

# MMXVI in Review

## The Bird's Nest West

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2016 began with Tom starting a sabbatical focused on walking the Camino de Santiago, 500 miles across northern Spain to the tomb of St. James the Great. While he spent the winter months prepping physically, spiritually and intellectually for the trip, he also found time for a variety of professional trips to places like San Francisco, Albuquerque, Philadelphia, Williamsburg, Atlantic City, Washington, D.C. and Austin. The trips to Philadelphia and Atlantic City gave him opportunities to see his sister Toni and his brother Eddie, who is now living in a condo literally on the Boardwalk in Ventnor, just south of Atlantic City.


Anne spent several winter weeks in Pittsburgh so Julia could work on her book on Benjamin Latrobe. Anne also went along on trips to D.C. (where we connected with niece Christina Gallo and nephew Tim Waterman) and to the CAMWS meeting in Williamsburg, which independent Scholar Dorothy Ophelia (then 14 months) attended along with her parents. On this trip we were also pleased to connect with old friends, Tom and Sharon Watkins in Blacksburg and Robert and Antoinette Gioenco in Williamsburg. In April we also traveled to Bismarck, North Dakota, to hear Gareth Cordery perform as piano soloist for the Bismarck Mandan Symphony Orchestra and to visit Anne's nephew Nick Waterman.

Tom's Camino began on Mother's Day, May 8<sup>th</sup>, with a pilgrim's blessing ceremony at Immaculate Conception Church in Monmouth. He then flew with Nick Mainz, a Monmouth College History/Classics major, to Bordeaux and then traveled by train to the little town of St. Jean Pied de Port in the French Pyrenees, where they began their long walk on Pentecost Sunday, May 15. The trek took a month and was indeed quite an adventure which included many foot blisters (for Nick), a sprained knee (for Tom), and encounters with many wonderful people and places. Whenever people ask Tom if he enjoyed the Camino, he just laughs because the Camino was always rewarding and challenging but only sometimes enjoyable. (The film "The Way", by the way, romanticizes the Camino way too much.)

Richard and Jessica, now both working in St. Paul for Thomson Reuter corporation (a multinational mass media and information firm), bought a house in July and we were pleased to be able to help them with last minute packing and moving.

Meanwhile Marie and Kyle moved out of their little nest in Wauconda into a much more comfortable and spacious home in Mundelein with their two girls, Sylvia (6) and Phoebe (18 months). Yes, grandparents were called in as movers and helpers again, too. Sylvia began Kindergarten this fall in a bi-lingual (Spanish-English) program where she is thriving and can already count to one hundred in Spanish! She has also started piano lessons and joined a children's choir, both of which she seems to enjoy. Her little sister Phoebe is a remarkably cheerful and laid-back child who enjoys all the attention her big sister, her parents and her extended family offer her.





Julia and Dorothy spent most of the summer with us, first in Monmouth and then in Maine while Victor was working on archaeological projects in Spain and in Rome. Tom did get to intersect with him in Spain while on his Camino. Julia finished her Latrobe book this summer and the manuscript is now under review by a publisher. Fingers crossed.

We had several good weeks in Maine this summer. Anne was glad to have time with her father, who enjoyed almost daily encounters with his great-granddaughter Dorothy. The two seemed to get perverse pleasure in having screeching contests with each other. Tom and Anne were pleased to visit the Coastal Maine Botanical Garden twice, once with Julia and Dorothy and again with Tom's college friend and Jesuit Paul Sullivan. We even managed to squeeze in a visit to the lighthouse at Pemaquid.

This was an odd year garden-wise. Tom had to plant a bit early due to his Camino and when he got back he discovered that the weeds had grown up through the cloth barriers he had spread and the poor eggplant and peppers, especially, had barely grown. But some ruthless weeding in June seemed to do the trick and we wound up with one of the best eggplant crops we've ever had. Tomatoes and leeks were bountiful, too, and we now have about 150 qts of "red gold" as our kids call it, canned in the basement and many casseroles of eggplant parmesan in the freezer. Bring on winter!

Anne spent several weeks in Maine this fall as her father's health deteriorated. She and her brothers did yeomen's work in nursing him and managed to keep him at home, with help from hospice, until the day before he died, on October 20<sup>th</sup>, one month and a day after his 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday. He lived a good life and will be sorely missed. The family is planning a memorial service for him in Waldoboro on Saturday, August 5, 2017. All are welcome.

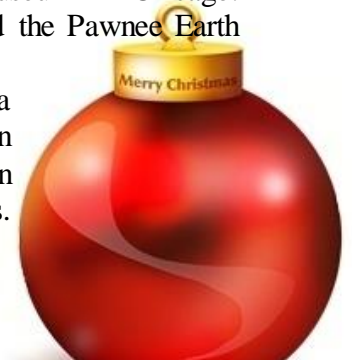
An especially rewarding experience for us this fall was accompanying Latin major Emma Vanderpool MC'17 to the Old State House in Springfield where she was recognized as Monmouth College's Lincoln Laureate Scholar along with scholars from all the other Illinois colleges and universities. The photo of Anne and Tom on the Christmas card was taken there.

By the way, we gave up our ground phone this year and are now completely wireless. Our old house number (309-734-3543) still works but forwards directly to Anne's cell. We are always be happy to hear from you.

Another important life change is that Tom resigned as chair of the Monmouth College Classics Dept. this spring, after thirty two years of service. He has no immediate plans for retirement, but is already enjoying the opportunity to devote more time to his students, his research and to CAMWS.

We were able to see Julia, Marie and their families during Thanksgiving week. A special treat was taking Sylvia by train from Mundelein to visit the Field Museum in Chicago. Sylvia enjoyed all aspects of the Field, and the Maori Meeting House and the Pawnee Earth Lodge

were her particular favorites. While we were there we also took her to a special exhibit on the Chinese Terracotta Warriors from Xian. We had an ulterior motive because in May Tom will be giving a paper in Shanghai on scenes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* on 18<sup>th</sup>-century Chinese porcelains.



Anne will go along and they plan to visit both Xian and Beijing on the trip. Great excitement for 2017!

Anne and Tom