



# MERRY CHRISTMAS

Dear Friends

Once again, Christmas has crept up on us stealthily. The warm days of Summer are always welcome although Christmases seem to be getting closer together. Yet, it's always a pleasure to re-establish contact with old friends and to bring back memories of past adventures. We've welcomed your letters and look forward to staying in contact by whatever means possible, including new avenues such as Facebook.

We celebrated Christmas day in 2010, very quietly at home alone. However, we were joined for post-Christmas celebrations by the Liebeck family from Muntadgin. Although droughts during the 2010 period again reduce the yield of their farm's wheat crop, regular rains this year are promising, hopefully, to yield a full harvest. They're keeping their fingers crossed that Australian wheat prices will be high, despite the high Australian dollar. For the first time in many years, the Australian dollar has been higher than the American one, a bonus for spenders like us who like to order overseas on eBay.

Curtis, our 19-year-old nephew, has successfully completed his first year of university at Curtin University, in agriculture and is looking forward to his second year. He's talking about doing a semester exchange at Guelph University in Ontario, Canada. He's again earning money working on the large grain silos in Merredin and assisting his father, Ken, on the farm. Britt commenced her Year 12 studies in October. She does get a two month break over Christmas, which she's spending on the family farm. She enjoyed a wonderful three-week French study tour of France this year and has definitely got the travel bug.

After 32 years as a quadriplegic, Don's health is not as good as it used to be. Unfortunately, in early December, 2010 the back portion of his air cushion went flat without his knowledge, causing a pressure sore. He ended up spending four months in bed at home, lying on his side to allow the wound to heal. Lily took a break from work to care for him, and bought him an iPad for entertainment. Sadly, he totally missed the summer of 2010-1, but he's well and looking forward to a more active season this year.

Although he had applied to complete a second year in film studies at Perth Technical College, the pressure sore forced him reluctantly to withdraw his application. This was a disappointment, and though he went for a couple days to classes, he only succeeded in worsening his problem. Nevertheless, since recovering, he has made a number of films this year, and they may be viewed on his YouTube Don434 site. Please do take a look at <http://www.youtube.com/user/DON434> or click your smart phone on this QR link.



Don was compelled to change the date of his trip to Zambia in Africa from January to July, 2011. Fortunately by June, he had recovered enough to go along with his carer of the previous two years, a Zambian student, Marshal who is attending university in Perth. On arrival, Don rented a car and driver for a month, employing Marshal's brother-in-law. The highlight of the trip was two weeks spent with an African family in Chililbombwe, in the copper

belt province. During this time he conducted daily trips to neighbouring towns, copper mines and a chimpanzee refuge. Don also spent four days at Victoria Falls which is truly impressive at 3 km wide and 100 m deep. Don also visited Kafue National Park, one of the larger national parks in the world. On his way home, he toured Soweto in Johannesburg, South Africa. His adventures in each of these places are described in the YouTube films.

Don is currently on the Gold coast of Australia for a two week holiday with his carer of old, Richard. At the end of October Don purchased a single lens reflex Canon 5D camera with two zoom lenses in the L-series. The camera has a 35mm sensor and shoots extremely high-quality video at 21 megapixels. To this equipment. Don added a video graphics kit including sound mixer, Matte box and follow focus. In October, Don spent a week in the Kalgoorlie Goldfields, visiting Ora Banda, an abandoned mining town. The purpose of this visit was to get acquainted with his camera while interviewing the publican to make a documentary film about this ghost town of nine people.

An ongoing project in 2011 has been the editing of the local history book of an older gentleman, who grew up in a Perth suburb of Shenton Park and in the process committed many mischievous acts. Don has edited his manuscript, and written a film script and storyboard in order to film a docudrama. This project is still in progress during the summer months. In the long-term, Don hopes to train an apprentice interested in film and then advertise his services to create film memoirs for retired people who wish to leave a visual record for their grandchildren.

Lily is currently working in a small architect's studio in Fremantle. She is delighted with the range of work undertaken; including masterplanning for airfields, schools, urban centres and mining camps. While the rest of the staff are immersed in designing buildings, Lily believes she gets to do the best bits of the projects.

This year while Don was in Zambia, Lily was called up for Jury Duty. While doing one's civic duty should be sacrosanct, Lily felt that the respite afforded by Don's absence was not to be eroded by languishing in a hotel with eleven other good men and true. Instead she booked a four day escape to Melbourne and spend much of the time at Art Exhibitions. The other winter activity in Melbourne, Australian Football held little appeal.

Of note was the "Vienna: Art and Design" exhibition which featured works by Klimt, Schiele, Hoffman and others active in the Successionist movement. It was breathtakingly curated and a fine representation of the body of work from the early 1900's Vienna.

Lily is planning to escape the Olympics again next year by going to another Pacific Island where sports coverage is less jingoistic. A young man in her office hails from Samoa, so this is the frontrunner for her sports-free fortnight. Otherwise, life for Lily is quiet, with catch ups with friends, bookclub and visits from the family. Unlike Don, she has been circumspect with her purchases this year, though she has toted up Don's camera costs and will trot them out at her next improvident moment.

Don has a range of photographs that he wishes to share with you, so we will end this with our warmest wishes to all for a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

Don Pugh and Lily Auld

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