

2011 brought a birth in February--our second grandson Matthew Morton arrived in Ottawa--and the death of my dear uncle Fred in July. I visited Regina for a celebration of his life, soon after getting back from seeing my mum in UK and taking her to a lovely family wedding (my auntie Jean's granddaughter!) in Dorset. My mum and brother Alan and I were able to choose a memorial bush to commemorate my dad at the crematorium near Watford. At home, Adam and I are still mourning the loss of beloved Reno in April, the very elderly deaf black dog we adopted in the summer of 2010. Though he spent only ten months with us, he was a real gentleman and a lovely character and we miss him still.

Adam "retired" from University of Alberta and was duly "roasted" (but very gently) in June. He seems to have enjoyed his first term of teaching at UBC, though the getting to and fro on the buses is physically rather arduous for him, and we are both making use of his wonderful apartment in the West End of Vancouver, with its fab location virtually in Stanley Park, complete with underused swimming pool. Adam has been having Feldenkreis sessions on Bowen for several months now and feels his walking is better as a result.

We enjoyed visits from Adam's sister Alison (Thunder Bay), philosopher-poet friend Karen Houle (Guelph), Kathryn Welch (Sydney) and Bristol friends Cathy and Chris Bolton.

We had a blissful though brief holiday on Salt Spring Island with classicist friend and fellow dog-lover Barbara Gold and her husband Carl (NY). I picked our accommodation almost at random online but when we got there we discovered a small world connection--the co-owner is a friend of ours in California. The white sand there is made up of sea-smashed shells. Hand feeding the doe with the damaged jaw was a highlight for me.

Reno was probably 14 when he died and Toby and SuzieQ are probably 12. (They are rescue dogs so we don't really know.) All three dogs were mysteriously and seriously ill during 2011, in spring and again in the fall. The vet found a bacterium called *clostridium perfringens* and though we are both now experts on this we are perplexed about its source. Frequent doggie visitor Bart never got sick. We now scrutinize everything Toby and SQ eat and drink; both are fine, though both are noticeably slower as they age, unsurprisingly.

Life on Bowen has been richer than ever this past year with lots of music and theatre, much of it happening at Tir-Na-Nog theatre, including a terrific gig by friend and guitar teacher Teun Schut. We enjoyed swimming at our favourite beaches, starting late June, and my book group has remained active, even tackling Proust, as a joint effort. I got deeply involved in discussions about a possible National Park on Bowen, which I thought would be really good for us. Unfortunately, the electorate did not agree and the referendum was lost 45/55,

despite the energy of our pro-park group. The election result as a whole was lamentable as the previous (ecological) council was rejected in favour of a gang of developers. Shock and gloom, but I did meet some fine people along the way. The worst of Bowen this past year was our fear of a wolf hybrid, which seemed to be taking cats and small dogs as well as many deer (which at least helped the eagles in a lean year for salmon). Despite our fear of the creature, which paid a visit to our house and attacked our neighbour's chickens, I was not alone in weeping when I heard it had been shot by the hunter the municipality had to bring in to deal with it. It was only trying to survive.

I continue active musically: I was in the recording studio with Pauline Le Bel for her latest CD and I performed with students from my department at a Masked Ball. The band "Taken" had a number of great gigs on island and off, including Bowen Canada Day, the Kits Showboat and Bowfest; sadly, this came to an abrupt end via email. Happily, my other band "Deer In The Headlights" goes from strength to strength, writing original songs; during the fall we performed for dear friend Peg Campbell's farewell party then at a Christmas Dinner event.

With a base in Vancouver now it's been easier for us to take in the restaurants and cultural riches there, including opera (*La Clemenza di Tito*), movies, and a fine staging of Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad*. I also saw a fave band, the Pixies, despite the fact that I had bought tickets for the wrong day!

I must be getting more radical as I get older. I am trying to cut down my travelling and to move towards veganism. (I have managed to give up butter, to spare those poor veal calves.) Since one of the largest contributions to a person's carbon footprint relates to house-size, I decided to walk the walk ecologically. After looking for several years, in September I bought a much smaller Bowen property to move into in the near future. It's a cute cabin on a gorgeous, flat, one and a half acre lot, with mature cedars and maples and an idyllic path winding down through glades and forest to the lake. I have a terrific tenant in there now and I will move during my forthcoming study leave, once I have got rid of excess furniture, books and clothes, including the baby grand (and we'll then sell the Fernie Road house). I was delighted to "christen" the cabin with a music practice during which the rain falling on the skylights was an impressive sight.

At work, the Headship has been at least as challenging as I expected. The best moments include engineering a spousal hire to bring in a really talented young couple in Islamic Studies, and holding the first departmental retreat ever, at the iconic Sylvia Hotel. I was surprised at how much I enjoyed teaching the huge Greek and Roman myth class (140 students) this fall.

The huge amount of administration has kept me from research in a big way this year. I did manage to complete a study of translations of the pseudo-Homeric "Battle of the Frogs and Mice" in the spring break in February and an essay on reinterpretations of Greek myth by Margaret Atwood, Carol Ann Duffy and Marguerite Yourcenar in December; the greatest triumph was sending off to the press a collection of 24 essays on the Roman satirists Persius and Juvenal for a volume to be published by Wiley-Blackwell, which I have been working on with Josiah Osgood (Georgetown University) for the past two years, a collaboration made in heaven thanks to Josiah's generosity and efficiency.

I am participating in an ongoing interdisciplinary project on "fairness" organised by Bowen friend and UBC Prof Janis Sarra: dance atelier followed by academic conference last April worked surprisingly well and I look forward to a longer event in January (and I have just submitted my paper for that). I staged a multilingual poetry translation event in April at the Vancouver Public Library, at which a poem by local poet was translated from English into Farsi into French into Mandarin into Spanish into German into English. With the poets and translators present for discussion, it was a success.

Though I am trying to reduce travelling, 2011 took me to the American Philological Association in San Antonio in January (caught flu on the way home, not a good start to Headship); to Seattle in May for a talk at Univ of Washington (I had to rush back because Toby was sick); to Toronto in June for a conference, allowing me a couple of days in Ottawa with Beth, Rowan and Matthew on the way; at an insanely brief trip to Harvard in October for a celebratory dinner. I solemnly predict that there will be less travelling in 2012.

Christmas will be spent on the Sunshine Coast, just two short ferry rides from here, but as the crow flies actually less than 5 miles from our home, with Stephen and Beth at Beth's parents place in Gibsons, then Stephen and Beth and Rowan and Matthew will visit us on Bowen for a couple of days.

I wish you all the very best of what you wish for in 2012.