

FUN

“I haven’t had as much fun in a long time” said Valerie as we turned off 401 onto Wooler Road for the last leg of our journey home from Toronto. This was several weeks ago but the buildup to the “fun”, in my view started at Thanksgiving.

We, as is usual, were heading for daughter Ann’s home in Mount Albert for the holiday. We had picked up oldest grandson, who is attending Queens, the day before and were taking him with us for a visit back home. Usually, on Thanksgiving, be it at their home or their cottage near Port Severn, we go on a trip on the day while the turkey and other delicious things are cooking. This year was no exception.

Daughter and her husband have bought a condo in downtown Toronto and invited us to go visit the “hole in the ground” as construction is only at the footing stage. The three grandsons bowed out as our youngest grandson said, “Grandpa, staring at a hole in the ground has to be one of the most boring things in the world, particularly if you’ve seen it a number of times”. We didn’t agree since we hadn’t seen it. The location is within a block of the St. Lawrence Market and other spots that Valerie and I hadn’t visited for a number of years.

You may remember that I am one of the rare breed of people born in Toronto. The street I lived on no longer exists but its name St. James Ave. was taken to cover the huge development St. Jamestown that runs from Wellesley St. north up Parliament St. to Bloor St. west to Sherbourne St. and south to Wellesley. The east side of Parliament maintains its quiet, wooded, but somewhat stony environment, as St. James cemetery. As kids we used to walk over to Yonge St. for the Santa Claus parade and then down to Eaton’s to tell Santa what we wanted for Christmas.

“If this trip was the start of the fun what was the fun”, I hear you ask. Well, Valerie and I were invited, at the beginning of November, to attend the Royal Winter Fair for the official opening of the South Eastern Ontario exhibit. This exhibit (a booth over 4000 square feet) was sponsored by the Community Futures Development Corporations of southeastern Ontario and businesses within southeastern Ontario to showcase what this area has to offer. As Chair of Prince Edward, Lennox and Addington CFDC I represented our interest. Neither of us had attended the Royal for a number of years when we each had an interest in horses, so it was a most interesting, pleasant and even, fun visit.

We were staying at the Sheraton Downtown Hotel which is located on Queen St. just across from the Nathan Philips

Square and Toronto City Hall. This is a most familiar area for both Valerie and me. In fact shortly after check in and lunch Valerie found some time for shopping at the Bay while I took some time to relax after the drive in, particularly the mess on the Don Valley since we arrived on a Friday.

After our visit to the Royal and a cab drive back to our hotel we walked to a famous sea food restaurant, just behind the hotel that we hadn’t been to in a number of years. On the Saturday morning we got the car and drove down Jarvis St. to the St. Lawrence Market.

Since we had lived in the Beach this was a favourite shopping spot for us, the north and south markets, at least twice a month. The area has changed around the market with considerable condo and apartment construction with a major effect of reducing parking spots. There are two lots behind the south market, one charging by the hour (it’s usually full) and a larger lot charging a flat rate of \$8.

We had to have our favourite market breakfast as soon as we arrived – pea meal bacon on a bun, which, based on the photos and testimonials on the walls, has become world famous.

I won’t try to describe the range and quality of goods since I couldn’t do it justice. I didn’t, although they were there as usual, pick up any fresh squid but did get marvelous schnitzels and other meats that don’t resemble the cello packaged stuff we get in super markets. There is one cheese seller that we always went to where we picked up some triple cream brie, unbelievably good, and some 4 year old Gouda that was indescribably delicious. I won’t list every thing else we got but we did take our plug-in cooler with us so the food kept in good shape.

After a trip up Jarvis and Mount Pleasant to Eglinton then over to Tilley’s where we bought some stuff for our trip to Egypt we headed home. I didn’t mind the drive home. Traffic was certainly heavy but not as bad as Friday’s.

We both had such a fun time visiting old stamping grounds that we’ve arranged for a similar trip just before Christmas.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL
FROM VALERIE AND ME

- John A. Jackson