

Canadian Caraventure

by Dick and Barbara Cleaveland

Monday, June 22, 1992: We left home at a quarter to nine, filled up the tank and headed out west and north on I-270/70 to join up with I-81. This is a little out of the way for a trip to Montreal, but it avoided DC proper and the Baltimore area, and was probably a more pleasant drive than the more direct route would have been. At first we thought we'd stop for the night just a little way into New York, but the slower going in the hills of Pennsylvania encouraged us to stop earlier, so about 2:45 PM we pulled into Lackawanna State Park. Nice campgrounds, plenty of space between sites, but no water or electric hookups. Surprisingly this park is noted in the AAA campgrounds book but not in the Trailer Life Campground directory. After finding an acceptable site and getting up on the jacks I discovered we were very low on propane, and the chilly weather (in the 50's all day) suggested we should fill up, so we went to a small community nearby where the gal running the general store sold us 13 gallons (\$19.15), a fill-up for our tank. Then back to the campsite, a visit by a ranger; the normal \$11 charge for out-of-state campers was reduced to \$9 because of my advanced age (ah, the benefits of the aging of the wine of life).

Tuesday, June 23, 1992: North into New York State, then we decided to stop in the town of Courtland for gas and lunch. As we filled up I asked the station attendant to recommend a nice restaurant. He may well have told us about a great place, but when we found it there was no way we could park our monster anywhere near by, so we resolved to try on the outskirts of town. A half hour later we were just succeeding at getting out of town so we skipped the idea of a restaurant lunch and stopped at an interstate pull-off for sandwiches. Courtland is a complex town, street-wise! We continued north to the St. Lawrence river and settled in at the campground in the Cedar Point State Park. Campsites were more crowded about twenty feet wide - but our site was right on the river, with an excellent view of the passing ships, although there were surprisingly very few of these. The weather was beautiful all day, clear and mostly in the 60's, and we were entertained by a veritable horde of chipmunks who lived in the area.

Wednesday, June 24, 1992: It started raining during the night, and continued off and on during the day. We left Cedar Point and ran Northeast along the waterway to Alexandria Bay, where we took a scenic boat tour (Uncle Sam's Boat Tours) of the Thousand Islands area. We both found the tour more interesting than we expected; there are some really impressive mansions built on some of these islands and they're all summer homes! Some of the islands with homes on them were really small, just large enough for the house, one tree and a dock. The tour was well done; the narrator was a young lad who spoke very well and had a clearly superior knowledge of the area. After the tour we returned to our Northeast path and stopped at Coles Creek State Park, again being lucky enough to get one of the last remaining sites right on the shore of the Seaway.

Thursday, June 25, 1992: Shortly after dawn the clouds wafted away and we had the start of what turned out to be a very nice day. While dumping on the way out of the park we saw a nice fish being caught just a few yards off shore; I gather the fishing in this area of the Seaway is excellent. We stopped for gas and lunch in the little town of Massena, NY. The restaurant we

chose was the Village Inn; it was very nice. About one PM we passed into Canada with little bother, and proceeded to the campground where the Good Sam tour is to start on Friday. After changing our site we found one that allowed us to level our motor home satisfactorily. The park is east of Montreal. No trouble at all getting the proprietor to let us make a computer phone call to CompuServe in Montreal, so we could clear out our outbox. No incoming mail yet.

Friday, June 26, 1992: After a short trip to a local store to get a few groceries, we spent most of the rest of the day loafing and reading. When we picked up the groceries there were two items that surprised us. I wanted a spare 9 volt alkaline battery for my modem, and found I had to pay \$5.85 (Canadian) for one. That's quite high, even at the exchange rate of \$1.19 Canadian to one US dollar. We also wanted a newspaper; the only ones available at the grocery and at the nearby drug store were in French, so we had to do without. Fortunately we could get a Vermont TV station so we kept up with the news (the rail strike is canceled by congress).

At 3PM there was a meeting of all of us going on the "caraventure" (a term derived from caravan and adventure). In all, there are 22 units in the group, with some 47 or so people involved. We were given identification cards for ourselves and our vehicles (we are #6), a set of maps, and an understanding of the procedures we would be expected to follow. Then we retired to a wine and cheese party where we all sat around and gabbed while enjoying the largess presented by our hosts, the wagonmaster and tail gunner. The wagon master is the overall manager of the operation; the tail gunner travels the route last and offers assistance to any group members having difficulties.

Evening brought bad news; our regular TV failed, so we brought out the nine incher we had brought along as a spare. Boo!

Saturday, June 27, 1992: This was "tour Montreal" day. We left the campground in a chartered Gray Line bus at 8:30 and until 12:00 we had a tour of the city with constant narrative by the driver. We visited the classic places: a beautiful cathedral, a high point nearby for panoramic views, local statuary, and so forth. Our noon-to-3PM stop was for independent lunch and shopping in the center of the "new" city, where a great deal of commerce is literally underground, a practice encouraged by the severe winters the area experiences. One high note: we found a Radio Shack where the 9volt alkaline cells were \$2 each (compared with the price we had paid yesterday) so I bought two more spares. We then moved on to the "old town" area, where the city was concentrating the activities associated with the 350th anniversary of its founding. Since the weather was beautiful - temperature in the low 70's, partly cloudy and fairly calm - there were a great number of street entertainers doing their things, and that helped us pass the time until the bus picked us up again at 5PM. We were then transported to a restaurant for a banquet dinner. While the food there was excellent, the service was abominable, from the space allocation (no elbow room, six people had to get up and move out to let one go to the rest room) to the food delivery (about 25 minutes between salad and entree') and little attention to the emptiness of water glasses. Personally, few things irk me as much as seeing our waitress standing around chatting casually with the other servers while the people at her station need service. Those of us

that had veal were served about ten minutes earlier than those who had selected salmon.

Sunday, June 28, 1992: The trip from Montreal to Quebec city was fairly uneventful. The route chosen by the wagon master was fairly scenic, along the southeastern edge of the Seaway. We passed through several small towns, many which had the strange and unnerving characteristic of power and telephone poles mounted on the street side of the curb, making right-side clearance somewhat less than intuitive. We docked in the "caravan" part of a campground west of the city; water and electric lines were strung out on the ground on a flat bare gravel parking lot. The campground "regulars" all had relatively permanent sites. We must have been quite a novelty to them, as much of the afternoon and evening there were groups taking walks past our area, staring at our vehicles. The management was cooperative, and we managed to make computer contact with CompuServe.

The weather finally broke in the afternoon, and periodic showers forced us to have our pot luck dinner in the campground's recreation hall. Barbara had fixed a George Bush special: broccoli salad. Amazing that with twenty two participants and no pre-coordination only one item was duplicated: two people prepared three-bean salad. During dinner we heard that one of the caravan members, #2, had suffered a failed transmission and was being delayed and would probably catch up with us later. Our television started working again just as I was beginning to remove it to see what I could do about fixing it. All TV available was in French, so it made little difference.

'Monday, June 29, 1992: The day dawned overcast and a cool 60°. We left at 9:00 for an all-day tour of the Quebec City area. The city is on two levels, separated by a bluff of a couple hundred feet or so. The "old" part was walled, and much of the old wall and half of the gates still exist. Quebec was a site of the French-English war, and I'm sure we saw just about every place a battle was fought in the area. Our Gray Line driver-guide was excellent, speaking good English but with an accent that was reminiscent of a cross between Victor Borge and Lawrence Welk. One of our stops was at the Shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupre, where we were told about a thousand healing miracles have occurred. Impressive church there; a great deal of mosaic. After return from the tour we checked in with CompuServe to respond to the messages received yesterday.

Tuesday, June 30, 1992: It rained all night, and the rain continued until mid-morning; by afternoon it was clear and pleasant. The drive from Quebec to Bic included passage through an artist's community where the specialty was wood carving. We stopped at one place, but the carvings weren't particularly impressive (to us - a highly subjective matter) so we didn't buy any. Later we stopped at a place where they had set up an information station for people interested in the ecology of the area; unfortunately the two women managing the station had no command of English, and of course their French was of little help to us. All the signs and placards were in French too, but they had about three pages of an English description of the place which we read. The primary thrust was that they had a dike which extended out into the river and allowed a group of farmers to make use of the land thereby reclaimed - just like in Holland, I guess. Apparently the farmers are in conflict with those who want the tidelands preserved, not surprising these days. We took a nice walk along the dike and saw the huge flapper valves that let

the land drain when the tide is out.

Our campground in Bic was on a flat area near the shoreline; the terrain is becoming more hilly and this type of land is going to be scarcer soon, it seems. Dinner was fried chicken; we had stopped along the way to pick it up (the sign said "Poulet Frit a la' Kentucky). We had more fries than we wanted, another casualty of our language differences. During the day's drive our cruise control stopped working, so after dinner I dug into it and discovered that the "temporary" fix I had applied last summer had failed. This time I spent less effort and made an even more temporary fix. I wonder how long this one will last.

Wednesday, July 1, 1992: Canada Day, like our 4th of July to Canadians. We stopped at a mariner's museum along the coast where the main thrust was the sinking of a large passenger ship, the Empress Of Ireland, just off the coast in 1914, with the loss of 1012 people, the result of a collision in the fog. Later we stopped at an installation of Hydro-Quebec where we were treated (at the cost of \$10) to information on the Canadian salmon fishery and the unusual way they locally manage to have the fish bypass the dam: they capture them, put them in a truck, and drive them up to the top! The people at this installation were very cheerful and friendly, even going to the trouble of interpreting the menu in the snack bar for us. We pulled in to the campground at Cap Chat (pronounced cap shot), pleased that my temporary cruise control fix had lasted at least one day.

Dinner for the group was at the Fleur de Lys restaurant, within walking distance of the campground. In contrast to the earlier group dinner this one was good all around - decently spaced seating and fairly good service as well as excellent food. After dinner a tour bus took us to see the huge experimental wind turbine located at Cap Chat; it is about 300 feet high and generates about four megawatts when the wind is sufficient, about half the time. It's interesting that the tours we've taken of Canadian public utility locations have required an admission fee; it's the same sort of thing that one would expect our U.S. utilities to provide free under their public relations budgets.

Thursday, July 2, 1992: The main tour today, the copper mines at Murdochville, could only handle one half our group in one two-hour session. Accordingly, last night we were divided into two groups; we volunteered for the first group which had to get underway by 7 AM. When we woke up it was blowing a full gale; the surf where we took a casual walk yesterday would have made a similar walk today life-threatening. The drive to Murdochville was uneventful, except for the somewhat winding roads through the mountains, which were similar to the best roads on the Alaskan Highway: most of the time the white line on the edge was visible, and there were no gravel patches although minor frost heaves were frequent. Our visit to the copper mine at Murdochville was very interesting. After a brief introduction to the place at the visitor's center we dressed up in mining outfits (boots, coveralls, safety belt with battery pack and hard-hat with lamp) and descended into one of the lateral shafts which no longer is in production; perhaps 300 feet below the surface. We saw the vein they had been working and got a good explanation of the working conditions the miners experienced. Then back to the surface for a tour of the above-

ground part of the current mining operation, including the pulverizing, float skimming and drying steps. I would like to have seen the smelting plant, but that wasn't included in the tour. A view of the open pit mine which they are no longer working completed the tour. They say that there is only enough ore in the area to keep them operating for about seven years; the town is desperately searching for other activity to keep itself alive after the mining pays out.

The trip from there to Perce ("percy") was the same as before until we reached the ocean at Gaspe, when it converted to a beautiful mountain seashore drive similar to what one sees in northern California. On the way out of Gaspe we picked up a couple of lobsters at \$4.50 per pound, planning on having them for dinner that night.

Friday, July 3, 1992: Although the wind was still strong this morning, it eased off by the afternoon, and the temperature finally rose to a more comfortable level - it has been in the 50's for the last few days. This morning we had a tour of Perce. It was originally a small fishing town, but with the decreased availability of the fish it has converted to tourism. Lots of motels, campgrounds and shops, shops, shops. Beautiful scenery, with a rock butte about three hundred feet high and 600 feet long sticking up in the harbor, as well as an island bird sanctuary where some 30,000 gannets nest at this time each year. The afternoon was free, so we took the opportunity to do the laundry and do a little shopping. In the evening we had a group dinner at the Au Pigalle restaurant; lobster was one of the entre choices and of course Barbara and I chose that. As Barbara put it, this was probably the only time in her life she had eaten lobster two nights in a row! The restaurant was very nice and the seating comfortable, but the service marginal, with the lobsters coming out slowly so that the last people had to wait some time for theirs.

Saturday, July 4, 1992: Finally a beautiful, calm morning, although still cool - low 50's. The drive to Nigadoo was uneventful. We stopped off at Campbellton, as we entered New Brunswick, for lunch and, with the cooperation of the information center people, made contact with CompuServe. In all eight messages were waiting for us, a record. In Nigadoo we had our second and last pot luck dinner; Barbara contributed a chicken rice dish. It started to rain during the night.

Sunday, July 5, 1992: The rain eased off in the morning (although the wind was strong again), and we managed to get underway with little trouble. Since we had "lost" an hour upon entering New Brunswick the sunrise was back on a reasonable schedule - about 5:00 instead of 4:00 or so. That, plus the overcast sky, made it easier to sleep until a reasonable hour. Our first stop of the day was at the Acadian Village, a sort of "Williamsburg of the North", as Barbara put it. They did a very nice job, however. After an introductory slide show where we were reminded that Longfellow's "Evangeline" was written about this area, we visited the several buildings from the 1760-1890 era. Each one was occupied by a person in period costume who described the place and even, in many cases, demonstrated. The women in the farmhouses were cooking - it turns out they not only demonstrate the cooking methods in use when the house was active, but their product was used as the staff luncheon. In the blacksmith shop the blacksmith gave us a decorative nail he made while we watched. Equipment in the carpenter's and cobbler's shops

were operating, as well as that in the mill: they grind flour several times a day. On the way out Barbara bought a few items in the gift shop and it really brought home to us the level of taxation there is in Canada. For \$10.60 worth of goods the tax was \$1.99!

The rest of the day was spent driving to Cape Tormentine, the place where a ferry departs for Prince Edward Island. We dry-camped there for the night. Dry-camping is when there are no sources of water or electricity, and one is entirely dependent upon the self-contained water and battery power (or generator). We did a lot more of that on our Alaska trip; apparently it's a novelty in these caravans. The winds continued to be strong and chilly and carried some rain, making our evening meeting (outside near the wagon master's rig) a bit uncomfortable.

Monday, July 6, 1992: The winds were (finally) relatively calm at get-up time, and stayed that way all day. We all left the campground at Cape Tormentine in a line, truly like a caravan, to the ferry terminal five minutes away. Our twenty-two rigs made only a small dent in the capacity of the ferry to Prince Edward Island; the ferry left at 9AM and docked forty-five minutes later. Again in a caravan, communicating by CB, we drove to the new campground twenty or so miles away, near Charlottetown. It rained a little most of the way, and the rain continued in the afternoon. Shortly after we arrived and got hooked up we had a clam chowder luncheon in the campground rec hall and then I checked in with CompuServe. Afterwards I lowered the awning for the first time on the trip; not because of the sun but because of the rain - and because we are scheduled to be here for three days.

Tuesday, July 7, 1992: Today we had an "all-day" tour of Prince Edward Island (P.E.I.) aboard a double-decker bus (imported from London). Barbara and I were "lucky" to get a seat on top; we had excellent views at the expense of a much rougher ride. P.E.I. is the smallest province of Canada, 2000 square miles, about the size of Delaware. Most notable on the trip were the number of places with gift shops that we stopped and lots of extra time. The island has a beautiful beach on the north side, and equally nice bays and harbors on the south side. Lobstering is a major industry here and the season had just ended, so we saw thousands of pots stacked ashore. One tourist attraction here is a place where a man had expended a great deal of time and money creating models of various buildings of London; most to scales of 1:3 to 1:6. This was no mean feat, since he tried to match not only the size and shape of the stones with which many of these buildings were built, but also the color, and there are no stones or rocks found naturally on the island. The toughest material we saw here was something like a red sandstone, totally incapable of being used for building without chemical treatment.

Surprisingly, the tour neglected the cities on P.E.I. completely, concentrating on the countryside. Included was the "House of Green Gables", where Lucy Maude Montgomery lived while she wrote the series of stories starting with "Anne of ... ". After the tour I checked in with CompuServe and picked up messages, then later on we watched a video movie we had brought along (Robin Hood). During the day the sun had peeked out occasionally, and then at night dense fog rolled in; the temperature had stayed in the 50's most of the day.

Wednesday, July 8, 1992: This was a "day off" from scheduled activities, but I signed up for a fishing trip in the afternoon. The temperature was 65° while we had breakfast, the warmest it had been for some time. The fishing trip was pleasant - it was calm and warm, but among the sixteen people fishing only six fish were caught - four cod, one mackerel and one that looked to me something like a sea robin.

In the evening we all attended a theater presentation of the musical "Anne of Green Gables". I had expected it to be a kind of amateur presentation, but I was surprised; it was very professionally done and in a large modern theater.

Thursday, July 9, 1992: After departing our campground we followed the Trans-Canada highway (1) to Wood Islands for the ferry to Nova Scotia. The line of motor homes waiting for the ferry was long - we arrived at about 10:00 and were told the next ferry was at 10:40 "but we wouldn't be on it".

Well, it took us from 10:00 to 12:10 to make it onto a ferry; two of them had loaded before our eyes while we waited.

The trip to Antigonish (antee-gu-NISH) was relatively nice; the highways were smooth and the terrain hilly, refreshing after the very flat P.E.I. Our campground was very close to the center of this small town (pop 5,205). During the ferry wait Barbara had bought a couple of lobsters, so in the evening we treated ourselves again to a lobster dinner. Later we attended the first half of a presentation of the Antgonish Highland Dancers; we left at intermission time because it wasn't exactly our cup of tea. It rained hard during our walk over to the dance and we got soaked, but the walk back was dry but cool.

Friday, July 10, 1992: A day off. We took a walk (downtown and got the first part of this travelogue reproduced and ready for mailing, then about noon we began to feel a bit bum and spent the rest of the day and evening loafing, skipping the caravan's dinner at a restaurant in town because of our unsettled insides.

Saturday, July 11, 1992: We watched the Highland Games parade this morning - it was reminiscent of the classic small town Fourth of July parades we have had in the states; every politician and big business had their car or float, and every band and public department for miles around was there too. There were lots of pipe and drum bands, one from as far away as Halifax. In the afternoon we went to the park, watched some games and exhibitions and visited some of the tents. In the evening we attended the tattoo, hearing some Gaelic singers, several pipe and drum bands and the Antigonish Highland Dancers repeating part of the program we had seen Thursday night. Fortunately, the weather today was ideal, a slight breeze blowing air at a temperature of about 70-75' degrees, and partly cloudy skies. I made omelettes for dinner.

Sunday, July 12, 1992: Before leaving the campground we did a washing; the day again was

beautiful with temperature in a dry high 60's with a light breeze. On our trip to Baddeck we stopped off for a leisurely lunch at Port Hawkesbury at a place a woman in the information center said was the nicest place in the area. The food WAS excellent, but the bar had no sweet vermouth and the bartender had never even heard of a manhattan. In Baddeck we toured the Alexander Graham Bell museum. Bell spent considerable time in this area; the museum was very nicely done and quite extensive. The temperature remained about 70, but the breeze increased during the day so that by afternoon steering took some effort. I can see why the immigrant Scots settled here in Nova Scotia; the scenery looks very much like what I've seen of pictures of Scotland.

Monday, July 13, 1992: We drove the Cabot Trail around the northernmost part of Cape Breton Island. The trail is named after the explorer John Cabot, who sighted the island in 1497, just five years after Columbus' "discovery" of the new world. The drive is claimed to be one of the most scenic in North America, and we have to agree; the mountains are not high but they abut the sea creating many small bays and harbors. For the first time on our trip I felt inclined to get out my still camera for some views; most of the time I've been using the video camera. The weather forecast was for rain, but it held off until late afternoon when the scenic part of the drive was finished. The temperature started out in the 40's in the morning and ended up about 60 when we reached our campground for the evening near Sydney Mines construction. The property remained otherwise undisturbed, however, and the Canadian Park Service started the reconstruction in part to alleviate a serious employment shortage the area was experiencing. The fort is staffed primarily by volunteers, all wearing period costumes, and each capable of giving detailed and interesting information about the particular character being portrayed. There must have been about twenty soldiers stationed in various places about the fort, many with replicas of the flint-lock rifles of the time. We ate at one of the restaurants in the compound, served in the manner of the period with rustic implements. The only condescension to modern times were the prices and acceptance of plastic for payment. Before leaving we picked up a loaf of dark bread made of 80% whole wheat and 20% rye flours, and baked there in one of the (reconstructed) ovens used to feed the original fort's soldiers. This is a highly recommended visit for anyone journeying to Cape Breton Island.

During the afternoon we visited a museum in Glace Bay which was focused on the local mining industry. Coal mining has played a large part in the history of the area since 1900, although the industry (and the naturally allied local steel plant) is operating at a very low rate at present. Although a trip into a (non-working demonstration) mine was offered, Barbara and I declined, choosing instead to wander among the exhibits and watch a movie depicting the history of the local labor movement. We were surprised to discover that the miners here belong to the same UMW as those in the U.S. Indeed, in the movie it made quite a point about John L. Lewis having not supported his locals in Nova Scotia during a particularly violent period of labor unrest.

Our evening meal consisted of baked brie with the soldier's bread and some fruit. The bread was good. The weather had, for a change, been perfect all day, high in the upper 60's, sunny

and a slight breeze .

July 15, 1992: Another beautiful day,) with the temperature barely reaching 72 in the late afternoon. We noticed that yesterday's reported temperature in DC was 102. We drove to Sherbrooke Village, stopping at a nice little beach park near Bayfield for lunch. The water was calm, and there were a few people in swimming.

Sherbrooke Village is another partially reconstructed community, this one appearing as it did in the late 1800's. We dry-camped in the village's parking lot. After dinner Barbara and I took a walk to the site of the (reconstructed, but working) sawmill along the marshy edge of the St. Mary's river, and watched a great blue heron fishing for his dinner.

Thursday; July 16, 1992: The drive today was to a campground just south of the picturesque Peggy's Cove, one of the most photographed fishing communities in the world. Highlights of the drive included the sight of many of the small villages along the seacoast route and the sudden change of topography south of Halifax; the land took on a barren, weathered, rocky appearance so abruptly it was nearly a shock. Low point of the drive was the route through Dartmouth and Halifax; even though the metro area is quite large there is no such thing as a throughway or beltway, and the streets were bothersome. Then, too, the road south of Halifax was very rough, similar to some of the less pleasant stretches of the Alaska Highway (but no where near as bad as many). The campground was a local call away from Halifax, SO again, with the permission of the management I was able to contact CompuServe for a message exchange.

Friday, July 17, 1992: A bright, sunny day, with the temperature in the low 70's. Our bus tour of Halifax started at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, where part of the display focused on the devastating explosion of an ammunition ship in the harbor in December of 1917; 2000 were killed and 6000 seriously injured. It was known as the most serious man-made disaster in history until the atom bomb was detonated. The explosion was the result of a collision between two ships; the anchor of one of the ships landed two miles away!

Next we visited the Citadel, an historic fort overlooking the city currently undergoing restoration while in active service; it is Canada's most visited national historic site. On the way to lunch we stopped off at a nice Victorian Garden downhill from the Citadel; I stayed in the bus while Barbara walked around and had the pleasure of seeing a bald eagle perched in the garden area. Later we enjoyed an excellent lunch at the Clipper Cay restaurant on the waterfront. The waterfront has been "revitalized" in the manner of so many port cities; many restaurants, gift shops, museums, gift shops, ships to visit, gift shops, street musicians, and so forth.

In the afternoon on the way back to our campground we stopped at Peggy's Cove. We learned that the weathered rock we had noticed the day before was granite, deposited there during the ice age. While fishing is the occupation of most of the village's inhabitants, the

tourists certainly outnumber them, especially at this time of year. The scenery was breathtaking, and it was a pleasure to be able to view it on such a nice day.

Saturday, July 18, 1992: This was to be an "off" day caravan-wise, so Barbara and I decided to drive to Truro to see the tidal bore on the Salmon River, at the head of the Bay of Fundy. While it sometimes amounts to a fairly sizeable wave, depending on the phase of the moon and the strength and direction of the wind, this day it was only a few inches high, arriving right on schedule at the place route 204 crosses the river. We had arrived much earlier, and spent some time having lunch and reading. Following the wave itself was a significant flood tide, amounting to several feet in the few minutes we watched. Afterwards we went to the Elm River campground for the evening. While the day generally had been overcast with a slight light shower now and then, the evening was frequented by heavy downpours. Such has been the luck of the Nova Scotians this year, weekends have been consistently rainy.

Sunday, July 19, 1992: Barbara's birthday dawned overcast but, thank goodness, dry. There was a slight fog for the first hour or so, but then the sun broke through and for the rest of the day it varied between overcast and sunny, with the temperature getting up to about 80. As we entered New Brunswick we filled our tank with the cheapest gas we had seen for some time: 60.3 Canadian cents per liter, or about \$1.91 US dollars per gallon. We stopped at Moncton for a very nice lunch at Cy's restaurant alongside the Petitcodiac River, and then after lunch watched the tidal bore proceed up THAT river. It wasn't quite as impressive as the one at Truro, but we were happy that we had chosen to see it - we were concerned that it might have been better, and we didn't want to miss that chance. I set up one video camera on the roof of the RV for time lapse exposures (two seconds out of every minute); it made an interesting picture of the wave as it approached.

We then went to the caravan's campground a little west of Moncton, and that evening attended the caravan's farewell dinner. Excellent food, but again the service was terrible, with some people's entrees being served about 20 minutes after the first were served. Part of the difficulty was that people had made their choices a few days ago and may have forgotten what they had chosen by dinner time. This in turn threw off the kitchen's count, and things went quickly downhill from there. After dinner I set up a monitor on the picnic bench at our site and showed the videos I had taken of the tidal bores the last two days, since many people had not been able to see them.

During the day we noticed one of the vent hatches in the roof had stopped working, apparently due to disengaged gears. Since it was quite warm I postponed the task of dismantling till a cooler day.

Monday, July 20, 1992: Our target in the morning was "The Rocks", a Canadian park on the edge of the Bay of Fundy, where the tidal action has eroded the land into strange shapes reminiscent of the badlands of South Dakota. The tides there average about 30 feet, with maximums of 45 feet. We were there at low tide, so we could walk along the beach at the

foot of the bluff and inspect the formations. We had originally planned to stay at another National Park' nearby for the rest of the day and night, but changed our minds and went on through St. John to a Provincial Park at New River Beach. The trip started out warm - the temperature was about 80 degrees - but then as we approached St. John it started cooling. When we went through St. John it was very foggy and the temperature had reached 62. That temperature held until we got to the park. Of course we watched as the price of gasoline dropped to about \$.553 per liter (\$1.75 US per gallon).

It was great to be back in that kind of camping - nicely isolated sites, fire rings and free firewood, with a nice beach nearby (although it was too cool for all but the young kids to enjoy). We grilled our meal on a nice hot wood fire and topped it off with roasted marshmallows.

Tuesday, July 21, 1992: The morning showed us heavy fog until just before we re-entered the U.S. The border guard didn't give us the opportunity to tell him how much we had spent in Canada and were bringing in; he just asked us what country we were from and whether we had any fresh fruit or vegetables aboard, then wished us a pleasant day. The route to Bangor along Route 9 was miserable, equal to the worst Canadian highways we had traveled. In Bangor we restocked the larder at a nice supermarket, and then while Barbara had her hair done at one of the mall shops I chatted on the phone briefly with one of the Roots Users Group members living in Bangor who I had been helping out via mail for the past few weeks. On the recommendation of Barbara's hairdresser we took Route 1 out of Bangor to travel along the Penobscot River to Northport, where we put in at a Good Sam campground. Not long after we had settled in one of the couples from our now-disbanded Caravan pulled in to the same campground on their way to Georgia. While the temperature had become quite warm during the day, when we arrived in Northport it was down to about 77 and got progressively cooler during the evening.

Wednesday, July 22, 1992: Shortly after leaving Northport we stopped for a while to get the laundry done. While there we visited a liquor store and, since they weren't very busy I asked the clerk if I could make a computer call on her phone and not only did she say yes, she set me up in the back room at her desk and left me alone there while she waited on customers! Trusting soul!

Down the road we stopped off in the Bath area to visit briefly with Ray and Barbara Ryder; he is an ex-shipmate of my Uncle Jerry (WWII, the U.S.S. George). He works at a very nice campground with nice beaches; too bad they don't allow big motor homes in. We couldn't stay long as we had reservations at a campground in Old Orchard Beach for the night. That campground turned out to be one with mixed blessings; the sites were fairly close together but there were lots of trees, there was a beach "nearby" but it took us 18 minutes of fast walking to get there, so we didn't make use of it.

Thursday, July 23, 1992: From Old Orchard to York Beach was a relatively short distance, but the drive took a long time as we chose to make the trip following US 1, and there were

several traffic jams along the route as shore-hugging vacationers clogged the streets of the small towns along the way. It had been three years since we had visited the Powers' Maine house, and after convincing ourselves that we weren't going to find it without help we called them on the cellular phone and they talked us in. We "docked" next to their house, fitting the motor home in between some pine trees with inches to spare.

Friday, July 24, 1992: We looked around York Beach a bit, then the four of us went to Portsmouth, NH, and visited Prescott Park and various other waterfront areas. The park is notable for its display of a wide variety of flowering plants, each bed carefully labeled. In the evening we dined at the Cliff House, and had quite a surprise in that the waitress, Debbie Ross, remembered waiting on the four of us during our visit three years earlier.

Saturday, July 25, 1992: The trip south was intentionally short; we had targeted Massachusetts' Salisbury Beach State Park as a possible place to spend some beach time, but the report from the ranger we got on the phone indicated we had better wait until the next day as the sites were all filled. We stayed at Rusnick's (a commercial park) nearby, surprised at it's woodsy environment, and relaxed most of the day reading.

Sunday, July 26, 1992: After a casual morning of reading we went to the State Park and, after waiting in a line for about an hour and a half managed to get a site. The sites are a ways away from the beach, but well within walking distance, and our site was near the Merrimack River so we could see the boats leaving and entering the river. We took a couple of walks but otherwise loafed and read. I lowered the awning for shade, and of course it became overcast not long after that.

Monday, July 27, 1992: My birthday started out overcast, and it stayed that way until late afternoon. Aside from a couple of walks and a period when I tried fishing the river, it was a day for loafing, reading and watching a videotaped movie, "Excalibur". The wind freshened during the afternoon and I shifted my operation from adding tie-downs to the awning to rolling it up. The temperature was cool all day - barely making 70 degrees.

Tuesday, July 28, 1992: The sky at sunrise was clear as a bell, with a stiff NW wind blowing, so we spent the morning loafing and reading. After lunch the breeze had moderated some, so we walked to the beach and "sunned" (under an umbrella) for a few hours. This beach is quite impressive, reminiscent of those at Assateague Island or on the Barrier islands off the Carolinas. Lots of nice sand; about 300 feet from the dunes to the shoreline. Considering that it was a Tuesday and this was a State Park, there were quite a few people on the beach. Later we took a walk and it looked to us like every one of the campsites was occupied.

Wednesday, July 29, 1992: We headed South and West to Harriman State Park, a little South of West Point, and camped in the Beaver Pond area there for the night. We found it hard to understand why, in the midst of the summer, this beautiful little campground wasn't more than about 50% occupied. There's a nice beach on the adjacent Lake Welsh, and the sites are in a nicely wooded area. About dinner time a doe and two fawns passed near our site

nibbling on the foliage, and a little later another deer came into view. A busy chipmunk working our site provided some additional entertainment for us. at Casa Maria. That evening John and Mary Anne took our Dad, sister Leslie, Barb and me out to dinner at the Crab Shack, where we all enjoyed various seafood dishes outside on the deck at sundown. Great!

Friday, July 31, 1992: The trip from John's to West Chester was easy except for some very heavy showers that Barbara was lucky enough to have the opportunity to drive through. We visited niece Margie to pick up mail that had been forwarded to her and to see the kids for a while, then drove home to no surprises.

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All in all we drove 4236 miles. We are totally baffled when people ask us what we enjoyed the most or worst; we liked just about all of it. The planned traveling in a "caravan" had us seeing and doing a lot more than we would have if we had traveled alone, but on the other hand we did feel a little pressured because of the schedule. If we had been alone, we may well have' paused longer at some places, and might have gone up to see Newfoundland. The service that Margie provided us was indispensable: acting as our agent and keeping in touch by computer network. It allowed us to feel a degree of freedom that otherwise could not have been possible.