

CHAPTER THREE

PAPA JOE'S FIRST CAR,

NANNY & PAPA'S SQUARE DANCING,

and

THEIR ALL NIGHT HOUSE PARTIES

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Nanny Guarino and Papa Joe (my parents), had many house parties when my brother Victor and I were about nine or ten years old. Papa Joe worked as a locomotive fireman on yard engines, both in the Fort Rouge yards or at the East Yards, back of the old CNR station on Main street south. Today, this area of downtown Winnipeg is called "The Forks". He knew all of the switchmen, and switch-foremen who worked within the Winnipeg Terminals Railway. These men did not work out of Winnipeg on any of the rail lines that ran out of Winnipeg.

Additionally, many times he worked as a fireman on the freight trains running outside of Winnipeg. He knew all the Conductors, brakemen and/or trainmen on these trains. These men never worked as switchmen or switch formen in the Winnipeg yards. He made many trips from Winnipeg to Dauphin, Rainy River, Brandon, Redditt, and Rivers. So Papa Joe knew all the railroaders involved in train operations, both within the "yard", (The Winnipeg terminals' East Yard, and the Fort Rouge yards) as well as "The Road", (all the lines running out of Winnipeg)

About once a month during the winter, these friendly railroaders had parties. Usually one of them would offer the use of their home for the event. They were wonderful social gatherings. The owner of the home where the party was going to be held, would order beer directly from the Brewery, usually Pelletier, Sheas, or Labatts. The beer was ordered in barrels, called eighths or sixths or quarters. I believe that the larger barrels held eight gallons of beer, and the smaller ones held four. For a party of approximately fifteen or twenty couples, the owner ordered three eighths and one or two smaller sixths as backups. The couples usually arrived about eight thirty, bringing garlic sausage or koubassa (Ukrainian sausage), bread and butter and other goodies that could be used for snacking during the party. The homeowners would order enough

food for the lunch that would be served during the party, shortly after midnight, and a collection would be taken from all attending to take care of the buying of the beer and groceries for the lunch.

The orchestra usually was made up of a violinist, piano accordionist or piano player and a guitarist. Old time music was mostly played with the favourite being square dancing. However, as a change of pace, they would play old time waltzes, quadrilles, and schottisches. Invariably, dancing would continue until one or two in the morning, at which time the lunch would be served. All the women assisted in passing food on trays, and clearing and washing dishes afterwards.

The large kegs of beer were usually placed in the basement by the delivery men. In our home, they used to roll them down the basement stairs on long skids. Placing the kegs on the basement floor kept the beer cool, and at the proper temperature for serving. Just before the party started, the owner and possibly some of the earlier arrivals would "tap", the keg, by driving a "spigot" into a bunghole on the end of the barrel. The barrel was then turned on its side on a small stand, and beer was "drawn" from the barrel through the spigot or tap into a large teakettle. Normally, the homeowner would have borrowed several of these large tea kettles from neighbors for use during the party. When the beer was first drawn from the keg it would be very frothy, or foamy. The men looking after the drawing of the beer would leave the beer in the kettles for ten or fifteen minutes so it would settle, and the amount of foam would have reduced. The beer was then taken upstairs where it was served to the guests, simply by circulating among them and filling their glasses directly from each large tea kettle. These old fashioned parties would last well into the morning hours, and usually culminated with quite a number of the couples remaining to have bacon and eggs with their host.

In all the years that our parents held these old fashioned railroaders parties, we never did see anyone drunk, rude or obstreperous. Looking back at the parties, I

suppose one reason that there was no blatant drunkenness or fighting or arguing was because people were too active and involved in having a good time; moving around, telling stories or jokes, or in the very active and strenuous dancing itself.

Both Vic and I were always being by the fellows playing music. I suppose I first heard a piano accordionist at one of my parents parties. One of the switchmen was Bert Bradley, and another was Herb Turner. Bert played the guitar and simultaneously played a mouth organ, which was held on a neck stand which held the mouth organ in place, directly in front of his mouth. Herb played the accordion.

Very close friends of my parents were Bill Trinder and his wife Jenny. Either he or my mother or some other person that could play the violin would join the guitarist and piano accordionist to play the old time square dances. These dances were played in sets of three: the first selection was known as the "first chain", followed by a "second chain". Finally, the last chain was played, and was known as the "hoe-down". Vic and I also loved to listen to the stories that the railroaders told, especially their jokes. The women were all friendly and related to each other as sisters. They intimately knew each other's children as their own, by name, age, grade at school, and also how well they were doing in the classroom.

Other good railroad friends of my parents besides Bill and Jenny Trinder, were Bill and Molly Anderson, and our next door neighbors, Eddie and Annie Lake. There also was Eddie and Mary Todd, Louis Migneault and his wife May, Bill Findlay and his wife, Hugh Cuttiford and his wife, and Hugh Ryland and his wife. Vic was very slight in build, had light coloured and wavy auburn hair and was a very attractive youngster of about nine or ten year of age, when our parents started having their "ten years of railroaders" parties. The Trinders had no children, and they really took a liking for Vic. Their nickname for him was "Vicky-boy". While they like me also, they more appreciated my ability to play the violin, and Vic was their favourite.

Bill and Molly also had no children of their own, but Molly had been married previously to a railroad fireman, Sidney James and had a son whom they named "sidney" after her first husband. Bill Anderson was Sidney James' best friend, and after he died from the Flu, during the flu epidemic of 1918, Bill married Sid's wife Molly. Later, he adopted young Sidney James, and young Sid took his stepfathers surname of Anderson. Thus, Vic and I knew him as Sidney Anderson. The "Great Depression" had just started, and almost all employees of the railroads, as with many other industries, were "laid off" for months at a time. Bill and Molly had purchased a small restaurant in st. Vital, on St. Mary's Road, facing a broad open expanse of the red River. Just about every item on their menu included "french fried" potatoes. For this reason, Bill's railroad nicknamed him "Fish and Chips" Anderson.

Their son "Sid" was about four or five years older than Vic and I. We quickly became very good friends. The Andersons lived at the rear of their restaurant in a small suite comprising two bedrooms, a kitchen and a living room. When we visited them Sid, Vic and I would invariably play catch with a baseball in the many open fields surrounding the restaurant. One game that we like to play involved throwing a baseball over the roof of the living quarters of the restaurant, trying to guess (if you were on the receiving side), just where the ball was going to come from and catch it.

During one of these games, Vic stumbled into a gopher hole in the vacant lot, and fell heavily on his left arm, causing a "greenstick" break of the forearm. The Doctors said that this type of break was very difficult to set. Instead of breaking clean, the bone had broken as the implies, as a green stick with a great deal of splintering which made setting of the bone very difficult. Papa Joe drove Vic to the old Victoria Hospital on the south side of River Avenue, just east of Osborne Street. A Doctor Handford, who happened to be in the hospital at the time, set his arm. A few weeks later, I remember going with my father and Vic to the Doctor's office which was situated on the second floor of a building at the north-west corner of Arlington Street and Portage Avenue. My

father took Vic and I in his old Chevrolet Touring car. I think Dr. Handford had to replace Vic's plaster cast several times, and for a long while Vic saved the sawn off portions of each cast because of the signatures and various writings that he had accumulated on each of the casts. After his final cast had been removed, that portion of his arm that had been encased by the cast appeared very white and fragile. Also, there was a "bump" on it, where the greenstick break could readily be discerned.

Papa Joe had just purchased our first "second hand" car, just prior to our visiting the Andersons on St. Mary's Road when Vic had the misfortune to break his forearm. It was an old four cylinder 1924 Chevrolet "touring" car. I recall my father spending the huge amount of forty-five dollars for it. Originally its sides were open, and the upholstery was done in leather (in order to withstand the effect of rain, and road dust). A previous owner had added a metal framework which contained glass, and thus enclosed the sides of the car.

I can very vividly recall the many flat tires that we repaired right on the side of the road. Automobile tires of that day, had inner tubes, and the tires were attached to a split rim. In the event of a flat tire, one had to remove the flat tire and its rim, and by the use of tire irons it was possible to remove the rim from the tire and remove and repair the inner tube. All motorists of that day carried "patching kits" in order to repair their flat tires. There were many. The tires were about four or five inches wide and were inflated to rock hardness. Since many of the highways of that day were gravel or mud roads, travelling was very dusty and dirty. Travelling on the gravel roads on a very dry day, passing cars in either direction was extremely dangerous because of the thick dust clouds that were created immediately behind each vehicle and the obscuring of each driver's vision.

Our family made several trips in our old touring -car "Chevy" to Winnipeg Beach, Morris, and Lac du Bonnet. The trip to Winnipeg Beach was quite and experience. To reach the Beach, we travelled north on McPhillips Street and followed

what is now Number eight Highway through Stony Mountain, and Teulon and then easterly to Winnipeg Beach. The entire road after leaving the city was gravelled. The bends in the road were not long gracious curves as we have today, but were rather sharp steeply banked turns. The traffic was very heavy, and consequently all that we could see during our trip was a large cloud of dust hanging over the highway. We travelled with another Italian family, Johnny Carson (Carson), his wife Blanche, and their children, Eugene, Lydia and Lovie. Their car was also a touring car, but it did not have its sides enclosed with glass as ours. I remember seeing all the concessions and the merry-go-round, bumper cars, the huge Dance Pavilion, and most importantly the tall, exciting Roller Coaster. There was the sandy beach and the C.P.R. pier which was just directly in front of the Dance pavilion. Additionally there was the Government pier at Boundary Park, about a half mile distant in a north-easterly direction from the C.P.R. pier at the Beach proper.

The excitement, hustle and bustle of the boardwalk concession, the restaurants, and of course the very busy beer parlour which was located on the main street were things that I shall always remember. Women were not allowed in the parlour, so they remained in their men's cars outside the hotel, waiting for their men-folk to return after having a few beers. My father and Johnny Carson were exception, so I can recall waiting in our car, as the Carson family in theirs, while our men-folk had their few beers. In the evening, we started our return trip to Winnipeg, and it was all very exciting. Dusk had fallen, and the cars had to turn on their headlights, thus the highway back to Winnipeg was a continuous stream of cars, each creating a huge cloud of dust and each with their huge headlights glowing through the dusty cloud. The youngsters of both cars fell asleep during the return trip, and upon arriving in Winnipeg, it was hard to recognize us, because of the thick layer of white road dust on our faces and clothes, from having travelled the dusty gravelled road back to our Winnipeg homes.

An memorable automobile trip to Morris was precipitated by one of my aunties. My father's sister, "Auntie Julia" had driven to Morris with another lady friend, and had experienced car problems. Morris was approximately forty miles south of Winnipeg, and since we lived adjacent on Jessie Avenue near Pembina Highway (near today's "confusion corner", we were her closest source of help. My auntie phoned my father, and he decided to drive out to Morris with our old touring-car in order to assist her. Our trip out to Morris was uneventful. The road was gravelled entirely from the University of Manitoba area on Pembina highway to the town of Morris and beyond to Emerson, at the international border. My father was able to get my auntie's car operative and we started home with both cars travelling together. It was to be a long arduous trip. My aunt's car was the first to have a flat tire on our return to Winnipeg. Of course my father repaired it for her, right on the side of the highway. In those days, one carried a number of irons that were necessary for getting the tire off the rim, and they accordingly were called "tire-irons". There were also special wrenches to take the rim off. In addition, the tire repair kit included rubber cement and patching material for the inner tube. It was easy to spend at least an hour repairing a flat tire, at the side of the road. As soon as my father was able to get my aunt's car operative, and we had started out again, my father's old chevy blew a tire, and again the process of repairing a flat tire was repeated at the side of the road. I remember that during our return trip of approximately forty-five miles from Morris to Winnipeg, we had six or seven flat tires between my auntie's car and our own. We spent more more than twelve hours completing the round trip to Morris.

Our trip to Lac du Bonnet, taken about a year later was a thoroughly enjoyable experience. My parent's friends, Mr. and Mrs. Eric LaBossiere had a brother and sister-in-law living on a small holding of land of only a few acres in the Lac du Bonnet area. Because the great depression of the early thirties, they were attempting to live from the land, and supplement their income from the operation of a small sawmill. They were experiencing great difficulties in obtaining enough income to buy food. Thus, the

LaBossiere's asked my parents to a few take a few bushel bags of potatoes and other miscellaneous groceries out to them, and this was the main reason for our trip.

Because of the saw mill operation, a huge two storey high pile of sawdust and wood shavings had accumulated in the immediate area of the sawmill, which was adjacent to their home. I remember the fun that Vic and I had, along with other all the LaBossiere children playing in this huge sawdust pile. We would slide back one step for every two that we took in going up the sawdust pile, and then there was the fun of the fast slide down the pile. Unfortunately my brother Vic experienced problems because of our playing in the sawdust pile. The sawdust pile apparently was "loaded" with fleas and Vic received a flea bite on his penis. (Nanny Guarino politely referred to it as his "ling-a-ling"). It became extremely swollen and painful. It required a few weeks of careful treatment with poltices and ointments), administered by my mother to get him back to normal. It was a topic of discussion and of course, great amusement among our family members for months.

The trip both to and from Lac du Bonnet had exposed us to some very beautiful country. As I recall, we had driven to Beausejour, and then northward and easterly through very heavily populated pine forest, rock outcroppings, rivers and streams. Fortunately we did not experience the problem of a series of flat tires, as we had on our trip to Morris.

It was incredible how people operated their cars during the late twenties ad early thirties. It was especially difficult during the winter. My father had established a very successful regime to ensure starting. After driving for the day, he disconnected the cables from the battery and took it off its bracket, which was easily detached by loosening two large wing nuts. He then took the batteries into the basement of our home to keep it warm and prevent it from freezing. He always placed a wooden board under the battery to prevent it from losing strength by touching the concrete basement floor and grounding. Then he would then open a drain cock at the bottom of the motor block

on the car to drain the water from it. Similarly, he would open a small drain cock at the bottom of the radiator and also drain it. This procedure prevented any vital area of the car from freezing.

The start up procedure was also very unusual by today's standards. The drain-cocks on the radiator and at the bottom of the block of the motor were closed and hot water taken by pail from the kitchen sink was poured into the radiator until both the radiator and the engine block were filled. The battery was replaced into its bracket and the hot and ground wires reconnected. The car had to be cranked manually (there was no starter motor) and usually it started very easily, because the hot water warmed the engine block.

My father always insisted that we take great care when cranking the car, so that if it backfired we would not receive a broken forearm. His system of starting using this hand cranking method, was to only pull "upwards" on the crank and not go up and down cranking in a circular motion. Using dad's method, if the car backfired the person doing the cranking would have their arm clear of the crank, which spun crazily in a backward fashion if the motor backfired. In that case the crank could not possibly contact the arm of the person cranking the car. Otherwise if the car backfired and the person cranking was in the downswing portion of the cranking operation, the handle of the crank in the reverse mode would contact the forearm of the person cranking. Usually, this would result in horrible fracture of both bones in the forearm. There were many men of the era who had experienced a very bad break of their forearm from cranking a car. It was a disability that they carried for the remainder of their lives in the form of a very badly mishapened forearm.

Papa Joe took a great deal of interest in all the younger boys in our neighborhood. It started when we used to play hockey on vacant street corner lots. There was a lot at the north-west corner of Jessie Avenue and Osborne Street, where the local community meeting building is today. In the summer, Papa Joe used this lot to

grow potatoes. He usually hired someone with a horse drawn plow to "turn over" the soil. Then it was "disked" to loosen it. Vic and I who were responsible for the planting of the potatoes. Usually we would have many potatoes left over from the previous year that we could use for seed. This was accomplished by cutting out the rooting eyes of the potatoes, leaving a good portion of the interior of the potatoe attached. The eyes were planted between six and eight inches deep in the soil, at approximately sixteen inch intervals and in rows approximately three feet apart. These eyes would grow into new potato plants. Another activity that Vic and I were actively involved in, was that of treating the potato plants for "potatoe bugs". This involved knocking the potatoe bugs off the leaves and collecting them. Additionally, we sprayed the leaves with a lye solution that killed any remaining potato bugs or their larvae that might have remained on the potatoe plant. The biggest job associated with the growing of the potatoes, was the removing them in the late summer or early fall, and retrieving the new potatoes from the soil.

Another vacant lot that Papa Joe used in the summer was located between Walter Creighton's home on the north-west corner of Pembina Highway and the Ransom home about a hundred and fifty feet to the west. I remember one winter when we used this lot for a hockey rink. Papa Joe was able to obtain some "box-car" doors from the C.N.R. was able to construct a type of shed or shelter in which we could put on our hockey equipment and skates. He, along with several other fathers in the neighborhood was able to construct a crude stove of sorts, using old discarded oil drums, and doing a little restructuring of them to form a stove. Thus if the children playing on the rink became cold they could come into the little shack to get warmed.

The city of Winnipeg Waterworks department flooded our rink for us at no cost. In the early fall, before the first frost, neighborhood fathers and the older boys would create an earthen bank about a foot high, marking out the rink area and at the same time providing a dam in order to keep the water contained in the rink area when it was

first flooded. Shortly after the first frosts and after the earthen dikes had frozen, the men from the city waterworks department would flood the rink. This was always an exciting event for all the youngsters in the area because they could see the "lake-like" formation of their future skating rink. It was truly a very happy and joyous time when we could put on our skates in the old shed and skate out onto the newly created rink.

I suppose we Vic and I were about twelve and thirteen when Papa Joe first organized the "fort Rouge Black Star" hockey team. At first, as a group we played "flyweight" division of the bantam hockey league. This league consisted of neighborhood teams such as ours that were distributed throughout the City. On Saturday mornings each hockey team visited another team in the league in a different area of the city and played a hockey game. Later, when we were old enough (16 years and under), we played in the "Midget" Hockey league. My father was able to get our hockey team into this very highly organized league which played all their games "indoors" in the old Olympic Hockey rink on Church Street, about a block west of Main Street in the North End of the city. We had graduated by this time from playing hockey on our little corner lot rinks without the benefit of boards, to the renting of a practice hockey rink (outdoors) on Burnell Street next to the Canada Bread Company, just off Portage Avenue. Then, we had the luxury of playing all our league games in the enclosed indoor Olympic rink.

Our old "Chevy" touring car was a great favourite of the young aspiring hockey players in our neighborhood. Somehow Papa Joe would cram ten or twelve youngsters into his old car and take us from Fort Rouge to either the Burnell Avenue rink or the old Olympic Rink. Nanny Guarino chose the name for our hockey team and designed the jerseys. Our Hockey club colours were "black and white" (again, as chosen by Nanny Guarino). On the front of our hockey jersey was a large black star superimposed on a larger white star, so the white star formed a bead or edging around the black star. Around this in an oval fashion was our club name "FORT ROUGE BLACK STARS".

When I played hockey, the simply referred to their jerseys as “ hockey sweaters”. (We have beomce more “sofisticated). The white lettering “Fort Rouge Black Stars” was printed above the Black Star in an oval shape, and similarly the word Black Star was placed below it in an oval shape.. We had three large horizontal white bands each about an inch wide on our arms and across our chest area. Similarly, we had three of these white horizontal stripes on around our hockey stockings, above the knee area and also a few inches above the ankle area.

Thinking back today, I can remember many of my wonderful boyhood friends. There was Walter Creighton, who played on Left Wing on a line centered by Johnny Sigurdson with Normie Wilson on the Right wing. Then we had a "Hunkie" line. It comprised a group of young Unkranian and Polish North-end boys made up of "Pinkie" Melnyk who played centre (he later went on to play Hockey professionally in the NHL (National Hockey League). Roy Ormiston play goalie. His parents owned a florist shop on Osborne Street close to the old Osborne Theatre. Roy came from the Mayfair Avenue area around the old Fort Rouge School on River Avenue near Main Street. I played Left Defense with Gordie Lewis. Gordon was a tall, tough, gangly kid who had a tremendously long "sweep-check". I was a cocky, pugnacious kid who loved to throw body checks at opposing forwards, preferably right at mid-ice or before they got to our blue line and I liked to do the “fighting”. I was the Ty Domi of our team. Gordon Lewis was usually very quiet and very concentrated. However, He too, had no hesitation when it came to throwing down the gloves and punching someone. Gordie and I made a good defense team. We "teamed" our defense. If the oncoming play swung to the left, I followed the puck carrier, and make the check, while Gordie stayed in the centre area to protect the goalie and also be in a position to intercept a pass coming from the puck carrier that I was checking. Similarly if the play swung to the Gordie would go after the puck carrier and I would protect the center area against a pass from the puck carrier that Gordie was checking. Our major objective was to force opposing forwards towards

the boards at each side. We bragged that no opposing forward had ever split our defense, and had gone in “unchecked” on our goalie.

My father thought our team needed some "tougher" players so he recruited a huge Jewish kid from the North End of Winnipeg, “Izzy” Labovitch, to alternate on defense with Gordie Lewis and myself. Gordie didn't care for Labovitch any more than I did. In one of our first practice sessions he really checked him very hard. Also at my very first opportunity I also gave him an exceptionally hard body-check which greatly annoyed and antagonized him. Labovitch probably thought that because I was quite a bit shorter than Gordie Lewis that I would be an easier mark. Also since I was the son of the General Manager of the team, and since he had been recruited to be a "Goon", he picked me as a target. Usually, because I was a very fast skater, I could intercept a pass in our own end behind our own blue line, circle behind our net (in those days we were discouraged to circle in front of the net) and lead an attack up the ice with two or three of the forwards. On one occasion when I did this during practice I noticed that Labovitch at the other blue line was preparing to charge me and give me an awfully hard body check. Fortunately back on our little neighborhood rinks, we had some excellent coaching and were taught to skate and handle the puck with “our heads up” (we didn't have to watch the puck on our stick”, so that we could observe what was occurring around ourselves. (Gretsky does this so effectively today - and seldom if ever gets hit).

It meant that the puck handling was almost by "feel". We didn't have to look at the puck to "stick-handle" and control the puck. Thus, while I skating and rushing with the puck I could see everything that Labovitch was setting up for me. I counteracted, by not totally concentrating on the puck but rather how I was going to handle Labovitch's charge at me. Being short gave me a tremendous advantage, because I could "hit" him much lower than he could "hit" me. I met him "dead" on, and he went down very hard. That ended the practice session for him, because his head struck the ice very hard (we

didn't wear protective head-gear in those days), and our coach and trainers were afraid that he might have suffered a concussion.

Ironically, my father "Papa Joe", was very annoyed with me for having "roughed up" his "tough-guy". Our coach, Gordon Chilton did not think very much of Labovitch, either as a player or tough guy, so he ended up being one of the spare defensemen, playing only sporadically and usually only when we were sufficiently ahead on the scoreboard to allow him to have some ice time.

I always felt unfomfortable playing hockey on my father's team because he had organized it and had become the General Manager. I didn't want the rest of the players on the team to feel that I was favoured in any way. Gordon Chilton, our coach worked on the C.N.R. as a crew clerk in the Fort Rouge roundhouse. It was Chilton who made the decision that I should play on defense. On all the other teams on which played, such as Kelvin High School, and various teams in the leagues that operated at the Main street stadium, I played either Centre or Left Wing. Chilton felt that because I was a husky youngster that I would make a better defenseman than a forward. I had to accept the role, but I did not feel comfortable or happy with it.

During this period of my life, my middle teens, none of the youngsters in my age group smoked. We all aspired become National Hockey League stars and practiced very hard each day. Sometimes we spent as much as eight to ten hours a day on a hockey rink (the old Main street Stadium - at 100 Main Street today) and skating or playing hockey for most of that time frame. This was a typical for the boys in my neighborhood area when they were in their early teens.

Between our regular league games, my old boyhood buddies, Walter Creighton, and Frankie Sharp used to walk from our homes near the corner of Osborne Street and Corydon Avenue to the Main Street Stadium. We usually followed the C.N.R. railway line leaving it at Mayfair avenue and then walking the several city blocks to the Main

Street Stadium, which was located just over the Main Street bridge crossing the Assiniboine River. The rink was located at 100 Main Street, where some of the administrative offices of the City of Winnipeg are situated today. The stadium was operated by the Wilkinson family who also ran one of the concessions during the summer months, the rifle-firing range close to the Roller Coaster area, at old River Park at the extreme south end of Osborne Street, just north of the Red River. The Wilkinson's Main Street rinks, (there were three of them, two regulation size hockey rinks and a very large open speed skating area) encompassed almost a total city block area.

The Wilkinson's were masters at making an ice skating surface. The entire hockey and skating rinks areas were brilliantly lit with huge overhead lights and the stadium glittered in the evening. It not only was a beautiful sight, but the lovely sound of Strauss Waltz's and other typical skating songs, such as the Skaters waltz enhanced the brilliance of the skating rinks.

I think my father traded his old 1924 Chevy touring car for another second hand car around 1936. This was a wonderful experience for our family. The new second car had doors and windows and offered protection from the weather. Later my dad installed a "gas" heater which tremendously increased comfort in the cold winter weather. This car had solid "disk" type wheels instead of the "wooden spokes" that our old 1924 touring car had. My mother loved the dark reddish colour (almost a deep red wine colour) that our new "second-hand" car had. It also had a great deal of brilliant "chrome" around the headlights, doors and the corners of a beautiful trunk which was mounted on the rear.

Papa Joe loved his car and kept it meticulously washed, cleaned and polished. He regularly cleaned and washed the car with a sponge, then waxed and polished it with a chamois. even our old garage was remodeled to better accommodate the new car. Unlike our first car the interior was beautifully upholstered in a good quality cloth fabric, instead of cold leather as in our old car. Our car seemed to impress our

neighbors. My father was a very proud automobile owner of that day.

I was attending Kelvin High School when Papa Joe

bought his second car. He traded his old Chevy for a "newer" used car. I think the dealer gave him a good allowance for the old car and Papa Joe was very happy with the deal that he made. I remember that some of my school buddies at Kelvin High School in that era, were able to "borrow" their dad's car to take their girl friends the few major school dances that we had. After these dances, they usually stopped for coffee at some of the local restaurants. The highlight of the evening was when the fellows would drive their date home. With a car, it was very convenient to park close to your girl friend's home, and as we used to say "do a little necking or "smooching".

I had the good fortune to meet a lovely brunette, at Grand Beach the previous summer. we met on the old wooden pier. Three girls were lying on the pier tanning, and Vic and I mischievously splashed water on them. The gals were Florence Thomas, "Mog" Davies, and her sister "Lillian".

Lillian was sixteen, (my age) and was attending grade ten at Kelvin High School. I was in grade eleven. We became beach buddies, and danced in the evenings in the old Dance Hall. I continued to see her off and on, when our vacations were over, visiting her at her home at 505 Rathgar Avenue. Florence Thomas lived next door, at 507. I had learned to play the piano accordion fairly well and had taken a few lessons from Fred Kent who was an expert player and teacher of the accordion. One of my favourite songs was "Harbour lights", which was a popular song of the day. Lillian Davies seemed to really like my Piano accordion playing. Her family had a nice upright piano in their living room, and I had just started learning to play the piano. Lil also enjoyed my fumbling at the piano, and we had many a very enjoyable afternoon at her home with my playing either the piano or my piano accordion. Lillian was the "first" girl that I kissed. We were talking at the side of her verandah, and it was she who took the

initiative to kiss. I guess I was very infatuated with her and we continued to see each other periodically during that school year.

At the year end there was the "Grad" farewell dance at Kelvin, and I was fortunate enough to persuade my father to let me use his new Chevrolet car to take my date, Lillian to the Dance. I remember that the orchestra was led by "Jimmy Gowler and his Old Time Fiddlers" However, they did not play the typical square dances and jigs, but rather the current songs of the day, which all the kids at school loved. These dances were held in the Gymnasium of the school and just about all the kids at Kelvin attended them.

I also recall the night that the School Plays were presented. I played the part of a french peasant, dressed in a bourgeois costume. I think I only had a few words to say in French. Something like, "Qui, Qui, Monsieur". Lillian and I went home together on the street car. She had waited for me, unexpectedly after the performance. We took a Stafford streetcar to Corydon Avenue where we transferred to a Corydon Avenue streetcar which ran to the corner of Osborne Street and Corydon. Then, I get off at Corydon Avenue and Osborne Street, while Lil continued on her own via a "Park-line" streetcar that ran south on Osborne Street. She got off the street car at the Park Theatre at Rathgar Avenue. Lil had only a half block to walk to her home at 505 Rathgar Avenue.
