



1982 Model Pontiac Phoenix LJ Coupé. This Redesigned Car was Once Again Powered by a 2.8 litre V6 Engine Coupled to a Manual Four-speed Transaxle and Front Wheel Drive. An Additional Refinement was the Removable Sunroof Panel, and the Passenger Side Mirror was an Optional Extra. Photograph Taken Outside the Home of Mr. Bruce Sully, CEO of Champion Road Machinery Ltd., Goderich, Ontario, in the Spring of 1982.



Taking Delivery of New 1982 Model Pontiac Phoenix, McGee Motors, Goderich, Ontario, December, 1981.



Monica Sporting her New Winter Coat in Front of the Lighthouse, Goderich, Ontario, December, 1981.

The remainder of our last vacation week was spent in Coventry and beyond visiting old friends. David and Susan Cross were preparing themselves to be first-time parents as Susan had about a month to go before their son, Anthony James, was born in late October. We also managed a get together with Roger, Susan and their children in Allesley Village. We then travelled to Ravenshead near Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, to visit Monica's old work colleague, Jean, and her family including the new addition, a daughter, Claire.

A glorious fall welcomed us back home; ideal for recreational hiking and some of the local trails. The Falls Reserve Conservation Area at Benmiller, the Bannockburn Conservation Area at Varna, and the Saratoga Swamp bush near Dungannon were ideal for admiring the autumn colours. The shorter days also heralded the annual trail clearing activity at the Hoffmeyer and McHolm properties, followed by a potluck supper, Tom Eadie's homemade wine and Norm and Marg McHolm's legendary hospitality.

I received an unusual gift on my 36th birthday – a computerised chess set, called “Chess Challenger”. The game used conventional chess pieces and a board. A membrane switch keypad was used to input the player's move for the computer to analyse and make its response. An LED readout by the keypad indicated the computer's countermove, then the pieces were moved manually. In all the time I played against the computer, I don't think I ever won a game.

Another toy that was delivered towards the end of the year was a new car. I had had the Pontiac Phoenix for just over two years and was itching for a replacement. The 1982 production version of the same model contained some design refinements and so I negotiated a deal with McGee Motors to trade in the old car for a new custom ordered vehicle. This time, I wasn't denied a sunroof – which was tinted and removable – and another optional extra was a passenger side mirror for improved visibility. All in all a satisfactory purchase.

As Christmas approached, we were, once again, content to stay at home. We certainly weren't disappointed with the amount of snow that guaranteed a 'white' Christmas and the many cross-country skiing opportunities during the holiday. Monica was able to make use of her new present, a “Northern Sun” winter coat designed specifically for Canadian winters. The following year was to see big changes at work and more travelling with its attendant adventures.

Champion uses a new method to improve productivity

In common with many North American manufacturers, Champion Road Machinery was struggling to compete in the recession. The term, “lean and mean” had yet to be coined, but the company was cutting corners wherever possible to reduce costs and improve productivity. Personnel changes and more aggressive outsource buying were signs of desperation at the beginning of the new year.

Then, in February, 1982, a new strategy took the spotlight. Japanese productivity improvement methods were becoming more popular in North America. A variation known as “Quality Circles”, marketed by J.F. Beardsley & Associates, caught the attention of Champion's board of directors. Following a pilot scheme, it was decided that this productivity tool could benefit Champion and keep the company in the black. Slowly, under the direction of the newly appointed facilitator, Elgin Fisher, all the firm's departments were given

training sessions to become familiar with the new methodology to help improve manufacturing quality and product support. It wasn't until later in the year that I became fully conversant with the techniques, by which time there had been a change in the departmental management. In any case, I had taken an in-house training course to learn leadership skills and, after completion, was installed as the leader of the newly formed Technical Publications Quality Circle or "Pubscircle" team, complete with its own logo and a blank sheet ready for discussing the 'brainstorming' methods used in the problem solving process.

Early in the year, personnel changes took place in Marketing Services. My technical illustrator colleague, Bill Barlow, decided to leave Champion and join Teledyne Industries in the town of Meaford to the northeast of Goderich. Also, my old boss, John Timbrell, resigned to become managing director at Bell Aerospace – designers and manufacturers of hovercraft at the nearby Grand Bend airport. Technical Services (Service/Training) personnel now reported to a new manager, Rowen Baker, who had previously worked as a design engineer at Champion's RND division.

My membership with the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) entitled me to visit, free of charge, the annual SAE Congress and Exposition held every February at Cobo Hall, Detroit. This was an opportunity to meet and mingle with other SAE members and look at some of the latest automotive technologies available in the industry. Myself and other Champion SAE members, including if I remember, Rowen Baker, Glen Naylor and Dave Sowerby, travelled by car to Detroit and spent the day at the exposition. Apart from the usual manufacturers' exhibits and product demonstrations, there were some novelty activities. One of the more popular ones enabled visitors to be photographed with attractive cheerleaders of the professional Detroit Lions National Football League team. I joined the lineup and came away with a Polaroid photograph memento of my arms around two of these beauties.

Any SAE event held at the local level required travelling to Toronto as that was the base of the SAE Ontario Section. Some of the presentations were held at the Brampton Golf and Country Club, located west of Toronto. This meant at least I didn't have to drive into or across the city. Nevertheless, it was a good three hours from Goderich, and often I didn't arrive home until the early hours of the morning after negotiating darkness, snow and ice in the winter months. Sometimes, I wonder how I made it home in one piece. One time I took Denver Dickie – then Champion's chief engineer – to Brampton sometime during the winter of 1978/79 and, on the return journey stopped to refuel. My car then refused to start in the prevailing subzero temperatures. Fortunately another motorist saw our plight and made a suggestion that worked; thus we were able to resume our trip home. Later, in 1982, I met David Semple, a young engineer with the Electromotive company (part of General Motors in London, Ontario), at one of the Brampton events and we discussed the possible reactivation of the SAE London Division that had been dormant for some time. Following negotiations with the Ontario Section and SAE headquarters in Warrendale, Pennsylvania, a new London Division – as part of the Ontario Section – was established under the chairmanship of David Semple. Many of our events were held on the London campus of Fanshawe College and later at various restaurants/banquet halls.

The American Business Communication Association (ABCA) and the Society for Technical Communication (STC) put out a call for papers: successful entries of which would be presented at the Canadian Regional Business and Technical Communication Conference at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario,

April/May, 1982. I was encouraged to submit a paper and so created a manuscript based on a series of coloured slides taken some time previously. The entry was scrutinised by David Pilfold, the General Chairman of the Conference, and Rennie Charles, a consultant and senior member of both societies. It was somewhat low-key and described the practices of a small technical publications department. However, it seemed to pique the organisers' interest and was accepted as part of the programme.

As this was my first departure in such a venture, I looked around for some sage advice. An article called "Planning a Slide Presentation" and published in the January, 1982, edition of "The Toastmaster" magazine was a useful guide. All the information I needed for a professional quality delivery was in the article. This was also a good personal test in using the public speaking techniques being learned in the Toastmasters club.

After receiving permission to take time off work, I headed for Kingston, Ontario, and found the Queen's University campus without difficulty. The university's faculty had arranged for all presenters to stay overnight in the Donald Gordon Centre halls of residence, and these basic dormitory rooms were ideal for the purpose. Also in the complex were the c1841 stone manor house administration building, conference, recreation and dining rooms. The organisers showed me the lecture room and the projection equipment, so I was able to familiarise myself with the seating arrangement and any potential pitfalls that could affect the presentation. Following the advice given in the article, I tested the projector's remote control and made sure all the slides were in the right order and correct orientation (no excuses for upside down images!). Soon it would be time for my 'baptism of fire'.

Twenty-one papers, plus a series of evening discussions, were delivered over the two-day conference period. The presentations were widely mixed, but mine was the only one with slides. The daunting thing was knowing that my peers – many in high positions – were my audience and it was important to speak to them in an appropriate tone. The presentation went according to plan; then I had to answer any questions. This was even more nerve-racking as some of the questions were of a highbrow nature. At length, my time allocation was used up and so I stood down to a polite applause.

The social aspect of the conference made up for the stress factor of speaking to a learned audience. Kingston, being a university city (Queen's University and the Royal Military College), has its fair share of drinking holes, and Princess Street is where pubs and hotel bars abound. Together with several of the other presenters, I took to visiting a few of these establishments and enjoyed some lively conversation. Among the group was Barbara Stern, a young Jewish woman who lectured at Kean College, New Jersey. She spoke of philosophical matters in a thick New Jersey accent and kept close company with me as the pub crawl progressed. The unusually warm evening also contributed to the 'unwinding' process.

There was positive fallout from the event when I received a letter from David Pilfold mentioning that my presentation "... figured prominently among the compliments I heard ...", and that "...Chris Celent in particular was very impressed ...". I met Chris Celent, manager of communications services at Xerox Corporation, Rochester, New York, at the 'greet-and-meet' session before the conference, and was pleased to receive a personal letter from him that echoed David's observations – underscoring my accomplished speech delivery and effective visual aids. Two great testimonials that I still have.

A week later, I attended another STC event: the 29th International Technical Communication Conference (ITCC) held in Boston, Massachusetts. I was given permission to take time off work and flew from Toronto to Boston's Logan International Airport; then by taxi to the conference centre in the Sheraton-Boston Hotel on Boylston Street. The cab ride was very educating as I sat next to the driver rather than in the back seat. We had an excellent conversation in which he realised that I was a first-time visitor to Boston and should know more about the city. His broad New England accent was remarkable as he reeled off the names of places to see: including Quincy Market, a meeting place for local Bostonians. I've found that some of the best advice about strange places comes from local taxi drivers who have an in-depth knowledge of their communities.

The ITCC provided opportunities to attend the presentations and workshops, as well as optional excursions and social events. It was also at a time when we were witnessing a huge upsurge in the evolution of computer-aided communication. Suddenly the rapidly developing word processing technology was taking centre stage, and many of the conference seminars and workshops featured the advantages afforded by microprocessors. This was well timed as I was exploring the probability of using such equipment to increase our productivity at work. Therefore, I was curious to glean as much information as possible.

Champion's engineering staff was looking towards the future and testing various computer-aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM) software packages. This proved timely and I considered how such a system could be beneficial to my department. A tour of the Computervision CAD/CAM manufacturing plant in nearby Cambridge, Massachusetts, showed that using interactive graphics and source data from the main-frame computer, it was possible to create a simple illustrated parts list. Computerisation spin-off sessions included solid model concepts and the advent of computer-aided translation (CAT), together with rudimentary electronic mailing. Being exposed to this technology boded well for the future, and the integration of CAD/CAM data into technical publications eventually became a distinct reality.

Downtown Boston is best explored on foot. A precursor to this was first thing in the morning when I joined a few conference attendees to jog around some of the neighbourhood streets. We had a volunteer who led us, but it was somewhat disconcerting when jogging on a short run before breakfast to pass by a crime victim's silhouette chalked on the sidewalk. Obviously vigilance was paramount when later walking around unfamiliar streets. Many of the downtown streets are lined with stately brownstone row houses, each with their own character. This extends to the upscale neighbourhoods around Beacon Common and even the quaint backwaters that are still lit by gaslamps. In the heart of the city are historic structures such as Faneuil Hall and the Old State House; as well as the Symphony Hall, famous for the Boston Pops Concerts associated with the conductors Arthur Fiedler and John Williams. I bought a ticket for a matinee show and was amused by the fact that beverages could be bought in the lobby and taken into the auditorium, so I purchased a small bottle of wine and consumed it as the orchestra played.

Following the cab driver's advice, I visited Boston's colourful, covered Quincy Market near Faneuil Hall in a pedestrian precinct area. This extensive food and general merchandise market had all the atmosphere of a typical street emporium. Shops and stalls were overflowing with goods, and the vendors were calling out their wares, indicative of typical London equivalents such as Chapel Market or Portobello Road.



“Pubscircle” – Technical Publications Quality Circle Team Logo I Designed, Goderich, February, 1982.



Barry and Two Detroit Lions Football Team Cheerleaders, Cobo Hall, Detroit, MI, February, 1982.



Typical Streetscape of Brownstone Buildings in Downtown Boston, Massachusetts, May, 1982.



Symphony Hall, Home of the Boston Pops Orchestra, Boston, Massachusetts, May, 1982.



Quincy Market near the Historic Faneuil Hall in Downtown Boston, Massachusetts, May, 1982.



Monica, her Parents and Ted and Nancy Plummer, Beamsville, Ontario, May, 1982.



Double-sided Embroidery Skill Demonstrated at the Chinese Exhibition, Toronto, Ontario, August, 1982.



Skirl of the Pipes at the Scottish Highland Games, Fergus, Ontario, September, 1982.



Fresco Decorated façade of the Hotel zum Karpfen, Eberbach, Germany, September, 1982.



Ruins of a Medieval Castle Overlooking the Town of Hornberg, Germany, September, 1982.



The Kurhaus-Casino at Baden-Baden, a Spa Town in the Black Forest, Germany, September, 1982.



Traditional Farmhouse and Outbuildings in the Black Forest, Germany, September, 1982.

Staying locally during spring and summer due to the recession

Monica's parents visited us during May and we all went to see Ted and Nancy Plummer in their trailer home in Beamsville. While in that area, we travelled through the Niagara Peninsula, stopping at Port Weller to see the construction of a new Canadian Coastguard vessel in the boatyard, before continuing to Niagara-on-the-Lake. Even though it was spring, there were still small ice floes on Lake Ontario. Towards the end of their visit, we took Monica's parents to see the Mennonite Relief Sale at New Hamburg. This event attracted thousands of people to sample traditional Mennonite cooking and buy handmade articles, especially the intricately stitched bed quilts that were auctioned to the highest bidder. A chicken barbecue lunch that catered for hundreds of guests was well organised by the Mennonite Relief Committee.

Despite the streamlining methods to maintain productivity at Champion; including machine refinements such as fewer options and installing only Cummins diesel engines, the company was faced with 60% less share of business in the marketplace. To combat this situation and prevent a large personnel layoff, the company's executive implemented a temporary 10% reduction in wages and salaries. This measure took effect at the beginning of June and continued for six months. At the end of May, The Technical Publications Department said goodbye to Graham MacDonald after working 23 years with the company. His retirement was part of any attrition to the workforce, although his presence in the department was missed. John Dicks was now the only technical illustrator in the department and this was a significant handicap.

The recession was really starting to bite and we kept close to home. June, July, August and September were punctuated with several cultural events, including the Goderich Air Show where several vintage aircraft were displayed, and a classic car rally that showcased a number of antique automobiles in The Square's central park under perfect weather conditions. The town's heritage wasn't forgotten as, once again, "Founders' Day" celebrations brought out large crowds to enjoy the colourful parade.

Further afield, we visited the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto to see a special exhibition featuring traditional Chinese skills. These included making paper by hand, wood block printing and calligraphy using special brushes, and silk embroidery where two distinctly separate images were created on both sides of a length of material. And, in complete contrast, a day at the Highland Games in the town of Fergus. Traditional Scottish games, dancing and bagpipe competitions provided a full day's entertainment, culminating with the massed pipe and drums band parade.

We attended two weddings within a week of each other. The first was the marriage of Karen Doherty and Paul O'Brien, solemnised at St. Peter's Catholic Church, Goderich. Karen was the daughter of my colleague at work, Jim Doherty. Susan Plummer and Colin French's wedding took place in the town of Alliston, just north of Toronto. Susan's parents, Ted and Nancy Plummer, and their many friends in the recreational vehicle club arranged for an open air reception in a nearby park. Unfortunately, the large tent and food tables were situated near a creek that ran through the park, and this was a haven for millions of mosquitos. As the day wore on, the clouds of biting insects chased guests away to areas of shelter, and that rather marred the occasion.

In August, the Technical Publications Department experienced a slight transition as our supervisor, John Lee, returned to his previous full time job as manager of the General Engineering Department. John's position was taken over by Dale Dignan, a project engineer from General Engineering, who also divided his time between the Maitland Road and Huckins Street offices. Dale reported directly to Bill Metcalfe.

Europe in the fall

Regardless of the current economical situation, we were determined to have an annual vacation and considered that a self-drive holiday in Europe was within our means. The main impetus of this trip was making Switzerland – a country that I hadn't been to and one that Monica wanted to revisit – a destination. Including other German-speaking countries became an extension to the holiday and I roughed out a journey that included the *Burgenstrasse*, *Schwarzwaldhochstrasse* and the *Romantische Strasse*; three well-defined tourist routes. Our landfall was to be Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and all meals and accommodation *en route* spontaneously made: adding to the challenge and adventure.

The overnight flight from Toronto to Frankfurt was typical of the trans-Atlantic journeys that we knew when travelling to England. One difference was adding an hour to the time change. After clearing customs, we found the car rental company and took delivery of a small Opel product. The next objective was to drive to Heidelberg and find a hotel. The weather was not in our favour as it was raining steadily. This, together with the effects of jet lag and an unfamiliar vehicle on unfamiliar roads, posed a significant stress situation. The quickest way between the two cities was taking the *Autobahn*. The rain-slick freeway where there wasn't a speed restriction meant major concentration. Huge trucks and trailers overtook me and created clouds of spray, and precise navigation was important so that I didn't overshoot the appropriate exit. After a white-knuckle drive, we turned off towards Heidelberg and found a *gasthaus* (small hotel) on the outskirts where we unwound and derived a little sleep before going downtown for our evening meal.

Heidelberg's downtown streets still followed the old Mediaeval pattern and were really not conducive to modern motor vehicle movement. This was especially where parking was concerned. Restrictions of all kinds meant finding a municipal parking garage and, after some frustrating moments, we saw the entrance to a multistorey car park. After taking the ticket and finding a space, we continued our explorations on foot. Our self-imposed daily budget meant reviewing the outside menus before deciding which restaurant to enter. Following our dinner we continued to look around while there was still daylight and found the ruins of *Schloss Heidelberg* (castle of Heidelberg) overlooking the main square and the *Hauptstrasse* (main street). Being an ancient university city, I was expecting to see more student activity – such as found in Oxford and Cambridge – but the streets and bars weren't at all busy with revellers.

We returned to the parking garage and was confronted with a major problem. Apparently the car park was open only between certain hours of the day and, by the time we were to leave, the manned pay booth was closed. This effectively impounded our car. Whilst pondering what to do next, a small party of French-speaking people arrived to find themselves in the same predicament. We did, however, have a stroke of luck as somebody tracked down the car park attendant and, by 'greasing his palm', we convinced him to open the gate. After this close call, we made sure to read any other parking garage notices very carefully.

Heidelberg on the River Neckar is also one of many stops along the *Burgenstrasse*, or the road of castles. Picturesque Mediæval fortresses overlook country towns, and their ruins are worth seeing – conjuring up visions of Teutonic Knights and petty kingdoms intertwined with Nordic sagas and fairy tales of the brothers Grimm. Although some of the castles are foreboding, others have been maintained as residences.

From Heidelberg, we took the *Burgenstrasse* that follows the River Neckar as it winds its way westwards through a valley. Dotted along the river were picturesque communities, each one inviting visitors to stop and explore their ancient cobbled streets and marketplaces. The fresco adorned façade of the Hotel zum Karpfen in Eberbach, for example, begged to be photographed. Further along the *Burgenstrasse* we could see the massive pile of Zwingenberg Castle as it brooded over the road and river. Now the residence of the Baron Ludwig von Baden, the intact building is also open for guests wanting to experience luxury hotel living in a Mediæval castle.

At Eberbach, the River Neckar traces its way south to the industrial town of Heilbronn. On the way, we saw the awe inspiring Hornberg castle, then through Bad Wimpfen to Heilbronn. Continuing further south we eventually headed east towards the *Schwarzwald* (Black Forest) area. At Karlsruhe, the road follows the contours of the Black Forest highlands and after passing through Rastatt we turned off to find a *gasthaus* in the spa town of Baden-Baden with its renowned *Kurhaus-Casino*.

Following our evening meal it was time to stroll and work off the heavy German cuisine and accompanying local wine. We made the *Kurhaus-Casino* our destination and started to walk towards the entrance. Along the way there was a small kiosk and an attendant. We continued to walk past the kiosk when the attendant immediately challenged us in an abrupt Teutonic manner. “*Passkontrol!*” “*Passkontrol!*”, he demanded. I looked at him with a “what’s the matter with you” expression, and he then understood. “You speak English?” “Special pass iss required for to enter ze casino”. I then tried to appease him with a smile and replied, “*Ich verstehe, danke*” (“I understand, thank you”). That was the end of our visit to the casino. However, we were able to take a quick photograph of the *Kurhaus* before we left.

Baden-Baden is the northern gateway to the *Schwarzwaldhochstrasse* or Black Forest High Road. This scenic route threads its way through the heart of the Black Forest, the heavily wooded area with its many curative spa towns that date back to the Roman occupation. Heading south, we passed the peak of Hornisgrinde, 3,819 ft. (1164 m), and stopped for a short hike along the trail around the lake of the spa resort at Mummelsee. From Freudenstadt, the *Schwarzwaldhochstrasse* continued to Wolfach then southwards through the particularly attractive scenery at Schönwald and Furtwangen, birthplace of the cuckoo clock. Traditional Black Forest farms with their combined massive house and barn dotted the landscape. In the evening we found a particularly comfortable *gasthaus*, the pension “Engel” in Frohnschwand.

The final stage of the journey through southern Germany took us through Waldshut-Tiengen; then we crossed the Swiss border to Neuhausen and finally to the *Rheinfall* at Schaffhausen. The *Rheinfall* is a huge cascade of rushing water that has eroded rocks into fantastic shapes. Tourists from far and wide visit to look at the mighty, roaring cataract, part of which has been harnessed for hydroelectricity generation. An amusing aspect to the tourism was in the public car park, which was patrolled by a hefty, stern ‘meter maid’, who

strutted around and made sure nobody overstayed their allocated time for fear of being ticketed. We walked around the picturesque downtown of Schaffhausen; noticing the uneven tiled house rooftops and slender projected spires of the churches. After a miserable and rainy morning, the sun appeared and lit up the walls of the *Munot* fortress and its private vineyards. We also admired the Mediæval characteristics of the central market place and ornate public fountain.

Our overnight destination was the city of Zürich, which was a relatively short drive from Schaffhausen, but the challenge was to find a suitable hotel. However, we were lucky to see one in *Bahnhofstrasse*, a main street in the downtown area, and secured a nice comfortable room.

Our Swiss adventure was now starting in earnest as we continued to penetrate deeper into the country. The mountainous terrain and large bodies of water were far more noticeable now as we drove on the wandering country roads – having chosen to avoid the *Autobahnen*. Our journey took us through the communities of Zug and Schwyz and then to the Alpine town of Altdorf, which is featured in the famous Swiss legend of William Tell. The story concerns Gessler, a tyrannical overlord, who demanded that everyone should bow to his hat displayed in the centre of Altdorf. William Tell – a reputed crossbow marksman – refused to acknowledge Gessler’s hat and was arrested. Gessler commanded Tell to shoot an apple off the head of his son with the bolt from his crossbow to assure his release from detention. He is successful, but the legend continues in a convoluted manner before Tell’s death under unfortunate circumstances. All the elements of this saga could be imagined when viewing the well known memorial of the bronze statue of William Tell and his son at the base of a tower in the Altdorf market place.

From Altdorf, we backtracked a little and joined the *Autobahn* as it was the only way of reaching the town of Stans. However, on the way was a marvel of modern road construction and tunnelling called the *Seelisburgtunnel*, which is over 5.6 miles (9 km) long. It really was remarkable knowing we were driving under the massive Alps in this well-lit and ventilated road tunnel consisting of two separate two-lane bores. At Stans we headed south on a minor road toward the idyllic village of Engelberg with its picturesque wooden chalet houses and the equally romantic Benedictine monastery complete with onion domed tower. It was in Engelberg that I bought my main holiday souvenir – a genuine *alpenstock*, or wooden walking stick with a metal spike (instead of a rubber ferrule). *Alpenstocks* are often decorated with small metal plates or shields depicting the names of countries and communities, and I made a point of buying them as souvenirs at places of interest along the way in readiness to attach to the wooden shaft. The *alpenstock* now hangs on our wall and the twenty-one shields that adorn it are tangible reminders of our 1982 European holiday.

An amusing incident happened as we were walking around the village. Evidently the traditional Swiss character of Engelberg makes it a natural sightseeing attraction for tour buses. One such bus had disgorged its party of what appeared to be typical English tourists. Some of the Brits in the party struck up a conversation when they saw the Canadian flag sticker on my camera case (gadget bag). They were a merry bunch and insisted in telling us that they hailed from Nottingham, England. “You know”, they said. “Sherwood Forest; the home of Robin Hood, the famous outlaw ... etc.” During the conversation, not once did they detect our own English accents – fully convinced that we were Canadians – and, smirking to ourselves, we didn’t enlighten them either.



The “Rheinfall” Cataract and Eroded Rocks in Schaffhausen, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Munot Fortress with its Walls and Vineyards, Schaffhausen, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Bahnhofstrasse, One of the Main Streets in Zürich, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Barry Stands by the Famous William Tell Monument, Altdorf, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Benedictine Monastery and Backdrop of Mount Titlis, Engelberg, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Alpenstock, Decorated with Souvenir Metal Plates, Bought in Engelberg, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Looking Towards the Summit of Mount Pilatus from the Aerial Cableway, Switzerland, September, 1982.



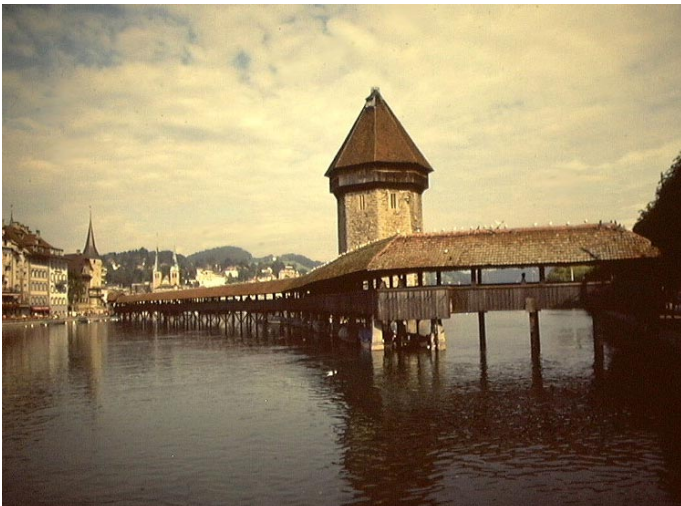
Barry and Monica at the Summit of Mount Pilatus, Switzerland, September, 1982.



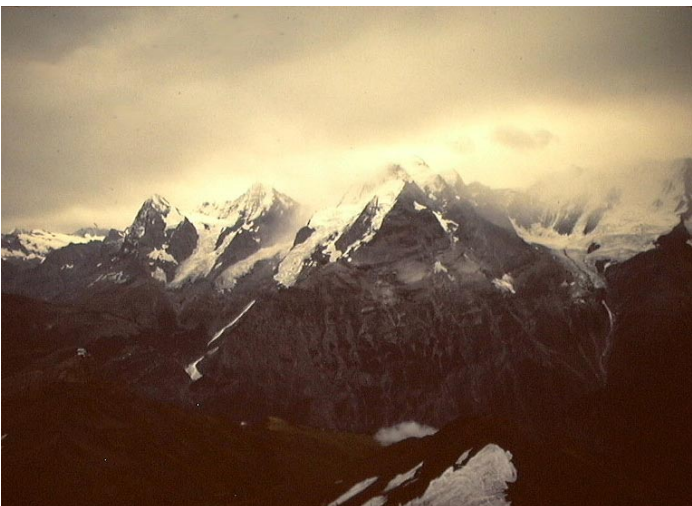
The Mount Pilatus Cogwheel Railway; the Steepest in the World, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Ferry on Vierwaldstättersee Approaches the Dock at Alpnachstad, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Picturesque Kapellbrücke and Old Towers of Luzern (Lucerne), Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Alpine Mountains: Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau, from Mount Schilthorn, Switzerland, September, 1982.

After finding a hotel in Alpnachstad we decided to drive into Luzern (Lucerne) and visit some of the sights, including the picturesque *Kapellbrücke*. However, I was disappointed with the downtown, mainly because the squares and other public places had been taken over by undesirables who appeared to be drunks, drifters and ‘hippies’. It was also dirty with litter, beer cans, etc. – far from the pristine nature of the Swiss. To make up for this degradation, the floodlit lakeside bars, restaurants, *Kapellbrücke* and old stone towers were very attractive; especially viewed when walking the entire length of the *Kapellbrücke*, itself.

Now deep in the heart of Switzerland, our ears were becoming accustomed to the Swiss German dialect, or *Schwyzerdütsch*, and our rudimentary ‘school’ German was generally understood by the locals. There are four official languages in Switzerland: German; French; Italian, and the indigenous Romansh. English, too, is generally known so, when conversing, we could revert to at least three of these tongues.

We had earmarked the following day for the first of our Swiss mountain ascents. A popular tourist route, known as the “Golden Round Trip”, involves taking a ferry boat from Luzern (Lucerne) to Alpnachstad, going up Mt. Pilatus on the cogwheel railway, coming down on the aerial cableways and taking a bus back to Luzern (Lucerne). Since we were already in Alpnachstad, it was prudent for us to reverse the journey. The weather was far from ideal for clear views, but we hoped it would improve as the day wore on and took the cableways to the Esel summit of Mount Pilatus at an altitude of 6,801 ft. (2073 m). Monica had done the same trip with her parents years before so it was something of a ‘déjà vu’ for her. The morning murk had cleared somewhat and the Alpine panoramas from the Hotel Pilatus Kulm sun terrace were mostly clear with the exception of a few low clouds over the lake. Taking it easy because of the rarified air and after looking around the summit, we started our descent on the cogwheel railway, which is the steepest in the world with a maximum gradient of 48%. The track meandered down the mountainside and the single traincar seemed to hang precariously as its rack and pinion mechanism strained to prevent a headlong nose-dive down the craggy slope. There was a junction at one point where we passed the ascending traincar running on a parallel track. After arriving at the Alpnachstad base station, we made our way to the ferry dock and awaited the small boat that plied the lake.

As is typical of the precise timing of all transportation in Switzerland to connect with each other’s schedule, the ferry boat arrived punctually to pick up its complement of passengers and continued to Luzern (Lucerne). The city’s skyline was soon discernable and this time we explored the sights during the day, including the River Reuss and, once more, the *Kapellbrücke*, before returning to Alpnachstad by bus. The hotel’s evening meal turned out to be a culinary delight as we indulged in a traditional Swiss cheese *fondue* and reflected on a day full of adventure.

Travelling further into the Swiss Alps, we became accustomed to being surrounded by lofty, snow-clad peaks. Our next destination was the town of Interlaken; however, we stayed in a *gasthaus* just outside in the neighbouring community of Goldswil. Before reaching Interlaken we stopped at Brienz then followed the old road around the north side of the picturesque Brienzensee. At Brienz we added a set of artisan made wooden coasters in a matching receptacle to our souvenirs. These complemented the five handmade angel figurines and Madonna plaque that Monica and her mother had bought years before when staying at Interlaken, and which are now ornaments at home.

The next day was an intensive one where sightseeing was concerned. The main objective was to make our way to the summit of Mount Schilthorn, which meant riding on four separate cable cars. After driving to Stechelberg just south of Interlaken, the first stage was to the remote village of Mürren. Then we took successive cable cars to Mount Schilthorn's peak at 9,774 ft. (2979 m). At the top was the circular, revolving Piz Gloria restaurant, made famous in the 1969 James Bond 007 film, "On Her Majesty's Secret Service", starring George Lazenby. From the terrace we were rewarded with fantastic Alpine views of the predominant neighbouring mountains: Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau. The rarified atmosphere made us a little lightheaded, but we took it steady. Neither the height nor the cool temperatures deterred the hardy ravens that lived on the mountain, usually looking for scraps of food thrown aside by visitors to the restaurant.

The return cable car journeys were just as thrilling and we decided to stop and explore around Mürren with its typical Swiss chalets perched on craggy outcrops. A restaurant beckoned and we ate in a spectacular wood panelled room with a panoramic view of the adjacent mountains. Truly idyllic. From Stechelberg we retraced our steps to the road that led to Grindelwald; another stereotypical Swiss village. Although the neatly trimmed village appeared to have been lifted directly from a glossy, picture-perfect Swiss calendar, it also smacked of wholesale tourist commercialism; emphasised by the large number of buses and escorted tour parties. The delicately spired church clocktower with the Wetterhorn mountain as a backdrop, however, was a nice touch.

Our journey now was to head to one of the world's renowned peaks – the Matterhorn. This meant a day's drive into the high country and crossing the Grimsel and Furka Passes, which were the first of several mountain passes that we experienced in Switzerland. Before leaving the Interlaken area, however, another not-to-be-missed attraction was the Harder Kulm and its spectacular views. Access to the summit at 4,337 ft. (1322 m) was by the *Harderbahn*, a rope-hauled funicular railway. The clear morning provided an unrestricted view of Interlaken, the Brienersee and Thunersee, and the surrounding mountain range that included the triple peaks of Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau. A bonus was visiting the small zoo at the bottom funicular station. Among the wildlife were ibex wild mountain goats with impressive curved horns.

As we drove through Goldswil, we could hear a strange sound further down the road. The noise sounded metallic and I thought it might be the rotating steel wheels of an antique tractor. However, it turned out to be a remarkable sight. This was the time of the year when cattle, that had been allowed to roam freely on the upper pastures during the summer, were rounded up and herded to their winter quarters. The cattle formed an orderly procession as they walked down the main street, and the metallic sound came from large, copper cowbells that rang as the beasts moved along. Furthermore, each cow was gaily decorated with flowers and coloured ribbons tied to the horns. Obviously a local cultural tradition.

After driving around the Brienersee, we entered the Hasli Valley with its fertile farmland. One surprise happened when passing a regional airfield as several Swiss Air Force fighter jets took off. I noticed they were old, but venerable, Hawker Hunter fighters, one of my all-time favourite modern warplanes. The flat valley floor eventually changed into a rugged landscape as the road meandered and began its ascent through the Grimsel Pass (7,103 ft. [2165 m]). Beyond were the many hairpin bends of the Furka Pass (7,969 ft. [2429 m]) before we descended into the valley of the River Rhône; then to Brig and our destination of Visp.



The Summit of Mount Schilthorn with the Piz Gloria Revolving Restaurant, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Feeding Ravens at the Summit of Mount Schilthorn, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Schilthorn Cable Car Seen from the Summit of Mount Schilthorn, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Grindelwald Church Clock Tower and the Wetterhorn in the Background, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Harderbahn Funicular Railway near Interlaken, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Monica on the Sun Terrace of the Bergrestaurant, Harder Kulm, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Overlooking Interlaken and the Jungfrau Range from the Harder Kulm, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Ritual of Bringing Down the Cows near Goldswil, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Old Section of Visp, a Town Nestled in the River Rhône Valley, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Zermatt Village at the Base of the Cloud Covered Matterhorn, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Hairpin Bends of the Simplon Pass near the Italian Border, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Old House Cheek by Jowl with the Main Road from Domodossola to Locarno, Italy, September, 1982.

The classic view of the Matterhorn (14,692 ft. [4478 m]) is from the village of Zermatt which, at that time, was accessible from Visp only by train. Zermatt was completely free of petrol-powered vehicles. On the day of our departure to Zermatt the weather decided not to cooperate. Rain and low clouds obscured the Alpine views, but we hoped that conditions would improve as the day wore on. We had studied the train schedule and arrived at the station according to the time table. The streets of the town were unusually quiet and the station was virtually deserted so we checked our watches to the station clock. There was a difference of one hour! The official Summer Time had reverted to Standard Time and clocks were set back one hour. There was nothing else to do but wait until the ticket office opened.

The train left Visp promptly and continued to the Zermatt terminus. For a continuation to the Gornergrat station, passengers transferred onto the rack and pinion line which is the highest open-air railway in Europe (10,138 ft. [3090 m]). At Zermatt, the weather hadn't improved and we trudged around the village in the rain; finally acknowledging that the low clouds were not going to lift and reveal the finely chiselled mountain peak. There was no choice but to return to Visp. This was the biggest disappointment of the holiday.

A bright day greeted us on the following morning for a drive that would take us further south and through part of Italy before returning to Switzerland. After leaving Visp and retracing our route to Brig, we changed direction and headed south towards the Simplon Pass (6,578 ft. [2005 m]). The clear mountain air revealed spectacular scenery and at least one remarkable road bridge perched on slender concrete columns way above a yawning chasm.

Not far from the hairpin bends of the Simplon Pass was the Italian border. Not knowing any Italian, I was worried about our entry since the car was sporting German licence plates. As it turned out there was no need for concern; the Italian border guards just waved us through the checkpoint and didn't even bother to look at our passports. Much relieved, we continued on the, now, substandard Italian roads towards Domodossola; passing old stucco houses built so close that they virtually touched the highway. Our experience driving on Alpine roads was now going to be put to an extreme test. Just before reaching Domodossola, we turned east towards Locarno on the shores of Lake Maggiore. The road became quite treacherous and deteriorated into virtually a mountain track. Most noticeable was the lack of guard rails; just an occasional boulder set on the side of the precipitous drop. Progress was slow as we had to be extra vigilant, and the twenty-five or so miles (40 km) to our destination were nerve-wracking to say the least. Monica felt particularly uncomfortable and was glad to cross the Swiss border as we drove into the Canton of Ticino.

At Locarno, we were greeted with a Mediterranean type resort, albeit nestled on the shores of an inland lake. Terraces of neat, white hotels and villas presided over marinas filled with expensive pleasure craft. The weather was mild and sunny and we stopped for lunch at one of the many sidewalk cafés. We ate under the gaily coloured shade umbrellas and I sampled *sauser*, which is an unfermented wine drunk out of a glazed, earthenware mug of traditional design. Its consistency was similar to the fruity Rioja wines from Spain.

From Locarno we continued west to Bellinzona, then the northerly route through the Ticino valleys to the spectacular St. Gotthard Pass (6,909 ft. [2106 m]) and back to the German-speaking part of Switzerland. By choice we drove on the old road over the pass and not the *Autobahn* with its access through the 10.2 mile

(16.4 km) long *Gotthardtunnel*. The pass itself has been used for centuries and is steeped in folklore, which includes the story of the *Teufelsbrücke* (Devil's bridge) that was saved from destruction when the sign of the Cross was inscribed on a large rock preventing Satan lifting and hurling it against the bridge. Following the old road meant negotiating the many hairpin bends that were characteristic of the route. Often, sheer drops on one side were alarming, but eventually we made it to the top of the pass and the view across the central ridge of the Alps was magnificent. The road then gradually descended by way of a series of sharp bends to a valley floor, then once past the Canton of Uri boundary and more hairpin bends we entered another valley. We were greeted with the last set of hairpin bends and finally arrived at the town of Andermatt where we lodged for the night.

We remember Andermatt primarily for the effusive landlady of the *gasthaus*. She welcomed us with open arms and, despite the partial language barrier (her *Schwyzerdütsch* was strong and probably rich with a regional accent), we were able to communicate well. Nothing was too much of a bother, and her jolly countenance in the morning at breakfast, plus her exuberant farewell certainly started the day right. And it was going to be a very long day on the road.

Fortunately the weather was fine with sunshine and a few clouds that wreathed around the mountaintops. Our aim was to traverse the Vorderrhein valley towards the town of Chur, then see how far we could drive in the direction of the Principality of Liechtenstein. Each picturesque village with typical wooden chalets and window boxes laden with flowers was a joy to look at. At Chur, I wondered whether my old Swiss colleague, Peter Bernhardt, was still living there. After twenty years, however, I decided it would be unlikely and elected not to pursue the idea. The Mediæval centre of town with its marketplace was very attractive, and the erratic rooftop skyline with its dominating church tower that we saw when walking around the ancient streets was unique.

From Chur, the road followed the River Rhine, now swollen with the confluence of the Vorderrhein and the Hinterrhein, towards the Principality of Liechtenstein. This autonomous country is similar to other self-governing regions such as San Marino and Andorra and seems to survive quite comfortably squeezed between Switzerland and Austria. The fine weather kept with us as we traversed the wide, flat valley that was punctuated here and there with fortified hills; Balzers Castle being a dominant one. Vaduz, the capital of Liechtenstein, had an impressive yellow brick and red tiled châteauxesque roof parliament buildings, but the largest municipality, Schaan, was where we stayed overnight in the Hotel Linde.

The next stage of our journey was to take us through the idyllic scenery of the Vorarlberg and Tirol regions of Austria. From Liechtenstein we crossed the border and headed east towards Feldkirch before taking the road to Innsbruck, our destination for the day. The weather was the best it could ever be in the mountains and encouraged us to find a supermarket to stock up on picnic food and a bottle of wine. At the Arlberg Pass (5,882 ft. [1793 m]), we stopped to drink in the fresh Alpine air and drink up the *vin de table* accompanied with cheese and fresh bread. Similar to the St. Gotthard Pass in Switzerland, we elected to take the precipitous original road instead of the 8.7 mile (14 km) long *Arlberg Strassentunnel*. The highway continued to wind through the Tirolean valleys where later in the year isolated villages would be filled with winter sports enthusiasts; this area being where the Arlberg technique of skiing was perfected.



The Hotels and Villas of Locarno on the Shores of Lake Maggiore, Switzerland, September, 1982.



Barry Samples 'Sausen' in a Traditionally Designed Glazed Mug, Locarno, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Hairpin Bends of the St. Gotthard Pass near the Gotthardtunnel, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Medieval Market Place in Chur, Switzerland, September, 1982.



The Parliament Buildings in Vaduz, the Capital of the Principality of Liechtenstein, September, 1982.



The Picturesque Arlberg Pass between Vorarlberg and Tirol, Austria, September, 1982.



Barry Picnicking on Wine and Cheese in the Arlberg Pass, Austria, September, 1982.



Pettnau am Arlberg: a Typical Tirolean Village near the River Inn Valley, Austria, September, 1982.



Das Goldenesdächl, or the Little Golden Roof in the Old Section of Innsbruck, Austria, September, 1982.



The Winter Olympic Games Ski Jump at Berg Isel, Innsbruck, Austria, September, 1982.



Painted Religious Mural on the Side of a House in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, October, 1982.



A Shop with Ornate Murals and Sign on the Main Street of Oberammergau, Germany, October, 1982.

The River Inn valley was a natural corridor leading to Innsbruck and we passed through numerous Tirolean villages clinging to the valley sides and often dominated by lofty church spires. At length we arrived in Innsbruck and found a comfortable *gasthaus* in the district of Pradl, not far from the city centre. The landlady was a kindly person who told us the best way to travel downtown was by riding on the *Strassenbahn* (tram). For a nominal fare, we were able to reach the heart of the city without thinking about parking hassles. This was ideal as we intended to stay two nights and see the city attractions, including the Winter Olympic Games site in nearby Berg Isel.

The following day was cold and wet. Not exactly comfortable for exploring the labyrinth of Mediæval streets on foot. However, we braved the elements and discovered a number of architectural gems, including the imposing *Schloss Amras* – a stately home; an elaborate Rococo-style coffee house and, of course, the main tourist attraction of *das Goldenesdächl* (the little golden roof). This feature created for the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I is a balcony overlooking the main square, and the roof is covered in gilded tiles. The weather started to improve as we made our way to Berg Isel and the Winter Olympic Games site. Dominating the area were the two Olympic Games torches – one each for the 1964 and 1976 events – and other large structures such as the ski jump and amphitheatre. In the evening we once again took the *Strassenbahn* to the city centre and found a nice restaurant. The friendly waitress spoke to us in a broad Tirolean dialect, but we were able to order our meal without a problem despite our floundering ‘school’ German.

It was now time to set our sights on the final leg of the journey – following the *Romantische Strasse*. We retraced our steps a little along the Inn valley, then turned northwards towards the Austro-Germany border. Now deep in the Bavarian Alps, we noticed subtle changes in domestic and ecclesiastical architecture. At Garmisch-Partenkirchen there were many murals, mainly of a religious nature, painted on the side of houses and other buildings. This cultural aspect was to be seen throughout Bavaria and, in the village of Oberammergau, such murals were seen in profusion. Oberammergau is best known for the Passion Plays that are performed at a special theatre every ten years. This year the plays weren’t being performed, but we did join a group to tour the purpose-built theatre with its covered auditorium and open air stage. We also noticed that some of the residents wore traditional costumes as everyday clothing; the men in *Lederhosen* (leather shorts) and Alpine hats adorned with a tufted crest, and women in colourful *Dirndl* (dresses). From Oberammergau the road continued north and then southwest through the Alpine foothills to the town of Füssen where we stayed overnight.

Füssen was both the beginning of the *Romantische Strasse* and a jumping off point to visit the two main tourist attractions in the area: *Schloss Hohenschwangau* and *Schloss Neuschwanstein*. The town is also a Mediæval gem of winding, cobblestone streets overlooked by erratic-shaped façades and gables. Our evening meal turned out to be adventuresome as we discovered a *Schenke* (tavern) and sat down to order dinner. At a nearby table we heard English voices with a North American accent being spoken and we may have become unintended translators for an American couple; although a certain amount of English was understood by the affable waitress. After the meal we sat together over drinks to compare experiences, etc., and a couple of young German men also joined in the informal party as they could converse with us in fairly good English. As locals we asked them about *Schloss Hohenschwangau* and *Schloss Neuschwanstein*, and they provided us with some useful information.

The following day started cloudy and we drove the short distance to *Schloss Hohenschwangau*, a fortress-like stately home of the Bavarian kings. There were conducted tours and we were shown through the numerous palatial rooms resplendent with masterpiece paintings and ornate furniture. As we left, the sun started to peek through the clouds and so I took a couple of photos of the building as it was being highlighted.

The fairy tale looking castle *Schloss Neuschwanstein* was built in the 19th century for the Bavarian King Ludwig II as a country retreat and is one of the most readily identifiable buildings in the world. As we approached the castle from the winding valley road, the lingering mist had yet to fully dissipate. An eerie sight of the castle's towers, turrets and crenellated gables loomed through the fog as if in a Frankenstein movie. Soon, however, the clouds fully disappeared and, as we toured the castle, the sun shone onto the brilliant white stonework. The tour was quite extensive and included climbing the spiral staircase of the principal tower; the inspiration for Walt Disney's "Magic Kingdom" signature castle. There were belvederes placed strategically along the road for taking photographs of the castle.

Before returning to Füssen for a second night, we continued to another outstanding building in the area. This was the Baroque church at Wieskirche near Steingarden. The somewhat restrained exterior belied the sumptuous architectural detail inside – so typical of the Baroque style. The soaring nave was richly decorated with religious frescoes, and gold leaf abounded in and around the altar. The church also possessed a mighty organ. On the way back we passed through the village of Trauchgau where several houses were decorated with whimsical wooden sculptures, possibly having local folklore connections.

After leaving Füssen, we started along the *Romantische Strasse*, stopping at times during the next six days to explore the well preserved historic buildings and Mediæval walled towns. Just north of Schongau we made a side trip to the monastery at Wessobrunn. On the way we noticed a rustic wayside church. The church was built such that the walls and the onion domed tower that faced the predominantly harsh winds were protected by wooden shingles. The other exterior surfaces were treated with stucco.

The road followed the meandering River Lech to the town of Landsberg am Lech, which was roughly half way to our next destination of Augsburg. The Mediæval square in Landsberg am Lech was particularly attractive. We found good accommodation in Augsburg and were able to reserve a room ahead in a hotel of the same chain in Rothenburg ob der Tauber. Despite its very long history, Augsburg itself was something of a dull manufacturing city and its drabness was made even worse with the arrival of torrential rain.

The wet weather stayed with us as we continued north through Donauwörth to Nördlingen with its impressive old town wall and sturdy *Fachwerkhäuser* (half-timbered houses). Approximately 15.5 miles (25 km) north of Nördlingen was the charming town of Dinkelsbühl. The old town wall here was even more remarkable as it was punctuated by watchtowers of different heights; giving the impression of a scene straight out of Grimm's Fairy Tales. One could imagine the Pied Piper of Hamelin from the popular German folk story playing his flute and marching down the cobblestone streets followed by a procession of children. At length we arrived in the old walled town of Rothenburg ob der Tauber and found the hotel which was nestled in a group of *Fachwerkhäuser* near one of the stone gateways in the wall.



Barry, Monica and Other Guests at the Schenke in Füssen, Germany, October, 1982.



Schloss Hohenschwangau Perched High on a Hill Overlooking the Valley, Germany, October, 1982.



Classic Setting of Schloss Neuschwanstein as it Overlooks the Bavarian Hills, Germany, October, 1982.



Interior of Wieskirche near Steingarden Showing the Ornate Baroque Style, Germany, October, 1982.



The Monastery Cloisters and Quadrangle at Wessobrunn, Germany, October, 1982.



The Mediæval Square and Religious Fountain in Landsberg am Lech, Germany, October, 1982.



Old Town Wall and Half-timbered Houses (Fachwerkhäuser), Nördlingen, Germany, October, 1982.



Old Town Wall and Watchtowers, Dinkelsbühl, Germany, October, 1982.



Old Town Wall with Covered Parapet and Tower, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Germany, October, 1982.



Wrought Iron Sign Depicting the "Meistertrink", Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Germany, October, 1982.



Schloss Miltenberg and Old Half-timbered Houses, Miltenberg, Germany, October, 1982.



Monica in the Vineyards Overlooking the River, Rudesheim am Rhein, Germany, October, 1982.

The town is well known for its Mediæval attractiveness. Although badly damaged during the Second World War, it was saved from total destruction by the advancing Allied forces and, over the years, has been restored to its original charm. At night, the *Rathaus* (Town Hall) was floodlit and this emphasized the imposing façade of gables and towers. We explored the town on the following day; admiring the shambles of old buildings, wrought iron signs – including the famous *Meistertrink* – and winding alleys. The old smithy building was particularly attractive with its sharply pointed gable and red tiles. Much of the town wall is accessible for walking along, and in places the path was protected by a roof structure. A souvenir shop full of handmade candles and wooden items caught our eye and, from the very friendly salesperson, we bought a wooden Nativity scene as a Christmas tree ornament and an unusual candle shaped like a barrel adorned with bunches of grapes.

The *Romantische Strasse* took us cross-country to the town of Bad Mergentheim, legendary home of the Teutonic Order. We walked around the town centre to admire the museum dedicated to the movement and the carved statue of the Teutonic knight at the fountain in the marketplace. From Bad Mergentheim we continued north through Tauberbischofsheim to Wertheim am Main where our route diverged from the *Romantische Strasse* and followed the curving valley of the River Main to Miltenberg and our next stopover.

With only three more days left and so close to Frankfurt am Main, we looked at incorporating a side trip to the tourist attraction riverside town of Rudesheim am Rhein. Since we had both visited there before, but independent of each other – Monica in 1968 and me in 1972 – it seemed like a befitting end to the vacation. After exploring Miltenberg we continued north following the River Main to just outside Aschaffenburg then, preferring to take the faster *Autobahnen* instead of having to navigate through the Frankfurt suburbs, arrived at a hotel in Rüsselsheim not far from the airport.

Under threatening skies we started out for Rudesheim by driving along various *Autobahnen* to get us quickly through the city of Mainz to Wiesbaden and the north shore of the River Rhine. When we arrived at Rudesheim it was noticeable that the summer tourist season was over as many of the outdoor café patios were deserted, and the inclement weather was also deterring the locals. However, we braved the elements and walked around the well known sights, such as the *Drosselgasse* even though the famous alleyway was devoid of live ‘oom-pa-pa’ music and neon lights. It was still too early in the season for harvesting the grapes that abounded in the area vineyards, but we hiked our way up the side of the valley and followed a trail to the nearby monument called the *Niederwald Denkmal*. This huge statue on a stone plinth is also known as “*Die Wacht am Rhein*” (The Watch over the Rhine), and depicts a female victory figure as the personification “*Germania*” and was erected to glorify the unification of all the German kingdoms and duchies in 1871 by the statesman Otto von Bismarck. Despite its importance in German culture, we were surprised to see that the statue had been vandalised with daubs of paint. We then returned to Rudesheim and drove back to the hotel and packed for the return flight to Canada.

Because the rental car pick up time was just after our morning arrival at Frankfurt, we wanted to avoid paying for an additional daily fee and so returned the car early. The disadvantage was having to wait for our evening flight, and that meant hanging around the airport concourse for many hours. Boredom quickly developed and we were hard pressed to maintain any enthusiasm. At length, though, it was time to board the

trans-Atlantic flight to Toronto and, as we took off, we reflected on the vacation and its adventures, totally unaware of the developments back in the office in my absence which would have long term repercussions.

Changes in the department and year end activities

For a year or so, personnel in the Technical Publications Department had been spread thin and productivity wasn't up to par. Despite the lean times, it was necessary to upgrade and perhaps find some other efficiencies. However, it was still a mild shock to receive a telephone call at home from John Dicks on the day before I returned to work.

John called to forewarn me of a major change in the managing of the department during my absence. From out of the blue, Bill Metcalfe announced that the department's day to day operation would now be handled by a separate supervisor, as Dale Dignan's engineering duties were distracting him from effectively managing the department. John asked me who I thought the new supervisor was. Without hesitation I mentioned that the logical choice was Greg Pillon, largely because of his higher education and he was ambitious enough to grasp the opportunity. John replied, "No. It was Ray Frydrych." Rather surprising, I thought, the lowest person on the totem pole (junior printer) was now installed as management. Still, that was the picture and Ray now turned up at work wearing a dress shirt, necktie and neat corduroy jacket.

I knew that when Ray was the spare parts compiler he had helped in one major improvement for the department. When we moved into the Distribution Centre building it occupied an area that was part of the open plan office. Regardless of the working cubicles sound absorbing partitions, the general noise level was high and we found concentration difficult. It would be nice to separate the Technical Publications Department from the rest of the office with a permanent wall. Acting on this suggestion, Ray more or less coordinated the construction with the Maintenance Department and an outside contractor. The steel studs, drywall panels, doorways and frosted internal windows were erected and we had an improved working environment. Perhaps this successful venture was used by Ray during an interview, and convinced upper management of his proactive leadership skills. Plus he was the president of the Optimist Club of Goderich, an organisation that raised funds to finance community projects. Certainly the club's annual concert show in the Optimist Park, with Ray as MC, was a popular event. We also heard that some financial support from the club was given to the Livery Theatre, a cultural outlet that involved both Bill Metcalfe and his wife, Maria.

From September, 1982 until March, 2007, Ray managed the Technical Publications Department, and within that timeframe – or at least until I retired in December, 2005 – he and I had a turbulent relationship. Sometimes amicable, but often acrimonious; the personality conflict was palpable. This was very unfortunate as I only wanted harmony to reign and somehow I kept unintentionally rubbing Ray up the wrong way. One of the barriers was Ray's new assertion of power, and he started to realign the department by adding new personnel. Clearly, John Dicks was overworked so Ray hired another technical illustrator: college graduate, Dominic Speranza. Towards the end of the year, more ambitious plans were to materialise.

Uncle Tony (Dad's older brother), had been suffering from the rare Jakob Creuzfeld Disease for quite a while and was in a comatose state in a Portsmouth hospital. His vegetative condition meant he was unre-

sponsive. A very sad situation and one that ended by taking Uncle Tony off the life support system on October 2nd, 1982, to let him die with dignity. I understand that his brain was surgically removed for research purposes.

In the meantime, the fall season in Ontario turned out to be beautiful; encouraging brisk walks in November. We celebrated my 37th birthday at home and, in December, enjoyed the resumption of normal salary – now \$554.23 a week. However, this situation only lasted a month and the temporary 10% reduction was reinstated in the new year. After a quiet Christmas at home, we anticipated 1983 as a year of radical changes. We were not to be disappointed.

Tech. Pubs. becomes high tech

Upon resuming work, we were faced with the situation that Champion's order book hadn't improved as much as had been hoped during the month of December, 1982. An executive decision to reinstate the temporary 10% reduction in wages and salaries took effect and was in place until August. A general belt-tightening measure was expected company-wide.

I was determined to pursue the introduction of word processing (WP) technology into the department's standard working practices. Already armed with information taken from the 1982 ITCC in Boston, I was interested in knowing the outcome of an evaluation, then taking place in the company, of three types of WP equipment. They were the CompuCorp 675; Philips Micom 2001, and the AES Superplus IV models. Through the Quality Circles process, the AES Superplus IV model was eventually selected and the micro-processor, monitor and impact printer were installed in the Distribution Centre building to be used exclusively by Sales and Technical Services. At least this was a step in the right direction.

Having been a member of STC since December, 1980, I decided to elevate my status in the society and applied to become a senior member. This was eventually granted and I received my new certificate at the end of January, 1983.

Under Bill Metcalfe, Marketing and Advertising Services continued to evolve and this included a new sales and service videotape recording strategy. The video editing suite, a dedicated room in the Huckins Street office building, was used by two new hires, Graham McEwan, coordinator, and John Archibald, videographer who, in February, replaced the previous three man crew. John's service video procedures became another method of using the electronic media in the production of technical publications. Now, under controlled conditions in the Service Training bay of the Distribution Centre building, service procedures could be simulated and videorecorded. The recording was then used as the basis for writing the technical manuals. Over time the procedures became standard, and they simplified product support material especially where foreign languages were concerned. It remained to convince management that the AES word processor should be shared with Tech. Pubs. to help justify the company's investment in the new technology. Eventually the equipment was relocated to an empty office and, with management's approval, we started transitioning from the existing manual cut and paste method to a fully desktop published end product. An in-house training course helped us become familiar with the equipment.

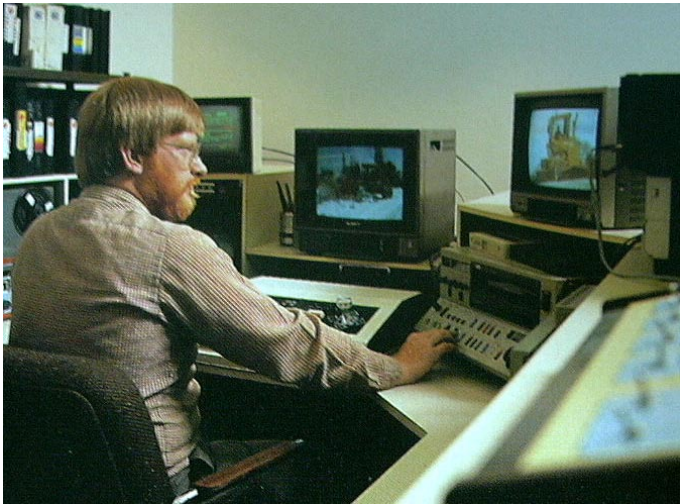
In the meantime, Monica and I had not been neglecting our recreational activities during the winter months. Curling still occupied our time several nights a week, plus bonspiels; although as it turned out this would be the last year that we participated in the sport. Outdoors, too, we were enticed onto conservation area trails and, later, the Maplewoods Farm sugar bush near Cambridge to enjoy a ‘sugaring off’ experience.

Easter was the first long holiday weekend of the year and fell at the beginning of April. The weather was mild and, for a complete change of scenery, we spent three days in the city of Toronto to visit some of the lesser well known attractions. One of these was exploring the chain of islands in Toronto’s Inner Harbour. An old fashioned ferry boat took us to Wards Island and from there we walked through the various parks and residential neighbourhoods, and over causeways and bridges that linked Centre Island to the rest of the archipelago. A visit to the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) rounded off the mini-trip.

In the quest to establish further efficiencies, it was decided to consolidate two of Champion’s departments – General Engineering and the design centre for the machine’s drive train – under one roof. The drive train group was in a satellite building and it made sense to combine all design activity in the main office. The upshot of this move meant that surplus working space was available, and Ray Frydrych pitched an idea to streamline the Technical Publications operation. This scheme involved moving Technical Publications from the Distribution Centre, and the print room from the main office, to the area just vacated by the drive train group. The move in May allowed not only General Engineering to expand into the print room’s current space, but also united all of Technical Publications resources. On the face of it, the rationale was sound, but moving from a true office to an industrial environment (the surplus space was located on a mezzanine floor overlooking Champion’s hydraulics assembly factory) was not welcome news to the rank and file.

The idea, however, was given management’s blessing and the Maintenance Department started the physical move. At one end of the working space, Ray ensconced himself in a corner office, while the writers and illustrators jockeyed for the best position on the concrete floor outside. At least large windows and overhead fluorescent lamps provided good lighting. Some of the manoeuvring of furniture became a bone of contention to Ray and I remember him bluntly saying to me, “When is it going to end?!” Eventually the print room equipment and storage shelves were delivered and located at the other end of the working space. Although Ray was the departmental supervisor and responsible for the daily activities, the building itself was managed by the Gearco and hydraulics assembly general manager, Mr. David Smith. Dave was a gruff Englishman who had risen through the ranks of tool and die making. He was not easy to work with, clearly anti-union and given to outbursts of rage. Now there were two people that were best to avoid if possible.

When I joined the “Circle City Toastmasters Club” in May, 1980, I had anticipated working through the course that eventually led to acquiring the Competent Toastmaster (CTM) level of expertise. The course consisted of fifteen challenging assignments that started with the basics of public speaking and ended with the expectation of a good degree of speech delivery, together with visual aids. Three years later to the month, I gave my final presentation of the course at a special meeting that included the presence of the Western Division Lieutenant Governor, Gary Reid. The talk went well, although there were some fundamental hiccups, and at the end I was recognised as the club’s first CTM member. A plaque was presented to me by Gary and a specially decorated cake was served up by fellow member,



Graham McEwan in the Video Editing Suite at Huckins Street, Goderich, Ontario, February, 1983.



AES Superplus IV Word Processor and Printer at Huckins Street, Goderich, Ontario, March, 1983.



Bridge Connecting Centre Island to Olympic Island, Toronto Islands Park, Toronto, Ontario, April, 1983.



Barry Receiving the CTM Plaque from Toastmaster Area Rep., Gary Reid, Goderich, Ontario, May, 1983.



Barry, Philip and Michael Enjoy a Pint of Beer at the "Camden Head" Pub, London, England, May, 1983.



Mum, Dad and Honey at 109 Birchwood Avenue, Hatfield, England, June, 1983.



Monica's Parents Celebrate at their Golden Wedding Anniversary, Coventry, England, June, 1983.



Guests Meet at Monica's Parents' Golden Wedding Anniversary, Coventry, England, June, 1983.



David, Susan and Anthony Cross. Susan is Expecting their Second Child, Wolston, England, June, 1983.



Monica's Reunion with Marjorie Kellam, her Old Work Colleague, Coventry, England, June, 1983.



Cooking First Nations Style, Ska-nah-doht Village, Delaware near London, Ontario, July, 1983.



Shingle Making at the Ontario Agricultural Museum, Milton, Ontario, August, 1983.

Rita Ross. As was typical of Champion's CEO, Bruce Sully, when he became aware of this achievement, he wrote a personal congratulatory letter that I still have amongst my memorabilia.

Spring visit to England

Monica's parents' golden wedding anniversary was a milestone not to be missed. We knew there would be a large gathering of family and friends on June 4th, so we made plans to visit England. Our last visit to the Motherland was in September, 1981, so it was time to reconnect with my parents and old friends, including seeing for the first time Anthony James, the son of David and Susan Cross, born in late October, 1981.

This trip was different in that we didn't rent a car at the arrival airport, but used public transport to take us to Hatfield where we stayed with my parents for twelve days. While there we kept local, such as Stanborough Lakes, or went by train into London to meet my old buddies, Philip and Michael, in one of our old haunts, the "Camden Head" pub, for a few pints of beer. Before we left Hatfield to continue the vacation in Coventry, we spent one day in the Imperial War Museum (IWM) branch at Duxford Aerodrome near Cambridge. In the hangars were many examples of military and commercial aircraft including some of the earliest jet tactical fighters, as well as famous piston engine planes. The weather was sunny and this encouraged a good look around the outside static displays, such as the ill-fated TSR-2 supersonic fighter; the Anglo-French Concorde supersonic airliner (which brought back memories of my flight in one, September, 1981) and others.

At 305 Broad Lane, Coventry, plans were well advanced to receive five close relatives for a private party before the actual anniversary celebration. A room was reserved at the Allesley Hotel and gathering there were Monica and myself, Monica's parents, Uncle Tom and Aunt Doris Haggerty; Aunt Betty Jennings, and cousins Trecia and Reg Gregory. The day of the anniversary party was dry and relatively sunny, which meant that all the nineteen guests could meet and mingle in the back garden. It was a pretty affair with flowers, cards, a special cake and several speeches. Altogether a memorable occasion.

Of course, we didn't miss visiting our closest friends in the Coventry area. There was a social evening with Roger, Susan, Stephen and Lindsey; then a get together with David, Susan and their nineteen-month old son, Anthony James. We knew that Susan was expecting their second child and, on June 15th, another son, Adrian Paul, came into the world. There was also a surprise visit from Monica's old work colleague, Marjorie Kellam, who was visiting England from her home in Australia. The two ladies had a great time reminiscing and comparing their new lives in different countries.

Back home

The remainder of June was something of a mixed bag. There was a change in the executive members of the SAE London Division as I was elected to the position of Chair for 1983-1984. This put more demands on my spare time as I now assumed extra responsibility and additional duties associated

with the society's administration. Much of this was attending strategy meetings on the London campus at Fanshawe College, but fortunately I had a great deal of help from my fellow executive members.

Back at the office, once again we became shorthanded where technical illustrating was concerned as Dominic Speranza left Champion and returned to his hometown of Hamilton. Dominic's departure spurred Ray on a hiring blitz and before long the department acquired some new faces. Phil Walton was a young English technical illustrator. Promoted or transferred through the union ranks were Rick Fisher and Clem Goulding as spare parts compilers, and Ray Scott as junior printer. Much of this personnel activity was due to more promising signs of increased production and a return to a healthy order book.

Clearly, the downturn in business was beginning to fade away although the temporary 10% reduction in wages and salaries was still in effect. Nevertheless, there was an optimistic air as Champion's employees looked forward to both a change in fortune and also the annual three week summer vacation. Monica and I made the most of the early summer by taking day trips to interesting places such as Old Fort Erie; the reconstructed ancient First Nation (Amerindian) village of *Ska-nah-doh*t at Delaware, and a tour of the John Labatt brewery museum in London, Ontario. *Ska-nah-doh*t was particularly interesting as it consisted of traditional longhouses as used by the Attawandaron or Neutrals tribe. The longhouses were surrounded by a double ring palisade for protection and defence. Part way through the visit, we were invited to a cooking demonstration to see how basic ingredients such as the 'three sisters' – maize (corn), squash and climbing beans – were prepared and cooked over an open wood fire for staple foods like bannock.

Confidence in the upsurge in orders at Champion meant that the temporary 10% reduction in wages and salaries was again lifted and I resumed my normal salary – now at \$561.25 a week. As we approached the Labour Day holiday weekend, we made short recreation trips included beach barbecues; a visit to the Ontario Agricultural Museum near the town of Milton, and a two night stopover in Toronto. There were many demonstrations at the Agricultural Museum, including grinding corn; the wheelwright's shop; blacksmithing in the forge, and shingle making. A novel feature of the day was a corn roast meal using locally harvested sweet corn cobs that were boiled and smeared in butter. Eaten fresh in the open air the corn tasted delicious.

The visit to Toronto during the September Labour Day public holiday included time at the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE or "the Ex") to see the usual sideshows at the CNE Exhibition Grounds and Ontario Place on Toronto's waterfront. Also on the agenda was the CNE Air Show and among the flying exhibits were an RAF Tornado, an Avro Vulcan, the BAE Concorde supersonic airliner and a Canadian built de Havilland Dash-8 passenger plane that was a new and revolutionary design in quietness and fuel efficiency. Another major attraction for us in Toronto was the Metro Zoo and we saw species of African wildlife such as giraffes, elephants and rhinoceros in pens that simulated the animals' natural surroundings. Later in the month we visited Ted and Nancy Plummer and toured the Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG), an area of managed natural beauty and Ontario's answer to Butchart Gardens on Vancouver Island in British Columbia. RBG lies in several municipalities including Hamilton, Dundas and Burlington, and incorporates Cootes Paradise, a protected wetlands environment that was rescued from the steel mill pollution of Burlington Bay and Hamilton Harbour. It was a perfect day to see the profusion of autumn flowers in the Rock Garden – one of RBG's two principal landscaped areas.

Having pulled itself up by the bootstraps, Champion continued to provide innovation to its products. In September, 1983, the All-Wheel-Drive (AWD) motor grader was introduced. Using a proprietary hydrostatic drive motor from “Mud Hog” already available on agricultural tractors, power could be delivered to drive the front axle wheels. The complete hydraulic system was a complex arrangement and I was tasked to produce the service instructions. Fortunately I had good support from my colleagues, including Bill Barlow, who had recently returned to Champion, and the AWD engineering design technologist, Dayle Wickie. Later, department personnel changes saw the departure of Ray Scott. Ray was never on friendly terms with his supervisor, and was often seen being given verbal warnings. He was eventually replaced by Mike Roncken. Bernie Gagné, another technical illustrator, joined us as the twelfth employee.

September was also the month I launched my freelance business. For a while and, to a certain extent encouraged by my colleague, Bill Barlow, I had contemplated ‘moonlighting’ as a hobby. One that could be creative and also bring in a little ‘pin money’. Ostensibly it would concentrate on my forte of technical communications; although I would also diversify into graphic design. To make the business ‘official’, it was necessary to register the name with the Ontario provincial government. This was done and “Technical Authorship Services” started up operation. Although the first business transaction didn’t happen until December, I had laid the foundation of an enterprise that was to continue until the books closed in April, 2007.

The fall colour change was becoming more picturesque and, aside from a day trip to the Rockwood Conservation Area near Guelph, we used up the rest of my annual holiday entitlement by extending the three day Thanksgiving public holiday to a whole week. As some of the best colour was to be found in the north-eastern United States and Québec, we planned a route that took us through Upper New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Québec and back home through Ontario’s ‘cottage country’. We certainly were not disappointed as complete hillsides of red maple trees greeted us in the Adirondack Forest Preserve and along the scenic roads of the Adirondack Mountains in Upper New York. Crossing Lake Champlain meant taking the ferry from Port Kent, New York, to Winooski, a part of Burlington, Vermont. Staying overnight in Burlington, however, compelled us to pay a premium price for a motel room. The reason was that the hotel industry capitalises on travelling tourists in the fall colour season and artificially inflates room rates, a practice that didn’t go down well with us. Nevertheless, with picture-perfect weather we continued traversing Vermont and briefly entered New Hampshire before crossing the border into Québec, continuing through Sherbrooke and Thetford Mines, and stopping at a motel just outside of Lévis. The lure of Québec City on the opposite side of the St. Lawrence River was too much, but instead of taking the ferry across the river, we drove around Lévis and over the Pierre Laporte Bridge. This took longer than expected (in hindsight the ferry would have been more convenient) and finding a parking spot in the Old Town was not easy. We still had a good time in the evening as the city lights gave the 17th century buildings a magical appearance.

Our journey home took us through Montréal to Ottawa. Once again we experienced ideal weather conditions to enjoy the fall landscape, particularly in the Gatineau Hills just north of the city of Hull. Here, the autumnal colours in the Gatineau Park attracted groups of artists who set up their easels to paint the vibrant scenes in front of them. Wildlife, too, was in abundance as squirrels and chipmunks ferreted for food and stored their found treasures in little caches to be uncovered later in the winter. ‘Cottage country’ in Eastern Ontario is usually a hive of activity in the fall as residents relish the last nice days and make plans to ‘close

up the cottage' for winter. After staying in Peterborough and looking at the hydraulic lift locks – now closed for maintenance and winter lay up – we returned to Goderich and admired the local colours framing our own heritage houses.

Following this agreeable journey, the remainder of 1983 settled into a tranquil routine. Which was just as well as we were preparing ourselves for next year's exotic vacation to Hawaii, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. The opportunity to go on this trip had germinated earlier in the year when we visited an 'open house' that showcased the tour by Rob Bullas, an established travel agent in the city of Kitchener, who had escorted parties of tourists on this excursion for several years. Originally, we had considered making an independent journey to Australia, but the open house proved that the organised tour was more advantageous and, to a certain extent, more cost-effective. Two close friends, Shirley and Norris McEwen, also came along to the information session and were enthusiastic to sign up. Therefore, we knew that in February, 1984, we four travellers would be winging our way 'down under' for a month.

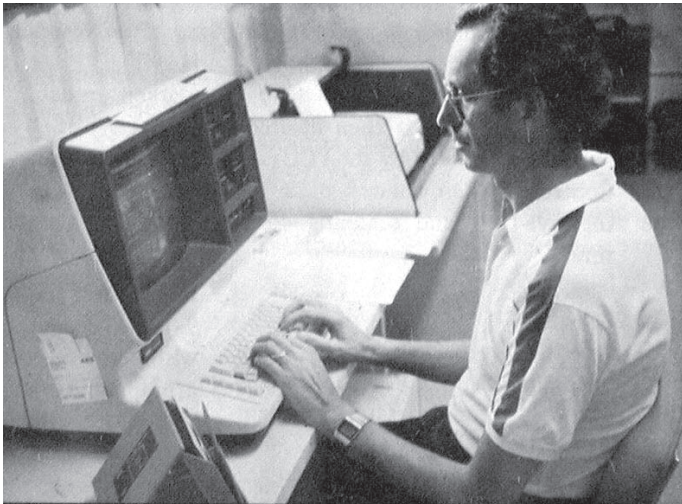
Knowing that we would be away for a month from our curling activity meant that we couldn't take out a partial membership and so elected not to participate in the sport for this season. The winter set in as I celebrated my 38th birthday and, once again, we spent Christmas at home.

We travel 'down under'

Very little of any consequence happened in January, 1984. There was at least one cross-country ski outing to the Pinery Provincial Park near Grand Bend, otherwise we were preparing for our big adventure to the Antipodes starting in late February. Champion offered an in-house training course in understanding more about the emergent computer science involving the programming language called BASIC. The course was organised by the Radio Shack company and featured their model TRS-80 microcomputer; an advanced machine for its time and more versatile than the AES Superplus IV word processor currently in use. Although I wouldn't have any opportunity at work to use the knowledge, it was a useful course in fundamental computer operating theory and programming.

On the eve of departure to Hawaii – the first leg of the journey 'down under' – we met Shirley and Norris at the Howard Johnson's hotel near Toronto International Airport. Later, Shirley and Norris's twin daughters, Carol and Cathy, treated us at "Mother Tuckers" restaurant opposite the hotel with a *bon voyage* dinner. The next morning we took the hotel shuttle bus to the airport and teamed up with our tour escort, Rob Bullas, and the rest of our fellow vacationers. Originally the tour called for only twenty participants, but eventually the number increased to twenty-seven. This included six married couples, an assortment of single women and Rob Bullas himself.

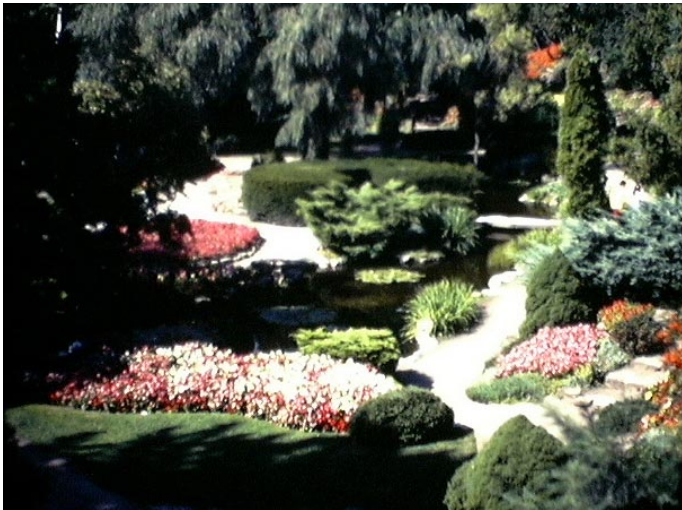
The initial flight was to Los Angeles for onward connection to Hawaii. However, when we arrived at Los Angeles the entire airport was in turmoil. The reason was the city of Los Angeles was hosting the 1984 summer Olympic Games, and the airport was being upgraded to accommodate an expected huge influx of visitors. The terminal building was one big construction site with restricted amenities. To add to the frustration, we were *in transit* for several hours and the only boredom relief was a scratch game of cribbage be-



Barry Operating the Tech. Pubs. Word Processor in the Relocated Office, Goderich, September, 1983.



Technical Publications Department Personnel outside the Relocated Office, Goderich, September, 1983.



Rock Garden at the Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG), Hamilton, Ontario, September, 1983.



Rockwood Conservation Area near Guelph, Ontario, October, 1983.



Fall Colours and Lake in the Adirondack Mountains, Upper New York State, October, 1983.



Artists Paint the Autumn Colours in Gatineau Park, Hull, Québec, October, 1983.



Waikiki Beach from a Lanai of the Sheraton Surfrider Hotel, Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii, February, 1984.



Overlooking Sydney Harbour, Lavender Bay and Circular Quay, Sydney, Australia, February, 1984.



Group of Friends Meet at Bruce and Karen Gilroy's, Pymble near Sydney, Australia, February, 1984.



Barry and Ron Crosthwaite Enjoy a Pint of Beer in a Pub, Sydney, Australia, February, 1984.



The Sydney Harbour Bridge as Seen from Bennelong Point, Sydney, Australia, February, 1984.



Detail of the Sydney Opera House, Sydney, Australia, February, 1984.

tween the four of us. Eventually the Air New Zealand flight was called and we arrived in Honolulu sometime in the early hours of the morning. Even so, ambassadorial Polynesian natives greeted us with the traditional *lei* gift and provided the first of many tourist photo opportunities. It was then a well earned rest at our designated hotel, the Sheraton Surfriider which overlooked the world renowned Waikiki Beach.

After breakfast, the usual orientation session directed us to a number of tourist attractions including the obligatory visit to the “Hilo Hattie” garment store and other shopping outlets in downtown Honolulu along with the ‘OTs’ (Rob’s labelling of ‘Other Tourists’). Since we were familiar with many of the attractions listed on the agenda, having visited them in 1980, we elected to make our own way to other places of interest. There was one particular beauty spot worth revisiting – this being Koko Head Regional Park and Hanauma Bay, a circular cove on the windward side of the island of Oahu – using the very efficient Hawaiian public transportation system. When we first visited Hanauma Bay in 1980 there was not a lot of time to spare, so this time we made sure to fully explore the cove with its coral reefs and volcanic rock promontory.

The second day in Honolulu was one for exploring the city and preparing for the overnight flight to Auckland, New Zealand, with its continuation to Sydney, Australia. The evening, however, was spent at one of the numerous night club cabarets; the audience being dazzled with Polynesian dances and other forms of cultural entertainment. The scheduled Air New Zealand flight was the incoming Los Angeles one, and only after the regular checks and servicing had taken place could we settle down to the extensive journey over the Pacific Ocean and the International Dateline; thus losing one day.

Landfall in Auckland, New Zealand, was a temporary stop and we stayed aboard until the flight continued to its scheduled destination of Sydney, Australia. However, as soon as we landed and the doors opened for exiting passengers, the entire plane was fumigated against possible invasive pests. This was achieved by airline employees with an aerosol can in each hand walking down the two aisles and spraying a disinfectant (Formalin) into the air above the passengers. Apparently all the luggage was given a similar treatment. New Zealand has a strict control to ward off diseases where horticulture and stock rearing is concerned.

Australia – Sydney and Canberra

Australia is a huge continent and we expected merely to scratch the surface of visiting the country. The itinerary, however, was still ambitious and we didn’t skimp on accommodation or sightseeing opportunities. The skies were cloudy over Sydney, but there was a interesting view of the city and its harbour as we approached the airport. There we were transported by one of the ubiquitous Newmans coaches to the Regent Hotel, our upscale downtown accommodation. There was an amusing take to our arrival. Since we had endured two extensive flights our appearance was somewhat dishevelled and, in order to maintain the hotel’s dignity, the coach arrived at the rear entrance before disgorging its bedraggled passengers. We were quickly ushered to our rooms by flunkies dressed in formal livery; there to wash away our travel grime and enjoy a short nap before embarking on the evening’s activities.

It had been preplanned to meet Monica’s old work colleague, Marjorie Kellam, who lived in Pymble, a suburb of Sydney. Marjorie had moved to Australia in 1973, just ahead of Monica’s emigration to Canada,

to be with her daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Bruce Gilroy, and their two adopted children, Antonia and Richard. After reuniting with Marjorie in the hotel lobby, we introduced her to Shirley and Norris. Bruce then arrived and he drove the five of us to his employer's office tower building on the north side of Sydney Harbour. The trip meant negotiating the Sydney rush hour traffic and crossing the renowned Sydney Harbour Bridge. I was mildly surprised at the extent of the bridge structure, which not only supported eight lanes of vehicular traffic but also two main railway lines, a bicycle lane and a pedestrian sidewalk. When we arrived at the tower block, Bruce escorted us for a bird's eye view of Sydney Harbour through the boardroom picture windows. It was a beautiful evening and all the downtown highrise buildings were bathed in the late sunlight. Hospitality flowed as Bruce opened a private liquor bar and we had our *apéritifs* while admiring the vista.

As the sun was setting, we left the office tower and drove to Bruce and Karen's house in Pymble. This was probably travelling along State Highway No.1 (Pacific Highway) that led straight to the suburb from North Sydney. Being passengers, it gave us an opportunity to look at the various neighbourhoods and absorb some of the local colour. Although we were expecting something of a throwback to England, it was clear that many of the everyday features were quintessentially Australian. For example, canopies outside commercial buildings providing pedestrians protection against the fierce sun were everywhere. In the residential estates, evidence of the 'Australian Dream' – the 1 acre lot of land and detached bungalow – was also prevalent. The sparse greenery was provided by dusty gum (eucalyptus) trees which were havens for the myriad of brightly coloured native lorikeets, parakeets, cockatoos and budgerigars.

Karen welcomed us into her cool bungalow where we met the rest of the family. The whole evening was a remarkable convivial experience, together with a nice dinner and exchange of cultural *joie de vivre*. Bruce, the typical 'Aussie', regaled us in his broad Strine accent with stories about Australian rules football ("Them bawstawsd fram Brisbane; ya mugs!") and answered our many questions about life 'down under'. With fatigue enveloping us, Bruce then returned us to our hotel in readiness for the next day's adventures.

The Regent Hotel was one of the premiere hotels in Sydney and this was reflected in such things as the immaculately dressed staff; quality table linen and silverware, and comfortable, well-appointed rooms. Following breakfast, the group was escorted to Circular Quay, the busy terminus for all the ferries and cruise liners, and boarded a tourist boat for a look at the city and its environs from the waters of Sydney Harbour. Unfortunately the weather was still overcast, but we embarked on a smooth voyage noting the many landmarks on the way. Obvious were the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Opera House; then we progressed through Port Jackson to the inlet's entrance at the North and South Heads. All the time we could see the large passenger boats and smaller hydrofoils that plied the ferry routes.

The inhabitants of Sydney, called Sydneysiders, try to aim for an ideal status symbol – the 'view'. In short, finding property with the best view of the water. Consequently there are houses clinging to the sides of the rocky shoreline, each competing for the best vista. Not only this, but access to the water via marinas or private moorings for the many pleasure craft was much sought after. It was plain to see that there was a great deal of wealth displayed along the inlet. However, we also knew there was borderline poverty in other parts of the city, such as the area called Mascot, and in dilapidated rooming houses not far from the hotel.

The afternoon was starting to brighten and, as we were at liberty, Monica and I decided to visit the Sydney Opera House and take the tour of this remarkable building. The Opera House project had a checked history: the design competition, won by the Danish architect Jørn Utzon, was beset by construction difficulties and took many years to build. Even the original design was altered but, regardless, the giant sail-like tile covered roofs as seen from Bennelong Point were awe inspiring. We continued walking around the immediate Circular Quay area and, after dinner, I met up with Ron Crosthwaite. Ron worked for Blackwood Hodge, the Australian heavy equipment dealer used by Champion to sell and service its products. This arrangement was made when Ron, an ex-pat Englishman, visited Champion in Goderich for a service training course. It was good to see him again and we shared several beers in a local pub where I drank the ubiquitous chilled Australian lager with such brand names as “Tooheys” and “Castlemaine XXXX (Fourex)”.

The following day dawned nice and sunny with occasional white puffy clouds as we embarked on an excursion to Canberra, the federal capital located in the Australian Capital Territory. Before exploring the city, we were taken by bus to a sheep station (ranch) where mobs (flocks) of sheep were reared in the rolling countryside of the Blue Mountain foothills for both wool and meat. We were introduced to the station foreman, a burly outdoors type, and he explained the method of raising sheep and the challenges associated with natural forces such as drought, bushfires and predatory animals.

The foreman’s mate was a ‘jackaroo’ or mounted stockman who, together with his dog, skilfully rounded up a small mob of sheep in a demonstration of corralling. One particular animal was selected for the next exhibition and manhandled by the foreman into a large open area inside one of the station buildings – a brick structure with a corrugated iron roof. There definitely was a technique in restraining a squirming sheep so that the operation of shearing a fleece of wool was not compromised. Nowadays, all wool shearing is done with heavy duty, fast acting electric clippers; as opposed to the traditional spring pivoted twin-bladed instrument. However, to assure the best quality the fleece must be shorn in one piece. After controlling the sheep between his legs, the foreman then proceeded to shear in a predetermined method. First, a cut was made down the extent of the chest, belly and under the chin; then sideway swaths were made around the body. Secondary cuts were made down each limb and, eventually, around the neck and back end until a complete fleece fell onto the floor from the sheep’s body. Except for a few small nicks, the animal didn’t appear to be any worse for wear and joined its companions in the corral.

The sheep station had a small petting zoo where kangaroos could be approached at close quarters for photo-opportunities. There was even a female kangaroo with her baby ‘Joey’ safely tucked in her pouch. The party was then mustered into an open area where a traditional Australian ‘barbie’ (barbecue) was served for lunch.

The bus then resumed its journey to Canberra and the first stop was to view the city from the summit of Mount Ainsley. In this spectacular vista we could see most of the city laid out in front of us, including the artificial Lake Burley Griffin, named after the Chicago architect who won the design competition, the prominent Anzac Parade and the federal Provisional Parliament House. Canberra was a planned community from the outset and was designed specifically for the central government, although now it is also renowned for its university and cultural activities. We continued to the Australian War Memorial and National Military