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# From Beyond The Pond



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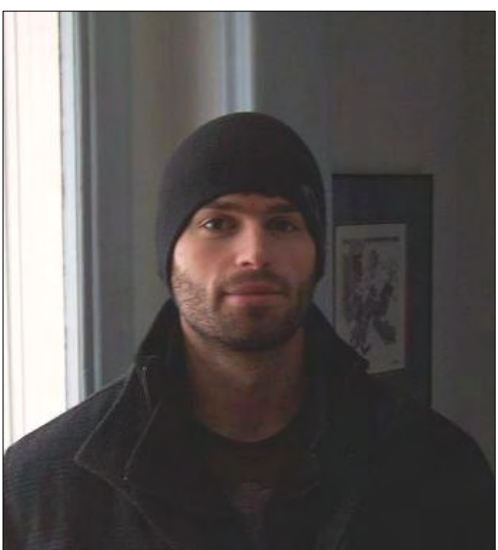
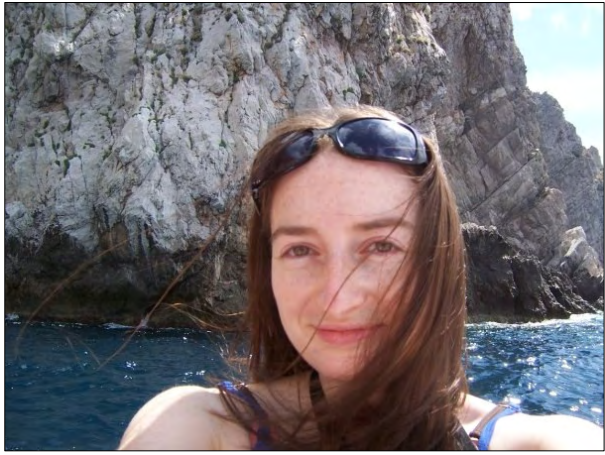
2009 Edition

The Mallinsons, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada

Dear All,

The past year has been a mixed bag, what with the economic situation and my "semi-retirement". We have not been away anywhere (except for the cottage), but we seem to have kept ourselves busy and entertained.

**James** continues his work as an intern architect with Montgomery Sisam Architects in Toronto. He has mainly been working on the redevelopment of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). He has also been teaching a volunteer art class on an inpatient unit at CAMH, which has been an inspiring complement to his architectural work. James spent his summer weekends traveling to and from Montreal to visit his girlfriend Elsa. Elsa is now in Toronto until January when she heads to Washington for a few months to continue writing her PhD in architectural history. The two of them first met during their undergrad in architectural school. James continues to thoroughly enjoy singing with the Toronto Choral Society and has even recruited two friends to the bass section. A couple of weeks ago we were treated to an excellent rendition of Bach's Christmas Oratorio. The highlight of James' singing season was a spring time performance of traditional Scottish songs at the Lincoln Centre in New York! Bandalero, James' cat, continues to



terrorize the other cats in the neighbourhood, and James frequently finds pieces of fur scattered outside his front door. Fortunately, his aggressiveness with cats is matched by an equal amount of affection for people.

**Rebecca** is presently studying for her master's degree in Environmental Studies at York University, having been advised by one of her professors that she was qualified to switch from the undergraduate stream to the master's. She would have graduated with her BA next spring, but will now graduate with her master's in the spring of 2011. Last year, Rebecca finished as the top student in her faculty, and would have qualified for an under-graduate scholarship. However, she now receives a very sizeable scholarship for each of the two years in the master's program, so she is happy with that. We are getting very used to going to bed in the evening and finding Becky still working on some assignment or another at 6 o'clock in the morning. In July, Rebecca took a trip to Italy for 12 days, on a Contiki tour that took in Rome, Pompeii, Sorrento, Capri, Florence, Milan and Venice. She had a wonderful time, and came back with over 1,200 photographs. On the way back, she stopped over in England to visit Granny and

Anne.

In the fall, Rebecca entered a cherry pie in the Markham Fall Fair, after many prior trial attempts, and won first prize!

Outside of university, she still attends NIA classes to keep fit, and makes soup with her friend Beth to combat the fitness.

**Chris.** In Chris's own words:

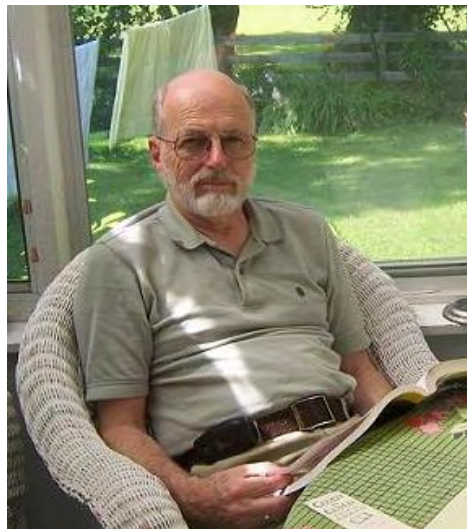
"2009 was an experience for me in that I made the move out and saw what such a life had to offer. I also saw how expensive it could be. I think I've grown from that experience and am more confident in the person that I've become.

Three of the most exciting things that happened to me in 2009 were: moving into my apartment (naturally), buying a heck of a lot of shares, and meeting Tara. One of my best memories of 2009 is playing with the Bowes kids at the cottage during summer. That, and taking photos at dawn down on the dock in the fall when it was just cold enough to be frosty in the morning."

Chris's chiropractor (he has a back problem) played match-maker to introduce Chris to Tara, another of his patients, so we are now seeing a lot of her too. Tara is training to be a nurse, once attended the National Ballet School, and has appeared in the National Ballet's production of "The Nutcracker" as one of the children.

Chris ended up coming home to work during the week, and spending the weekends at his downtown apartment. At the end of November, he gave it up, and is now living at home again.

**Sue** has been active with her CFUW (women's group) again this year, enjoying hiking on local trails, jaunts to interesting places which include excellent lunches, attending theatre outings, as well as participating most recently in a book club. As members of the couples club, we have both attended lunches, theatre outings, 5-pin bowling and dinners. We have been thinking of moving our residence north, but Sue's condition is that there be a CFUW group within commuting distance! Rebecca and Sue made a vegetable garden in the back garden this year; and had such fun growing and picking their own produce before the squirrels and chipmunks



could get to it. Two of Sue's cousins' husbands passed away this year which has brought great sadness as they were only in their 60's and very likeable and respected people. Our family get together (Sue's mother's family) had 105 people in attendance in early December; Santa brings presents and we share in providing a buffet turkey dinner for all. Of course, we chat and chat and chat. Keeping family connections is important.

**I, David**, worked until the end of April, but have not been able to find another contract since then. I have kept myself busy since then by learning about HTML and cascading style sheets, in order to create a web site about cottage life called *The Practical Cottager*. You can find it at [www.practicalcottager.com](http://www.practicalcottager.com).

Any comments (positive or negative) or suggestions about it would be very welcome.

I also spent time on jobs around the house, the largest of which was sanding and refinishing our pine dining room table.

## Happenings

We had a great deal of snow over the winter, and seemed to be shovelling the driveway every few days. At times, the banks of snow were about five feet high, and it got progressively more difficult to throw

the new snow over the top.

In the spring, Sue and I once again cycled alongside the Don River, following the annual Paddle the Don event.

One weekend in August, we trailed the sailboat over to Lake Vernon, a larger lake with better winds than ours, where Rebecca and I sailed for a few hours in good breezes, while Sue read on the beach. The day almost ended before it had started when our car got stuck in the sand when launching the boat, but a nice German couple who were touring North America pulled us out with the camper van that they had shipped over from Germany.

We have made the decision that if I am unable to find a contract by the end of the year, we will seriously start getting our house ready to sell in the spring, with

the idea of moving north to Orillia, the town where Sue taught for seven years, and where we got married. We have already viewed a number of homes in Orillia to get some idea of what is available on the market.

## Cottage Life

Most of June and July was cool and wet this year, so there was not as much incentive to spend time at the



cottage. In addition, I wanted to be readily available for any interviews that might arise. We did, however, manage to spend a couple of weeks there in July and August, but we made no significant renovations, other than making a stand for a new water barrel, and replacing the eaves trough that I had removed before we got the cottage painted five years ago. The whole family congregated there on two long weekends in August and September, at which Elsa got her first taste of cottage life.

It is always a joy to be at the cottage canoeing, swimming and puttering around. The deck that is part of the dock which I finished last year has a new umbrella affording a pleasant place to eat meals and chat with friends and relatives who come to visit. Cousins Sharon and son, Craig, spent one afternoon and evening with us on an impromptu visit on their way to their cottage. We shared food, enjoyed a swim, and had great conversation. Those are special moments.



**Mother** and **Anne** still enjoy being in their respective retirement homes, though Mother's memory continues to deteriorate to the extent that she now finds it difficult to remember words. Anne visits her mother for lunch every Friday, and has occasional trips out with others in her home.

## The Bowes Family (Sue's sister and family).

We enjoyed seeing all the Bowes family at the cottage over the summer. All the children are growing up very fast, and developing their own personalities.



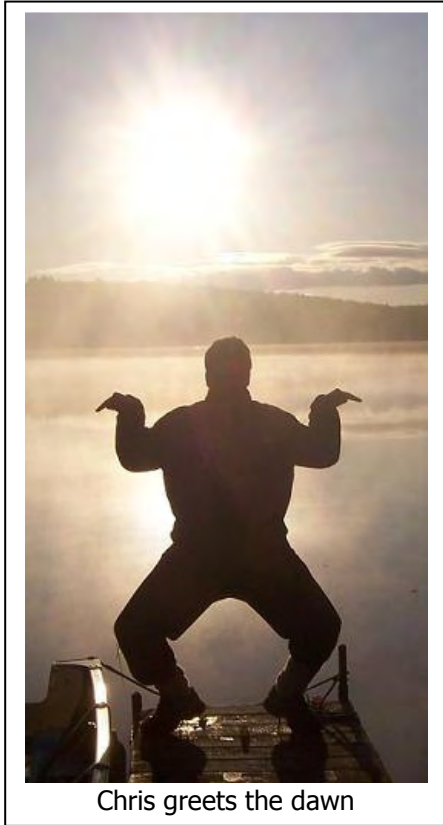
At Thanksgiving in October, we were delighted to get together with Dan and Jill and their family at the lake for a celebratory dinner. Dan and Jill have just bought a larger house to accommodate their brood in Sault Ste. Marie, and expect to move into it in January. Lisa, Mark and Rachel are still in Calgary, where grandma and grandpa (Lib and Bill) take over baby-sitting duties when Rachel's parents are both working their odd hours for the TV networks.

Well, that's all for now. May you all have a successful and happy 2010. It seems no time at all since the turn of the century, but a lot has happened since then, not only among our family and friends but also in the world at large.

All the best,

*David, Sue, James, Rebecca and Chris*





Chris greets the dawn



"Ballet" on the Lake.  
Chris, James & Rebecca.



Penquins at Halloween

