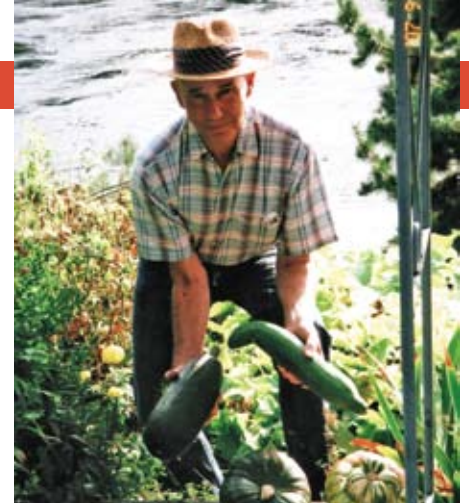




WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Walter Siemens: Gardening *by the River in Trail*



Texas-sized cucumber found among the squashes

My first 6 years were lived in Rabbit Lake, Saskatchewan. My family then moved to Strathmore, Alberta.

When I was 16, in 1951, we moved to Abbotsford, BC.

Ten years later, my wife and I moved to Trail with our 1-year-old son and a 10-year-old car. We were going to stay there “just for 2 years,” to try out a different area. We’ve been living here now for over 47 years. (We do have a condo in Richmond.)

I took my high school matriculation with the idea of entering teacher training. I soon started in business and I never did teach. Over the next 40 years, I took many business and professional continuing-education courses. I have always considered it necessary to keep my knowledge up to date to provide proper service to my clients.

My myriad early endeavours included operating a garage and service station in Chilliwack at age 23 and working as a travelling auto-parts salesman. In 1961, I entered the insurance business as an insurance agent and purchased an insurance brokerage in 1969.

I was commissioned as a BC Notary in May 1971.

I became a Notary to augment my income in the event the NDP party came to power and interfered in the auto insurance business, which it did. There was little in the way of study material or practical Notary training in those days. After I wrote my exams, then-Secretary Dr. Bernard Hoeter called to advise I had passed “with good marks.” I was commissioned as a BC Notary in May 1971.

I was the first Notary in Trail to establish a separate Notary practice with a dedicated staff. The other

Notaries conducted their practice with insurance or real estate staff. My daughter-in-law Karen Siemens worked with me for several years, then took the Notary Preparatory Course and purchased my Notary practice. Karen is highly professional and very well respected here in Trail.

I believe I enjoyed a great deal of respect from the public in general as a result of being a Notary. In particular, I found satisfaction in assisting clients with their Last Wills; it was most interesting to learn about their family relationships.

After selling my Notary practice to Karen, I continued in the insurance brokerage until 2004. Thereafter, I did some consulting and managed and sold property. I am active in the local Rotary Club and in politics to a degree, and serve as Vice President of the Trail Seniors Villa Society, a 29-unit apartment development.

I have served as president of the Insurance Brokers of BC, chair of The



Plots of our prize-winning flowers and borders





*Celebrating our 50th Wedding Anniversary
June 16, 2005*



Castlegar airport farewell to our granddaughter Katie and Korean exchange student Hee Won, who lived with our daughter Diana and Katie for the school year. We sent Katie to Korea for a 3-week visit. Katie, Diana, and my wife Hildegard are in front, on the right.

Insurance Council of BC, and a director of BC Assessment. In addition to being a four-term councillor on Trail's city council, I have been involved in many civic and church responsibilities.

My hobbies are reading newspapers and periodicals and I usually have 2 or 3 books on the go—primarily biographies and John Grisham mysteries. Every year, I reread *The Bible*.

I spend a good deal of time working on our yard, a 100' x 126' river lot.

Trail is engaged in the National "Communities in Bloom" competition. To support the effort, my wife and I enter the local competition in the "borders and flowers" section. We won first prize in 2005 and second prize in 2007. We also enjoy travelling and spending time with our grandchildren.



I have been adopted by our granddaughter Katie's Dachshund!



Welcome to our front door.



Hawthorne tree in bloom at north-east corner of our home

To me, the most important part of life is being a good husband, father, and grandfather; being respected in the community; and serving others as a practising Christian. We contribute quite substantially to relief organizations and other groups that need assistance.

I have had an extremely busy and satisfying life. Now that I have slowed down, I have more time for reading, travel, and keeping our home and property in shape. I also have more time for my wonderful wife of 53 years.

PS: I was involved with the start of *The Scrivener*. Congratulations to Val and staff for a most professional publication. ▲

Two uncanny incidents stand out in my Notary and insurance business experience. I call them the Tales of Two Couples.

**Notary Transaction:
Apartment Block Purchase**

The men were cousins, of Italian descent. (One third of the Trail population is of Italian origin.)

All 4 of the people involved—2 men and 2 women—had the same names. The only difference was that one man had a middle name.

When I tried to register the transaction, the Land Title Office rejected my deed. A good deal of assurance was required before the LTO would finally register it.

**Insurance Transaction:
Vehicle Accident Claim**

This incident happened in the Slokan Valley, home to many people of Russian descent. It caused quite a stir.

Both vehicles were 1960 Chevrolet pickups. Both vehicles were green. Both men had the same names. Both wives had the same names.

The "mystery" was finally sorted out by checking the vehicle serial numbers.

They were different.