



From Beyond The Pond



2019 Edition

The Mallinsons, Orillia, Ontario, Canada

Dear All,

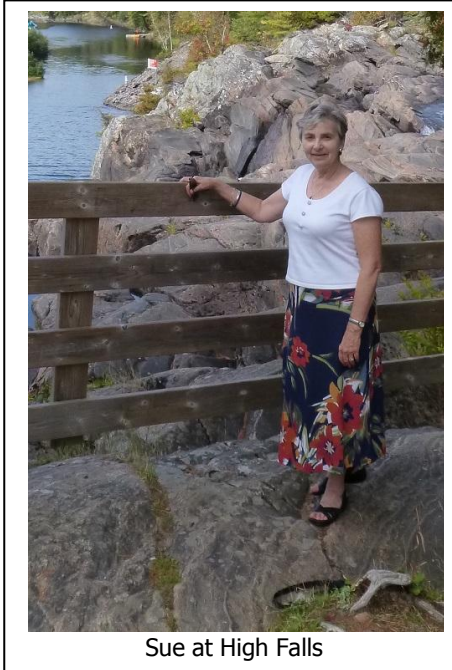
That time of year has rolled around once again when we share our news with family and friends. Many thanks to all of you who sent us your Christmas newsletters. It's always wonderful to hear from you and learn about your families and your doings.

2019 was somewhat different from other years in that we did not take any trips anywhere. There were reasons for that, however, as I will relate.

David and Sue:

On the auspicious date of April 1, Sue underwent a hip replacement operation, which has been very successful. We moved a single bed into our family room on the main floor where Sue could access a bathroom without having to tackle any stairs. David lost several pounds running around to attend to her needs. Our home has five sets of stairs with a total of 27 steps from top to bottom, and he traversed them several times a day running errands as well as preparing meals. Sue recovered from the operation very quickly, and welcomed the freedom from pain in her left leg. Unfortunately, her right hip has continued to deteriorate (her orthopedic surgeon used a highly technical medical term in describing her hips as "both shot") so she has decided to have that one replaced too, rather than go through the pain and suffering of it worsening over time. The second operation is scheduled for February 27th, at which time David will again lose a few pounds while Sue gains the weight of a metal hip.

In the fall of 2018, we had six trees at the cottage cut down to make the lot safer, and to open up the leaf canopy to get more sunlight. However, a seventh tree came down of its own accord during the spring and brought down our hydro line (here in Canada, we refer to



Sue at High Falls



David ready for pickleball

electricity as "hydro"). In coming down, it ripped down the mast on the cottage to which the line was attached. Because there are other balsam trees in the vicinity of about the same age, we decided to put the hydro line underground. Peter Gysbers, a former student of Sue's, offered to help, and ended up doing most of the work himself, with David's paltry assistance, both of us being tortured by hungry black flies. We had to dig a trench three feet deep and 60 feet long from the cottage to the nearest hydro pole, and the large rocks and thick roots that we encountered on the way were extremely challenging, sometimes requiring the use of a block and tackle. In the third week of July we finally had the power

restored, thanks to Peter's help and technical expertise. The reason the tree fell, we discovered, was that carpenter ants had shredded its interior, making it look like lace.

Probably as a result of playing pickleball and digging the hydro trench at the cottage, David tore a ligament in his knee and limped around for several months. Both he and Sue visited a physiotherapist together many times, Sue to recover mobility after her operation, and David to treat his knee. David is now starting to play pickleball again, albeit with a pressure stocking and knee brace which make him look like a partial cyborg.

Sue continues with her two book clubs and her activities with the Canadian Federation of University Women. As part of a working group, she has been updating the CFUW's constitution and

by-laws, a project that has taken over a year now, as it already got a mention in last year's newsletter.

In October, we were able to meet up with Sue's university friends Bonnie and Margaret plus husbands Andreas and Stuart for lunch in Port Perry, where we spent a happy couple of hours catching up on each others' news and ailments.

Sue and Rebecca managed to escape for a mother and daughter weekend at St. Jacob's in Mennonite country in September, where they toured, painted, ate and relaxed.

David gave up membership duties for our Probus club in September after eight years of service to give him more time to focus on his work for Stephen Leacock Associates, for whom he upgraded their web site to handle on-line donations. In addition, he implemented web sites for two more Probus clubs, both of them in Huntsville which is close to the cottage. Our Probus club recognized David's efforts by awarding him a life membership, the first to be awarded by them. Apart from handling membership, he has in the past run several bus trips to theatre productions, developed their web site, and was one of the monthly speakers on two separate occasions.



As is becoming a regular event, we attended the Gala Weekend for the Leacock Medal for Humour award in early June. Somehow, despite financial straits, the medal continues to be a well-known literary award in Canada, and there are now 84 submissions for the 2020 medal – the most we have ever had. You can learn more about it at www.leacock.ca.

At the cottage, a major task this past summer was to cut up the downed trees into appropriate lengths for the wood stoves, a task greatly helped by the purchase of a totally reliable cordless electric chainsaw to supersede the highly unreliable gas-driven one that we inherited from Sue's Dad. In addition, we picked up a second-hand electric log splitter for an incredibly reasonable price, and both it and the chainsaw made the cutting up of the logs a much more manageable task.

During the year, we have enjoyed visits both at home and the cottage from our family. Rebecca has come frequently, and was a great help after Sue's operation. We also have been able to enjoy the company of our

grandchildren Aiden, Max and Benny and their parents. Chris proposed to Yalda in the summer, and Max and Benny now call us Grandma Sue and Granddad David. No date is yet planned for the wedding. The children are a joy, and have us running around while they are here. Aiden is fast developing a vocabulary, and it has been fascinating to watch him develop, aided by weekly connections using Facetime.

James, Elsa and Aiden:

Elsa and James spent much of 2019 watching Aiden grow into an energetic acrobat of a 2-year old. Few opportunities were passed up to climb, hang and generally be upside down, and words have been bubbling out him with ever increasing enthusiasm. In March Aiden was a very hesitant attendee at daycare, but has since grown to love interacting with his caregivers and other kids.

Elsa had a very busy second half of 2019 owing to the release of her book *Canadian Modern Architecture: 1967 to the Present*. The book aims to be the definitive anthology of work from that period and contains fifteen essays by notable Canadian architects and writers. The reception thus far has been great and the book is already in its third printing. Elsa

has been travelling across Canada to promote the book in launches. James and Aiden accompanied her to launches in Halifax and Sudbury, but have yet to actually hear mommy talk due to Aiden's keen interest in the environs outside of lecture theatres. Elsa also continues her work at the magazine and has begun teaching a course in architectural writing at Ryerson University.

James' paternity leave ended in March, after which Aiden began daycare and James returned to Perkins and Will Architects. He's been working primarily on community and recreation centre projects in Toronto as well as an expansion of the Faculty of Education at Queen's University in Kingston. He's also been involved in forwarding the sustainability and energy efficiency agendas of the office.

Rebecca:

In 2019, Rebecca managed to survive another year without suffering death or dismemberment. She continued to work on energy conservation programs for low-income natural gas customers, moving from managing

a low-income multi-residential retrofit program to managing a low-income new construction program.

In the spring, many of Rebecca's leisure hours were spent training, choreographing, practicing, and creating a costume for her third aerial silks recital, which took place in June. You can watch her outer-space-themed performance [here](#) or [here](#).

Unfortunately, after the June recital, Rebecca suffered what could be called a 'sitting injury', as a result of spending too many consecutive hours sitting in an office chair without getting up and moving around. The nerve impingement in her left leg continued to worsen from June onwards and caused her to miss performing in the annual December recital. Work really gets in the way of things!

In terms of vacation, she spent a week in Orillia in April helping out after Sue's hip replacement surgery, and spent another week at the cottage in July.

In late September, Sue and Rebecca also took a long-weekend mother-daughter trip to St. Jacobs, Ontario - a small town with a large Mennonite population in the surrounding area. They stayed in a lovely bed and breakfast and took day trips into the countryside to hike and sketch.



Chris, Yalda, Max and Benny:

Chris and Yalda have had a very busy year. Chris surprised Yalda by driving her to a butterfly sanctuary on her birthday, where he put an engagement ring in a box full of butterflies by a waterfall. When she opened the box, the butterflies flew out, and he proposed to her – very romantic! She said Yes, but there is no date planned for the wedding yet.

On the business side of things, the GRIP video game in 2019 saw more updates and is finally ready to launch in China. GRIP 2 is being planned and designed, and Chris is looking for significant financial backing.

Yalda's ROSÉ cosmetic oil product was featured in Toronto Fashion Week and also had electronic digital ads paraded around on trucks during the Toronto International Film Festival. She's also in talks to put her products into stores.

On the family side of things, the kids had a great summer being at the cottage a few times and then Max transitioned into grade 1 and Benny into Junior Kindergarten, which were big steps for both of them. Max is getting better at reading and Benny is very much into building structures and solving puzzles. They went sledding a couple of times before Christmas and the boys loved playing in the snow.

We wish you all health, happiness and success in all you do in the coming year.

David and Sue and Family .

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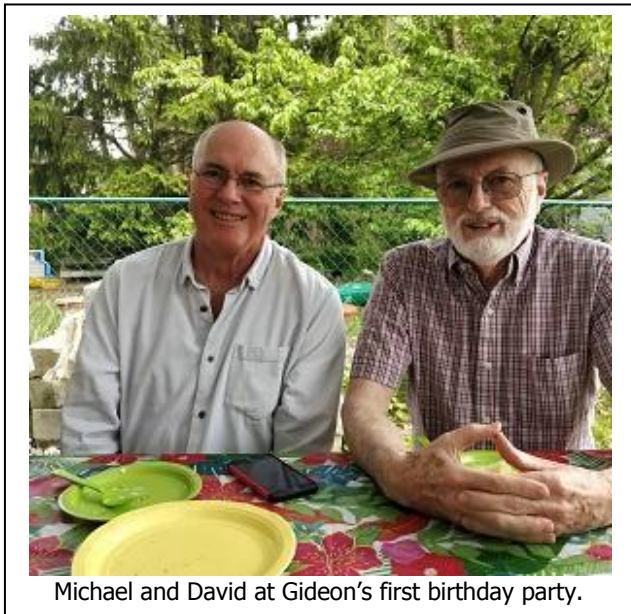
Some of the logs awaiting splitting at the cottage



Valentine's Cake looking rather too much like a real heart!



Inside the tree that the ants ate!



Michael and David at Gideon's first birthday party.



Max and Benny enjoyed our snow slide in the front yard



On a CFUW hike



Sunset evening at the cottage



Max and Benny enjoy a snack in their cardboard house



Enjoying a bonfire in front of the boathouse



The long trench!



Splitting wood



Sue and Rebecca at Gideon's party



With Sue's university friends, Bonnie and Margaret, and husbands Andreas and Stuart.



Sue received lots of flowers after her operation.



After a Mallinson Family brunch; Sue, Margot, Rebecca, Katharine, Michael and David.



Leacock Medal authors arriving for lunch in a 1911 Ford Model T



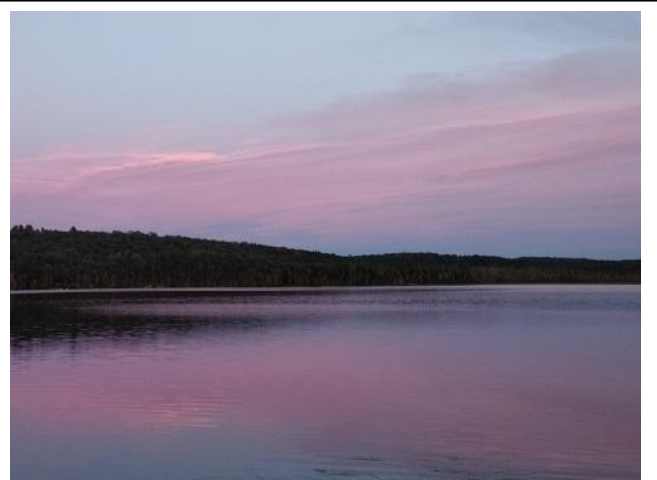
Time to take the boat out of the water in the fall. Sue struggles against the wind.



Christmas card from James and Elsa



Reading to Aiden



Evening sky at the lake