# Rotary ‘Classification Talk’

## Introduction

The time has come, the walrus said

To talk of many things

Of shoes and ships and sealing wax

Of cabbages and kings

And why the sea is boiling hot

And whether pigs have wings.

(The Walrus and the Carpenter, Lewis Carroll)

## A Renaissance Man

Heidi’s friend: ‘What does your Dad do?’

Heidi: I’m not really sure.

I’ve been called a Renaissance Man, a description which is as good as any other. Of course one could say that it means that I don’t know what I’m going to be when I grow up – if I grow up.

I’m interested in virtually everything, from science to art, from history to music, from Jaguars to John Deere tractors.

## The Farm

I was born in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, at the edge of the Cypress Hills. I spent my first eight years on the family grain and cattle farm north of Maple Creek. We then moved to Golden Prairie, seven miles from the farm so that my sister and I could go to a school with more than one room.

We did not have electricity at that time on the farm – but we had a barb wire phone which worked well unless the fence was down.

## Education and Learning

I completed Grade 12 in the spring of 1960, then spent the summer with the Canadian Army on a Grade A Instructors Course before enrolling in the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan in September.

I joined the college band, along with Ed Schultz. We played on campus and for various functions in and near Saskatoon.

This was the beginning of a lifetime of professional music, writing, and creating visual art. I do not have hobbies, only a wide variety of endeavours which are essential to my life.

## Operation Crossroads Africa

In January, 1964, I saw a brochure on Operation Crossroads Africa on a bulletin board in the Administration Building at the University of Saskatchewan.

The person who posted it had written ‘Would you like to go to Africa this summer?’ at the top of the brochure.

I applied and was accepted as the second Saskatchewan student to participate. Twenty-five Canadians were chosen that year to join 275 American students in East and West Africa.

CPR Conductor at Maple Creek station: ‘Where are you going, son?’

‘I’m going to Africa.’

This was – and continues to be – a life-changing experience

Music on the beach – and on Jomo Kenyatta’s piano.

## A Graduate Degree – and the beginning of an association with computers, technology and new ways of learning

‘Dr. Bell, there’s a computer on campus. I have a huge experiment and I don’t want to spend a month doing calculations on an old Monroe calculator.

Well…

I completed my MSc in January, 1966, and moved to Edmonton where I accepted a position in Alberta Agriculture working with farmers, ranchers and researchers, creating feeding and management systems. I travelled extensively, worked with fine people, and after 13 years moved to an opportunity in the private sector.

During that 13 years, however, I was fortunate enough to take some educational leave which (with holidays, weekends, and late nights) allowed me to earn my PhD.

## I Saw The Light

Living in a creative city, seeing opportunities to create and learn, led me to doing free-lance book reviews and op-ed items for CBC Radio, and articles for Canadian and American magazines.

However, my most exciting development was finding a notice for a photography course that was unlike any other I had seen. The instructor, Hubert Hohn, had recently moved to Edmonton from Illinois after having declined an opportunity to visit Vietnam. Hu had worked with Ansel Adams, Minor White and many other well-known photographers. In a short period of time Edmonton became to centre of creative photography in Canada.

In 1974 Hubert and I were two of the photographers included in the first exhibition of photographs held at the Edmonton Art Gallery (now the Art Gallery of Alberta). Prior to this exhibition the gallery (and most other galleries) felt that photography was illustration, not art. Times have changed, fortunately.

In 1976 I received a Canada Council Grant in Photography just two months before my PhD was granted.

Hubert was also a carpenter. He built my darkroom, which has now been in use for 45 years.

## Austria And The Venus of Willendorf

In 1979: Would you like to write a chapter for a scientific book, then spend 8-10 days in a 12th century castle in Austria reviewing and discussing the chapters, hosted by the Wenner-Grenn Foundation? Of course!

I used the same methodology to create Alternative Futures for Prairie Agricultural Communities, and Alternative Futures For What We Currently C.all Publishing.

The Venus of Willendor

## Teaching and Learning at the U of A

I spent five years at the Faculty of Extension, U of A, where I edited a magazine, published books, and taught courses in the Applied Sciences area.

I moved to the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry on July 1, 1995, and spent two years teaching communications. On that same day I became the President of our Rotary Club –and my family welcomed an exchange student into our home for a two month stay.

I was told that my class would meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:00 to 1:30. I said that would not work. I had Rotary on Monday, and I was the new president. I created (remember, this was 1995) new web page every Monday. These pages would have the lecture that I would have been giving that day. They could access it at any time – and I included links to key references. It worked.

They learned how to use web pages and messaging systems very early in the game.

‘These links are really neat. I go to the first one, then to another and it’s so interesting. I only have one question: how many levels are we responsible for on the exam?’

NINETEEN!

OMG!

I included writing, speaking, and using the internet in my class. The students at that time did not have access to the internet but I obtained e-mail addresses for each of the 150 –170 students in each class. We then arranged for them to respond to discuss subjects and concerns that were discussed in class.

Two students, one male and one female, disagreed with each other on a lot of topics and argued regularly on line. After several months of this they decided to meet (they had never meet in person) and deal with their concerns and difficulties.

A year later I received an invitation to their wedding. I was the only Faculty member to be invited. The young woman’s parents were particularly interested in meeting me, not only because of the internet matchmaking but because she had received her first 9 (stanine system) in my class – and she earned 9s for the rest of her time in the Faculty.

A year later a U of A survey evaluated students from each Faculty to determine which Faculties were most proficient in using this new and exciting technology.

They found that Ag and Forestry students were by far the most capable internet users. Several people responded to this with incredulity: ‘How could that be possible? Oh….’

I knew why it was possible and so did my students.

## Innovative Publishing (1997 – )

We created a publishing company, partly because we are very fond of books and also because we have book skills in our family.

25 books, websites etc.

## E-Books Can Changed the World

SCP was, I believe, the first publisher in Canada to produce and market e-book versions of all their books – and that was 20 years ago. Now some publishers are providing e books free (Open Access).

I also wrote and produced e-books which were available free (and still are):

Personal Knowledge Management – 2000

E-Book Cappuccino U, by Jerome Martin. 2006

E-Book Golden Prairie, Photographs by Jerome Martin. 2007

E-Book: London, Photographs by Jerome Martin, 2009

PKM, 2000

Personal Knowledge Management is knowing what knowledge we have and how we can organize it, mobilize it and use it to accomplish our goals – and how we can continue to create knowledge.

Jerome Martin: Personal Knowledge Management: The Basis of Corporate and Institutional Knowledge Management

(cited by US Army KM group). 2010

Listing (1!) in NASA’s PKM group report

Universities in Australia, New Zealand and Venezuela asked if they could use this in their MBA programs. My chapter is cited in several theses.

‘If you’re coming to India we would love to have you visit and speak at our Univesity.'

## Focus on These for 2018

The University of Anytime and Everywhere (Coursera, Seeing Through Photographs)

Learning, formal and informal

Communication

Design

Publishing in various formats, including Audio

Culture and the Arts (Literature, Music, Visual Art, ….) More people are realizing that these areas are important for older people as well as everyone else.

Meeting and Learning From People

Travel

Visual Literacy

Technology

Last week I chatted with a friend whom I had not seen for a while. We talked about what we were doing and what we had done.

‘You’ve always enjoyed what you’ve done: you’ve never differentiated between work and play. You’ve simply loved what you were doing.’

One of the finest compliments I’ve had.

## Learning, Creating, Sharing

A fine guideline

## Aaron Siskind

We become aware of what the truly creative photographer has always known, that the photograph can be a visual symbol or metaphor of the photographer’s experiences, capable of evoking deep responses within the viewer. ‘As the language or vocabulary of photography has been extended’, Siskind has stated, ‘the emphasis of meaning has shifted from *what the world looks like* to *what we feel about the world* and what we *want* the world to mean.’