

## OUR FIRST CANADIAN HOME

So we began looking for a house and soon bought one at 29 Colonnade Road in North York. We paid \$145,000.00 for the 4 bedroomed house with an unfinished basement. The house was more than we could afford so we (maybe me more than Rhona) decided to sell her engagement ring – an ice white .97 crt. diamond. We sold it for about \$5,000.00 which was used to pay down the debt on the house and reduce our monthly mortgage payments.

Three weeks into our move we discovered that the roof was leaking. The neighbours told us that our roof was old and should have been replaced. How ridiculous. Our slate roofs in South Africa could last generations. So, I saw an advertisement for shingles at the local Home Hardware and was told that replacing the shingles was an easy task and could be done in a weekend. Simple. Major savings!

The next weekend, when the shingles were delivered the Charney family went to work - much to the astonishment and amusement of our neighbours. Watching us clowns lift the heavy shingles onto the roof must have been a site. I started on the top and as best as I could laid the shingles on top of the existing layer slowly working my way over the entire roof for 4 or 5 weekends solid. It didn't look great and it wasn't perfect but it did stop the leaking and we did save money.

Next we painted the outside of the house and did a reasonable job at that too.

The basement was another story. It was half finished. I was told that all Canadian men need to finish a basement, dry walling and all, as a rite of passage to Canadian citizenship. With little guidance or experience I nearly finished one room's worth of dry walling and then realized that this was not a job for a Jewish boy. So, I gave up in frustration and after about 5 years in North York purchased a home with a fully finished basement. Much easier.

Learning to ski was important. After all, what else would a Canadian do during winter. Asking fellow employees at work about how I should go about acquiring the right equipment I was asked whether I was interested in downhill or cross country. How silly. In my mind they were one and the same thing. So, off I went and purchased cross-country skis (cheaper!) and downhill warm outfits. When the first snow arrived, out the house came the Charneys and down Cummer Road we skied, or slipped on our backsides, much to the amusement of the neighbours. It took me a while to realize that cross country and downhill were so different and therefore required different clothing and equipment.