



Retirement Presentation at CPR, November 15, 1985



Retirement Party: Clock from fishing buddies; John Fischer, Frank Maydanich, Bill Zaparinuk, Murray Hunchuk, John, Leonard Langley and Roy Sargent



The fishing trip breakfast "eye opener". Frank Maydanich, Roy Sargent, John Fischer and John



A good catch at the Beaver River. Roy Sargent, John, Bill Zaparinuk, John Heshka and Kurt Chow (kneeling)



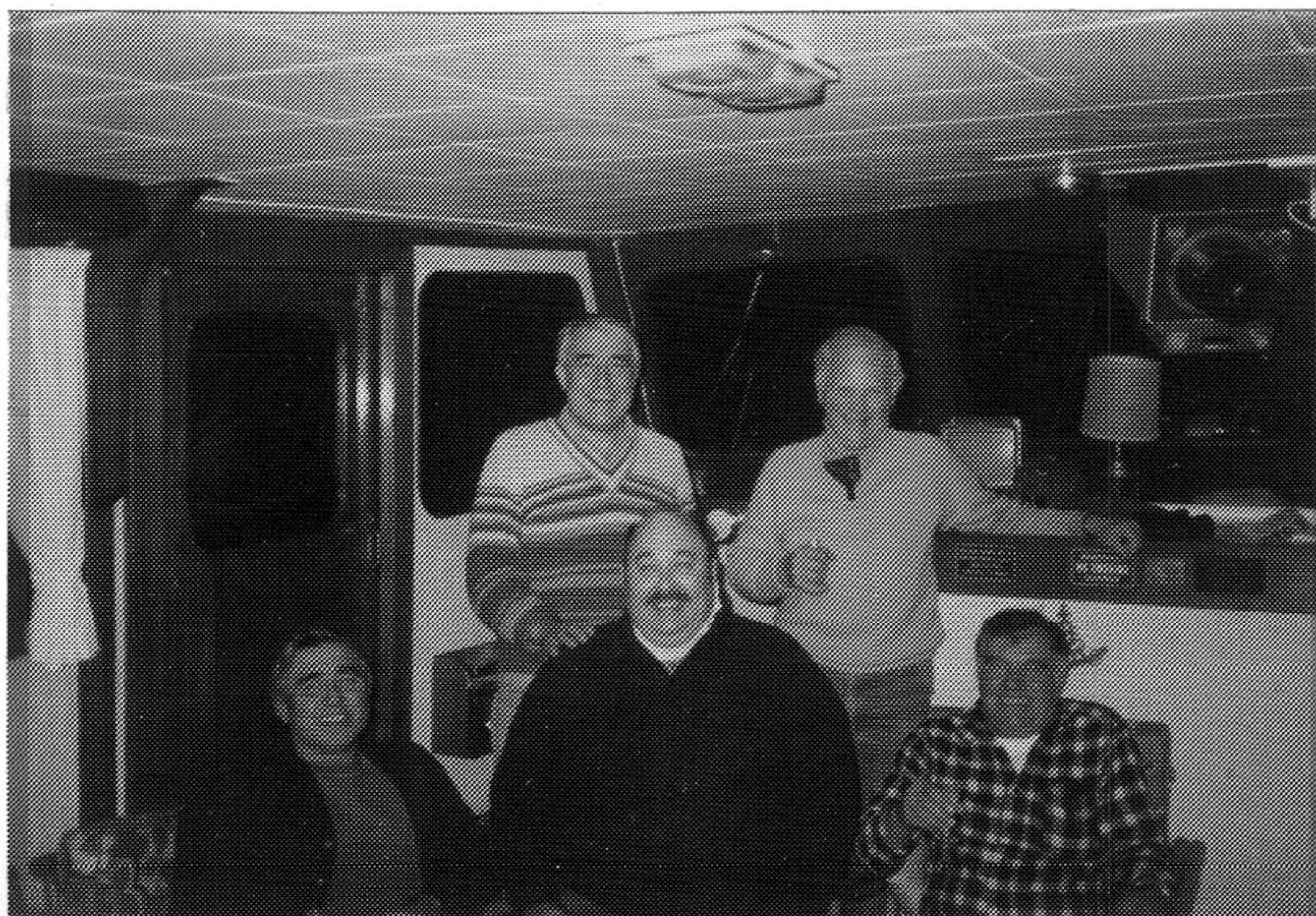
Big fish at the beaver River, John



Big fish at the beaver River, Randy



John Fischer and John at Besnard Lake



Salmon fishing in style. Bill Zaparinuk, John Zaparinuk, Murray Hunchuk, John Turner, and John



A nice buck shot on the run at 500 m

March 25, 1987 Scott Edward was born. Sandra and Gerry were very happy to have a son and of course we were overjoyed to have a second grandson (and our fourth grandchild).

On May 5, 1987 Paul Nicholas was born. Randy and Jennifer's second son. Our third grandson (and our fifth grandchild). We were both happy and joyful to be blessed by two new grandsons about a month apart. We now had two grandsons to carry on the Mikula name, Andy and Paul.

That year (1987) Minnie, Shelley and I went with Randy, Jennifer, Andy and Paul (Andy was 2 years old; Paul was 3 months old) to Hawaii for three weeks. Randy had a conference in Kona on the Big Island (Hawaii) to attend through his work in research.

We had a great time and enjoyed our time together very much especially with the grandchildren. It was the first time for Minnie to visit Hawaii. She just loved it.

Shelley was already attending the U. of S. in Saskatoon and doing very well. She was going to be a High School teacher, a life long dream. To help out with her university expenses, Shelley worked in the summer months as a waitress at the Green Oak restaurant, as a playground supervisor, and as a clerk at Sears. She also worked at the Centennial Auditorium while in university.

She was going around with Gregory Noble, a Moose Jaw boy who was in his third year at the U. of S. He was going in for a law degree.

When Shelley got home from Hawaii, Greg had a big Welcome Home sign on the door for her, and a big Palm tree (from a drama set) in the back yard. She was very impressed.

On March 12, 1989 Timothy Randall was born to Randy and Jennifer. Our fourth grandson (6th grandchild). We now had three grandsons to carry on the Mikula name besides Randy, our son.

So with another beautiful grandson to add to our growing list, we had another excuse for a celebration. Lucky for me that I was retired, otherwise I couldn't keep up to all of the excitement.

Early in 1986 we decided to invite my sister Genia, her daughter Natalie, Natalie's husband Eugene, and Genia's other daughter's husband,



Genia (sister), Canada, 1990

John, to come and visit us in Canada. We sent them all the necessary papers and the guarantee that we would keep them in our care for the duration of their visit here. They were still under communist rule, so there was a lot of paper work and red tape to overcome.

A few years went by. Then much to our surprise, we received a phone call from Natalie one day in the first week of March 1990, that they would be arriving in Montreal in less than two weeks time, on March 13.

Our long wait was over. We were overjoyed that we would soon see my sister once again and this time on Canadian soil and at our home. Minnie was, of course, looking forward with great joy and anticipation to meeting Genia for the first time along with Natalie, Eugene, and John. We picked them up at the Regina airport on March 14. It had been eighteen years since I had last seen Genia and Natalie in Poland when I went with Sandra in 1972.

What a reunion this was, full of joy and tears and many blessings. We had so much to talk about and so much to catch up on. There was

also a period of grieving over our parents who had passed away. We missed them deeply in our hearts.

Genia was the sister that was working in the field when the gestapo came to pick her up and instead they took me in her place. We talked about that, and many tears flowed. We were so thankful that our family survived the war and all of its atrocities, tyranny and oppression. We were truly blessed by God and we thanked Him for being able to meet again after so many years, both in Poland and here at last in Canada, and for giving us such beautiful families, because when I was taken from home by the gestapo in 1942, we were both kids ourselves.

We had a beautiful visit. We visited our children Randy and Sandra and their families in Edmonton and Prince Albert, and Shelley who was just finishing her last year in Education at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.

It was like a dream come true for my sister and her family to visit Canada. They were amazed at the vastness of the land, the abundance of goods in the stores, the freedom, the friendly people that they met, the churches they attended; everything overwhelmed them, everyday things that we sometimes take for granted.

I couldn't get over how Minnie and Genia hit it off so well. It was as though they had known each other forever, and I was pleased. Natalie, Genia, Eugene, and John were so kind and loving and humble, that everyone who met them marvelled at their inner beauty.

The time flew by, and before we knew it, it was time to say goodbye once again. Between all of our family and Minnie's brother John, we presented them with many gifts and money to take back home with them to

Russia.

It was a great blessing to them, as they would have had to work many months, even years, to acquire monetarily what they had received.

With many beautiful memories of Canada, they left for Russia on April 30, 1990.

On May 20, 1990 Shelley graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree from the U. of S.

We attended the graduation ceremonies and once again it was a big thrill for us as our last child had received a University degree. Our dreams were now fulfilled.

So Minnie and I were now home free. We felt like we retired again. All of our children had degrees and that was a blessing for us and for them.

I said to Minnie, "Thank God we still have each other." We now had time to ourselves.

Shelley decided not to apply for a job in Canada. She had decided to go to Japan to teach English there. At first we weren't too happy, but we knew we couldn't stop her either. We accepted her decision and she had our blessing.

So in September, 1990 she took off for Japan all by herself. It was a big worry for



John, Genia, Natalie, Eugene, Jennifer, Tim, Minnie, (kneeling) Randy, Andy, Paul, and John

Minnie and I because she was travelling all alone. Her friend had copped out at the last minute, but she decided to go anyway. On the plane she met two girls from Saskatoon who were going to Japan also. They became good friends and stayed together in Japan. Shelley and Lorna Klose shared an apartment in Japan and became very close friends.

Shelley phoned us every week and it was heart warming to hear her voice. She was there about eight months before she came home. Shelley and Lorna took a trip to Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia before heading back to Canada.

On May 20, 1991 at 9 p.m. we picked Shelley up at the Saskatoon airport. She was smiling and full of joy. She looked great. This was a time of rejoicing for Minnie and I. She was home safe and sound. We thanked God for that.

We stayed in Saskatoon overnight. Shelley was very tired after her long trip. She was reunited with Greg on May 21, 1991.

Shelley applied for a job at the Moose Jaw Board of Education and in spite of jobs being hard to get she got a position at Riverview Collegiate teaching mathematics, geometry, algebra and geo-trigonometry, grades 10, 11 and 12. We thought that she was very fortunate and blessed.

That summer she went to the U. of S. to take a course in mathematics for six weeks.

Greg had graduated on May 20, 1991. He began articling with the law firm of MacDermid Lamarsh in Saskatoon.

Shelley decided that before she started teaching she wanted to take Minnie and I on a trip. She wanted to spend some of that money that she had earned in Japan which was over \$5000.

So we chose Las Vegas. Shelley, Minnie and I took off for Vegas in August 1991 for four days. We all had fun. Minnie enjoyed herself tremendously - we all did.

When we came back Shelley bought a brand new sports car in Regina. A red Acura Integra with black leather seats and all the options - her dream come true.

The cost was \$23,315.46. She wanted that car in the worst way and she got it.

November 16, 1991 Randy phoned to say

that they had a baby girl named Lucy Elizabeth. I said, "Isn't that beautiful. You finally got a girl." We were overjoyed. Soon Minnie and I headed for Edmonton to see our Lucy. The "icing on the cake" for Randy and Jennifer. She was such a beautiful baby girl. We now had seven grandchildren. We stayed there for a few days and had a nice visit. Randy and I celebrated with a few scotches.

We came home and thought that we could now relax. That's when the phone rang. Shelley was on the other end and said, "Guess what Dad? I'm engaged." Without any hesitation I said, "To whom?" "To Greg of course," she replied. It was December 7, 1991.

Soon wedding plans were in full swing. They set the wedding date for July 25, 1992. In the next eight months the main topic in our house was "wedding". I don't think Minnie had a good night's sleep until after the wedding.

Soon July 25 came and Shelley and Greg's wedding day.

All of our children and grandchildren came home for the wedding.

Besides our family we had two of the bridesmaids stay with us, so there were sixteen people altogether.

Shelley's bridesmaids were Lorna Klose (from Saskatoon), Tomiko Azuma (from Japan) and Lisa Noble (Greg's sister). Sandra was maid of honour; Sarah and Kelly were flower girls, Andy was ring bearer, and Connie Neufeld read the scripture.

The reception and dance were held at the Sportsman's Centre for about 200 guests. Randy gave the toast to the bride. Geoff Brick was the master of ceremonies and best man. Gerry and Randy were ushers. Kevin McGuigan was the groomsman.

It was a beautiful wedding and everything went according to our plan. The weather was perfect and the church bells pealed out everyone's joy.

Greg and Shelley went to Hawaii for their honeymoon.

We had "open house" at our house the next day. We had another beautiful day and held the party outdoors. We had a lot of fun. The scotch tasted much better the next day!

After the wedding Minnie and I realized that the last of our children was now married and

that Greg and Shelley would now begin a new life together.

We were both happy and sad. Happy that Shelley had found a mate to spend all of her

days with and sad that our nest was now empty.

We were pleased that all of our children found such good mates and we were very thankful.

Minnie said, "How blessed we are," and I agreed with her.



Our beautiful children and grandchildren. Greg, Shelley, Gerry, Sandra, Randy, Jennifer, and Lucy, Kelly, Andy, Sarah, Scott, Paul, and Tim

Epilogue

When I look back on my life, I have so much to be thankful for. There were days that life wasn't that good. To a lot of people they would say that it was just terrible. To me I thought that it was a good lesson.

I am grateful for everything that happened in my life and I thank God for it.

I learned many lessons in my life. The most important ones are to take people as they are and to respect them; and to learn that the kind of life we have is based mainly on our attitude.

Some people would look at a situation and think of how terrible it was, but I always looked from another perspective and saw that it wasn't so bad and that there were always better days ahead.

Being able to listen to other people and understand their points of view enriched my life. Today is April 7, 1993. I am 66 years old plus and as I look back over the years, I find that I learned a lot from people I least expected to learn from, like what to do and what not to do.

I learned a lot from our own kids on how to be patient and how to listen to other people even though they tell you their stories many times over.

I listened again and again as long as they felt good about it. This way I learned how to be patient. I still have a lot to learn. And I like to be corrected.

Sometimes we forget ourselves and think that we are doing so good but really we aren't.

I like quoting from Proverbs in the Bible "When you correct a smart man he will thank you for it, but when you correct a fool he will get mad at you." I went through that experience many times.

I probably wasn't the best father that a child would like to have. I was very strict with Randy and Sandra and I slacked off a bit with Shelley probably because I was mellowing with old age. But that was because I loved them and cared for them and I thought that there was nothing worse than undisciplined children.

If I had to live my life over again there is nothing I would change. I would do the same things over again.

As I look back on what Otto Skurzeny, the German prisoner of war that I had guarded

some 48 years ago, said to me, I think about how right he was. He told me that I was rich. He saw something in me, probably my attitude towards life and my inward happiness and that kind of richness no one can take away from you and you are rich for life no matter what the circumstances.

I wouldn't trade my way of living with the richest man in the world. I have more money than I can spend, a good wife, beautiful children and grandchildren and most important of all I value my freedom that we have in Canada. And I think of how many people today are taking this freedom for granted.

Minnie and I thank God for all of the blessings that He has bestowed upon us.

My father often quoted Jesus' command to us children and I pass it on to you:

"Love One Another" John 13:34

May God Bless You All and Keep You, Our Beautiful Family

Love Dad

April 7, 1993