

PLANNING

One evening last spring, Valerie and I were sitting in the living room, having a pre dinner drink as usual with Buffy patiently watching the signal for her treats and dinner.

“We should make plans for some holidays during the summer” I said. We of course had had a spring holiday with two weeks in Egypt, but we knew what with friends, neighbours and family the empty calendar days during July and August would rapidly be filled.

I can hear some of you saying. “But you are retired so your whole life is one big holiday.” I’m not even going to dignify that erroneous comment by discussing it.

“What did you have in mind?” said Valerie. “Is there any particular place you want to go?” “Well yes there is one” I said. Two years ago we had attended the dog trials in a park midway between Kingston and Gananoque. Now I have, as I’m sure most of you have seen segments of dog trials on the T.V. and in the movies. To see it in real life to my view is a real pleasure. With hand signals and whistles only the ‘shepherd’ brings the dog from his or her pen along the side of a field to where the flock of sheep is standing. The dog takes the sheep down a number of hazards and finally drives them in to a fold against the clock. It is exciting to watch as a wayward sheep can lead the whole flock astray and the dog must work extremely hard to put everything back in order.

We have planned for a number of years to drive down to the Hudson Valley and see the various houses and enjoy some sight seeing and perhaps a trip or two on parts of the river. We had to include the military college at West Point and the famous American Culinary Institute so this too went on the list for the summer of 2008.

You may be surprised to find that Valerie and I think that a couple of days spent during the summer in Kingston a rewarding and restful experience. We’ve seen the Buskers Convention, visited the market, enjoy cruises on the St. Lawrence and of course one or more of our favourite restaurants.

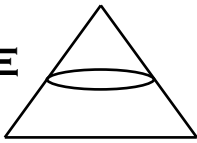
I suppose this love affair with Kingston harkens back to the days when we sailed. I can’t remember a years when we spent a month circling Lake Ontario from Niagara and back to Bluffers Park when we didn’t visit Kingston. At first we would stay out at Portsmouth Harbour and then later on we docked at the harbour right downtown. It was on these expeditions that we also came to know Picton as we docked at the sailing club or the Yacht Club on our circuit.

“Well, how did your planning turn out?” I hear you ask. Not really as we expected. First there was the weather. Any day free from thunderstorms was spent catching up on chores that couldn’t be done in the soggy weather – the grass just keeps on growing! Then there were the usual invitations from family and friends to this and that used up some of the time between and sometimes even during the showers or more likely downpours. There were interferences in our planning agenda in the health category as our body’s continual aging with bits falling off or deciding not to work very well that took time out with doctors’ visits.

As an example just the other day we heard on the CBC that a hotel in Tamworth had undergone remodeling and had opened a new restaurant. Now I can’t recall ever being in Tamworth so since we had to be in Kingston for a health appointment we took a holiday trip to Tamworth this Wednesday. Needless to say the Hotel is not open on Wednesdays! But we did find this splendid little food outlet that Valerie assured me served the best chicken fingers she had tasted and my burger was too large for me to finish.

But what about the plans! Well we made it to Kingston, Gananoque for the opening night of Les Miserables and also made our annual trip up Shelter Valley Road but we are going to work on the Dog Trials and the Hudson for 2009 and one of these years I am definitely going to get to New York. I think the only way we are going to fit all this in is to tell everyone that we have gone away for the summer!

- John A Jackson

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