



Review of Allan's Awesome Adventure and Seminar at IGAS Ontario Chapter, Niagara Falls, Canada, November 13 to 15, 2015

In fall 2014

the Ontario Chapter of IGAS invited me to present a seminar at their fall 2015

conference. This group has distinguished, active members and has thrived for many years. Mary Ann Matthews was my prime contact person. I knew her from her presentation to our Pennsylvania Chapter a

few years ago. She and Carmen Kirschling are Co-Chairpersons of the Ontario Chapter. She was very gracious and helpful in all my needs, especially the audio-visual aids for the seminar. She even delivered a welcome bag of goodies upon my arrival. The event and my room for the stay were both at the Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre, located next to Niagara Falls, in Canada. It was built in the 19th century for training Catholic priests. It is a majestic edifice, large and with grand character. *See photo above right.* Today it's a retreat spot for groups.

Inside, my fellow attendees and I had rooms on the third floor. The rooms were sparse with basic





furniture but no TV's or other modern spoiled amenities. The adjoining bathrooms were old but adequate. I had a view of the Canadian Niagara Falls. Outside in the dim-lit, bare-wood hallway was a sign, **Silence is appreciated**. I did my part and so did others.

The event was over three days. On Friday evening we had a sumptuous dinner, served exactly at 5:30 pm in an imposing first-floor dining room. The food all weekend was buffet style, delicious, and with healthy options. Breakfasts were complete, well beyond cereal and orange juice, and danishes and coffee. After dinner the group strolled to the huge downstairs assembly room where Mary Ann Matthews led the evening session in the handwritings of two of member Janice Baker's family. After about two hours we adjourned for wine and snacks in a large open lounge in the downstairs. We learned about the terrorist attacks in Paris from the TV there, but otherwise ignored the news from the outside world in this relaxed setting.



The Centre building is now mostly used for retreats and other gatherings for large and small groups. The Centre has a sizeable chapel and a gift shop. On either side across the lawns were other buildings for the sprawling complex. It is still under the aegis of the Catholic authorities. Everything was run efficiently and gracefully. To gain entry to the facility everyone had a code number to unlock the front door.

After an 8 am breakfast on Saturday we began my seminar at 9:30 am in the large conference room in the



downstairs. Mary Ann had supplied me with a huge, portable, wide blackboard, a sturdy wooden lectern, a flipchart, an overhead projector for my transparencies (Power Point is what Donald Trump makes), a large screen, and a clip-on mike. My initial seminar was about Rhythm, which I have written about and posted on my website

GrimHandwritingAnalyst.com. The wide blackboard was a superb way to display the six categories of Rhythm I have determined. The overhead and screen allowed me to display the kinds of handwriting Rhythm. They are on a continuum. Having them arrayed across the board aided the group's understanding of their different roles in the personality. I emphasized how each person acts in the real world within each of the six slots



After a break for lunch in the dining room, we resumed and I soon finished the Rhythm portion of my presentation. I next presented a lighter talk on "Bringing the Traits to Life." I voiced my views on how analysts should convey any aspect of handwriting analysis to the public. The major portion, however, was more concrete and colorful ways of conveying traits to clients and the public to ensure they understand the trait meanings. As part of this session I handed out some materials I had prepared. One was 35 ways to describe handwriting that has a large mundane area. The other was a grand chart of the three zones and the baseline. This enables an analyst to visualize these often misunderstood areas and to know and recall the several roles of the baseline.

The group was very involved in the topics. They asked questions, took extensive notes, offered their informed opinions, and they challenged mine. I don't recall anyone yawning. I even used the comfy stool that Mary Ann had thoughtfully added to the area at the lectern. For a lengthy seminar it helped immensely. My sessions lasted until 5:00 pm. No one dozed off. During my talks, Mary Ann and Carmine Kirschling took these photos of me and the other attendees, then took photos of the group after the seminar was over. Dinner was served to all at 5:30 sharp. It is an endurance test having to talk and

Since I wore a clip-on mike, it has a battery device that you fix onto your person. I chose the back of my belt. Mary Ann Mathews volunteered to attach it. She seemed to take extra time and liberties and then offered some wisecracks to her aghast colleagues. I pretended to be amused.



stay alert from breakfast at 8 am through dinner and then the group gathering after. Although I didn't lose my voice, I was hoarse and otherwise drained. I found some brief moments to relax between the events.

After dinner we again retired to the spacious downstairs lounge for wine and snacks and conversation. Since we all had long days of travel and busy evenings before, then the all-day session on Saturday, we adjourned to bed early that evening. On Sunday morning after breakfast two Ontario members presented a conference-room seminar on the subject of doodles. Since I was driving straight home from the Centre, I didn't stay for what was apparently a stimulating session. The presenters were Ontario members Angie Joyce-McKinnon and Julie Morton. *See their photos in the Forum Review.* They passed out their comprehensive materials on doodles. They even sent me a batch in the mail after I returned home. I passed it around at our December 5 Forum, where I gave an oral report on this marvelous, unforgettable weekend. ●



Oh, Canada! No. Ohhhh, America!

The only real wrinkles I faced in the whole event arose before I got to Canada. I am not a travel pro, nor do I enjoy the journey. I hate driving and flying. I only like travel when I have arrived. The trip by car is close to seven hours from Sellersville, Pa. In checking flights I found that leaving from Lehigh Valley Airport to Buffalo would take me all over the map, including flying first to Philadelphia Airport. It would be an all-day affair. I decided to drive but didn't want to do it in one day. I detest driving anywhere, let alone several hours straight. I decided to go about half way and leave a day early and stay overnight near Ithaca, New York. I always wanted to visit Ithaca, Cornell and Cayuga Lake. I found a motel near Elmira and stayed over on Thursday evening. The trip on Friday was relaxing except for the immigration portion. The border patrolmen are cocky mean.

That raises the other issue I wrestled with before leaving. I had my passport in my safe deposit box. I waited until two weeks or so before the trip to get it. I found out it had not only expired but was over five years beyond the ten years it lasts, I learned late. Now I had to apply for a new passport with a strictly-defined photo (no selfies) and other requirements. I went to my local AAA, which is set up for these photos. Since I was late in applying and it takes a while to get it, I wasn't sure I would get it intime. I elected to go to the passport office in Philadelphia and get an expedited one. It was a major hassle, especially understanding the items needed. For my birth certificate requirement, I found out I had the one issued by the hospital at my birth and one from 1952. I sweated on that, declining to obtain a new one. When I went through the officials at the Philadelphia office, lo and behold, they never even asked for any of them. They did want proof of my staying in Canada. My room was arranged by the Ontario Chapter of IGAS and it was at a retreat facility, not a hotel. I also needed a written statement why I was going to Canada. Because I had no hotel confirmation, I had to involve the Ontario people in providing confirmation of my visit and stay. I also fretted that the passport office had the discretion to reject your expedited passport if they thought you were doing it just to get it fast. I somehow got through all of this and received my passport in the express mail two days after my interview in Philadelphia.