

VANCE D. JOHNSON – CONTINUED

school for the last two weeks of June, 1962. (I'd been working on Model 28's for the past 2.5 years, so it was about time...) While in Chicago on my free time, I went to all the museums, shows, and baseball games since I figured I never had been there and didn't know if I'd ever be back again. Afterwards, I returned to Denver for the month of July. Then I was sent back to Chicago again for the M-28 ASR school for three weeks. I had been to all the museums and the same shows were still going on.

I did return to the Museum of Science & Industry a couple of times. I did a lot of window shopping and started to build HO model RR trains in my hotel room. I still have one French Steam locomotive I built then. I never had been for a ride in a helicopter, so I took rides from Meigs Field out to Midway, to O'Hare and back to Meigs. It wasn't as much fun as I expected it to be, it was noisy, I didn't have a seat by a window, I could see the downtown buildings going down as we went up, but there wasn't any sensation like you'd get on some sort of a ride at an amusement park.

"My trips to Chicago and later to Kansas City were always with a pass on a RR train. WU always gave me a roomette for these trips. When I went to KC, Missouri, it was for the Model 32 KSR/ASR Telex school. Mr. Boatwright and I went to the Autodin school in Chattanooga for the four weeks in December 1962. In another class that started a week before us were all the Overseas Mtce Spvrs that were getting their training before leaving for their assignments.

"After I had been in Denver for awhile, the Asst. District Plant Spvr needed me to come back and relieve the man in Sante Fe, NM. After I checked into a motel, I drove my car down to the Sante Fe WU Office. I was met by him and a Plant Tech, guys I knew from Albuquerque who provided me with the keys to Sante Fe's pick-up truck and WU Ofc. They had driven that truck and a sedan-delivery car up there the 70 miles from the WU shop in Albq. (Their names are not given due to what follows.)

"We exchanged greetings and I climbed into the truck. The truck was parked on the street parallel to the curb in front of the WU Ofc. I backed up a short distance to give me more clearance to swing out around the vehicle in front of our truck. As I pulled out from the curb, my two friends started waving wildly. I thought they were exuberantly waving, "Good Bye!" So I waved back. I went down the street a short distance and made a left turn onto an avenue and headed for my destination. I didn't learn why they were waving that way until about a year ago, at the annual Denver WU Local Union #31 Picnic. One of the two that I mentioned in the previous paragraph was there and clued me in... There was a small automobile parked behind me on the street in front of the WU office that somehow got hooked to the back of the WU truck and was being pulled along behind me down the street. When I made my left turn, the car became disconnected and continued rolling straight ahead until it rolled to a stop behind another car next to the curb. My friends went down the street and checked the condition of the little car, found it to be OK and decided to let it go at that... That was a nice green WU truck that was still pretty new, but it had the problem of inadequate mirrors.

WU should have equipped it with Lakeside mirrors so you could see what was behind you.

"The man that was in Cheyenne, Wyoming, got promoted to be a Plan-55 Spvr. So, **Abe Rabinoff**, the Dist. Plant Spvr in Denver sent me up there to replace him. It was a one man place that took care of other cities in the S.E. corner of the state. At the time, the main concerns were Warren AFB for Plan 55 and a 12 Card Autodin terminal and the 210 Signal Generators for the Bomb Alarm System. But there were lots of Time Service Clocks and Clock circuits. Another event that was going on at the time was the POTUS visit (President Of The United States). I had to set up press terminals at the airports in Cheyenne and Laramie. The Wire Chief was Jim Donaldson and the WU Ofc Mgr was Jim Carskaddon. I was there three months the first time. Then after a break, I was there again for two months.

"What happened in the break was this: In 1963, after only being in Denver for about a year, Mr. Boatwright offered me a promotion to become an Overseas Mtce Spvr. It was to either LaMacaza, Province of Québec, or North Bay, Province of Ontario. I wasn't sure. He replied, "Boy, I'd sure like to go up there. Think of all the hunting and fishing you could do." Well, those weren't things I liked to do in those days. So I went home that night and tried to figure out where these places in Canada were. Using the Rand-McNally Road Atlas, I found La Macaza. It was 120 miles NW of Montréal, Province of Québec, Canada. I liked what I saw, it was in the mountains and there were ski areas nearby. North Bay was easier to find in Ontario, it was just N of Lake Nipissing, 234 miles N of Toronto. So, the next day, I advised Mr. Boatwright that I wanted to go to La Macaza. He got on the Shop's Telex and called his contact in NYC/HQ. He advised I was interested in La Macaza, but that I would take either one. (I didn't like what he said, but didn't complain.) NY said good, and they wanted to send me to the Autodin school. Boatwright advised that I had already been to that. Then NY said maybe I could go to Chattanooga and be an asst instructor. Some time passed. Later they said that there was some problems with the installation in La Macaza. IBM refused to have a Customer Engineer stationed in La Macaza or to be within a two hour response in case of trouble calls. But