

On the Road Again – Three days after last Christmas, Nam and I packed up the Subaru Forester and headed off on a road-trip ...



Painted Grain Silos at Coonalpyn on the Dukes Highway

Bilbo in Search of The Ring – We headed for the “South-East” of the State of South Australia. The most direct route is to take the Dukes Highway (the main Melbourne road) as far as Keith, and then turn south onto the Riddoch Highway. We spent our first two nights at Naracoorte, 340 kilometres from home. The whole of the South-East is predominantly limestone, and the elaborate cave systems at Naracoorte are particularly famous.

During our day in Naracoorte, we went out to the general-public Visitor Centre. There are some “walk-in” caves for the tourist, but Nam signed up for the Basic Speleological Course. All suited-up, with hard hat and light, he and a few other brave souls were taken through a cave system that involved quite a few challenging twists and turns. Nam proved to be a natural – perhaps he is part hobbit – and now he is keen to go again to get the next qualification. I of course spent the day in the café.

There are a couple of ironies here.

Firstly, in my early days on the staff at Flinders University, I got to know many of the members of the Flinders University Speleological Society Inc. (FUSSI), and underground at Naracoorte was second home to them. I was awarded Honorary Life Membership of FUSSI, despite never venturing down a hole ... it’s a long story.

Secondly, the second-most cited academic paper of my career is ‘Codd, J.R., Sanderson, K.J., and Branford, A.J. (2003), “Roosting activity budget of the southern bent-wing bat (*Miniopterus schreibersii bassanii*)”, *Australian Journal of Zoology* **51**, 307–316’, cited a whole 18 times according to Google Scholar, which examined factors that influence the behaviour of this sub-species of bent-wing bat peculiar to the Naracoorte Caves. Our main conclusion was that the bats spend most of their time hanging upside-down doing absolutely nothing, irrespective of the conditions. A great leap forward for animal behavioural science there!

I never went anywhere near Naracoorte for this study, of course; that’s what Honours students like Mr Codd are for.

The Creatures from the Bool Lagoon – Upon leaving Naracoorte, we decided to visit Bool Lagoon, a famous wetland area. Normal people take the Riddoch Highway south from Naracoorte, and then turn onto Bool Lagoon Road; after a while, there is a turn-off onto Lindsay Hoods Road which leads to a Visitor Centre and boardwalk, on the eastern side of the main lagoon.

For reasons that we cannot recall, we instead decided to leave Naracoorte on Moyhall Road, which we later discovered runs to the west of the main wetland area. I spied a sign for ‘Bool Lagoon Game Reserve’ on a track to the left, and so, a little confused, we stopped at the next fork in the road to consult the GPS. I was offered the selection “Bool Lagoon Game Reserve and Hacks Lagoon Conservation Park” by the GPS, so I selected it. Alas, such a method of selection turns out to give you quite literally the centre of the lagoon area! This happened to be a finger of land with a track on it. So, we dutifully started to follow the directions.

Oh dear!



Little Bool Lagoon taken from a short side-trip between Little Bool Lagoon and Round Lagoon

We never did get to find the Visitor Centre or the boardwalk. We did, however, capture the whole adventure on our dashcam. This exciting video – just over an hour of hair-raising fun – may be found on YouTube by entering this link into your web browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpe1gqXShrg>

I shall produce a short *Director’s Cut*. Keep an eye on (or, better, subscribe to) my YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAhh9F5qZHBGiy-RTzT9s_g

Just Like Mount Gambier – Our destination upon leaving Naracoorte was the large regional city of Mount Gambier. The family of my maternal grandmother, Lillian Ada Cornelius née Topham, came from Mount Gambier. (Those of you with sharp minds may have guessed the connection between my grandmother and our cat, Lily: I would only consent to a cat if we named her after my Grandma. She was one of the kindest and most gentle souls you could ever hope to meet. I’m sure Grandma would have been pleased with Lily the cat.)

Whenever we toured anywhere with Grandma when I was younger, a green and pleasant vista with stands of

tall trees would always be greeted with the cry, “Oh, it’s just like Mount Gambier!”

The whole area around “The Mount” bears the scars of a turbulent volcanic past. Mount Gambier itself overlooks a number of extinct volcano craters, most notably the famed Blue Lake. It is called thus since at certain times of the year the water takes on the most amazingly deep, dark-blue colour, and it is generally bluer than you’d expect at any time of the year. There are also many quite large sinkholes around the area, most notably Umpherston Sinkhole. Keep an ear out for creaking sounds as you walk around the city! 😊

We spent our first day, New Year’s Eve, touring around “The Mount” itself. As for New Year’s Eve, we did as always: celebrated with a nice dinner and then in bed by 10.30pm.

On our second day in “The Mount”, we drove the remaining 28km of the Riddoch Highway to Port Macdonnell on the southern coast.

About half-way there, the road passes the distinctive volcanic shape of Mount Schank, yet another sign of the area’s once turbulent geological past. Nam scarpered up the side and then round the crater rim. “Next time,” he says, he’ll take the track to the bottom of the extinct crater. I looked at the visitor information board – which was actually quite informative!

Port Macdonnell is famed for its seafood, especially lobster!



Good Boys Get Lobster (I got a burger 😊)

Port Macdonnell is always a blustery place, as it is the last stop before Antarctica!



Looking out to the Southern Ocean from Port Macdonnell

On our way back to Mount Gambier, we stopped in at a cottage named ‘Dingley Dell’. It was, for a time, the home of the poet, horseman and general raconteur, Adam Lindsay Gordon.



Dallying at ‘Dingley Dell’

His life was more colourful than any novelist could dream up, but it was ultimately heartbreakingly tragic. If you are unfamiliar with the life of Adam Lindsay Gordon, then do find a biography – and a collection of his poems! There is a monument to him at the site of one of his most famous exploits, on the side of the Blue Lake crater in Mount Gambier, constructed by father and son stone-masons, John T. and John E. Topham!

John T. Topham featured in my 2008 Christmas Letter, as it was he who had hand-crafted an upright piano from the original walnut wood, a piano that is now in my lounge room. The Tophams were a prominent family in early Mount Gambier, and their names often appeared in the local press. Many of the stone houses in the oldest part of the city around Vansittart Park were constructed by my great-great-grandfather, John T., and my great-grandfather, John E., as well as the façade of the Kings Theatre, which is now the Riddoch Art Gallery.

My grandmother was the fifth of six children, all girls. The sixth, Gertrude, drove a Hire Car in the “The Mount” for many years. She was renowned as being the lady who drove the children to and from school. On a few occasions while we were there, I asked older locals if they remembered a Gert Topham, and they exclaimed that she had driven them to school every day!

The third sister, Muriel (but known as ‘Mooks’) married Roy Bent, a prominent Norwood and State footballer. They ran the Gambier West Post Office and General Store on the south-western corner of the intersection of Commercial Street West and White/Sutton Avenues for years. My grand-uncle Roy had the commission to meet the train each evening to collect the mail sacks from Adelaide. My mother’s generation and my own all recall riding in the tray of Uncle Roy’s ‘ute’ (utility vehicle) while going to meet the train. Although the store is long gone, the spot is still to this day known as ‘Bent’s Corner’.

Mr. J. E. Topham Retires

Builder, Designer, Monumentalist, Musician

Seventy-one year old Mr. J. E. Topham, who yesterday retired from his builders' supply business in Commercial Street, is probably the only man in South Australia who has:

- Built, with his father, a third of a town,
- Won a nation-wide architects' competition for a £3,000 war memorial,
- Left his name in every cemetery in the South-East,
- Played in a town band for 60 years,
- And played music for a different opera every night for a complete season.

Mr. Topham, who came to Australia with his father in 1884, was born in Lincolnshire, and settled in Mount Gambier because his father believed that it would one day develop into an important city.

He bought land on the corner of Wehl and Commercial Streets, built a house there, married, and has watched the town grow up.

Among the building in Mt. Gambier that Mr. Topham claims as his own are the South African War Memorial, Baptist Church, Methodist Lecture Hall, the front elevation of the present Ozon Theatre, and hundreds of houses. His father helped build the memorial to Gordon's leap.

When an Adelaide suburb decided that it should have a war memorial, builders were invited in a nation-wide competition to submit plans. Mr. Topham won the competition, and built the memorial at Semaphore. He is also a monumentalist, and has designed monuments in every cemetery in the South-East.

REPRESENTED SA

Mr. Topham's musical career began when he "started to make noises very early in life." He joined the original town band in 1885, sang with the Methodist Church Choir for 40 years, conducted a Mt. Gambier orchestra, and represented South Australia in musical contests.

He plays the violin, piano, euphonium, baritone, circular bass, string bass, trombone and cello.

During the visit of a travelling operatic company Mr. Topham played in the orchestra for a different opera every night for a complete season.

He is still interested in music, and claims to enjoy "wonderful health."

*The "Border Watch" Newspaper,
Mount Gambier, 2nd July 1946*



The Grotto

I became alarmed, though, when we reached Port Campbell for lunch. Back in my youth, we had camped here in what was then a peaceful community on a charming harbour, with a surf break off the point. In 2018, it was heaving with tourists! We grabbed something indescribable to eat from a take-away and fled. The appearance of frequent road signs reminding drivers to drive on the left in Australia set off more alarm bells.

I had, of course, resigned myself to the fact that those attractions that were a bit of a hike from the carpark were now effectively inaccessible to me. But, when we arrived at the turn-off to The Blowhole and Loch Ard Gorge, we discovered that the authorities had closed the road as the whole road and carpark system was already choked with cars! Strike them out.

A little further along were the iconic Twelve Apostles, as well as Castle Rock and Gibson Steps. In the old days, we had just driven into their respective car parks with ease, even though it was the same time of year as now. But, all these access roads were closed; we were diverted into an enormous car and coach park on the northern side of the Great Ocean Road. Tourists, local and international, swarmed the whole area, and the kiosk was an inadequate joke. Tourists were herded on a path that had been constructed under the road and thence on towards the attractions on foot. Nam joined the throng and at least managed to see these attractions. I sat and sulked.

From the Twelve Apostles' Car Park, the Great Ocean Road goes mainly inland and after 40km there is a turn-off to the Blue Johanna Road. This road is unsealed and quite twisting and turning until after 8km of driving torture it meets the Red Johanna Road just before the latter reaches Johanna Beach.

Johanna Beach is one of my favourite memories of the trips decades ago. There was an expanse of grassy land where visitors could just drive and pitch a tent wherever they liked – no charge. There was a rudimentary toilet block, an outside shower rose and a pit for rubbish. In those days it was too far from Melbourne and too rustic for family tourists. It was more a commune of surfers and unrepentant hippies. There was a path through the sand dunes to a glorious stretch of deserted beach, a crashing ocean surf and a tortuous rip for the unwary swimmer.

The Great Ocean Road Redux – Over the University summer holidays of 1978/79 and again in 1979/80, I went on camping road-trips down to the South-East and over the border to western Victoria. For the first trip, I went with Scott Dodman, a keen surfer, and for the second his brother Andrew, also a keen surfer, joined Scott and me. Part of both of those road-trips was a journey along the Great Ocean Road. In the intervening 38 years, the Great Ocean Road has become an international tourist destination. I was interested to see how things had changed.

Warrnambool is one of the principal cities of western Victoria, and is about 185km west by the main road, Princes Highway, from Mount Gambier. A longer route is via the Glenelg River Road (about 200km), but this route is more scenic, especially the magical Piccaninnie Ponds. About 13km west of Warrnambool there is a turn-off from the Princes Highway that marks the start of the Great Ocean Road.

Nam and I had stayed a couple of nights in Warrnambool, and we planned to drive the Great Ocean Road 150km to Apollo Bay, taking in the famous rock formations off the coast along the way. The Bay of Islands was straightforward enough, and then, after passing through the town of Peterborough, there were The Grotto, London Bridge and The Arch.

Now?

The camping area of our day was rendered inaccessible for camping, both by edict and by a row of bollards.



A desecrated camp ground of yesteryear

Instead, the Old Coach Road, unused for years, had been recreated to the east for a few hundred metres, and nice neat little camping spots had been carved out for nice neat people to camp in – having booked and paid for them well in advance. They had an alternative access path to a section of beach with quieter waters.

I was disgusted.



The old path to the beach – now inaccessible to me in my decrepitude

Our progress further east took us on the (now bitumen-sealed) Red Johanna Road until it joined the Great Ocean Road. Do you know why the roads are called the Blue Johanna and the Red Johanna? I do. And I'm not going to tell you!

After rejoining the Great Ocean Road, the remaining 40km to Apollo Bay is largely through the Otway Forest. The approach to Apollo Bay is along the foreshore of Mounts Bay. Thirty-eight years ago, we could pitch a tent in the sand dunes and use the beach ablution blocks, for a nominal fee paid to the ranger if he happened to come along. Not anymore!

Even back in my University days, the final 90km of the Great Ocean Road from Apollo Bay to Torquay was packed in the summer with Melbourne holiday-makers. The drive itself is of course the main highlight here, as the road for the most part tightly hugs the coast. For my surfing buddies back then, a visit to Bells Beach was also mandatory, although the both times I was there the sea had been completely flat – not the surfing season.

In our one-day layover in Apollo Bay, we made use again of the AWD Subaru Forester to explore the Otway Forest in the hinterland of Apollo Bay along roads I

would never have dared take a conventional car. We also drove down to Cape Otway for some lunch.

On the day we left Apollo Bay, we drove up to Lorne and back so that I could show Nam the nature of this third and final phase of the Great Ocean Road. We then bolted inland, heading for Adelaide.

We overnighted in Hamilton and in Horsham so that we could spend a day driving through the main artery of The Grampians. This spectacular mountain range is worth a holiday in its own right. We only had time for Nam to hike to The Pinnacle and to MacKenzie Falls, two of the best known of the dozens of hikes of varying difficulty in the area.

From Horsham it was just tyres to the bitumen to get back home to Adelaide.

So, the Great Ocean Road: one of the great tourist drives of the world. If you've never seen it ... it's a pity you missed it!

Masons of a More Speculative Kind – My declining health has meant that I hardly attended any Masonic meetings this year, but I made a point of attending the February meeting of Saint Andrews Lodge No. 19 to witness Brother Joseph Hayes being passed to the Second or Fellowcraft Degree.



Worshipful Brother Branford and Brother Hayes

I had been a member of Saint Andrews Lodge No. 19 myself for many years – rising as far as Senior Warden, the second principal officer – until my health forced the curtailment of these activities. It was good to catch up with Brethren, such as the Lodge Piper, Des Ross.



Worshipful Brother Des Ross, Lodge Piper

Rocking the Retirement Village – Back in the late 1960s and in the 1970s, *Fahrenheit 451* was one of the top South Australian bands on the live music scene. The lead singer, Roger Ball, and his wife, Jenny, are residents of my parents' retirement village.



Alan Branford with Roger Ball – We're Putting the Band Back Together Again!

From time to time, Roger gets one of his old musician buddies and they put on a show for the residents. On 23rd February, the show had a guest singer for “Green, Green Grass of Home”. Sir Tom Jones, eat your heart out! (Ladies, though, had been requested not to throw their knickers onto the stage.) To watch this musical magic on YouTube, enter this link into your web browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSZTwoQ8Kx8>

And Now for Something Completely Different – My attendance at the opera and at Wagner Society meetings has also dropped off significantly. That alas will continue to be the case. On 11th February, Nam and I attended a Wagner Society afternoon with the young tenor, Samuel Sakker, as the guest. Barbara and Andrew Fergusson had prepared a series of questions that they put to Samuel that gave us some insight into his world and to his career.



A major event at this year's Adelaide Festival of Arts was Brett Dean's new opera “Hamlet”, which we attended on 4th March. As with the 2017 offering of the opera “Saul”, this was a production originally performed for the Glyndebourne Festival Opera in England. Samuel sang the role of Laertes. I was in a wheelchair on that occasion. We entered the foyer café and Nam

placed me directly facing the wall, the cheeky sod. On the wall was a photograph of the Adelaide operatic icon Thomas Edmonds as a young man at the time of the opening of the theatre. Would you believe it, but that we were joined at our table by Thomas Edmonds and his wife, Elizabeth Campbell, herself a singer of renown!



With Thomas Edmonds, “old and new”!

Later in the year, there was a (semi-staged) Concert Performance of Wagner's “The Mastersingers of Nuremberg”, Act III, on 4th August, in which Samuel sang the role of the cheeky but dependable apprentice, David. See my review of the performance on my blog by entering this link into your web browser:

<https://alanbranford.blogspot.com/2018/08/the-wisdom-of-honest-cobbler.html>

After the Conductor, Maestro Nicholas Braithwaite, took his curtain call, the design team came out to take their much-deserved bow. There in the middle of the group was the production's Head of Wardrobe, my sister Judith Branford. She had been specifically invited to join the curtain call by the Designer, a rare honour indeed!



Judith Branford, in an orange top near the centre

We also saw Bizet's “The Pearl Fishers” in May and Lehár's “The Merry Widow” in December.

Is There Light at the End of the Carpal Tunnel? –

Even for someone with idiopathic peripheral sensory neuropathy, the acute numbness of my left hand was a bit too much to ignore. This was especially so given that the numbness affected from my thumb through to the middle finger and the thumb-side of the ring finger: the tell-tale sign of trauma to the median nerve that runs through a band of ligament in the wrist called the carpal tunnel. With age, the carpal tunnel can shrink as the ligament tightens, and the median nerve is crushed.

Nerve conduction studies confirmed carpal tunnel syndrome. Straightforward day-surgery to saw off pieces of ligament would do the trick. I asked my neurologist about the underlying sensory neuropathy. She said with a wry smile that this would still be there after the surgery: the check of the ulnar nerve that feeds the other side of the ring finger and the little finger, and that does not go through the carpal tunnel, showed the sensory neuropathy with which I'm plagued. Sigh.



The stigmata appeared early this year

I Thought I Was Done With Students – Early this year, I received an unexpected email from Imre Leader. While I had been a PhD student at the University of Cambridge in the U.K. in the early 1980s, I had tutored a number of students, primarily from my own college, Trinity College, in Probability and Statistics. One student who had displayed considerable talent was Imre Leader; Imre is now a Professor of Pure Mathematics at the University of Cambridge! I had last seen Imre, and his wife Janet and baby daughter Claire, when I visited the U.K. in January 1997. Claire was now studying at one of the Melbourne universities for a year, and Imre and Janet were coming out to visit her! They spent two weekends with Claire and in the intervening week they drove along the Great Ocean Road (armed with travel tips from a recent visitor there ☺) and up to Adelaide. We had just the one day together, 22nd March, before they had to make a dash back to Melbourne. We had a delightful day, mainly down in the McLaren Vale wine district, and we talked relentlessly as there was so much to catch up on!



With Imre and Janet Leader at Coriole Winery

Hellfire and Brimstone – When my health permits, I attend the monthly Progressive Christianity Services at Adelaide West Uniting Church Chapel. These services differ from the norm by replacing the sermon with a short talk by either a visitor or a regular on some topic of interest. The talk is then followed by a Q&A and general discussion. It happens quite often that the subjects are ones that you would never hear in a Sunday morning service!

For the April service I was asked to join two other regulars who also had/have careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to form a panel. We each spoke briefly on the subject of "Faith in the Age of Science". I must have been a reasonably well-received speaker, as I was asked to give the talk in June on "Contemplative Christianity" and again in November on "The Word Became Flesh – The Gospel of John, Chapter 1: Nativity Postponed". (I had been given quite a free rein in November; Rev. Esmond Dowdy knew that I was particularly intrigued by the Johannine scriptures and asked me to talk on "something to do with John". The subtitle "Nativity Postponed" had them all guessing until the last moment! I had often threatened during my academic career that I would take early retirement at age 55 years and become a minister for my remaining years. As things turned out, ill health forced me out of the game entirely at age 56 years, but I'm enjoying occasionally "playing preacher"!

The transcripts of all three of these talks are published on my website; just enter this link into your web browser:

<http://www.alanbranford.net/Essays/essays.html>

and make a selection.



Sitting at the chapel altar, the Preacher is worn out from the talk

A Vintage Red – With all the running around to medical appointments and with planning a trip to Vietnam in September (see later), my 60th birthday on 14th August nearly slipped past without notice. All I was up to was a small family gathering, but my mum produced this amazing birthday cake large enough to feed their entire retirement village! With mixed emotions, I applied for my "Seniors Card". I received a letter from my old school, Prince Alfred College. We had red as the school colour, as opposed to the blue of Saint Peter's School Collegiate. The letter congratulated me on becoming a "Vintage Red". I'm still not sure whether to be pleased or not.



The cover photograph for the new edition of 'The Picture of Dorian Gray' by Oscar Wilde

Twin Graduations – I had two PhD students at Flinders University, identical twin sisters from Vietnam. I felt quite conflicted when I had to step down as their Principal Supervisor part way through their studies. They had already had to overcome significant language and cultural barriers, and now my ill health forced them to adapt to a change of supervisor as well. But there was nothing that could be done. I was so pleased when they both graduated with PhD in September this year. The ultimate irony though was that I could not attend their Graduation Ceremony – I was in Vietnam at the time!



Dr Hoa Thi Thu Pham and Dr Huong Thi Thu Pham

My entry in the Mathematics Genealogy Project now shows me as having three “academic daughters”, Ghazaleh Mohammadian and the two “baby twins”! Enter the following link into your web browser and you’ll see what I mean:

<https://www.genealogy.math.ndsu.nodak.edu/id.php?id=71473>

Vietnam Wedding – A significant event this year, both in planning as well as importance, was the wedding of Nam and my niece, Phạm Dương Khuê (English: Khue Pham), and Nguyễn Hoàng Phủ (English: Jason Nguyễn) in Vietnam in late September.



My mother came with us as well, since she qualified as a close relative, namely Khue’s grand-aunt

If you think you’ve seen a wedding, wait until you experience a Vietnamese one as a close relative. We went to numerous ceremonies and to five fully catered feasts over two consecutive weekends, one in Cần Thơ in the far south where Khue’s parents live, and the second in Sài Gòn (officially Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh, or Ho Chi Minh City in English), where Jason’s parents live.



The Bridal Couple offer water to a street Santa Claus

My mother and Nam’s mother seem to get on very well, even though they share no common formal language. Various relatives could not believe that Grandmother was dancing!



Two Mothers Dancing

I shall produce a video of photographs with narration that will document the trip in general and the wedding in particular. Keep an eye on my YouTube channel.

There was a Man in the Land of Uz – My health is an unpleasant saga. The fancy name for my condition is idiopathic peripheral axonal sensorimotor neuropathy, which means that the nerves in my peripheral nervous system are diseased, for some unknown reason. The specialists said at the beginning that the condition was degenerative (so it will keep getting worse) but that in itself it will not be fatal (so life will go on, but it will get less and less enjoyable). Furthermore, exactly how it will behave is unpredictable.

Every nerve that the neurologist has tested electrophysically has been found to be diseased. The sensory nerves are very badly affected, the motor nerves not as bad.

The thoracic nerves – the ones that wrap around the trunk of the body and also feed into the brachial system into the upper arms – give me the most debilitating pain. As the pain is spurious, in the sense that it is the electrical conductors themselves that are damaged, ordinary painkillers don't help. I take a drug specifically for nerve pain. My current dose of this drug, Lyrica, is about twice the supposed maximum! The Lyrica has lots of horrid side effects such as weight gain (15kg so far), fatigue, cognitive impairment and short-term memory loss. No surprise to learn that my driver's licence is now suspended.

The motor nerves in my legs cause mobility problems. I have trouble standing for long, and with a walker I can manage maybe a few hundred metres with rest stops. For many activities I'm now in my custom-made Ottobock wheelchair. My physiotherapist has devised a Pilates program for me, which has greatly improved the strength in my legs. We have also invested in an exercise bike.

I am waiting, and have been waiting for months, to get an appointment with the Pain Management Unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I have just received notification of a 'Required Pre-Clinic Introductory Pain Management Lecture', but an actual appointment will not be made until after I attend this lecture in late February! Alas, they are terribly overburdened.

So, things are now so bad that I am either asleep due to the strength of the medication, or awake but in pain and in a drug-induced haze. I rarely ever go out at night, and also it seems that outings during the day are usually just for medical appointments.

One specialist has recently referred me for two different but related scans. The first was a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scan of my brain. The second, conducted a few hours later (at another hospital, sigh), was a Single-Photon Emission Computerized Tomography (SPECT) scan of the brain. A SPECT scan is a type of nuclear imaging test, which means it uses a radioactive substance and a special camera to create 3-D pictures. The 'Clinical Notes' on the referral form reported "peripheral neuropathy – confusion, reduced concentration and reduced short-term memory". I'm not entirely sure what this procedure is supposed to reveal. Whatever, I find out the results in early January.

In the meantime, I do what I can, when I can. It is all very unpleasant.

Nunc vero fessus sum



Best wishes for 2019, with love from Lily, Alan & Nam