

# Stouffville man travelled world by computer

Over 20 years in the computer industry has given Iain Drummond more than mere expertise; it's enabled him to experience a variety of exciting cultures and has led to the formation of his own company in Canada, which has recently developed its own unique product.

"We've been in Canada for about three years, having always planned to come here," explains the Island Lake resident. A native of Britain and for many years an employee of ICL, a British multinational computer company, Iain spent much of his career overseeing the organization of its various international offices.

When the opportunity to travel first presented itself in the mid-'70s, he and his wife Moya didn't hesitate to take it. "By then I realized I knew a lot about a little, but nothing about the big world. When the company needed a new managing director for the Malaysian operation I applied and was appointed to the position. We went to Kuala Lumpur in 1975."

They went for two years and stayed for five. "It was a great place. I moved from a specialized position to a very generalized one. At the time the economy was going great guns, so it was very enjoyable, but after five years we realized we had to stay forever or get out."

Although he describes it as "a tremendously exciting part of the world," the constant requirement to entertain took its toll and they decided to leave. "That may sound odd, but sometimes we were out 21 nights out of 30; it was part of the job. We finally got sick of it."

His next position took them somewhere very different; to Cairo, Egypt. "It's a horrific place to live. It was designed for two million and about 15 million live there." As a result, driving was an extremely hazardous

pastime. "For employment reasons I had a driver. One day he told me the car would have to go into the garage because both horn buttons were worn out."

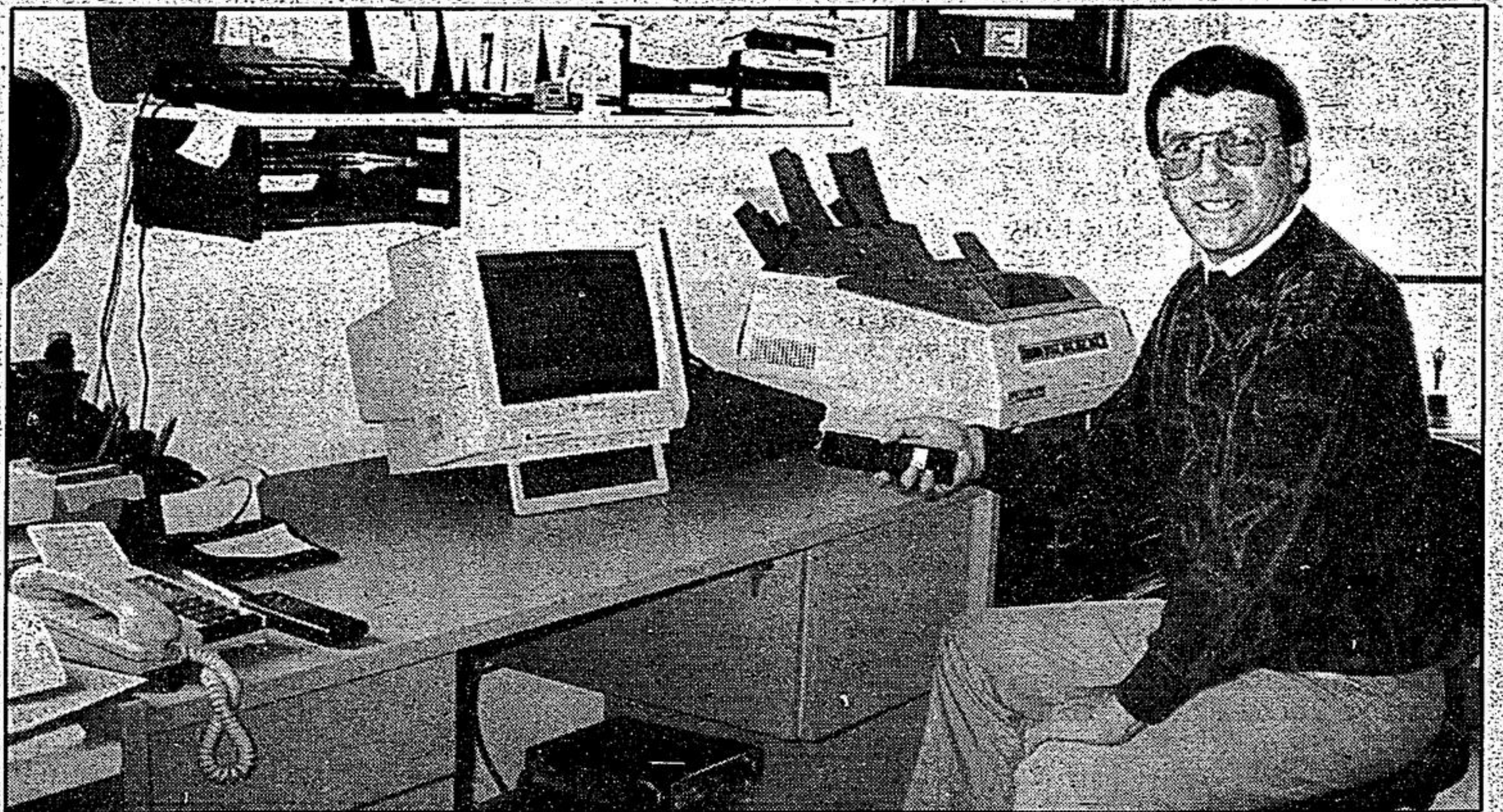
Traffic signals were largely ignored. "When I asked one manager about what the rules were, he said, 'red is optional, green is compulsory.'" And if efficiency was an important consideration to someone, Cairo was not the place for them, stresses Iain. One front-page article he read in Egypt's only English-language newspaper illustrates his point perfectly.

The article advised residents of Cairo that their telephones, which had not been operating for some time, would be reconnected. "The reason for the problem," the article explained, "was a broken sewer pipe. This has been fixed. However, residents should not be surprised if, for the first couple of weeks, odd smells emanate from the handset."

He also chuckles over the time he was in Tel Aviv, Israel, and heard a sportscaster come out with the immortal observation, "this is a real Mecca for tourists." He and Moya made a hasty exit from Egypt after two and a half years, when he contracted peritonitis and was flown home.

Following his recovery, he returned to work. "A week later I got a call from ICL saying 'you've got to go to India now.' So we went to Bombay and stayed there for exactly a year." Parts of the country were very beautiful, Moya points out, and they thoroughly enjoyed the time they spent there.

"When I got there, there were no word processors and one electric typewriter; the rest were manual. And we were an international computer company," grins Iain. "I insisted on having a word processor and ended up with the only one in the country, which



Photo/KATE GILDERDALE

Iain Drummond travelled the world before settling in Canada three years ago. The former computer firm executive now runs his own business which developed an alternative to the computer keyboard for non-typists. The device, about the size of a TV remote control, is used by executive of a number of multinational corporations.

was imported from Britain." Disaster struck when it broke down.

"We worked out which chip had caused the problem and said we'd have to get it from Britain." Within an hour, some technicians came in with the microchip he needed. "They told me they got it from the Black Chip Shop." It transpired that the "shop" sold illegally imported chips, brought in by Indians who had picked them up in different countries and smuggled them in.

When their year in India was up, they were transferred to Abu Dhabi, where they stayed for two and a half years. "It was one of the most enjoyable places we've been to," says Iain. "There were no taxes on anything and the companies provide you with housing, flights, medical costs,

everything. They have the highest per capita income in the world there."

Their next and final transfer with ICL was to Canada. "I came here as president of ICL Canada, but after about a year I decided the time had come to do my own thing. We agreed we'd done enough travelling for a while." One of his clients was Dylex, which own such stores as Thrifty's and Fairweather.

"They'd expressed a need to provide executives with computer systems, but they didn't want equipment cluttering up their desks. I saw this as a big opportunity, so I bought my own company and set about developing a computer networking company called CLAN (Canadian Local Area Networks)."

As a result of extensive

research, the company developed an alternative to the traditional keyboard; a unit which looks exactly like a handheld television channel changer, but which can perform all the functions of the keyboard itself. "Executives aren't prepared to spend any time learning to use the keyboard, but this is something they feel comfortable with."

The user makes numeric selections from the screen to access the information required. "It can be linked to a PC or a mainframe, and it can also be linked into InfoGlobe and the stock market," explains Iain. The system is now installed in major organizations including Chrysler Canada, Dylex and Ontario Hydro, and has attracted international attention for this innovative Canadian company.

# Stouffville's Jim Rehill travels world on a song



By KATE GILDERDALE  
Correspondent

When the award-winning Scarborough Dukes of Harmony take to the stage for Harmony Showcase '89 Dec. 1 and 2 at Seneca College, the chorus will feature three familiar faces from Stouffville.

Jim Rehill, George Pratt and Rick Heath will be performing with the group and it promises to be a memorable evening for everyone. Three Scarborough barbershop quartets, Flipside, Signature and Catch 44, will also be featured, as well as Chordiac Arrest, which Jim describes as "really incredible. This quartet came fifth in the world at last year's international contest."

Jim himself joined the Dukes of Harmony in 1986. "To get into the Dukes, you have to be sponsored by someone in the group," he explains. When a friend said he was going to sponsor him, his first reaction was to refuse. "I was so busy, but I love singing and I'd tried almost every kind except barbershop. I knew if I didn't do it, I'd always be sorry I'd passed up the chance to sing with the top chorus in Canada."

He auditioned and to his delight was accepted. "My whole life has been music. I sang in high school and we were the top choir in Ontario in 1953. I also sang with the McMaster Choir, which is really outstanding, when I was in university. I've always either been in choirs or directing them."

Jim finally gave up directing the Stouffville District Secondary School choir last year, after many years of involvement. "I just couldn't make the commitment with all the other things I was doing, but I've stayed on with the church choir." Being a member of the Dukes of Harmony is a time-consuming affair, he admits.

"Throughout the year we practice on Tuesday nights. As we get ready for anything special, we go Thursday nights as well. At the end of April, we go to four-hour practices on Tuesday and on three hours on Thursday and on Sundays we usually go from 10 to 3. That's the time the chorus prepares for the annual international championships."

"We're a really competitive chorus, the guys live for competi-

tion." With countries like Sweden and England now competing in the championships, it's become a truly international event, Jim states. The Scarborough chorus is made up of people from as far away as Barrie and Georgetown. "Last year we had one guy driving to and from Woodstock."

The Dukes hire one of the top coaches from the States, to coach them in sound, interpretation and stage presence. "We work extremely hard, but we also have a tremendous amount of fun." And the hard work pays off. On Saturday, Oct. 28, the Dukes won the Ontario district official chorus contest in Kitchener hands down, ahead of eight other groups.

That's just the beginning, says Jim. Now the Dukes will go on to compete in the international event, which takes place next July in San Francisco. He considers himself very fortunate to be a member of the chorus. "Many people who have been singing for over 30 years have never made it to an international."

His involvement with the Dukes of Harmony will also allow him, and his wife Shirley, to do some travelling, particularly

after he retires next year. "In 1991, this chorus and the Tri-City Chorus are going to Jamaica, touring and putting on concerts. In 1992, we're touring Australia."

One of his fondest memories is of the concert they did last year at Roy Thomson Hall with the Sweet Adelines, whom he describes as outstanding. The finale featured a combination of songs, including Look Away, Look Away, The Battle Hymn of the Republic and Hush Little Baby, in an eight-part harmony. When it was over "there were tears in everyone's eyes."

Profits from their concerts go to Harmonize for Speech, an organization which provides funding for therapists and treatments for speech problems in hospitals, clinics and other medical facilities. "It's like the Shriners with their cause, we have this one. Throughout the world our motto is 'we sing that they shall speak'."

Harmony Showcase '89 takes place Friday, Dec. 1 and Saturday, Dec. 2 at 8 p.m. at Minkler Auditorium, Seneca College, 1750 Finch Ave. E. For tickets or information call 282-0033.

Jim Rehill, of Stouffville, will perform with the Scarborough Dukes of Harmony on Dec. 1 and 2 at Seneca College's Minkler Auditorium. He's been a member of the award-winning barbershop group since 1986.