



Looking out our front window (in holiday mode)



Eric, Hannah, & Alice



Crawford House (drone shot)



With Bruce Hunter in Key West in February

Dear friends,

This year is was a little bit of everything, to quote a lovely song by Dawes. At this age, we are beginning to lose friends and family - this year we lost one dear friend, a cousin across the country, and a friend of a friend. Other friends and cousins, here and abroad, have received chilling diagnoses, or declining in one way or another. Sobering times for all.

Alice and I are in good health and spirits. We enjoy our comfortable apartment, whence we can walk to library, post office, community college, and restaurant row. We are blessed with good friends both local and afar, some of whom visited this year. It's also nice to have younger people in our lives, including Alice's daughter Hannah and her friend Eric.

Alice continues to enjoy her craft as a bookbinder. She's playing a little harder to get this year, turning away multi-copy editions to focus on custom bindings and restorations, especially those involving skills she want to practice. She continues to support her neighboring studios – for their “Winter Market” this month, she set up in the hallways and helped more than a hundred kids stamp their names in gold leaf on little handmade book ornaments!

I continue with the Historical Society, where I was elected president for the 4<sup>th</sup> and (I swear) final time. This year we added two new board members, happily a generation younger than the rest of us, and a new director, who is working out well. We made a few more repairs on Crawford House, the 1830 historic house museum we own. I also continue to serve on the Architectural Review Commission – it's always interesting to see what coming next from the city's newcomers.

I entertain myself by attending meetings and tours offered by preservation groups. In June I took a workshop on historic house museums in Washington DC. Alice came along, and we took a guided bus tour that we awarded the “worst ever” prize.

On the lingering professional side, in February I spoke at a conference in Orlando, where I reprised the talk on my Eames “Art Game” project from a year earlier. (You can still view the original here: <https://tinyurl.com/yd8qe74j>). The real treat, though, was popping down afterwards to Key West for a relaxing visit with Bruce Hunter – a friend since London days in the 90s.



In August, we made a road trip to Michigan, stopping in Buffalo to stay in the recently opened hotel in the former state psychiatric hospital designed by H.H. Richardson in the 1880s. Despite appearances, it was most salubrious.



Siblings August: Roger & Dot, Jim & Alice, Helen & Marv, David & Susan

The object of the trip was Dot & Roger's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which they celebrated in a potluck picnic at a park in Grand Rapids. Many cousins also came. The siblings stayed in a nearby hotel for a couple of days, finding time for a cut-throat round of mini golf. After a stop at David & Susan's on Lake Michigan, Alice and I drove up for a quick visit with friends Jerry & Meg near Traverse City – then it was back home, via Canada on the return.



Resting on a 6<sup>th</sup>-c. BC Greek temple in Paestum



The vehicle on this trip was a "new" one for me – a green 2016 Subaru Forester – by chance, identical to Susan's car! The new acquisition was prompted by the sudden

spontaneous self-destruction of my 2008 Audi wagon. I still miss some of its luxury features, but the Forester is eminently practical, even if it is a cliché for a white middle-class retired dude.

In October, Alice attended her annual bookbinders' seminar, this time in Philadelphia. I rode along but hopped out at the airport and flew to Rome for a 12-day "bucket list" trip. What for? Despite studying Greek & Roman art history in grad school, I had never seen Pompeii. You get there via Rome, so I spent a few days there as well, for the first time in 20+ years. From Naples I made day trips to Pompeii, Herculaneum and the ancient Greek city of Paestum. The weather was perfect most of the time. Studying Italian for 2 months beforehand helped me navigate restaurants and transportation. In Rome, some popular spots like the Sistine Chapel were overrun with crowds, so I just skipped them. For the most part I saw what I wanted to see, albeit with sore feet by the end of most days!



Sanford, Courtney, Kingsley & Winston-Ringo

In November we did "faux Thanksgiving" with Alice's sister and extended family, including all three of Alice's kids (a first).

Speaking of kids, Sanford and Courtney are enjoying their work – he in multimedia production in Phoenix, she in social media strategy all over the world, it seems. Emma and Ryan moved houses but remain in the Newport CA area, both busy raising their daughters Parker, who just turned 3, and Riley, 18 months.



Ryan, Parker, Emma & Rylee



In the best surprise, in December we won the app-based lottery for tickets to see "Hamilton," which we enjoyed immensely.



Wishing you health & happiness...