

Pair win Japan trip

# Whirlwind tour leaves her dreaming

By Olga Darcovich  
"Mom spent four weeks in Japan," observed 11-year-old Gary Coulter. "Two weeks on the trip itself and the next two weeks dreaming about it every night."  
Norm and Donna Coulter of Northend Datsun won the activity-packed trip in a contest among Datsun dealers. A group of more than 100 contest winners and Datsun executives from across

Canada made the trip leaving Vancouver Nov. 22 and returning Dec. 5.  
The tour was pre-organized for the group and punctuality was essential. "Everything just went click, click, click," said Mrs. Coulter in a recent interview.  
Their accommodation was in luxury western-style hotels. Meals were pre-selected for them as well. Once, or sometimes twice, a

day Japanese meals were served. "Norm ate everything put in front of him," his wife commented.  
Mrs. Coulter was a little more picky. Raw fish, not her favorite dish, appeared frequently on the menu. "When you're hungry, you'll eat anything," Mrs. Coulter replied when asked how it tasted.

With their meals they were always served Japanese beer, which she found light both in taste and alcohol content. Coke was also available. Soft drinks in the hotels were expensive, however. A room service order of four Cokes and ice came to about \$12. Liquor is also very expensive, costing about three times the Canadian price.

The group toured Japan by bus and a fast train called "the bullet". Their luggage sometimes went to their following day's destination by truck. Whatever they needed for the overnight stop, they had to carry with them. In those cases, the hotels supplied necessities such as toothbrushes, kimonos and slippers.

The trip was a marvellous experience, Mrs. Coulter said. "Japan was a wonderful place to see, but I'd never want to live there," she commented. "I'm too used to the luxuries we have here, such as refrigeration."

Mrs. Coulson observed people in Japan are either poor (by Canadian standards) or very rich. Few are to be found in the middle class.

In Japan everybody works, she said. If not working at jobs outside the home, women work at crafts in their homes. Incomes are low. Canada, by contrast, is the land of milk and honey, she commented.

Because of the lack of refrigeration and storage space generally, home-makers shop daily. There are no supermarkets. Shops are market-type stalls in which vendors sell their goods. Vendors live over their shops.

Any land that is available to the homeowner is used for a garden, she said. There are no lawns. However, the ubi-

quitous television sets are plentiful in Japan, too.

The crowds left an impression on Mrs. Coulter. "There were wall-to-wall people," she commented, adding: "But you never see kids running around. They are either at school or working at crafts or at home."

Parents have to pay for their children's schooling beyond grade eight, she learned. Children whose parents can't afford to send them to school join the labor force. She saw many youngsters peddling flowers and other goods.

School children and workers all wear uniforms, she observed. Those who aren't in uniform are smartly dressed in western style clothes. The older generation, however, continues to wear the traditional kimono, she

said. The men's kimonos are black or grey.

Kimonos are worn over kimono, the number of layers depending on the season. In January and February, the coldest months of winter, as many as 12 kimonos might be worn.

Few people wear jeans. Those she did see were mostly tourists, she noted. Checking the price of clothes in Japanese department stores, she found them very expensive.

Service in stores is "great", Mrs. Coulter said. There are many more sales-clerks than in Canadian stores. Overall, Japan doesn't seem to have the unemployment problem Canada is experiencing, she reported.

Working hours are staggered in an attempt to control the large volume of commuter traffic. A unique

feature of Japanese city life is the banning of cars at night. Between the hours of 7 p.m. and midnight, only taxis are allowed on the streets of large cities. But because of the congestion caused by the large number of cabs they could walk to their destination faster than they could ride by taxi, she said.

A foreigner driving in the country might be puzzled to see no pumps standing at Japanese service stations. Gas is pumped from overhead, Mrs. Coulter said.

Another uniquely Japanese custom she found was the requirement for surgical masks to be worn by anyone suffering from a cold.

She was also struck by the absence of litter. Not only is the country very clean, disposable containers are not used.

A visit to a pearl diving operation was one of the highlights of the visit, Mrs. Coulter said. All the white-clad divers are women. Women are said to be better at the job than men. The trade is handed down from generation to generation, young girls starting to learn the skill at 11 years of age. Some women were still diving at the age of 66, Mrs. Coulter reported.

The trip included two days in Hong Kong, which turned out to be markedly different from Japan. Whereas the Japanese were gracious and helpful and the country clean, Hong Kong was dirty and people they encountered, especially shopkeepers, were pushy and abrupt. "We were spoiled in Japan," she remarked.

Nevertheless, they learned to barter in Hong Kong and came home with several treasures they bought at bargain prices.

The Coulters placed sixth out of 62 Ontario Datsun dealers in the competition. Winners were chosen on the basis of their purchasing power — how much stock they bought from the company. This meant they had to sell more too. "We didn't buy unless we could foresee we could sell," Mrs. Coulter said. "Our sales went up, but our percentages went down."

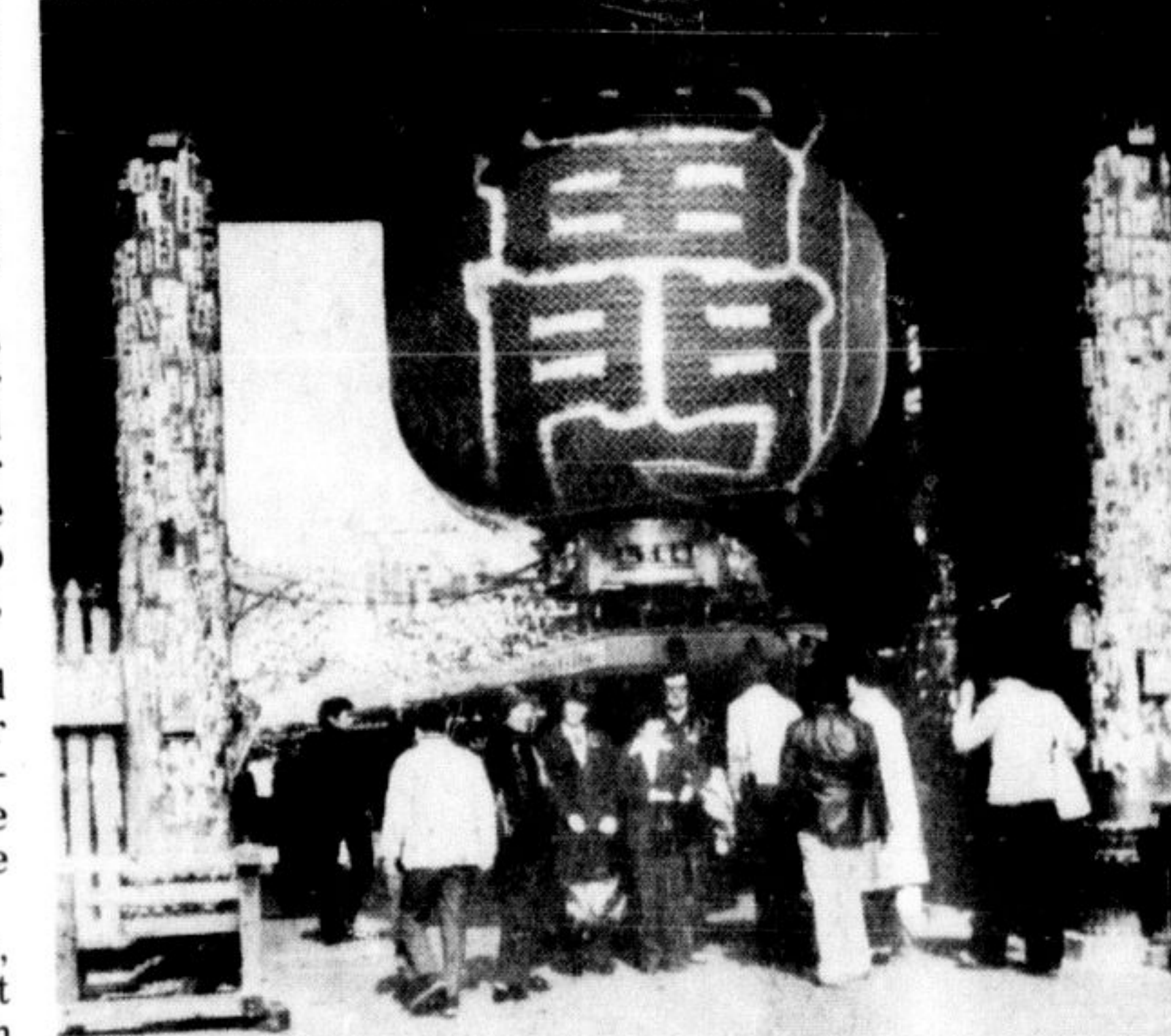
However, the idea of the six-month campaign was to put more Datsuns on the road, she pointed out. As a result, there will eventually be a greater volume of cars to service and for the used car market.



LAVISHLY DECORATED ramp led way to board junk, a type of houseboat common in Hong Kong, which was used to ferry tour members to an island restaurant. Only eight people could be transported at one time.



HOME from a busy tour of Japan and Hong Kong are Norm and Donna Coulter. Despite a hectic schedule they had time to pick up a number of souvenirs, including this calendar, from the orient.



JAPANESE VERSION of a shopping mall was visited by Donna (in centre of photo) and Norm Coulter during recent trip to Japan.

## Seniors hear talks on houseplants

A talk on growing plants under lights and bingo were the highlights of last week's meeting of the Senior Citizens' Club.

Mel Robinson discussed how plants could be grown under lights the year around. He gets spring flowers ready for outdoor planting in this way. Dean Parrott introduced the speaker.

Mrs. Jean Hasselfeldt called for bingo. Four tables of cards were also played. In the absence of Mrs. Fred Edwards Sam Finnie chaired the meeting. Mrs. Clara Price played the piano for the

singing of the national anthem.

For Jan 25 the seniors have planned a pot luck lunch in the Legion Hall. The lunch is set for 12:30 p.m. Three meetings will be announced in the list of coming events.

## New recreation programs

For those unable to get away to a warm sandy beach during the next few months, Milton Parks and Recreation Department is offering a selection of winter programs to make winter a little easier to live with.

Programs include both outdoor sports activities and indoor interests for children and adults.

The majority of the programs are a continuation of those offered in the fall program but there are new additions, as a result of public interest, according to Karen Uhryn, program supervisor. Learn to skate, and power skating are two new courses commencing Saturday, Jan. 7 at Milton Memorial Arena. Also new is an adult and junior ski program at Glen

Eden Ski Area.

Boys' gymnastics will be taught for the first time as part of the program at Ernest C. Drury School, starting Saturday, Jan. 7 for boys seven to 14 years of age.

Both Campbellville and Brookville will continue with courses run during the fall months with new additions.

A program of mixed physical exercises will be offered in a course for women. The course "Active Adults" starts Thursday, Jan. 19. A quilting program and a craft program for children in Brookville are also new topics.

Campbellville will continue

with its pre-school playshop course and ladies' yoga class, both at Campbellville Community Centre.

Registration for the courses can be made by completing a registration form, available at Milton Parks and Recreation Department, and dropping the form in a mail drop outside the office.

All registrations are accepted on a first come, first served basis. A minimum registration of participants is required before a recreation program may proceed and insufficient registration will necessitate the cancellation of any course.

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