


From Beyond The Pond



2010/2011 Edition

The Mallinsons, Orillia, Ontario, Canada

Dear All,

Having missed last year's letter owing to various upheavals in our life, I now have to cover two year's worth of events.

The most significant event has, of course, been Mother's death at the age of 99 in December 2010, after a fall in which she fractured her pelvis. I was able to fly over just before she died and see her one last time, though I don't think she was really aware of who I was. The funeral was in January, but we had a celebration of her life on March 27th, which would have been her 100th birthday. We were pleased to see many friends and relatives from both sides of the family there to remember her and her remarkable life. It was also an occasion on which we were able to catch up with the news with many people whom we had not seen for years.

Our other big event was our move from Richmond Hill to Orillia, which occupied most of our time in the spring of 2010. We had



to paint and spruce up our house to make sure it was as presentable as possible, which involved "de-cluttering"



by throwing lots of stuff out or putting it in storage, before we put the house on the market. Within three days, we had two offers and accepted one of them on May 12. Then followed a search for a house in Orillia, which we finalized on May 28th. The purchase of the house in Orillia closed on June 25th, a



month before our closing in Richmond Hill, so we had time to paint the hall and living room before we finally moved in on July 28th. Since that time we have gradually been renovating. We have replaced the flooring in our recreation room and re-painted the trim. The main floor powder room has been completely re-decorated, and the exterior doors have been painted white to cover up the

salmon colour that the previous owners liked. Recently, I re-painted the en-suite bathroom attached to our bedroom. At some point, we want to replace all the carpets in the house with hardwood flooring, but that will likely have to wait a bit.

As if I didn't have enough to do, I foolishly accepted a contract in Toronto in the fall of 2010, and found myself travelling down there every day for some weeks, spending five hours travelling to work seven hours in the office. That ended in January, and since then all work has petered out, so that I can now consider myself to be fully retired.

On moving to Orillia, we joined the local Probus Club, and through it have met new friends, and have seen our social life become very hectic with dinners, excursions and theatre events. Just recently, I organized a trip to Stratford for 40 people to see "The Merry Wives of Windsor" which went off very well.

At Christmas last year, our children gave Sue and I a gift certificate for a float-plane flight for a trip from Orillia to the cottage and back again. We arranged this in July, and enjoyed a flight on a beautiful clear day, landing on the lake close to the cottage before we took off again and returned. The view from only a couple of thousand feet up is so much more interesting than from 30,000 feet; you feel more in touch with the landscape below.



In August, Sue and I took a three-week holiday in Newfoundland, which we thoroughly enjoyed. Sue's grandfather (Joseph Forsey) came from Grand Bank on the Burin peninsula, so we absolutely had to go there. We spent some time tracking her ancestors on



tombstones, and managed to find and talk to a present-day Forsey there. After that we travelled over most of the province, with some of the highlights being: a beautiful hike up to Cook's Lookout in Burin; seeing whales and puffins near Bonavista; a boat trip on Western Brook Pond (a fresh-water fjord); hiking on the sea shore and the Tablelands in Gros Morne National Park; a trip on the sea from Twillingate; watching the great waves coming in on Cape Spear; and climbing Signal Hill in St. John's. In addition, we enjoyed many great seafood meals (though it appears that Newfoundlanders don't know what vegetables are) and a musical and comic pub night in Rocky Harbour. On



nearly our last day, we met Helen Forsey, the daughter of the late Senator Eugene Forsey, who spends the summer living in a red caboose at Cape St. Francis (without a car or running water), and who is writing a biography of her father. All the people in Newfoundland are so friendly that they make you feel at home immediately. On arriving back from Newfoundland, we entertained my cousin Rowena and son Jamie for a few days, taking them to Niagara Falls and home to Orillia. Thanks to Hurricane Irene battering the east coast of the United States, their departure to New York was delayed, and they ended up extending their stay by three days. We took the opportunity to take them up to the cottage where we all enjoyed canoeing and other outdoor activities, before finally



taking them to the airport to continue their journey.

Both Sue and I have been involved in membership activities; Sue with the Canadian Federation of University Women, and me with our Probus club. In addition, I have been developing an interactive web site for the Probus club, and the results can be seen at www.lakecountryprobus.com.

It was our turn to organize the McKay family Christmas party this year, and it took place on December 4th. I should say rather that Sue was the organizer, with only a little help from myself and the other members of the family. Chris did a good job of playing Santa Claus and giving out the presents, while James and Rebecca organized a McKay family tree game and family trivia quiz. Overall, the party went off very well, and we are now relaxing after all the effort of the last several weeks.

In October 2010, **James** was promoted to associate at his office and wrote and passed his licensing exams in November. He is now nearly a licensed architect having nearly completed his requisite number of working hours. And work he has! James became job captain for the design and documentation of a long-term care facility in western Toronto, a role that gave

him a crash course in project management for much of 2011. After much effort, the project was tendered, came in under budget, and is presently under construction.

Elsa has also had a busy 2011 finishing her PhD in architectural History in May. After taking some time off, she then found a job at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montréal, Québec, where she has been since August. This has meant another period of long-distance relating and plenty of travel between Montréal and Toronto, but thankfully this is temporary as James

is planning to join Dr. Lam in Montréal in early 2012.

But the biggest news of 2011 is that James and Elsa got engaged! Accompanying Elsa to her convocation ceremony in New York, James took the opportunity to propose and they are engaged to be married in 2012. Wedding planning is underway!

For the last two years, **Rebecca** has continued work on her graduate degree in Environmental Studies at York University. Her proposed plan of study for her master's program was approved in the winter of 2009/2010, which resulted in her pursuing a combination of course work and field experience credits in that academic year. During the summer of 2010, Rebecca took a full-time field experience placement with the Ontario Power Authority, helping to administer the province's microFIT program, which promotes small-scale electricity generation from renewable sources (i.e. solar panels on people's roofs). While working at the OPA, Rebecca also took two weekend workshops on solar panel installation at Kortright Centre for Conservation, and an after-work course at York in Consulting Skills.

In addition to being busy, 2010 was also a milestone year in that Rebecca and three of her high school friends all turned 30. They celebrated this during the summer by taking a weekend trip to the Briars (a resort spa on the shore of Lake Simcoe). After several changes of direction, Rebecca finally settled on a thesis topic in January 2011: Electricity Conservation Policy in Ontario: Understanding and Assessing a System in Progress. She has been working on her thesis ever since, poring over Ontario's electricity legislation, and interviewing key people in Ontario's electricity sector. When we moved to Orillia in July 2010, Rebecca moved into an apartment in Toronto, which she loves. Her building, which was built



Chris has had an active year. When we moved to Orillia, he leased a house in Toronto with two friends at a reduced rent on the understanding that they would renovate it. The previous tenant had not been paying the



rent, and had let the place deteriorate beyond belief. Chris did a fantastic job on it, and honed skills he had not used before, effectively managing the project and its finances, and delegating work to his two friends. During the winter, he worked on various renovations with a contractor, learning a lot in the process. When Spring came, he hooked up with Graham Robertson, the son of a friend of ours, who runs his own renovation business in cottage country, and spent the spring, summer and fall working on the renovation of people's cottages. In October, he and Graham and another of Graham's friends re-shingled our roof, at a considerably lower cost than we would have had to pay a contractor.



Chris has just returned from a holiday in Brazil where, despite a serious stomach upset and being stopped at gunpoint at night by the military looking for drug smugglers, he and his friend Jordan enjoyed themselves very much. The highlight of the trip was a visit to a beautiful national park. They returned a week earlier than planned as the weather forecast called for rain all week.

The **Bowes** family were all at their cottage at one time or another over the summer, but we missed seeing Lisa, Mark and Rachel as we were in Newfoundland at the time they visited.

The Sault Sainte Marie Bowes clan have all been in evidence, and have enlivened some of our visits to the cottage.

Libby has just had an operation on her knee, as she was suffering from arthritis that had necessitated her using a cane again. So far, the results appear to be good, though she is proving to be allergic to the pain reliever medications. She is now back home and submitting to Bill's ministrations.

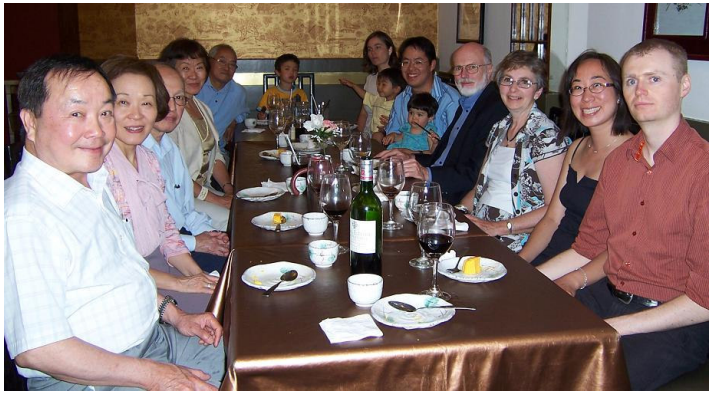
We hope you all have a healthy and prosperous 2012.

Best wishes from

David, Sue, James, Elsa, Rebecca and Chris.



Dawn at the cottage



Elsa's Graduation Celebration



Helen Forsey's caboose home



Beautiful Tudhope Park in Orillia



Rebecca "flying" on The Chevin



Western Brook Pond in Newfoundland



Getting ready to Paddle the Don



Chris in Rio