

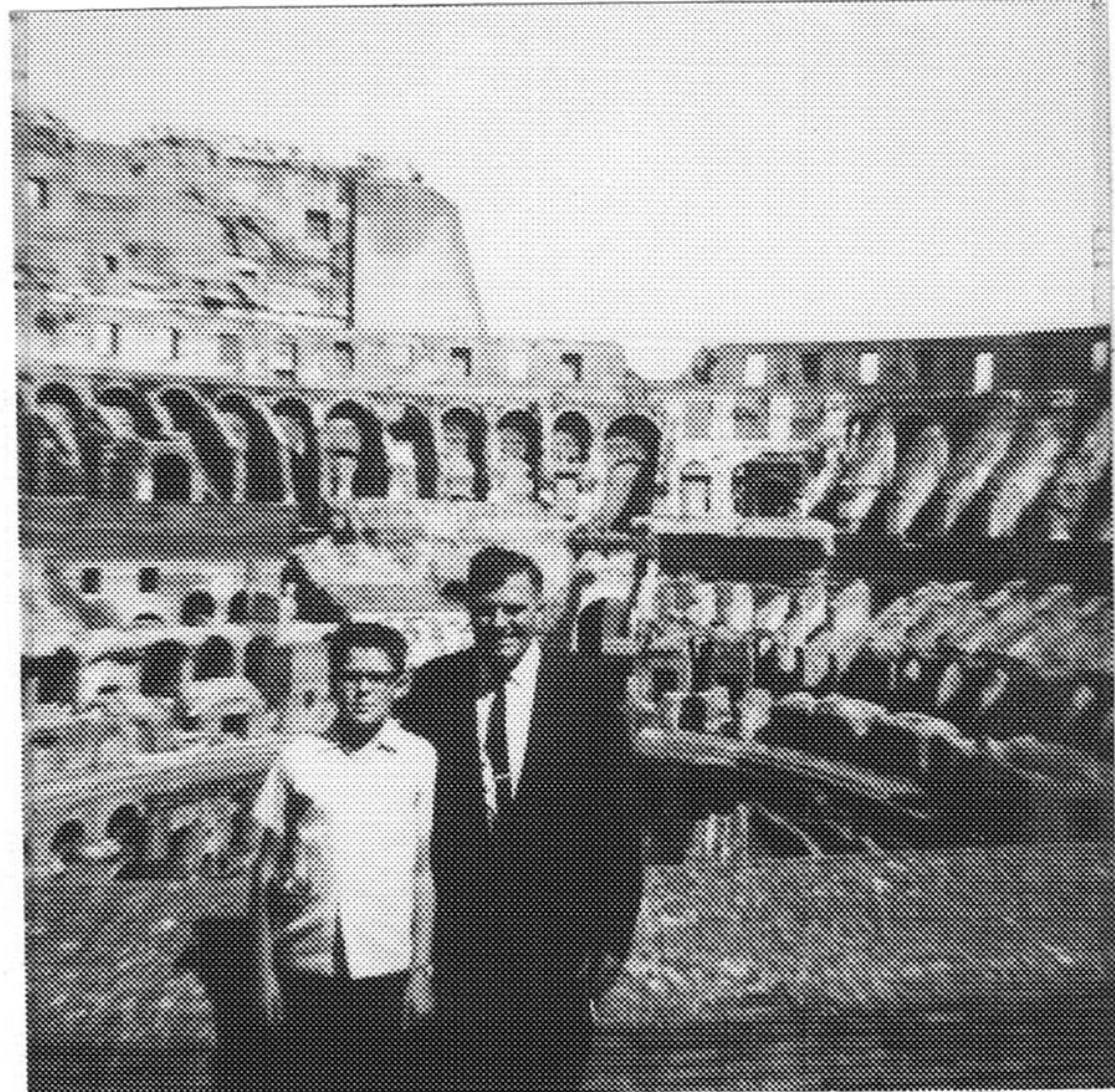
So on August 1, 1966 we said good-bye to my mom and dad and took off for Warsaw by bus. Wladek came with us. In Warsaw we stayed with my cousin Anna and her husband Janek Tkach. They showed us around Warsaw. They told us how it was destroyed during the war and that they were in the process of rebuilding it again. On August 3 at 6 a.m. we got up and took a taxi to the airport in Warsaw. From there we flew to Zagreb, Yugoslavia, then on to Rome, Italy where we stayed for two and a half days. Randy and I had a nice time in Rome. We went sightseeing which of course included the Coliseum. It was all very interesting to say the least. We stopped for a real Italian Pizza served at a sidewalk cafe. We also had wine - all you could drink - just like water! We stayed out late into the night. The next day we got up early in the morning, had breakfast, then we went out "roaming around Rome". Our flight was at 2 p.m. from Rome to Montreal. We landed in Montreal at 2:30 p.m. on the same day (time change). Then on to Toronto. We stayed in Toronto over night. The next day we had a straight flight to Regina. Minnie and Sandra were waiting for us at the airport. Minnie had a new hairstyle and she looked just beautiful.

We were happy to be home. We missed each other very much. Minnie said that she prayed every day for our safe return. We had a lot to relate about our trip.

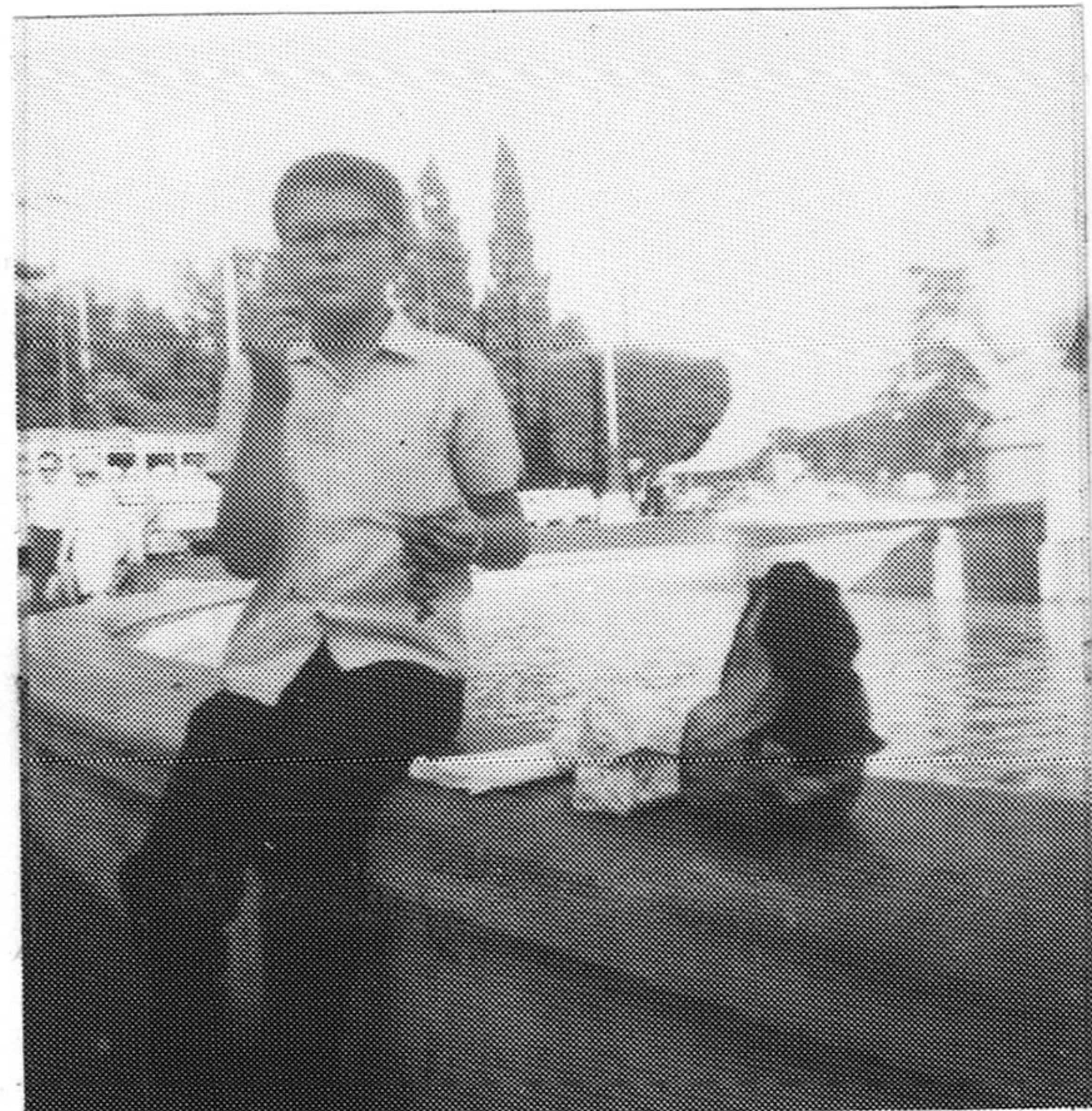
Randy was amazed at the thousands of houseflies he saw on the farm in Poland. They were so thick that it is hard to describe. We felt like we lived inside a bee hive. Randy lost his appetite when he saw the flies sitting all over the food. Sometimes we had to watch not to open our mouths too wide for fear that a fly might fly in. Of course, this was nothing new to me, but to Randy it was quite an experience.

At one time Alinka, my brother's oldest daughter, got some spray to kill the flies. She sprayed the whole house and when she finished, the floor was covered with a carpet of black house flies. She swept them all up and threw them outside. Within an hour the house was swarming with house flies again. It was a never ending battle. Any bread left on the table would soon have flies nestled in the air holes of the bread. They were everywhere. Glasses of

water or whiskey that you were about to drink had to be watched very carefully. As you lifted it up to your mouth to drink, a fly would almost certainly find its way into the glass and you could easily swallow a fly or flies along with the liquid. I should explain that the manure pile was



John and Randy, Coliseum, Rome, 1966



Randy eating grapes, Rome, 1966

about eight meters from the house and pesticides were not used, so no wonder there were thousands of flies around. Everything was in its natural state, no environmental pollution there!

Before we left Poland I gave my brother a few hundred dollars. He needed a new house and I wanted to help him out as much as I could. Our money was very high in value in Poland. For a thousand dollars a person could build a house there, where in Canada the same house would be worth \$100,000. After we came back to Canada we sent him more money. They built a beautiful house on the farm. Aleksander said that the house was really mine. We were happy to help them out.

I felt extremely good to be home and proud to be a Canadian. The beautiful facilities that we have all over Canada, the roads, the parks, hotels and I could go on and on. I felt just like I owned all of this and I thought that I was the richest man in all the world. Canada, the land of plenty and oh so beautiful.

Everything was now back to normal here at home.

One morning I was heading out in my car to do some side line work when I slowed down to make a turn. The guy behind me forgot to slow down and ran into my 1952 Pontiac and made an accordion out of the trunk of my car. The car was written off and I received some money for it. I was still able to drive it around for awhile with the wrecked trunk lid, but I knew it had seen its day.

On April 21, 1967 we bought a brand new Chevy Impala for \$3750. and sold my Pontiac to a guy for \$50.00. Minnie said that we were due for a new car.

Later on that fall, Minnie surprised me with, "You know what? I'm pregnant!" I said, "It's about time." We had wanted another child and our dream would come true. Minnie went to the doctor and he confirmed her suspicions. We all looked forward to the new baby. Minnie felt pretty good health wise this time.

Also, in the fall of 1967, I got a lay off notice from the C.P.R. Twenty percent of the staff was cut and I was one of them. I said to Minnie, "Don't worry. We'll manage."

I went to the unemployment office to register and told them that I would take a job as

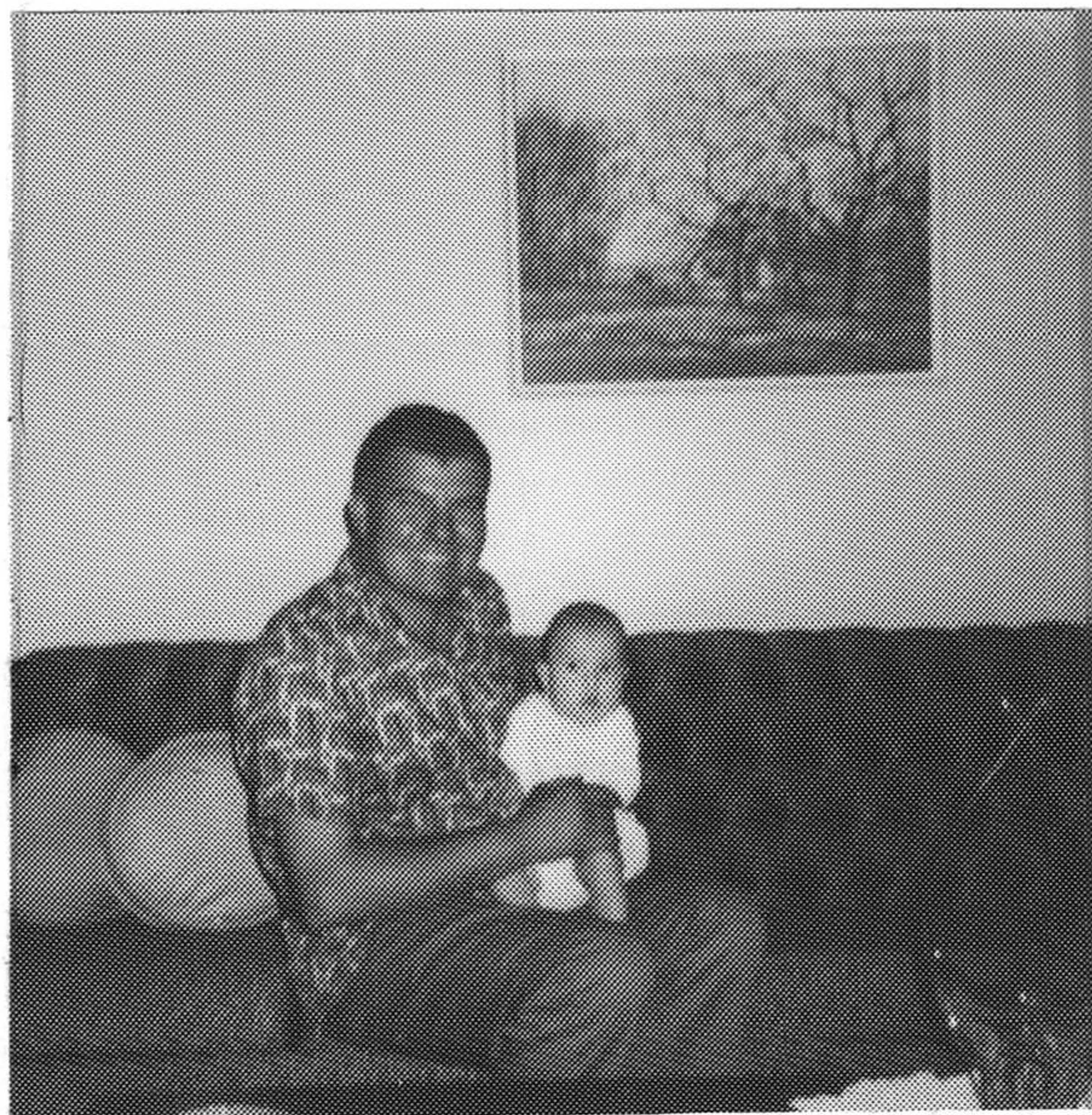
a carpenter. Before I got home I had three phone calls offering me jobs. I took a job offered to me at the Training School (an institution for the mentally handicapped) as a maintenance man, building furniture, tables, chairs, cupboards, shelves and a lot of repair work.

The Training School is located five kilometers south of Moose Jaw. I worked there for about eight months, and I enjoyed my job.

On April 6, around 11:30 p.m. Minnie began her labour pains. I drove her to the hospital, got her settled in her room then went back home to be with Randy and Sandra. Randy was thirteen years old and Sandra was eleven.

Around 5:00 a.m. on April 7, 1968 (Palm Sunday) I received a call from the hospital. The nurse said, "You have a beautiful baby girl 5 lbs. 11 1/2 oz.; you can come and see her." I went to the hospital to see Minnie and our new baby girl. I went to see Shelley in the nursery. She was all wrapped up nicely and I jokingly said to the nurse, "I thought you said she was beautiful." All of the nurses then spoke up together, "Well, isn't she?" I definitely agreed.

I then went to see Minnie. She said, "We have another beautiful baby girl. She sure is tiny isn't she?" Minnie stayed in the hospital for five days. On Good Friday we brought Shelley

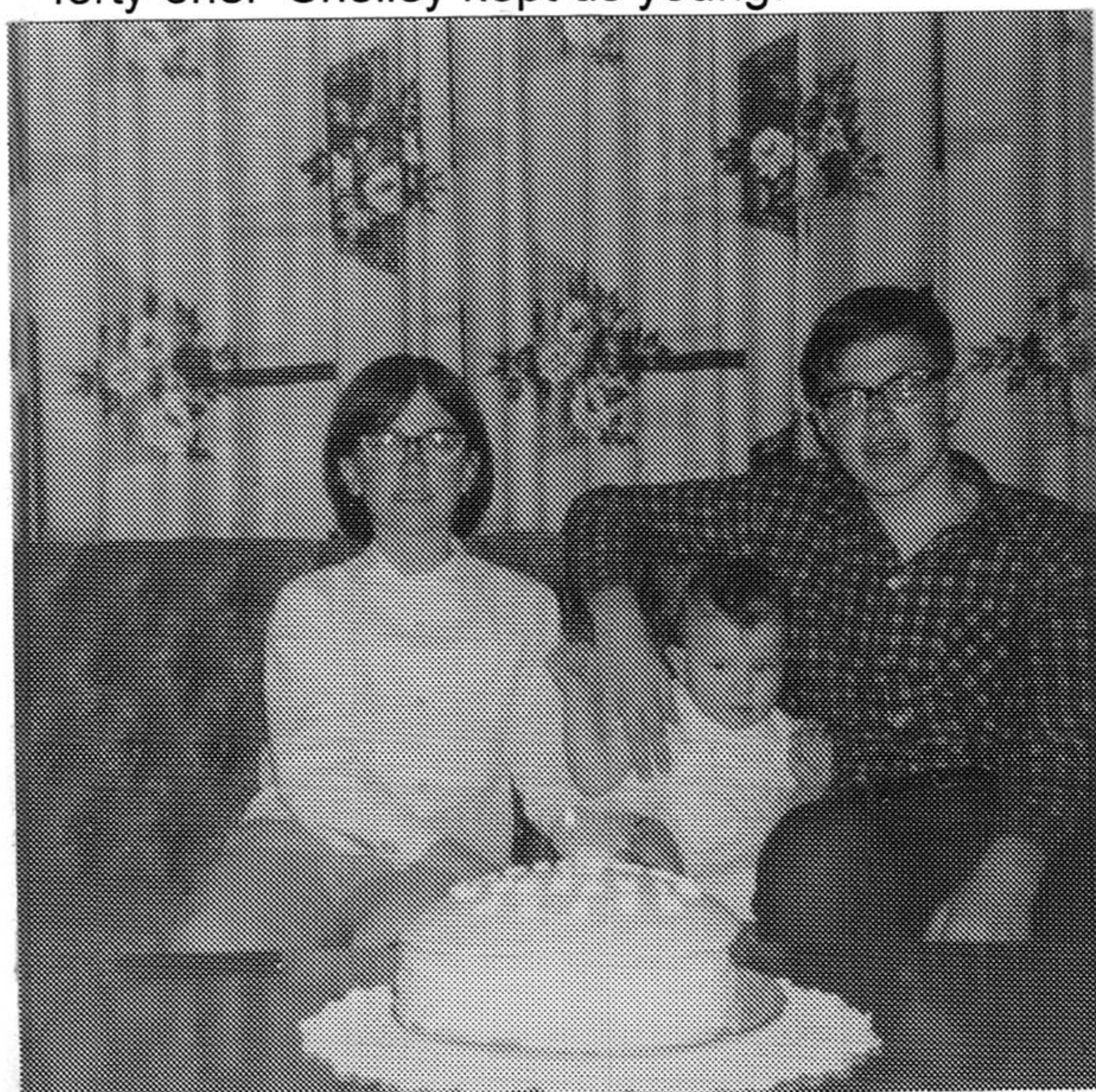


John and Shelley

home. Shelley was wrapped in a blanket that Sandra and I had bought for her. This blanket was very special to Shelley for many years. We put Shelley in the bedroom. Randy and Sandra hovered around her and looked her over. They had never seen a new born baby before and they were amazed that she was so small. They had a brand new baby sister to love. Shelley got lots of attention and we lost many nights of sleep!

Shelley was baptized by Father Thomas at St. Michael's Church. Our very good friends, Bill and Maureen Zaporinuk were Shelley's godparents. We had a big celebration supper with friends and family. Elaine Boey who was a nurse in training at the Providence Hospital when Shelley was born was one of the guests.

Minnie was thirty-four years old and I was forty-one. Shelley kept us young!



Sandra, Shelley, and Randy; Shelley's first birthday

On August 5, 1971, we received word from Russia that my sister Natalia had passed away. She was only 47 years old. She had been sick for sometime with a kidney ailment. It was a shock to me even so. I missed her very much as she always wrote to me. It was a very sad time for me as this was the first death in my family.

In 1972 Randy graduated from Riverview High School. He enrolled at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon majoring in

Chemistry. He had loved chemistry ever since he was a small boy and we bought him his first chemistry set. He spent many hours experimenting and figuring things out. I knew he would do well in it. I used to say if you like what you do you are bound to be good at it.

In the meantime, Sandra was nagging me to go to Poland as she wanted to see her Grandma and Grandpa. She used that as an excuse because she wanted to travel more than anything. I thought it would be nice to see my family again and it would also be nice for Sandra too, who wanted to go to Poland ever since Randy went and she heard of his experiences there.

So we started to make plans for our trip. Minnie didn't want to go as we had Shelley who was only four years old.

I got my passport and all the necessary papers and we were set to go. Sandra didn't need a separate passport as she could travel on mine (she was fifteen years old) up to sixteen years of age.

So we took off in July 1972 for three weeks to Poland. The flight was from Regina to Toronto to Amsterdam to Brussels and on to Warsaw.

My cousin Wladek and my brother's oldest daughter, Alinka were waiting for us at the airport in Warsaw.

Sandra enjoyed the flight very much. We travelled 250 kilometers by bus to Tarnawatka. My nephew Januszek was waiting for us there with a team of horses and buggy. He took us to my brother's place and it was well after midnight when we arrived there.

My brother had a new house now with electricity in it but no running water. It was a nice house built out of bricks. My brother was very pleased with his new house. He said to me, "This house is yours. It was built with your money." (He was talking about the money I had left him the last time I visited him with Randy in 1966). I was happy to have a room all to myself. Two days later my Dad and sister Genia and her daughter Natalie came from Russia. It had been thirty years since I last saw my sister Genia. We had a beautiful reunion with my dad, sister, brother and families.

Natalie was the same age as Sandra and they got along well together and had a lot of fun



John and Sandra: Monument containing ashes of unknown victims; Majdanek Concentration camp, 1972

even though they didn't understand each other's language. They were very attractive girls. They turned many heads in town and we heard many comments on what beautiful girls they were. Sandra couldn't speak Polish so I was her interpreter. We went to many places and saw many interesting things all over Poland.

We saw the concentration camp in Lublin called Majdanek. I was taken there (when I was fifteen years old and taken from home by the Nazis) before I was taken to Germany as forced labour.

Seeing it brought back many memories for me. It actually made me shiver, thinking that the ashes I saw could have been me.

The people were allowed to tour the crematorium and some of the ashes were preserved for people to see it the way it was. We saw gas chambers that looked like showers and we saw stacks of children's shoes. A memorial was built in remembrance of those who died in the concentration camp. It was a round stone building and in the centre were the ashes of people who had died in the camp. Written in stone were these words "Let us not forget. It could happen again."

My mom was not well enough to make the trip to Poland, so I missed her very much. I would have liked to see her once again. My dad loved Sandra and they got along very well. We had a beautiful visit and a time to remember all of our lives.

The people of the village had a party for us complete with a dance and a live orchestra in the village hall. One of the performers sang his heart out with romantic songs, all the while looking intensely at Sandra. Later on I saw him following us around. I saw him on the bus and also in Chelm and I don't think it was just coincidence, I think he was attracted to Sandra. I had a few polkas with my sister Genia and we both enjoyed it very much. The brass band orchestra was loud and thrilling. Genia and I danced our feet off with our old school friends whom we hadn't seen for thirty years. There was all kinds of food to eat and all the

vodka we could drink and it was all on the house. We had a most enjoyable time and it ended all too soon. A time to remember in our hearts and minds.

A few days later we took off for Chelm to spend a few days with my cousin Wladek. In Chelm we bought a 5 speed racer bicycle for Sandra for \$27.00 and a bicycle for Shelley for \$16.00. Sandra's bicycle would have cost \$250.00 in Canada and Shelley's \$100.00.

We also spent three days in Warsaw with my cousin Anna and her husband Janek. Sandra was very homesick. Her most fervent wish was to have a hamburger and a glass of water with ice cubes in it when she got home to Canada. The water we drank on the farm was from the well and had to be boiled first, then cooled. There were no refrigerators there at that time. In Chelm we drank bottled water which was also warm.

At the end of August our visit was over and we were ready to go home. At 6 a.m. we got a taxi and drove to the Warsaw airport. We got our boarding passes then we went through customs. At the gate there was a final check by military personnel.

A soldier checked my passport and said that it was okay. He asked Sandra where her passport was. Sandra did not understand him. I said, "She is my daughter and she is only fifteen years old and is travelling on my passport. Her name and her age were shown on my passport. He firmly said, "No. She cannot go."

Sandra who was very anxious to board the plane and be on her way to Canada asked "What is he saying?" "He says you cannot go. You have to stay in Poland." Sandra was speechless and I was beginning to get concerned. I tried to stay cool and not show how furious I really was. I said to him, "I am not going without her. She is my daughter." He said, "How do I know that she is your daughter?" I said, "Her name is on my passport. It was okayed by the Polish Consul in Canada and there is no way that I am leaving her here." Keeping as calm as I could, I finally said to him, "You are pretty young, and by holding us back you are going to hurt your career. All my papers are in order and legal. You are going to cause a lot of embarrassment to yourself and to your government. I have no money to give to you, so your government will have to be responsible for us." He thought it over and then let us go. The plane was delayed because of this incident.

By then we had missed the plane connection from London, England to Toronto. So when we got to London, they put us on stand by. There was a flight available from London to Winnipeg First Class. That was fine with us. What a treat we had! For dinner we had three choices of meats and the most expensive wine also linen tablecloths. Sandra was happy now and was breathing easy after that episode she had in Warsaw.

She had fun on the plane and kept looking through the curtains back at the passengers in the economy section and saying, "I wonder what the peasants are doing back there." We had roasted duck for dinner and all the booze I could drink. Sandra, being under age to drink, gave her share to me, so I enjoyed it very much. We had three empty glasses set before us and I wondered what they were for. The steward came and poured a wine appetizer in the first glass. The second glass was for wine with the

meal. The third glass was the aperitif. Then came the napoleon brandy - very expensive - I had all I could drink and enjoy! It was a most memorable flight, and all for the same price.

We landed in Winnipeg and we made a quick connection to Regina. We got to Regina two hours sooner than originally planned. I phoned Minnie from Winnipeg and she was surprised to hear that we were getting into Regina much sooner than planned.

Again, we had a lot to talk about. Sandra never forgot her adventure especially the difficult time she had of getting out of Poland.

When she got home I assembled the bicycles and everybody was happy.

Two years later Sandra graduated from Riverview Collegiate and she enrolled at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. She wanted to be a teacher. Sandra was only seventeen years old.

Here we were starting life all over again as Shelley was just starting school.

Randy worked on the tie gang at the C.P.R. for the summer months. Sandra worked at the Easter Seal Camp in Watrous. So we hardly saw them over the summer months. It helped us financially though.

Randy graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Saskatchewan with a Bachelor of Science degree. We were very proud and thrilled of his accomplishment. He also received his Honours in Science Degree the following year and went on to the University of British Columbia for his Ph.D. in Chemistry. We were very proud and pleased that his dream had come true. He received a scholarship for five years which was a tremendous help.

Sandra was attending the University of Saskatchewan for her Bachelor of Education degree. She roomed with Brenda Clarke in residence in her first year at the U of S.

In her second year she moved into an apartment with Sheila East and Dale Tanner. She liked that and thought that she was saving money. It was a very nice apartment in a beautiful old house on Saskatchewan Drive overlooking the Saskatchewan River. Sandra worked at the Centennial Auditorium for three years, while attending university and in her last year of university worked half time as a teacher's aide at Grosvenor Park School in

Saskatoon.

She met this fellow by the name of Gerry Duggleby in her third year of University, whom she bragged about every time she came home, telling us how nice he was and oh, so good looking, and that he was studying to be a doctor.

So this one time she did bring him home to meet us. I came home from work and there was this guy sitting on my chair in the kitchen. Sandra ran to me and before she had a chance to introduce me to him I said, "Is this the Gerry Duggleby that you were bragging about?" And so we met. Right at first sight I kind of liked the guy but I didn't show it. We hit it off very well and Minnie liked him too. Gerry stayed for supper (with us that evening) and because it was a special occasion I said it called for a drink. You guessed it! Scotch, bottoms up! After a few scotches, Gerry felt right at home. He was like one of us.

It was about a year later when one evening we got a phone call from Sandra saying she had something to tell us. "I am engaged," she said. Minnie, without thinking said, "To whom?" "Gerry of course," she said annoyingly. I thought to myself, "Just about time." We soon met Gerry's mom and dad and his five brothers. We liked them very much and thought that they were a nice family. We all made wedding plans for July 15, 1978.

Sandra graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree in May, 1978. We were very thrilled and proud to see Sandra graduate. She got a teaching position in Saskatoon which we were all happy about.

The lot to the west of us had gone up for sale and we were offered the first chance to buy it. It had two shacks on it belonging to Mr. Joe Laycock. He was over ninety years old and was unable to care for himself, so his daughter Pearl Beare and her husband Jack came and took him to Calgary, Alberta to live with them. We offered them \$4000.00 for the lot and they accepted, so we got a very good deal.

I had wanted to build another

house for a long time and this was the perfect opportunity and with the lot being next door to us it was also very convenient.

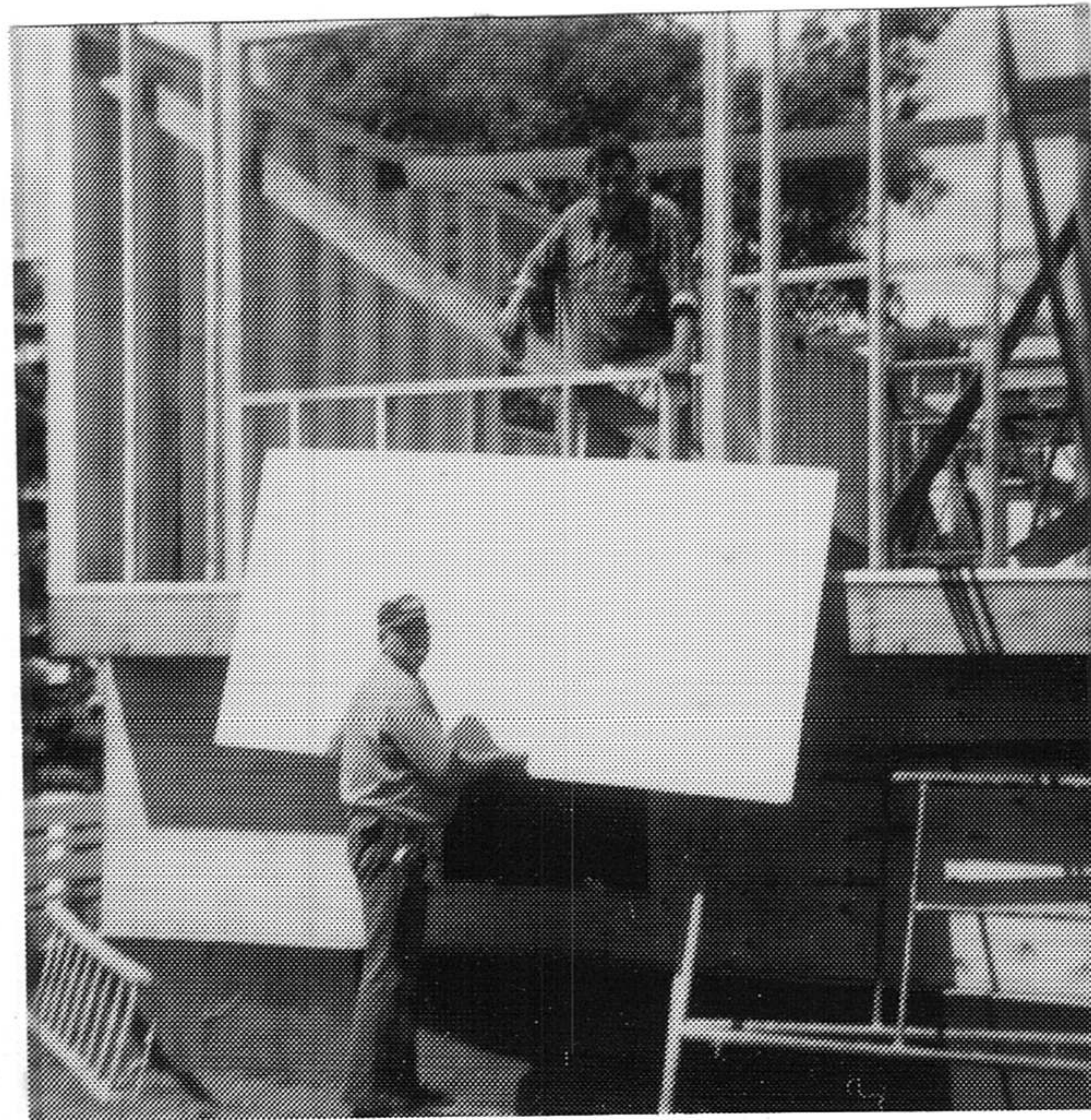
We had the shacks bulldozed down in 1977 and in March, 1978 we started to build. Minnie was worried and thought that we should postpone building for the time being as we had a wedding to prepare for. But we went ahead anyway.

I had a lot of dependable help when I was building. Joe Prebushewski helped me frame the whole house. I had pre-cut the 2x4's for the trussed rafters and Joe and I built them all in one day. The cost for the rafters was \$7.00 each, which normally would have cost \$35.00 each. It was a big savings. Bill Zaparinuk was my main "brick mover", Steve Heshka, Johnny Heshka, and John Fischer were also a big help to me. We helped each other out in our different projects and knew that we could call on each other whenever anyone needed help.

Randy came home from U.B.C. and helped me a lot and Gerry also gave me a helping hand, so before the wedding we had the roof shingled. That was my main concern as it was a very wet spring.



Joe Laycock



Joe Prebushewski and John sheathing the house



The new house at 338 Grandview Street with the first house at 330 Grandview Street in the background

Sandra and Gerry's wedding day was July 15, 1978. The day was just beautiful. Sandra was radiant and the most beautiful bride I had ever seen and she was my darling daughter. The reception was held in the Sportsman's Centre with about 300 guests attending. We had fun. This was the first wedding in our family. Everything went according to our plan and we were very pleased.

One of our most memorable times was when Gerry called us Mom and Dad. We will always love him for that.

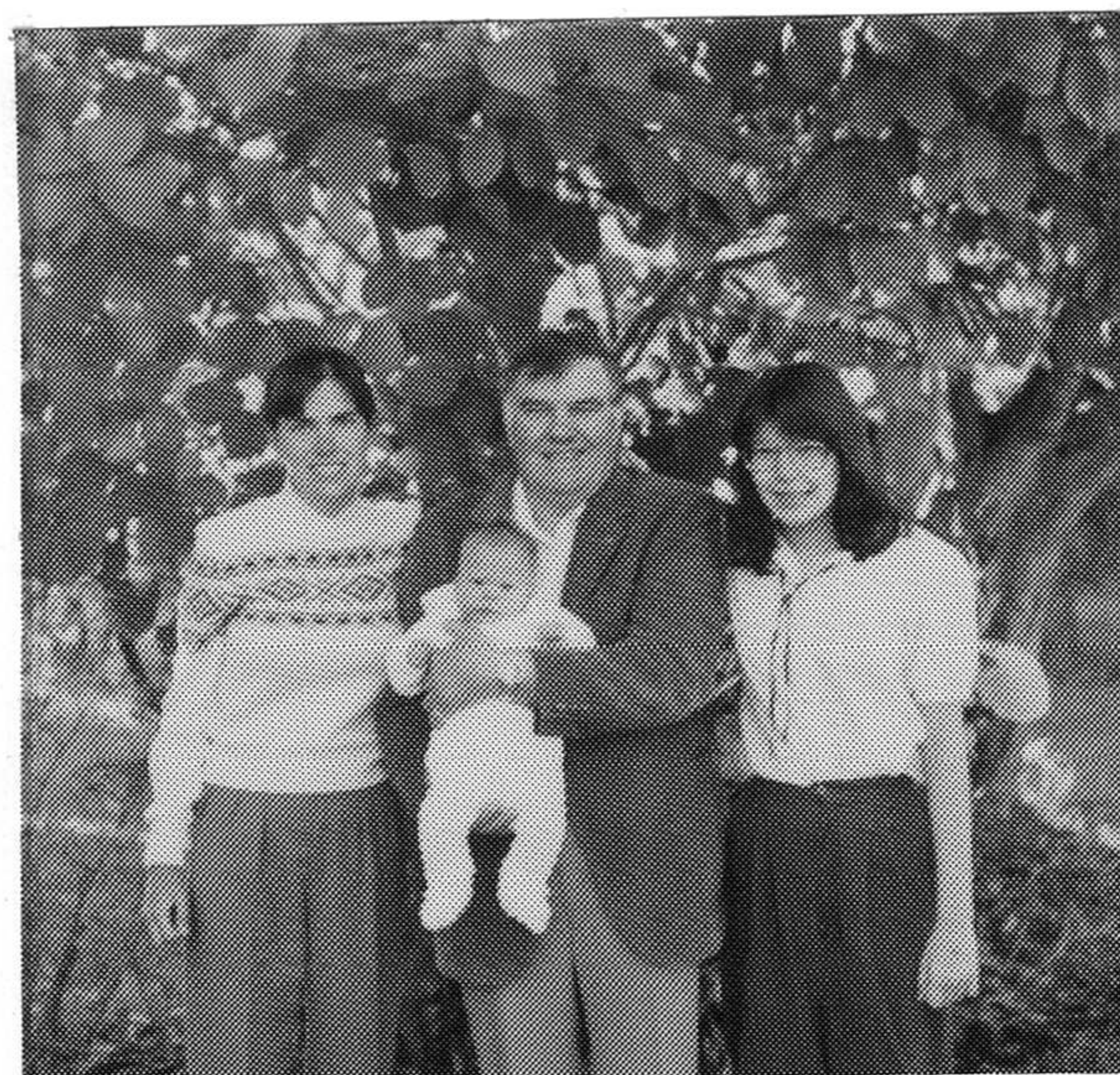
They settled in Saskatoon. Sandra taught at Grosvenor Park School and Gerry was attending University as he had another three years to go before he graduated.

Minnie's mother passed away on November 6, 1979. She had suffered a stroke and lost her speech. Randy was studying at the University of British Columbia at the time, and Sandra and Gerry were living in Saskatoon. Shelley was eleven years old. All of the children came home for the funeral. It was a sad time for all of us.

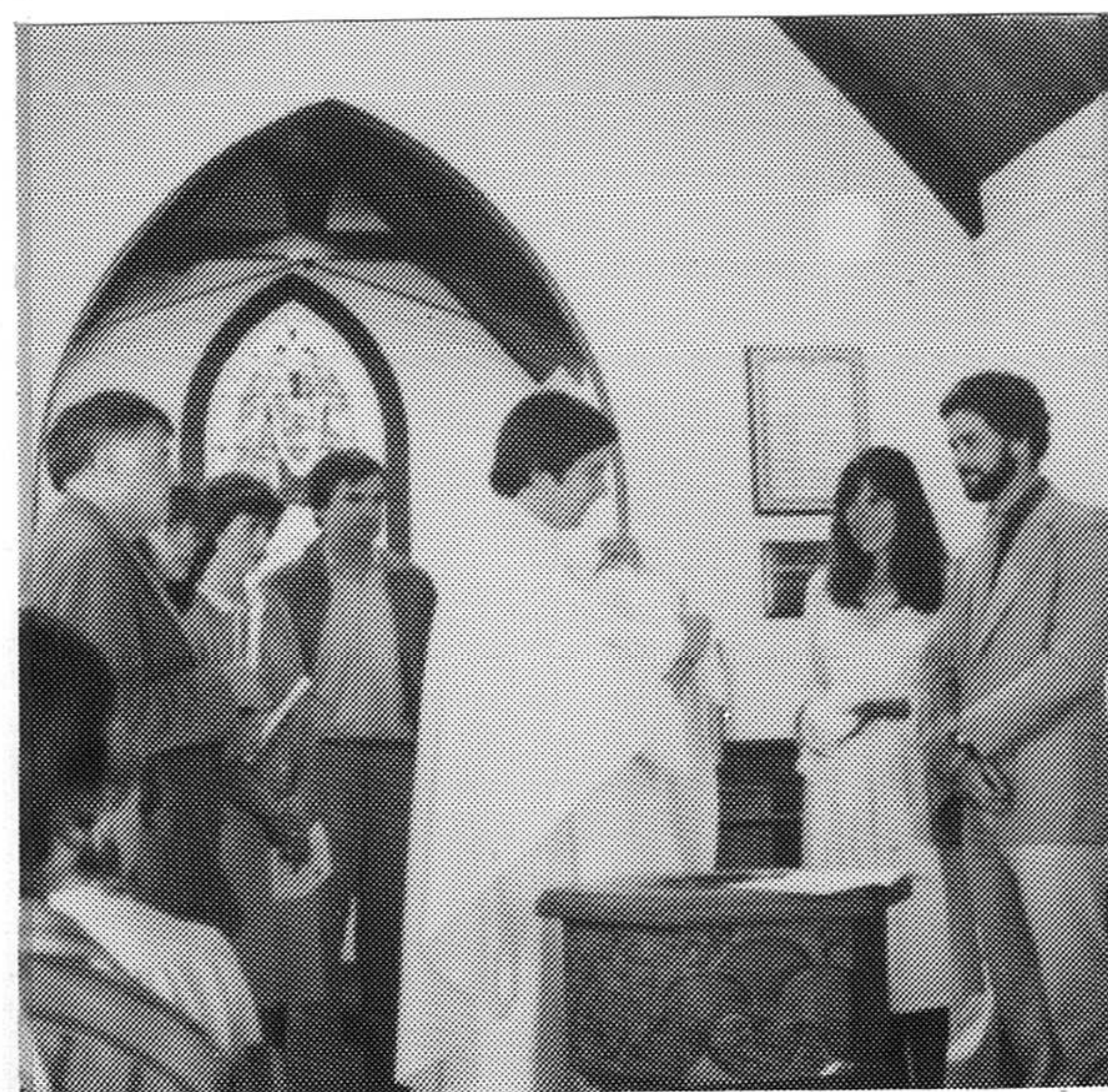
Upon graduating, Gerry signed up to go to New Zealand for his internship. Gerry's mom and dad had a big going away party for them in Saskatoon. We had fun. All of Gerry's brothers were there as well as his Aunt Jane and Uncle Lloyd. I promised Gerry and Sandra that we would see them in New Zealand, which we did.

Shelley and I went to New Zealand (Minnie had a lot of trouble with her ears at the time). It was Shelley's turn to go on a big trip as Randy and Sandra had gone to Poland in their younger years. We were very excited to go as Sandra and Gerry announced the birth of their first child, a darling beautiful baby daughter, Sarah Marie on January 4, 1982 in Tauranga, New Zealand. Our first grandchild and granddaughter and Shelley and Randy's first niece.

So on April 3, 1982 Shelley and I took off for New Zealand. Shelley and I left from Regina. We went from Denver, to Honolulu, Hawaii and then to Auckland, New Zealand. Sandra, Gerry and three month old bundle of joy Sarah, met us at the airport. It was a joy to my heart to see my first granddaughter and grandchild. She looked so sweet and beautiful. Gerry and Sandra



Sandra, John, and Shelley, with Sarah, the first grandchild, New Zealand



Sarah's Christening, April 18, 1982

looked great.

We stopped at one of Gerry's friends place for lunch in Auckland. We then took off for Tauranga. When we got to their home Sandra prepared supper, a New Zealand specialty - broiled lamb chops. I opened a bottle of scotch which I picked up at a duty free shop. We had a beautiful welcome to New Zealand.

Gerry took three weeks off and he drove us all over New Zealand. We had a great time.

One evening we got a phone call from Minnie. It was April 7, 1982 and she informed us that Randy and Jennifer got engaged. We were so happy for them. I bought a bottle of Kiwi wine and we drank a toast to Randy and Jennifer. Randy had met Jennifer at the University of British Columbia when he was going for his Ph.D. in chemistry and Jennifer was going for her Bachelor of Commerce degree which she received in 1980. Jennifer earned her Chartered Accountant designation in 1983.

It was Shelley's fourteenth birthday and we were celebrating it and having fun. We took Shelley out to a fancy restaurant by the sea shore for her birthday supper. Just before we went into the restaurant, Sandra and Gerry introduced me to Gerry's friend who was also interning in New Zealand. I grabbed him and hugged him and lifted him right off of his feet and told him that my son Randy had just got engaged and I was so happy.

We spent Easter at Sandra and Gerry's place. Sarah was christened shortly after Easter and we had a big celebration. It was held outdoors and many people came. We had lots of food and no shortage of scotch. It was a great party.

One of the guests at the party invited us to their sheep farm. We watched their sheep dog round up the sheep. It was very interesting to see.

While in New Zealand we went swimming in the Pacific Ocean. They have many beautiful beaches. It was a time that I shall always remember.

On the way back to Canada we stopped in Auckland for four days. Shelley and I explored the city on our own. We had fun. Then it was time to head home. We gained one day coming home, leaving Auckland, New Zealand on Friday night we arrived in Hawaii Friday morning. We stayed two days in Hawaii. Marilyn and Howard Toda picked us up at the airport and drove us all around the island. We had a nice barbecue supper with them, stayed one night with them and then we had one night on our own on Waikiki Beach. The next day Marilyn took us to the airport. We had a nice

flight home.

Minnie picked us up at the airport in Regina. We had a lot to talk about and Shelley became a world traveller.

It was a busy year for us. Randy graduated in the summer of 1981, with the official convocation ceremony in May. Minnie, Shelley and I went to U.B.C. for the celebration. We were very proud and happy as Randy received his Ph.D. in Chemistry. We had a nice party after the Convocation with a lot of Randy's friends and his Professor, Dr. Fleming. It was a memorable time for us. Dr. Randall John Mikula, Ph.D. Chemistry - a dream come true for Randy and for us. He accepted a job with the (Federal government) Department of Energy, Mines and Resources Edmonton.

Randy and Jennifer set their wedding date for November 20, 1982 in Edmonton. They made all of the arrangements for the wedding themselves. We provided the liquor and the Mason's provided the meal for the reception so it was easy for all of us.

We met Joyce and Nick Mason (Jennifer's mom and dad) for the first time a couple of days before the wedding. They lived in Sorrento, B.C. and had about the same distance to travel as we did to Edmonton. We hit it off very well and we enjoyed our time together.

The roads to Edmonton were treacherous at that time. A drizzling rain had fallen and the roads were sheer ice. The temperature was -20°C on the wedding day. It was very cold. The wedding was beautiful and Jennifer was a beautiful bride and lovely daughter-in-law. Randy was very handsome in his tuxedo, and we were very proud and happy for him. They were married in Christ Church (Anglican) and the reception and dance were held at the Sands Hotel. We all had a great time. A lot of people from Saskatchewan couldn't make it because of the bad weather. So there was more room for all of us to dance.

Randy and Jennifer went to Hawaii for their honeymoon. We stayed one more day in Edmonton and visited with the Masons, then we headed for home. I said to Minnie, "Two down and one to go" (meaning Shelley was the only one left to get married).

Shelley was already in High School and doing very well. Gerry, Sandra and Sarah came

back to Canada from New Zealand in June 1982. They were all at Randy's wedding, so our whole family was there to celebrate the happy occasion.

We were so very thankful that Sandra, Gerry and Sarah made it to Randy's wedding safely as the roads were so icy. Gerry was practicing in Shellbrook, Saskatchewan at the time.

We made quite a few trips to Shellbrook especially to see our first grandchild, Sarah. We love her with all our hearts. She is a very kind child and has a heart of gold. We enjoyed taking Sarah out for walks and we had fun playing with her. In 1983 Sandra and Gerry decided to move to Prince Albert.

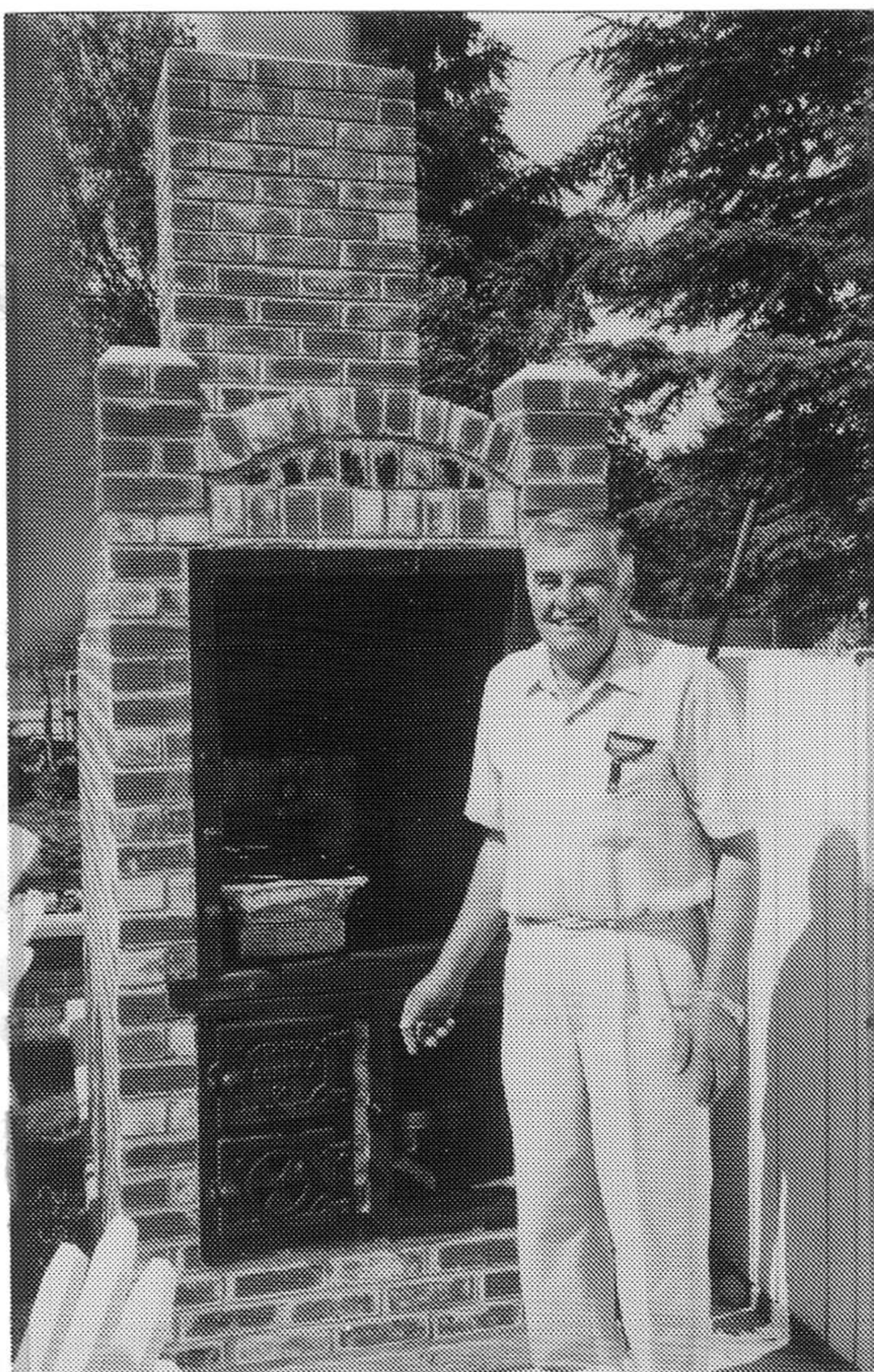
On April 15, 1984, we received a telegram from Russia saying that my mom had passed away (Palm Sunday). It was a very sad day for me and all the family. It was especially hard for

me as I could not be at her funeral. My heart was very heavy. Mom was 89 years old.

As a memorial to my Mother, I made a brick oven in our back yard similar to the one that my mother baked bread in when I was a young boy. I can still smell the aroma of Mom's homemade bread every now and again.

On May 30, 1984 our second grandchild, Kelly Anne was born. So once more our hearts were filled with happiness and joy. We now had two beautiful grand-daughters. When Minnie visited Sandra and baby Kelly in the hospital, she bought her a little pink t-shirt and on it was printed "A Star is Born". Kelly plays the piano beautifully and also dances, much to our delight.

Just one year later, on May 30, 1985, my dad passed away in Russia. Kelly was just one year old (her Birthday). My heart was heavy once again and I felt a deep sense of loss. We had a memorial service at St. Michael's Church for him. The Officiants were Herb and Ruth Taylor, our very dear friends. Dad was 92 years old.



The bake oven I made as a Memorial to my Mother and a remembrance of the bread she used to bake



Mom and Dad, Ukraine

Minnie and I were now both alone with no parents and our children now had no grandparents. Now it was our turn to take over as grandparents. A new generation had now begun.

Sarah, Kelly and Scott were all enrolled in pre-school. So we made many trips to Prince Albert for "Grandparents Day" which was held at the school. There the children would show us their projects that they had made and the activities that they were involved in and they also showed us around the classroom and the gym that they played in. We were then served tea and cookies that the children had made. We enjoyed those special days and they are forever etched in our memories. We remember especially when the children would sing their special song to us.

Randy and Jennifer had bought a house in Edmonton at 3612 - 108 St. It is a very well built house located on a quiet residential street and very close to both public and high schools. He did a lot of remodelling on the house and I found out that he is just as good and sometimes an even better carpenter than I am. He is very fussy too. At one point he didn't think I was doing a good enough job. I am very proud of him. He is an excellent car mechanic too, doing his own repair work and a lot of mine too. He is a jack of all trades. I guess the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree!

Gerry and Sandra decided to build a house in P.A. at 620 32nd St. W. I had the pleasure of building their oak railings throughout the house. It was -30°F; extremely cold! The railings had to be done within two weeks time. I went out to the garage to see if I could get the saw going. Nothing moved - it was literally all frozen stiff - my planer, my saw, nothing would budge. Only a dull moaning sound came from the machinery. I plugged in a small electric heater and set it by the saw and planer. Slowly things started to turn. I thanked God. I dressed warm, but the coldness would numb my hands and feet. I would go into the house for a few minutes to thaw out, then determined to get my job done, out I would go again, and by the time two weeks had gone by I had everything done. Each spindle was hand-crafted as well as were the railings and posts. We loaded up the old truck and headed for P.A.

We received a call from Randy on November 8, 1985 saying that our first grandson, Andrew John, was born. Minnie and I were bursting with joy. He was very special and I was very proud as he was named after me. He is our third grandchild.

I said to Minnie, "How life goes on! Some are leaving this world, and new ones are coming to take their place," literally speaking. I was thinking of my parents who had passed away and now we had three grandchildren who took their place, and life goes on. I think this is beautiful.

I promised myself I would retire as soon as I became 60 years of age and Shelley would graduate from High School. The time came sooner than I expected. There was a big lay off at the C.P.R. so I was offered a pay out for retiring early. I was given a full pension and \$12,000. for retiring one year earlier. I was 59. That suited me fine. My last day of work at the C.P.R. was on November 14, 1985, my birthday.

The next day my co-workers had a get together for me at work. They presented me with a fishing rod and an ice auger for ice fishing. That evening I had a stag party for about 50 of my co-workers and friends at our house. Minnie made cabbage rolls and perogis, roast beef and all sorts of other goodies for the occasion. There was plenty of scotch and other drinks and we all had a great time. Bill Zaparinuk presented me with a beautiful clock from our fishing gang. Shelley was home for the occasion, but Randy and Jennifer, because of the birth of their first born son on November 8, couldn't make it. Sandra was unable to come also because of teaching commitments and Gerry couldn't get away because of his practice. So we had another party later on for all our family. All of the children and grandchildren came home for the big celebration. Minnie made a big cake with 'Happy Retirement John' written on it. We had a wonderful time.

So here I was retired, my time was my very own now, to do with what I wanted. My dream finally came true. We now had more time to see our grandchildren.