped at the company mining town of Rouyn-Noranda. The Noranda company's zinc and copper smelter was open for public tours and we were shown how the raw material was broken down and the two different metals made into ingots for transportation. The return journey took in other frontier towns such as Colbalt and then to the area's largest community, North Bay. Following the Ottawa River on the homeward stretch we saw the nuclear research facilities of Deep River and Chalk River from a distance.

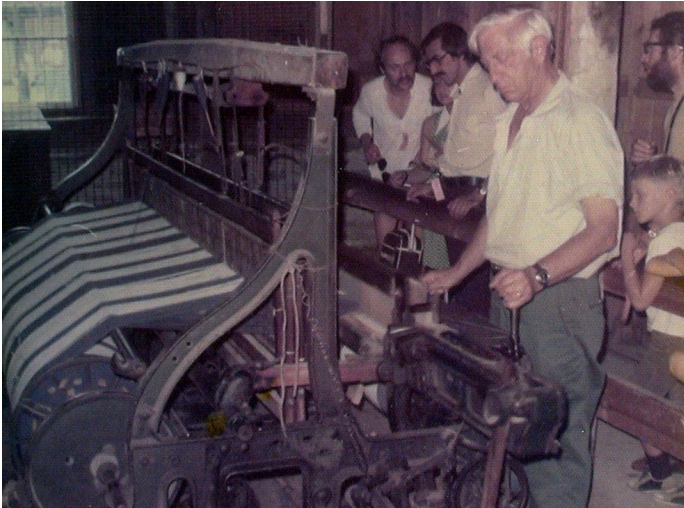
There was certainly no escaping the influence of history and the lengths organizations had gone to preserve the past. Before roads and railways opened up the frontier, the primary means of long distance travelling and transportation was by way of the network of rivers and other watercourses. The St. Lawrence River was the primary artery, but dangerous rapids in places impeded progress. Early canals were dug to bypass these obstacles, and one not far from Montréal at Coteau-du-Lac has been restored as a National Historic Site. Heavily fortified during the War of 1812, the canal and lock system and entire extensive defences are now dominated by the reconstructed octagonal blockhouse which is also a small museum.

We continued to explore the historic sites of Eastern Ontario in the St. Lawrence River valley as they were easily accessible from home. Following a return visit to Old Fort Henry in Kingston, we also spent some time at Upper Canada Village, one of the premier 'living pioneer museums' in Ontario. This was a collection of original buildings and artifacts that took all day to visit. Similar to Fortress Louisbourg, costumed interpreters were happy to explain and demonstrate skills and trades of a bygone age. Many of the pioneer houses; the one-room schoolhouse; wooden church; sturdy grist mill; brick hotel, and sundry out-buildings for craftspeople such as the blacksmith; printer; weaver, and others essential to the viability and prosperity of village life, were transplanted at the Morrisburg site. This was prior to the flooding of the land as a result of the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway project. The Eastern Townships of Québec also had landmarks such as Fort Chambly and Fort Lennox that added to our history knowledge.

The strike at UACL finally ended in August, 1975, after the acceptance vote of the offer. The ratification had a significant impact since it originated a new 'Anti scab' law and the adoption of the Rand Formula in Québec. The laws were eventually adopted in 1977 when the Parti Québécois of René Levesque was in power.

Regardless of the strike settlement and resumption of normal operations I was still seriously considering a career move. The daily job search in the national newspapers turned up some leads and, one in particular appeared promising. The job opportunity was at the industrial turbine division of Canadian Westinghouse Company Ltd. in Hamilton, Ontario. The personnel manager arranged for an interview and an all-expenses paid Montréal/Hamilton air fare. The meeting was held off-site at the Connaught Hotel. After flying into Hamilton's Mount Hope Airport I hailed a taxi to take me to the hotel. I made a point of sitting next to the cab driver and engaged in an interesting conversation mainly revolving around the cabbie's life as a landed immigrant from Eastern Europe. He described his struggles with the various bureaucratic systems, language barrier and cultural challenges, but was pleased that he had carved out a reasonable existence for himself and his family in this 'land of opportunity'. It was a real 'good feeling' story. The Westinghouse personnel manager and head of Technical Publications took me to lunch before the interview, then we had an in-depth meeting. Despite a cordial reception, as with the de Havilland interview, I didn't pass muster and so once again it was back to the drawing board.

That year the summer was particularly hot and humid. To escape the stifling city, we decided to spend another week or so away and toured the New England states. This turned out to be a marathon trip that took us through New Hampshire to Massachusetts and Boston. Using the Boston transit system was an adventure but the only sane way of travelling around the city. Of the many well known attractions,



*Weaving Loom Demonstration, Upper Canada Village
Morrisburg, Ontario, July, 1975.*



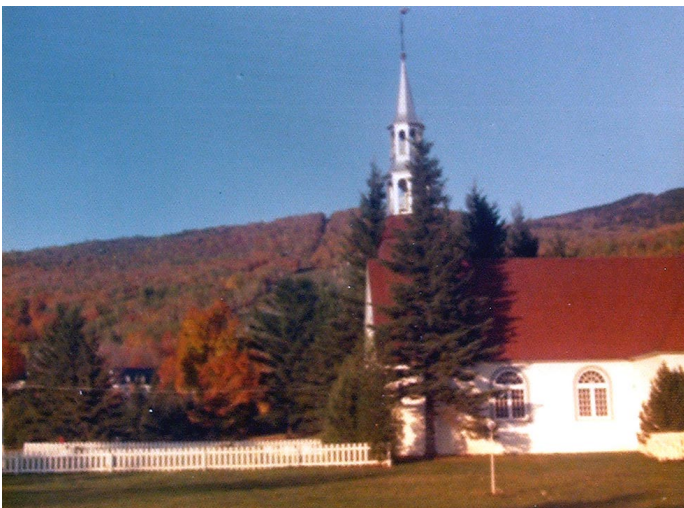
*Monica with Replica of the Galleon "Mayflower",
Plymouth, Massachusetts, August, 1975.*



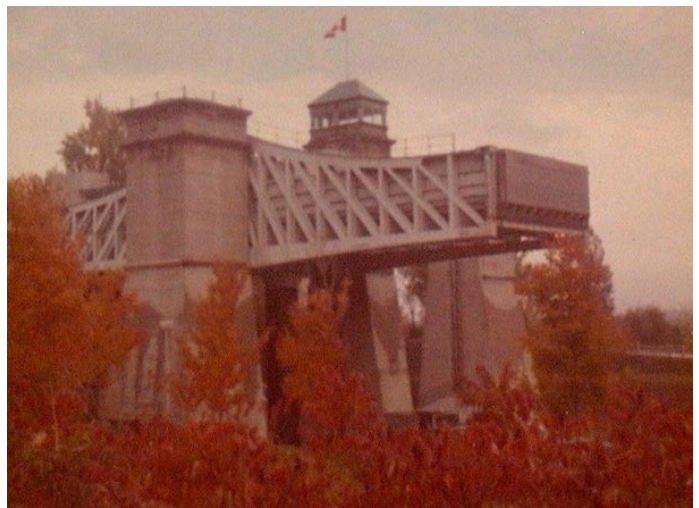
*Recreated Colonial Williamsburg Main Street,
Virginia, August, 1975.*



*The U.S. Capitol Building from Constitution Avenue,
Washington D.C., August, 1975.*



*Fall Colours and Village Church of Mont Tremblant,
Québec, October, 1975.*



*Fall Colours and Hydraulic Lift Lock, Peterborough,
Ontario, October, 1975.*

one of the best was the *USS Constitution* or “*Old Ironsides*”, a square-rigged warship used as a maritime museum. Not far away in Fall River, was the decommissioned Second World War battleship *USS Massachusetts*. At the other end of the scale located in Plymouth, was a replica of the *Mayflower*, the ship that brought the Pilgrim Fathers to the New World.

After traversing Rhode Island, the smallest state in the U.S.A., we entered Connecticut and followed the Atlantic Ocean seaboard before diverting inland and crossing the New York state line. There a scenic drive took us down the Hudson River valley to West Point and its famous military academy before we joined the New Jersey Turnpike for a rapid circumnavigation of New York City, Jersey City and Newark. We continued south through Delaware and a small portion of Maryland before crossing into Virginia and the tapered point of the Delaware Peninsula. Crossing the narrows meant using the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, a marvel of civil engineering that is 20 miles (32 km) long leading into Norfolk, a major naval base (our hotel in Norfolk had water beds; the only time we slept on one). This was where we started our return journey, but firstly stopping at Williamsburg, which is a recreated colonial town – interesting and not too tacky.

The last major stop was at Washington D.C. The pedestrian friendly Capitol area allowed us to view many of the monuments and other statuary before heading home. However we found that navigating through Washington D.C. was not easy and, after futile attempts trying to find an appropriate exit from downtown, eventually stopped outside the gates of Arlington National Cemetery and consulted our map. We discovered we were on the wrong side of the city, but finally located an urban freeway that took us to the Capital Beltway outer ring road. Because we were so anxious to leave, we didn't realise the significance of the cemetery where John F. Kennedy is buried, and failed to visit the revered site with its Eternal Flame. The return journey took us through Pennsylvania and New York. It was an extensive tour, but we gained an appreciation for the diverse scenery and historical connections found in the New England states.

Much of the remaining summer was spent either pursuing cultural interests or weekend stopovers at selected destinations. We paid a return visit to the Welland Canal to watch the large cargo ships pass through the locks, a sight that has never lost its fascination, as well as cross-border journeys to Upper New York state and New Hampshire. For a flavour of true rural Québec we made a circular tour of the Beauce region, which proudly retains its own subculture and distinctive dialect – almost unchanged from pioneer days.

Riding the rails ‘out west’

With the approach of fall, we were also anticipating a visit from Monica's parents. They had expressed a desire to see more of Canada and we considered a novel way was to travel across the country by train. They arrived in early October hoping to see some of the spectacular autumn colours. A trip to Vermont, however, was disappointing as nearly all of the leaves had already fallen. This didn't deter us from riding on the cablecar to the summit of Jay Peak for a panoramic view of the Cold Hollow Mountains and National Forest. During the following Thanksgiving holiday weekend we did achieve a measure of compensation as some of the foliage colours were at their best when we stopped at Peterborough after a journey to Sudbury where, just as I remembered back in 1967, one of the main attractions was watching the cascades of molten slag at night.

Our knowledge of the main line railways was scanty, but after some research we decided to travel by Canadian National Railways (CN Rail), as opposed to the rival Canadian Pacific Railway Company (CPR). Mainly because a good part of the time spent traversing the Rocky Mountains on the CPR line was at night. The more northerly, although less spectacular, CN Rail route at least crossed most of the Rockies during the day. Further research convinced us to reserve the best of three standards of accommodation. The basic standard was a regular reclining seat for the duration of the trip. Next came the reserved seat and ‘couchette’ which was a curtained off bunk bed in the sleeping car. Top of the line was the ‘mini-bedroom’, which came with its own wash basin and toilet, and we each decided to reserve one.

Because of holiday entitlement constraints, the journey as planned consisted of travelling from Montréal to Vancouver and return, but with no stopover in Vancouver. After packing our cases we headed for Central Station in downtown Montréal to catch the CN Rail transcontinental train. Fortunately the two mini-bedrooms were adjacent and separated by a concertina style partition wall, which could be folded away and both rooms then made into a large lounge with two picture windows. This was an ideal arrangement for the anticipated lengthy journey. Our carriage attendant (porter) service was first rate and we could rely on him every evening to close the partition wall and arrange the upper drop-down bunk bed in both compartments.

With the exception of scheduled stops, the train travelled continuously across the country. We left Montréal in the evening and continued through the night to the small Northern Ontario town of Capreol where the crew attached the carriages of the CN Rail train from Toronto. That day was spent traversing the rugged Northern Ontario landscape that consisted mainly of rocky land and evergreen forests interspersed with sparkling lakes. No sooner had we reached the Ontario/Manitoba provincial border when the treeline seemed to vanish and was replaced by wild prairie plains and the occasional farm or cattle ranch.

We soon became used to the daily housekeeping routine and eating arrangements. The dining car was separate from the passenger and sleeping carriages, and we were pleasantly surprised with the exceptional standard of service and cuisine. CN Rail made a supreme effort to provide passengers with first class meals and surroundings. The table linen was immaculate and the cutlery was substantial. China and glassware were also of good taste and both the menu and wine list were extensive. Certainly we found dining on board a very enjoyable component of the entire travelling experience.

The train stopped in Winnipeg, the provincial capital of Manitoba, not only to exchange passengers but also to attach the all-important observation, or dome, car. This operation lasted a while so we took the opportunity to temporarily leave the train and stretch our legs by strolling around the city’s downtown. The station was not far from the legendary ‘Crossroads of Canada’, where two major roads meet: Portage Avenue and Main Street – otherwise known as the windiest corner in the country. It certainly lived up to its reputation. Monica’s father then started to feel uneasy that we could possibly miss the train, but even after buying some apples to eat later, we arrived back with time to spare.

The next leg of the journey was passing through the ‘bald-headed prairie’ and vistas of endless, flat wheatfields and grasslands. By this time the wheat had been harvested and stored in the many grain silos, or elevators, that dotted the landscape along the railtrack and that could be seen from miles away denoting a

settlement of some kind. For hours the somewhat monotonous scenery passed by our picture windows as we crossed the provincial border from Manitoba into Saskatchewan. This was an ideal time to relax in the expanded mini-bedrooms. For their own amusement, Monica's parents had brought with them their travel "Scrabble" kit and a deck of cards. To while the time away constructively, Monica's Dad taught me the rudiments of the card game Cribbage. He and Monica, who were both mathematically minded, played a competitive game together, and I soon caught on to the strategy. From this humble beginning Monica and I have often pitted our skills against one another in Cribbage.

There was a respite from the flat land when we rode into Saskatoon, a university city on the picturesque South Saskatchewan River. Then heading northwest we entered Alberta and travelled overnight towards the provincial capital of Edmonton. There was a prolonged stop in Edmonton so, at about 5 o'clock in the morning, Monica and I decided to stretch our legs similar to when we were in Winnipeg. It was cool and a little foggy as we ambled around the streets close to the station. Nearby there was the local police detachment headquarters and some excitement happened when the 'Paddy wagon' arrived and several individuals were escorted inside – presumably to the 'drunk tank' holding cell. After reboarding the train we had breakfast and then awaited the part of the trip when the flat prairies gave way to the Rocky Mountain foothills and then the Rockies themselves. At one point the train slowed down as we passed the site of an earlier derailment – one of the hazards of hauling very long freight trains where a seized wheel bearing can cause considerable damage. Soon after passing through Edson and Hinton the landscape changed dramatically and, after entering Jasper National Park, the magnificence of the mountains became readily apparent.

Jasper, itself, seemed to be surrounded by white capped summits and, as the railway wound through the Rocky Mountain chain and the legendary Yellowhead Pass, some of the highest peaks, such as Mt. Edith Cavell and Mt. Robson could be viewed from the dome car. Having now crossed into British Columbia, this vista continued as range after range unfolded until we reached Kamloops. Then, after travelling through the Fraser River canyon, we finally arrived at our terminus in Vancouver.

As anticipated, we visited the city just for the day until the return train left in the evening for Montréal. To maximise our visit we decided to take a conducted tour on a tourist bus operated by Grey Lines. This turned out to be a wise move and we were able to see parts of the city that were beyond practical walking distance from the station. Some of the city sights were: Stanley Park and its Zoo; the Lions Gate Bridge; the Nitabe Japanese Memorial Gardens, and the University of British Columbia campus. The city has extremes in architecture – from typical Oriental jumbled façades found in Chinatown to classical mansions in the opulent neighbourhood of Shaunessey. Viewing the city this way certainly provided the impetus for an extended return visit.

The four day journey home was equally as enjoyable. Again we had ideal conditions to observe the mountains thanks to the availability of the dome car. We became used to the relative monotony of the prairie provinces and, once we entered the dense tree belt and Canadian Shield of Northern Ontario, we knew it wouldn't be long before reaching Capreol where the crew separated the Toronto and Montréal carriages. We arrived at CN Rail's Central Station somewhat travel weary, but fully appreciative of how vast a country Canada really is.



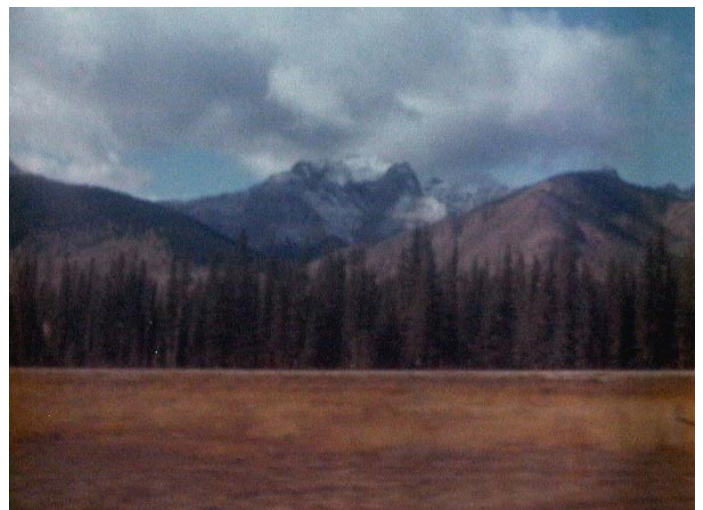
Monica and her Parents in the Living Room of our Apartment, Longueuil, Québec, October, 1975.



Corner of Portage Avenue and Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, October, 1975.



Monica and her Mother in the CN Rail Dome Car, Travelling across the Prairies, October, 1975.



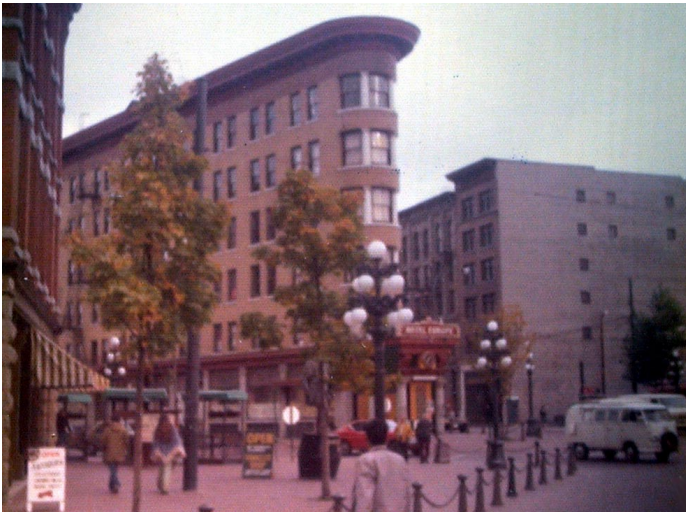
Prairies, Foothills and Rocky Mountains, Alberta, October, 1975.



Rocky Mountains in Jasper National Park, Alberta, October, 1975.



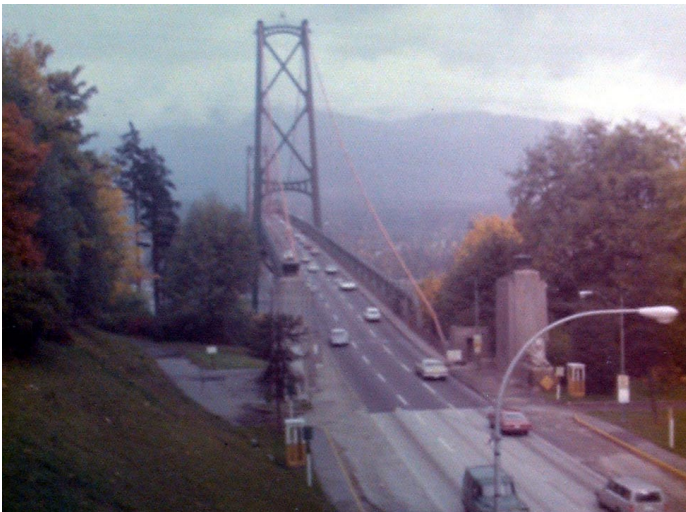
Rocky Mountains and CN Train in British Columbia, October, 1975.



“Gastown”, an Old District in Downtown Vancouver, British Columbia, October, 1975.



Granville Mall Precinct in Downtown Vancouver, British Columbia, October, 1975.



Lions Gate Bridge – the Link between Vancouver and West Vancouver, British Columbia, October, 1975.



Nitabe Japanese Memorial Gardens, Vancouver, British Columbia, October, 1975.



Totem Pole and Rocky Mountains at Jasper Station, Alberta, October, 1975.



Grain Elevator, a Typical Sight along the Railtrack of the Saskatchewan Prairies, October, 1975.

Dawn of a new year and career opportunity

Spending the Christmas and New Year holiday in the UK was becoming an annual ritual. In 1975, there was a change in our flight arrangements because Montréal was now served by the new Mirabel International Airport, and Dorval Airport became dedicated to handle cargo traffic. Mirabel was about 12 miles (20 km) northwest of Montréal and, as we had decided to use public transport to get there, we went on a dummy-run to make sure the connections were good. When it was time to depart, we took the Métro from Longueuil to the Henri Bourassa terminus and then boarded a bus for the ride through Laval and along the Laurentian Autoroute (Route 15) into the country to the airport.

The holiday format had been established – spending Christmas at my parents in Hatfield, and with Monica’s parents in Coventry for the New Year celebrations. Of course, we met up with as many old friends as possible. Dave and Susan Cross, together with Dave’s parents, were invited to Monica’s parents’ house in Broad Lane for a social evening, and we visited Roger and Susan Moore at their 16th century cottage in Allesley Village.

By the time we returned there was a significant accumulation of snow and, once again, we were faced with the usual challenges of a typical Canadian winter. Not that it stopped us from enjoying the outdoors as we discovered additional trails for cross-country skiing. Notably, Jean Beliveau Park; Mont St. Bruno Park, and the golf course at St. Bruno-de-Montarville.

There was no respite at work and it seemed that new projects were continually keeping the Technical Publications Department busy. New hires – some from the UK and brought over on a similar scheme to my one – were evident. Alan Ford moved into Field Service and Doug Hyde returned to England; plus changes at the top as the company president, Mr. Thor Stevenson, was replaced by Mr. Elvie Smith. Still, working as a technical editor was not conducive to creativity and my somewhat lacklustre performance was commented on by the Technical Publications Department’s second-in-command, Ed Whyte, at my annual review. Not that it bothered me as I was still searching for pastures anew.

Every day I scanned the job vacancies in the national newspapers. I soon learned to skim over the large announcements that were primarily for executive positions and to concentrate on the small advertisements in the column entitled “Technical and Professional”. In late January a not so obvious entry for a technical writer’s position appeared in the Toronto Globe and Mail. The details were scant, but the advertiser – Ian Martin Associates – was looking for someone with experience in heavy equipment. I hesitated a little since Ian Martin Associates was obviously a contracting company and not a manufacturer. However, it appeared worthwhile making further enquiries so I called the Toronto telephone number listed in the advert. The ensuing conversation shed more light on the situation, and the interviewer appeared sufficiently interested in my qualifications to offer me the position right there and then over the phone. A snap decision on my part to accept it sealed the deal and set the paperwork exchange in motion.

When my new working contract with Ian Martin Associates was finalised, I then approached Ed Whyte and tendered my resignation with ten days notice. He looked at me as if to say, “Fair enough”, but very

little reaction other than to immediately contemplate my replacement. The news, of course, spread like wildfire through the office gossip grapevine. I deliberately kept a low profile so as not to fan the flames, although a few colleagues did show some interest as to where I was heading and with which employer.

On Friday, February 20th, 1976, I made my farewell rounds in the office saying cheerio to friends and colleagues. I had an exit interview with the head of the department, Callum Keane, who provided me with a nice written testimonial. Just before quitting time there was a small gathering around Ed Whyte's desk and I was invited over to be presented with a leaving gift. I had a struggle opening the package which contained a modern attaché case, and I thanked all for their kindness and good working relationship. Ed Whyte's last words to me were, "... and get rid of that accent." The way that lay ahead was an unknown quantity, but I knew I was, at least, heading west out of the province of Québec and back into my chosen career. What transpired set the stage for the next thirty years.



Monica and Barry, New Year's Eve Celebration. Photograph Taken at 305 Broad Lane, Coventry, December, 1975.



Mr. and Mrs. Cross, Dave Cross and Monica, New Year's Eve Celebration. Photograph Taken at 305 Broad Lane, Coventry, December, 1975.