

The Crazy Horse Saloon

Away back when we were young, Betty and I planned a trip to London and Paris, the first time abroad for either of us. We were living in Beaconsfield, Quebec at the time, and had a two year old son, Steven. We organized the trip such that he would stay with his maternal grandparents on their farm in Ontario, while we went to see the sights.

Our next door neighbour in Quebec was Executive VP, Public Relations for Air Canada, and hence he and his wife had executive passes to anywhere they wanted to travel. Pierre worked crazy hours and rarely travelled unless for business. Meanwhile Phyllis, in her early sixties, was bored, had lots of free time with her offspring all established, and she tended to fly to London or Paris or New York for weekends. When she learned of our trip, she took me aside and said “When you are in Paris, you must go to the Crazy Horse Saloon. And, more importantly, you must buy seats in the front row of the balcony. Now remember this!”

Off Betty and I went on our adventure, and we thoroughly enjoyed the sights of London before we flew across the channel to Paris. We toured all the great attractions, and then rented a bright orange Mini-Cooper to make a couple of short trips into the countryside. The first stop was the ancient cathedral city of Chartres, followed by the wine areas nearby and then we drove north to Normandy. I had an uncle who had been killed in action about 70 days after D-Day. My mother wanted us to visit his grave and bring her some photos. It turned out to be a very emotional experience.

We arrived back in Paris for our last couple of days, and one evening we dressed up in our finest and went to the show at the Crazy Horse Saloon. Paris in 1976 had several such theatres, the Folies Bergere being perhaps the most famous. The show was a dance and song revue with exotic costumes and beautiful female singers and dancers. At the first intermission, we both commented how much we were enjoying the show.

When the lights were flashed to encourage the audience to return to their seats, we dutifully followed and sat down just as the lights went down completely. We were in complete darkness for 15 or 20 seconds before all the lighting came on again. Much to my surprise, and enjoyment, there was a string of beautiful young women on a catwalk all the way around the balcony; the closest was less than three feet away. Of significance, all the tops of costumes had been removed, and they were all bare-breasted. Imagine our surprise. The remainder of the show was in a similar state of clothing, or lack thereof.

The long trip home to Toronto, then to the Owen Sound area to pick up Steven, and the 450 mile drive from there to Montreal had us worn out when we arrived home in Beaconsfield.

The next day I encountered Phyllis, and went to her and merely said “Thank-you”.

“Ah,” Phyllis replied, “You took my advice and bought the correct tickets for the Crazy Horse Saloon. I thought you would enjoy that.”

What a great friend!

Walt Lemon – March 4, 2016 (557 words)