



# From Beyond The Pond



2022 Edition

The Mallinsons, Orillia, Ontario, Canada

## Dear All,

The major event of the last year was that we were warned in October that my sister Anne's health (she was living in a retirement home in Leeds) was declining. At the beginning of November she was moved into a nursing home as the retirement home could not handle her increasing needs. Her health continued to decline and sadly she died on January 4<sup>th</sup>, not quite reaching her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Michael, Katharine, Sue and I travelled to England for her



burial on February 6<sup>th</sup> and to deal with her financial and personal affairs. A number of relatives came to the burial, and we were able to meet for lunch after the service and catch up on news. Due to her mental health challenges, Anne led a sometimes difficult life, but I feel a part of our own lives is now missing.

Initially, in reviewing the other events of the last year in my mind, I felt that nothing of any significance occurred. However, when scanning the photos we took, it appears that there really is enough material for this letter.

## David and Sue:

I am getting to the point of finally handing over responsibility for our Probus web site to others, which will be a great relief. In an effort to divert my energies into something new, I decided to learn more about electronics, and took an on-line course. So far I have got to the stage of building a circuit that flashes a sequence of coloured lights, but for the past few months I have been too busy to get any further. In September, we were finally able to



Dinner al fresco, celebrating 45 years of marriage

organize and hold our gala weekend for the Leacock Medal for Humour, the first in three years. The winners from 2020 and 2021 were celebrated in addition to the latest winner in 2022. The events were held in a marquee on the grounds of the Leacock Home Museum, partly to minimize COVID exposure and partly to encourage more people to come to a larger venue. The events all went off as planned, and were very successful. One of my tasks was to integrate the use of ticketing software into the Leacock web application to sell the tickets for the events, enabling us to get beyond the stage of handling them manually. In addition, I made a number of enhancements to the web application to provide further information about each book that is entered for the Medal competition. For anyone interested, our web site is at [www.leacock.ca](http://www.leacock.ca).

Sue has still been busy organizing speakers for her CFUW group, and planning their hikes. She has given notice that this is the last year that she will do this, and has successfully managed to organize replacements for herself.

As far as the hiking is concerned, over the past ten years Sue has developed a portfolio of the hikes she has



Monet

organized, and this will help her successors in the job. As with last year, we have managed to keep fit by hiking or snowshoeing two or more times a week. Each organized hike requires pre-walks to reconnoitre each trail initially and then again a few days before the hike itself to ensure conditions are still OK. On one occasion this past year, we discovered that the forest tract had been logged since our reconnoitre, and the trail had been obliterated by fallen trees, resulting in a change of location at very short notice.

Once again, the cottage claimed our attention for much of the summer. After the lightning strike in the fall of 2021, we wanted to get the electrical system checked as we felt that the ancient panel box probably needed replacement. Because of COVID, many people have been spending their time and money on home and cottage improvements, and finding trades people to do the work is difficult as a result. In the spring we came to an agreement with an electrician to check the system over, which he said he could do later in the year, but we have not seen him since.

A couple of trees on our lot were partly blown down last winter, so we contracted a forestry company to remove them, and to take down four other trees that were either dead or dying.

Ever since we moved our water pump to a pump house attached to the front of the cottage, the icy temperatures in winter have caused a U-bend in the pipe under the cottage from the well to freeze and pop off its connecting pipe clamps. The result has been that every year in the spring I have had to crawl through a nine and a half inch slot on my belly to reconnect the pipes in a very restricted space. This is not something I should be doing at my age, so we decided to eliminate the U-bend by bringing the pipe directly into the pump house from beneath. This necessitated disconnecting pipe and electrical connections and moving the pump house out of the way while we relocated the pipe, then moving it back and reconnecting everything afterwards. Hopefully that will solve the problem permanently.

In the summer, we finally made use of Libby's gift of a family canoe day trip on the Oxtongue river on the edge of Algonquin Park. Renting three canoes, we paddled upstream to the Ragged Falls, climbed to the top of the falls and down again then returned down the river. Chris was unable to come, so Libby took his place in the canoe with Becky. A very pleasant day.

With the lessening of COVID restrictions, the Mariposa Folk Festival in Orillia was able to take place again in July, and all the family except Chris managed to attend on one of the days and enjoy various genres of music.



Having managed to avoid COVID for nearly three years, Sue and I finally came down with it at the beginning of December, but thanks to having had five inoculations over the years it was not too serious.

### James, Elsa and Aiden:

Aiden started in senior kindergarten French immersion in September and has been enjoying learning the new language and making new friends. As his teacher recently

said, "Aiden has no trouble expressing himself and asking for what he wants". He's turning into a very social kid who counts everyone in his class as his friend, often befriending children who are younger or not accepted by their peers. Outside of school he's still very much interested in acrobatic activities and mechanical things - it's hard to keep up with him at times!

Elsa's work continues at Canadian Architect. With pandemic restrictions lifting she's been able to travel more to meet with architects across the

country, some recent trips being to Edmonton and Montreal. Elsa's public profile in the architecture community means that she is regularly being asked to join advisory committees for various organizations, participation in which she's set to a limit of six. All, however, let her provide guidance on fascinating issues

like the structure of awards programs, empowering women in architecture, and equity and environmental justice. Outside of work Elsa is enjoying contact dancing, puzzling and cultivating an increasingly exuberant wardrobe.

In 2022, James was working for an architecture firm that specialized in low-carbon laneway/garden suite and supportive housing design. Deciding it wasn't the best fit, he returned in February 2023 to Montgomery Sisam Architects, where he previously spent seven years and will be working on long-term care and higher education projects. James is still playing tennis, doing yoga and oil painting. He'll also be singing with the office rock band at a benefit concert this spring.

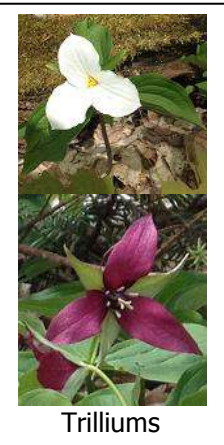
### Rebecca:

Rebecca had an eventful 2022. In May, she left her job of almost 7 years at Enbridge Gas (where she worked on energy efficiency programs) and embarked on re-training to become a home energy auditor. As a result, in addition to spending two weeks with us at the cottage, Rebecca spent the summer of 2022 taking building science training

courses and doing air sealing jobs. Although she took and passed her first certification exam in September, shortly thereafter Rebecca accepted a Project Lead position with the City of Toronto's Environment and Climate division, so she is now working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from existing buildings, with the goal of helping the City reach net zero emissions by 2040. In her non-professional life, Rebecca resumed regular aerial silks training in 2022 - a welcome change from most of 2020 and 2021 when she was unable to attend classes regularly due to the pandemic. However, she made up for lost time in 2022 by performing in both the summer and winter recitals - videos of which can be viewed by clicking the following links:

[June 2022](#) ; [January 2023](#).

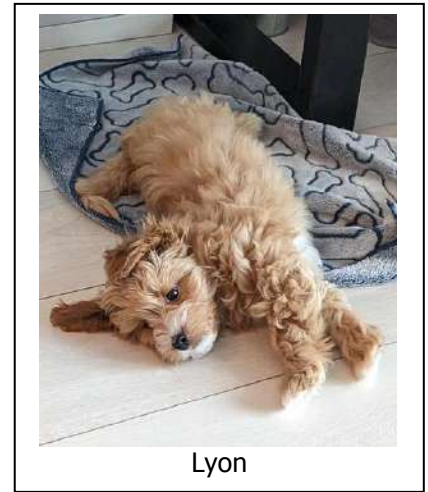
In 2023, Rebecca looks forward to taking on more challenges at work and to enjoying new and existing activities that involve running, jumping, dancing, climbing, spinning, and falling.



Trilliums



Pix



Lyon



**Chris:**

After much painstaking work, Chris was finally able to secure funding for his company's second game. The publishing partner is a German company that is prominent in the industry. On a personal level he hasn't been doing much due to the workload associated with his project, but managed to spend many days at the beach and out rollerblading during the summer. His Christmas was spent with us and a little Yorkie-Poo puppy (pictured with him, borrowed from his ex Yalda) that he absolutely adores. It made him consider getting a dog himself which he did in February. His new companion is a Coton-Poodle puppy, whose name is Lyon (pronounced the French way). Although there was much trepidation at first, he's turned out to be an all-star and really low maintenance all things considered.

As with last year, we wish everyone a belated Merry Christmas and a great year, again hoping that the pandemic will fade within the next few months.

*David and Sue and Family .*

Scenes on the way to the cottage...



Bracebridge Falls



High Falls



Little East River, Novar



Pink Lady Slippers in the woods



Deer spotted on the cottage road



Christmas Day snowfall



Celebrating Libby's 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday with Rachel and Lisa

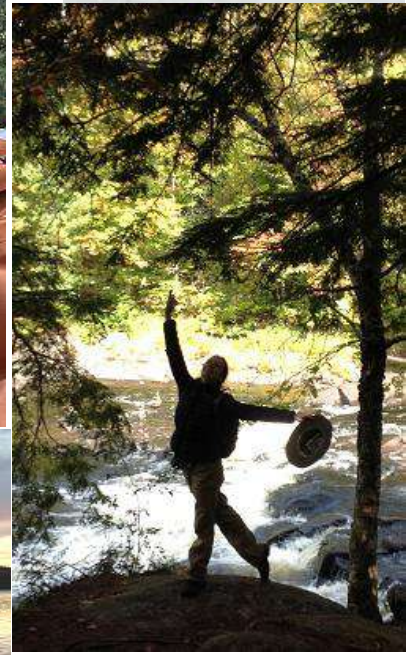


Celebrating the boys' birthday in the park





Ragged Falls canoe trip



Sunrise



Sunset

