

July 1982 - Our first major family trip started with shopping for a vehicle large enough to carry two adults, two or three children plus camping gear and one small dog which we could afford. We managed to buy a 1972 Ford Gran Torino station wagon for \$400 a few days before departure. First stop was Minneapolis for the 4th of July weekend. Warren and Patty live just across the street from the Park where Minneapolis has its big fireworks display. While there we enjoyed the company of Evelyn and Eric Henderson (my mother's sister) who we hadn't seen in years. They were making their first visit to Warren's home, traveling with a little house trailer which they parked behind the house. They invited us to stop overnight at their house in Ottawa with their daughter Hildegard who was house sitting for them while they traveled. On the way to Ottawa we stopped to see the Mackinac Bridge connecting the upper and lower peninsulas of Michigan and spent a morning in Deep River, Ontario, where I showed Barb and the boys the home and town where I lived on the beautiful Ottawa River when I was 5 to 9 years old.

After a pleasant night in Ottawa with Hildegard we pressed on for my sister Betty's place in Fredericton New Brunswick by way of Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Our several days in Fredericton gave us a chance to see not only Betty and her husband Charlie but Betty's daughter Linda, Tony, and their 5 month old son Jason. Other highlights were a day at King's Landing Historical Settlement with its authentically restored shops and homes, horse drawn wagons, etc.; swimming from the sand bars in the St. John River a short boat ride from Betty's home; and gorging ourselves on fresh strawberries from Betty's enormous patch.

Heading down the coast from Fredericton, we camped two nights along the coast of Maine and visited Camden Hills State Park with its exceptionally picturesque view of Camden Maine and its harbor from the top of Mt. Battie, and toured Fort Knox (a cannon era river fort with no gold) where Mischa smashed his toe on a rock while running barefoot to catch up with Robin.

Next we spent a night in Boston in the small but accomodating apartment of Holly Loring, former Prairie member and R.E. Director whos folk singing we have enjoyed at Prairie, at our home and at the Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse in Madison. She took us to see the U.S.S. Constitution, an old square rigged sailing ship which the U.S. Navy maintains in the Boston Harbor.

Then on to North Branford, Connecticut (near New Haven) where Barb's 14 year old daughter Casey was visiting her grandparents. Casey missed out on the first part of our trip because at the end of the school year she went directly from Chicago, where she goes to school, to a Unitarian Universalist youth conference in Maine. A day at the country place of Casey's great grandfather with her great grandfather and numerous other relatives, spent mostly in the swimming pond on a very hot July day, highlighted our stay in Connecticut.

Having gained Casey we next lost Robin and Mischa for the remainder of our trip, delivering them to the country home of their mother's aunt and uncle near Shirley, Massachusetts, where their mother was visiting. Then on to Barb's parents home in Syracuse, New York where I met her stepfather for the first time along with various old friends of Barb and her family. After a relaxing week in Syracuse it was on to brief visits with my uncles Clifford Park and Wesley Leonard and their families in southern Ontario, with a stop at Niagara Falls on the way. Our time in southern Ontario included visits to the town and house where my brother James and I were born, to the town where my father and Clifford were born and where my mother lived until the parsonage burned down (we talked to a town employee who remembered the fire), to the town and house where I remember my maternal grandparents living when I was a boy, and to a small rural schoolhouse no longer in use where my mother once taught before marrying my father. We also had a gathering of local relatives on the Park side of the family with Wesley and his wife and son at the Sand Hills, a traditional Park family gathering place not far from my father's birthplace. Casey missed the Sand Hills picnic because she had to fly to California, poor kid. She went along to a conference with her father, and got to represent us at the wedding and reception of my older brother Doug's daughter Renee.

From Ontario, one long day's drive got Barb and me and the dog back to our Lake Wisconsin home with its uncut lawn and a thriving garden which Barb had thoroughly mulched before we left.