

From Beyond The Pond

2005 Edition

The Mallinsons, 187 Altamira Rd., Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada, L4C 4C6

Dear All,

Life goes on much as usual in our home, though we have made a few changes over the past year. More on this later.

James is still living in Toronto, and we see him every few weeks. We can't say that he comes home for Mom's cooking because, as a vegetarian, he makes his own meals when he's here, so he must enjoy our company. He is now working for an architectural firm (Montgomery Sisam) that specializes in hospitals and health care facilities. For the last few months, he has been seconded to another company to work on a project in which he has a lot more design responsibility.

In his spare time, James is getting more and more into cycling. He bought a high performance bicycle from his



flatmate, and has been going out into the country on it as much as possible. He has also been riding to work through the streets of Toronto, and, on one occasion, the rear wheel connection somehow unlocked, the wheel fell off, and he landed on the street in front of a car which fortunately managed to stop in time. Since then, he has been checking his equipment over very

carefully. James is still cycling to work despite winter conditions.

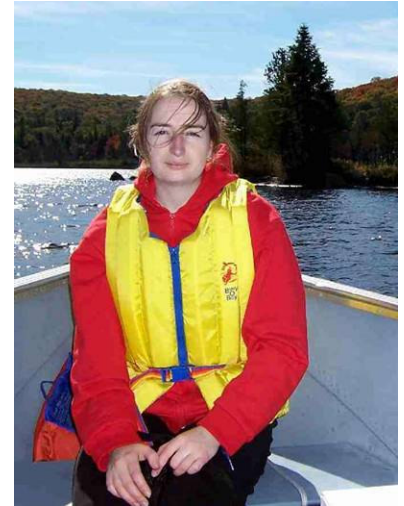
Now that winter has arrived, he has started playing (ice) hockey in pick-up games at a local arena, but this has been interrupted temporarily by his fracturing and dislocating a toe by accidentally kicking a chair leg with his bare foot.

Rebecca is living at home, and working as a student advisor for Seneca College at their King campus. Her job involves coordinating tutoring activities, managing the Learning Centre's web site, and doing some tutoring herself. She sees this as an interim job until she decides whether or not to go back to university or to move on to some other activity.

Rebecca has joined the local gym, and participates in salsa and NIA classes for diversion and fitness.

Chris is also living at home, mostly in the basement, and is currently attending a computer games development course at the York University campus of Seneca College. The course is demanding, and we frequently do not see him until late in the evening. I am told that the computer game development industry is now larger than that of the movies, so hopefully Chris will find his own niche.

Chris spent the summer doing roofing, a well-paid but strenuous job that frequently requires long hours. In July, he bought an un-certified 1990 Jeep Comanche truck at a "bargain" price, and has since learned the meaning of the phrase "money pit". Right now the truck seems to be behaving itself, but during its worst period we were being called out to rescue him every couple of nights.



Sue is involved with both the Canadian Federation of University Women and the Oak Ridges Land Trust, for which she has been coordinating volunteer activities. As usual, volunteering has turned out to require a lot more time than anticipated, but Sue is enjoying the CFUW activities such as hiking and jaunts to interesting places, now that she no longer has responsibilities there.

Sue continues to tutor a number of students each week, but does not actively look for the work. Her reputation generates business by word of mouth. One pleased parent has sent all three of her children to Sue over several years.



I (David) am still working and wishing I wasn't. Retirement never seems to come any closer. Over the past eighteen months I have been managing the development and implementation of a web-based system for the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, and the system finally went live in November. Response to it has been good, but I have yet to be paid from February onwards. Fortunately, I have had work at the Royal Bank and from my own clients, which has kept the wolf from the door. I am now working on a project for Bell Canada, and it is one that has the potential to transform QLogitek into a very different type of business. As usual, the timeframe is totally unreasonable, but the potential rewards could be enormous. We shall see what we shall see.

Mother and Anne

Mother and Anne are still managing to survive in Otley, though Mother's worsening memory is causing us all some concern. She now has difficulty remembering things from day to day, and does not remember who her grandchildren are. Mother and Anne still seem to be making the most of life, however, and regularly book themselves to go on trips to the Dales, Southport or the Lake District. Michael and I try to make sure that one or other of us visits them every six months. We have a home care person who is our eyes and ears visiting every week, and the cleaners also come regularly.

The Bowes Family

Libby and Bill celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary at the end of July, and we all organized a surprise party for them at the cottage, with many Bowes, Mallinson and McKay relatives attending.

Libby had a hip replacement operation in February, which has dramatically improved her locomotion, and eliminated the pain from her deteriorating hip. Bill and Lib continue to maintain a schedule which would leave most of us gasping from exhaustion, but Bill still finds time to drive a tourist bus.

Dan and Jill are now experiencing the changing phases of the twins at two years old, as they develop their own characters. Morgan is now attending junior kindergarten, and enjoying it. Sue and I

visited Sault Ste. Marie in November to provide a little relief in Dan and Jill's lives, so that they were able to go out on their own three times over the weekend.

Lisa and Mark have bought a house in Calgary, and moved in during the fall. One way or another they seem to be keeping themselves occupied in their respective media careers.



Events

February: Sue and I flew to Calgary for ten days in support of Libby after her hip operation. While there, we attended dog sled races, took a dog sled ride ourselves, and scaled Sulphur Mountain (by gondola, of course).

July: To achieve a more eclectic look, we removed all the wall-to-wall carpet from the living room, dining room and hall, and

had the oak floors underneath sanded and urethaned. Now the look is all oak with oriental rugs and mismatched furniture. We all had to move out of the house for a week to avoid being overcome by fumes from the drying urethane, so went to the cottage. The whole venture was like moving from one home to another, as everything had to be packed up and moved into other rooms, and then took a couple of months afterwards to be moved back.

September: We enjoyed the company of cousins John and Janet Burton for dinner as they wound up their genealogical tour of Canada.

October: Sue and I spent two weeks in England, hiking in the Lake District (in the Duddon Valley, a very unspoilt area), visiting Mother and Anne (and disrupting their lives, I fear), attending cousins Pat and Archie's 40th wedding anniversary, visiting Chester, and hiking near Nantwich.

November: Up to the Sault to see Jill, Dan and family.

December: McKay family Christmas party, 83 people attending, our turn to organize it this year. Exhaustion and turkey surfeit as a result, but lots of fun.

Cottage Life

A major achievement was actually getting the cottage painted by College Pro, after realizing that we would never get around to it ourselves. It looks so much better, and was ready for the surprise anniversary party for Libby and Bill.

James invited some of his university friends to the cottage for a weekend in August. They had a surfeit of sun, water and fresh air, with Libby and Bill providing water skiing and sailing services.

Other than the above, we spent several weekends at the cottage, plus the week in July when we had to leave home, doing the usual canoeing, swimming etc. There was no sailing until late in the season, because we had to get a hole in the bottom of the sailboat fixed, and even then the boat was only put in the water once.

Sue and I are still looking at options for retirement. We discussed the option of upgrading the cottage to make it a year-round home, but came to the conclusion that it would be very expensive, we would be rather isolated, and renovations would destroy the character of it. Possible options now include buying a building lot or home in Huntsville or Orillia, so that we will be closer to the cottage.

It is now Boxing Day, and we are recovering from a splendid Christmas dinner at the home of Ian and Iris Miles, Katharine's brother and his wife, with the meal

being orchestrated by Katharine. The evening was very enjoyable and concluded with karaoke songs sung with varying degrees of ability and skill!

We wish you a prosperous and fruitful 2006.

David, Sue, James, Rebecca and Christopher.



Sue on Sulphur Mountain



Libby and Bill's Surprise 40th Anniversary Party



Pat and Archie's 40th Anniversary



Sue shoveling snow off the cottage roof



The ancient mariner?



Mist at dawn



Chris on the phone, with "the money pit" truck



Devin, Paige and Morgan with James



Canoeing in the reeds