



GUNDAROO, NEW SOUTH WALES



SIGNPOST AT THE SIDNEY NOLAN GALLERY



SCULPTURE GARDEN, CANBERRA



CHINESE GARDENS, SYDNEY



COTTESLOE BEACH



SYDNEY HARBOUR



CHINESE GARDENS, SYDNEY



DON WITH TED EGAN, GOVERNOR OF THE N.T.



WOODBIDGE, NEAR PERTH

merry christmas
and a happy 2007



merry christmas

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As always we appreciate sharing our adventures and news with our friends around the world and we wish you yet another Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Our summer Mediterranean weather has arrived again, with its inimitable cloudless blue skies and penetrating rays from a brilliant hot sun. The year's activities have been exciting for both Don and Lily, with some trips and as in the past, a great deal of work. Here's our annual roundup of events.

Don turns 60 on January 3rd, 2007 in another month and looks forward to a party on January 7th. He's completed a third year at Rockingham High School, his thirteenth consecutive year as a school psychologist since graduating with a

Master's of Psychology degree in 1992. He has enjoyed this challenging new career involving counselling of high school students using cognitive behavioural therapy. It's actually his third career, since beginning as a high school teacher for three years in Wawa, Ontario in 1972 and one year teaching at Rockingham High School in 1976. He then worked as a curriculum consultant from 1977 to 1987 before going back to study for four years after a year's travel in 1988.

Nevertheless, he's a high level quadriplegic, and in the last four years has endured a gradual accumulation of annoying chronic medical problems. These include low blood pressure which causes dizziness, usually after a meal. This is a concern since he drives two hours every day to and from work. He's coped by eating minimal breakfast and no lunch. With some regret, he's finally decided to retire from work and pursue leisure activities. He's been incredibly fortunate to have been healthy, travelled and maintained employment for twenty eight years since breaking his neck in a car accident.

Don has purchased a seven metre caravan or trailer and a station wagon to pull it. Although Lily's not interested, he's planning some overnight trips initially with anyone he can interest in going with him. This hopefully will be followed by a drive to Darwin during the winter months of 2007. Our friends, Bill and Sue Vanwart are planning a trip back to Perth in July 2007 and we look forward to their company and doing some travelling together. As a recreational activity he plans to film and edit his adventures for distribution on the internet with a focus on local history and the people he meets.

One of these leisure projects this year has been to convert his old slides into digital images with Lily's help and then, using Adobe Photoshop Elements, into five to ten minute movies with sound tracks. These include segments of his six month journey through Asia to Australia in 1975 and trips taken by Don and Lily in subsequent years. Obsessively, he's uploaded three hundred of them onto the internet at <http://video.google.com> with links on his website. He's amazed that the Google statistics average over thirty thousand viewings on a monthly basis. Don intends to do a course on film making and photography to try to develop his skill in editing and photography.

Don and his carer Richard enjoyed two weeks in Darwin in July, 2006 basking in blue skies and thirty degree weather. Don's already posted the twenty odd videos that he made of his adventures and travels around Darwin on the web with "Jumping Crocodiles" of the Adelaide River being the most popular. Richard has continued in 2006 to assist Don one morning a week.

In 2006, Don has continued his weekly lunch at the Saigon Vietnamese Restaurant in Northbridge. With his retirement, amateur radio may continue to occupy a little time, chatting worldwide. Don intends to install his HF Icom radio in his caravan to work mobile while travelling. Don has continued with his regular Saturday movies, reading, and exploring Perth's cycle paths by wheelchair.

Don's sister Margaret Richmond with her husband Ken continue to be well and have finally retired by selling their chicken franchise in Ridgeway, Ontario. They're enjoying some ocean cruises and trips to see their children and grandchildren. Don's brother, George with his wife Pat are both well with George continuing as a doctor in emergency medicine in Vancouver. George still accepts numerous locums on cruise ships, resulting in several overseas holidays for Pat and himself. We really enjoyed seeing George and Pat when they visited Perth for four days in March, 2006. This was followed by a two week visit by their middle son, Kevin who has been teaching in Korea. Don signed him up for a PADI SCUBA diving course and Kevin became a qualified diver. Both George and Kevin have short videos on video.google.com as a result of their visits.

In June, Lily had a week's holiday in Sydney, catching up with the design projects that were implemented for the 2000 Olympic Games and subsequently. She walked long distances, went wine tasting in the Hunter Valley, shopped and visited many galleries for the Sydney Biennale, a large contemporary art exhibition over many sites. Together with a visit to Canberra's National Gallery and the Sculpture Garden, and undertaking a course on Mannerist and Baroque art, she has had a surfeit of culture. Otherwise Lily walks regularly with friends, continues to meet with her reading group and is relishing a summer of cricket in Australia.

Lily's sister Robyn Liebeck with her husband Ken have enjoyed a particularly good wheat crop in 2006 on their Muntadgin farm. They have finally commenced the construction of a new farm house. Their son Curtis, age 14 has attended Scotch College as a residential student near us this year and will be entering year 10 in February. Curtis continues to make considerable progress in learning to play the bagpipes and has joined the Scotch Bagpipe Band. We invite him over regularly, particularly when the refrigerator needs clearing out. Britt, aged 11, has done very well at North Merredin Primary School and came to stay with Lily while Don was away. They both enjoyed a trip to the theatre to see Amadeus, both frocking up like socialites on the opening night. They are truly delightful children and great fun to have to stay. Their parents jokingly rue our exposing them to such things as Persian feta and vine ripened organic tomatoes, bookshops and theatre and cable television, but their ability to embrace new experiences combined with their empathy with others is a delight to see.

Lily has completed her third year of study in Landscape Architecture at the University of Western Australia and has scored a summer job in the Planning and Design /Facilities Management Office at UWA where she is undertaking the design of the new campus map, and other projects around the extended campus. The university grounds are recognised as one of the most beautiful in the country and given that two incumbent medical researchers were awarded Nobel prizes last year, the funds are pouring in. A frustrating day at her desk is totally ameliorated by the walk at the day's end through the beautiful campus to the shores of the Swan River.

Lily's studies have focussed on suburban and urban design, which she has relished. One of her projects was set in Canberra, our national capital, where she visited in July/August. The city was designed by Chicagoans Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony in the early years of the 20th century, using the landscape as the overarching organising principle. Canberra is still a large country town, though population is expected to rapidly increase over the next twenty years. Her work involved designing for increased urbanity of the city area. She expects to undertake Honours next year, capping off her 10th year of full time university studies, thankfully not consecutive. She will continue part time in her position with the University.

We welcome your news and updates. Our summer will feature Don's birthday party and a visit from Margaret and Ken Richmond for a fortnight. Lily will be working and Don will be adjusting to retirement, so hopefully, there will be some restructuring of the household tasks, but Lily isn't too sanguine about that.

We wish you good things for the 2006 Christmas and a happy, healthy prosperous 2007.

Lily Auld and Don Pugh



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