

2011: Lost & Found...

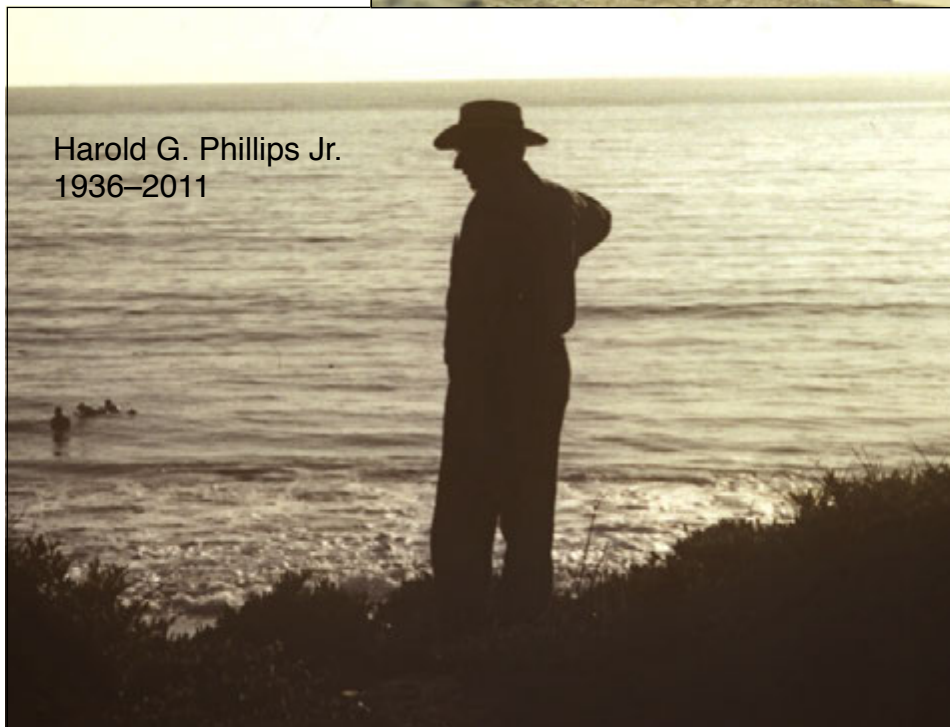
Because we Vanderlips opt for the New Year's letter, as opposed to Christmas or "holiday" correspondence, we invariably receive tons of cards and notes from friends and family before responding in kind. And so, having endured this annual period of creeping guilt, we here acknowledge your good wishes and offer our thanks for staying in touch, for being so damned prompt, and for remaining stalwart friends & family.

In looking through that pile of cards the other day, and in browsing the images assembled for this edition of the annual Vanderlips New Year's Letter, it's not hard to count our blessings and look back on a year that was, on several levels, perfectly adequate. Fulfilling and exhilarating even.

But 2011 was no bed of roses. My dad, Hal Phillips Jr., a truly good man, passed away in August and that sort of thing tends to cast quite a pall. He had



Clockwise from top: The Vanderlips pause for a set piece in Zion; desert flora; Silas and Clara after their first visit to the Garment District, still Greater Boston's finest second-hand clothing and costume emporium; "October Moon Over Gloucester Hill"; and two iconic images of Big Hal — the silhouette really does capture him; the smaller one is a Phillips archival mainstay, that rare shot of both Hals with dark hair.



Harold G. Phillips Jr.
1936–2011



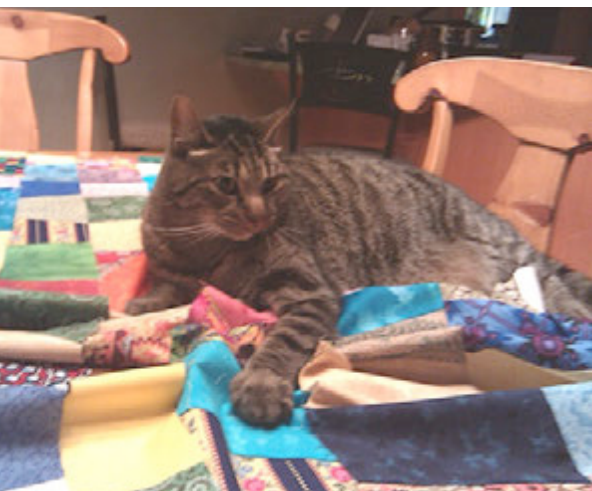


been diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of lymphoma in May 2010 and, in retrospect, we count ourselves lucky to have had him around for 15 more months. We can and perhaps should remember 2011 for the seven-plus months we *did* have with him, as everyone knew the score and made the most of this time. Once the light had gone out, on Aug. 27, there followed a quite extraordinary outpouring of affection from all quarters, capped by an SRO memorial service of which, I think, he'd have been proud (if only for the score of Barber, Bartok and Beethoven). It was comforting, if not surprising, to see and feel the extended family he served as patriarch close ranks and help each other through the whole experience.

Yet this is all so much happy talk. The experience, on balance, sucked. It remains terribly sad and quite strange to know he's gone. It's not the fault of 2011, but the entire year will, for some of us, be forever cast in this melancholy light.

By including photos in this annual correspondence, we show off our kids, choose the ones that make us look good, and provide a varied window on our lives. This year they serve the same function, but they spare us the frivolity of placing prose re. Latin prizes and District band selections beside that re. more weighty stuff. They also illustrate by default that yeah, life does go on. For some of us.

It should be noted here that Trajan, a truly good dog, also left us this past year,



Clockwise from below: Silas was confirmed this summer in the First Congregational Church (note that he also outgrew his dad in 2011); part of his reward was a visit to the steeple; Stripes and Snowflake are both big fans of Sharon's quilting prowess; lounging on the rim of Earth's largest meteor crater (or one of them).





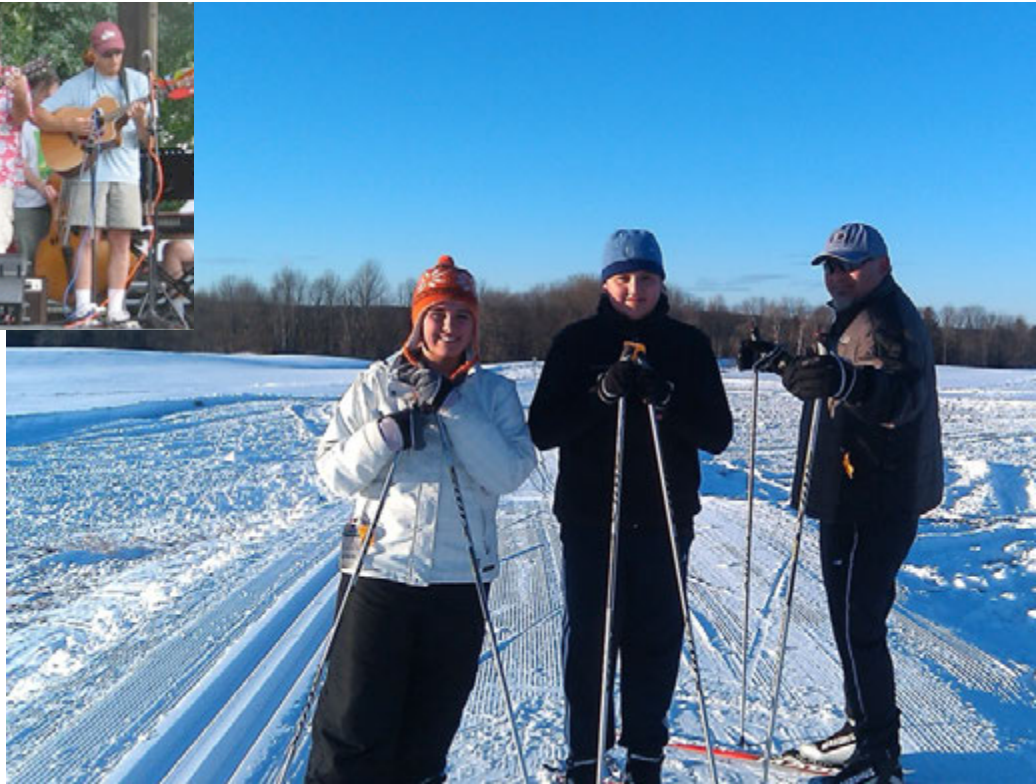
Clockwise from top: Silas, permitted; fun November meet-up with the Gonsenheim relatives in Exeter; could've sent some of Sharon's signature fabric postcards from Glen Canyon Dam in Page, AZ (though we didn't); Clara's final go-round with the Little League Cubs ended with a loss in the title game; Halloween Vinyl party, where guests were obliged to dress from an album; *Such a fine sight to see ...*



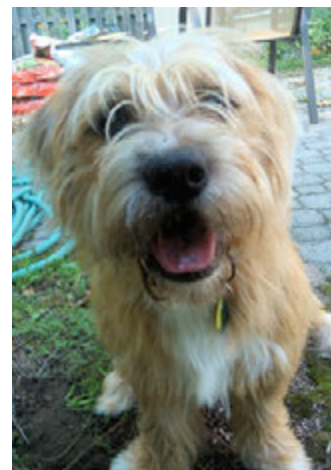
in February. She was 15, and a sweeter dog you're not likely to find.

So yeah, bring on 2012. Thrilled to have a new year at hand frankly... In it, we Vanderlips plan to carry on traveling and seeing more of this earthly plane. We resolve to continue watching in wonder as our kids grow up and reveling in the relationships we've lost, still maintain, and create anew. We remain determined to make music, produce things of quality, kill squirrels, work, learn, blog (www.halphillips.net), swim, quilt, build up the communities we share, and try to fixate less on the money that, upon examination, doesn't really enable much of this (save the travel).

Happy New Year.



Trajan
1995–2011



Clockwise from bottom left: New Zealand on business in May; sweet Trajan; rockin' the Peace Fair on Brunswick Green; Clara took her animé and associated art obsession to new heights in 2011 (this piece is called *Eyes: openandclosed*); Nordic fun at Pineland in NG; Silas does the Jonah thing; after a suitable period of mourning, Governor Brody joined the Vanderlips Clan in August.