

December 2002

Dear family and friends,

I started this letter the day after Veteran's Day and now it is the week before Christmas. How does time travel this fast happen outside of Star Trek?

The best part of preparing for the holidays is remembering the experiences shared with each of you over the years – the “memories that make one a wealthy soul,” to borrow from a pop singer. In a nutshell, life here is good and we are relishing it. All of us are happy, reasonably healthy and settled. Our big loss (and change) was Bob's father, in February. Harold had been at sea on an ocean without Lucy. Watching his deterioration, however understandable, was wrenching for all of us. The entire family spent four healing days together in New York, mourning his passing, celebrating his 92 years and recounting our memories of both Nana and Pop Pops.

We had other big changes this year. Ben and Crystal moved into their own apartment (in our building), leaving Bob and me empty-nesters for the first time. We still eat together most evenings, and Crystal comes by frequently for grandparenting, which we are delighted to dispense. Sally moved to New York City. In a single day, she found an apartment and a job, both of which she loves. Even more amazing, both are in the Village, an easy walk from each other and close to Ed and Barbara and Jenn. Her zest for the city and her adult life energize our visits there.

Jill, John, James and Holly completed construction on a new house in Honolulu this fall and are enjoying all of the new-homeowner experiences that come with that. In August, the entire Eisenberg family spent a week on the North Shore of Oahu, to celebrate Bob's 60<sup>th</sup> year, attend a naming ceremony for Holly and preview the new house. This gave all of us a chance to enjoy the Trowbridges' army of friends and see more of their daily lives. Emily and Ben Taylor liked what they saw, and began planning a move to Hawaii in 2003. We know it's official, because they've started getting the required shots for their dogs. We look forward to this new passage for them.

For Bob and me, the big adventures were living from April through June in Cambridge, England, and visiting China for two weeks in October. Both were exotic in their own ways, and we were privileged to have the opportunities. (I kept a journal of the England visit. If you weren't among the group I inflicted it upon, and you'd like to read it, please let me know: ardyth\_eisenberg@hotmail.com.) I went with Bob on some of his other trips. Working two days a week for the American Civil Liberties Union has given me flexibility for more traveling and

grandmothering. I also have a few private clients, and helped handle Harold's and Lucy's estates. As a law career, this is unorthodox, but exactly what I need and enjoy.

Of course, my reasons for traveling are Bob's reasons for working. If travel equals success, then he has it made. As a non-scientist (and wife – both his harshest and gentlest critic) I can't really judge this objectively, but every trip seems to produce more interest in the work he's been doing. I attended one of his lectures in Cambridge and it was standing room only, which was impressive. At the very least, he's having fun and he's off the streets.

In the wake of Ben's and Crystal's move, Bob and I did some long-needed work on our condo. In a classic case of project-creep, the job turned into a total renovation. Mercifully, most of it was accomplished while we were in England. I lost the summer to unpacking about 250 boxes of our things, and we are now buying some new furniture and finishing the walls, floors and windows. We are thoroughly enjoying the new-old space.

Visiting Hawaii also gave us the now-rare opportunity of posing for a single family photo. Below, you see Emily, Ben Taylor, Ardyth, Ben Eisenberg, Crystal, Bob; James, Jill, Holly and John Trowbridge; and Sally. We all wish you and your families the same chance to be together in one frame, with souls rich in memories of the experiences you **want** to have in 2003.

