

Rockingham High School,
Rockingham, Western Australia.
10 Nov., 1976.

realize

Dear ^{Karen} Parents,

Christmas Greetings for 1976. It is difficult to that
another year has already passed, but I am using this opportunity to
send seasons greetings and news to all my friends.

It seems strange to be writing to you as summer approaches with its
long hot sunny days as opposed to the snow and frigid air of Nova.
For some of you this letter from Australia may come as a surprise, so I
shall fill you in on my past activities. I left Canada in Sept., 1975
and gradually worked my way overland through Asia for five months. Travel-
ling by four wheel truck for the first three months, and public trans-
port for the remainder, my experiences included exploring sand covered
Greek and Roman ruins along the remote Eastern coast of the Mediterran-
ean, and abandoned caravanseral along the camel routes of the seldom
visited interior of Persia's Great Sand Desert. I travelled through the
difficult Northern route of Afganistan and met Afgans in their unde-
veloped state, herding sheep and camels. Two months were spent travelling
through both North and South India, learning to eat curry, while New
Year's Day was comfortably passed on the sandy beaches of the former
Portuguese colony of Goa. In Nepal a two week trek to Helambu Valley al-
lowed me to stay in Nepalese mountain homes and to share their meals and
hospitality. A one week visit to Rangoon and Mandalay gave me a better
idea of socialized Burma, while Bangkok and Singapore's Americanization
provided a contrast after the conservativeness of the Moslem and Hindu
dominated countries.

Arriving in Australia in Feb. of this year, I have been teaching
at Rockingham High School since that date. With four basic level and
one advanced class, teaching has proved a both difficult and educational
experience. The winter was a warm, wet one, passed in relative comfort,
and I am now enjoying the long hot summer. My spare time has been
spent playing golf, (badly), in diving, surfing, and operating my
400 watt amateur radio station 7160M. Perth is a very pleasant, well
organized city, situated on the Swan River. The main Australian
activities seem to be drinking Swan Ale, playing 'footie', sailing,
surfing, sunbathing, and horse back riding.

During my two school breaks, each 16 days in length, I managed to
explore some parts of this vast state. The first trip was to the
world's last major gold fields in Kalgoorlie. Although the last gold mine
recently closed, it is still possible to see twenty rusting headframes
from one hill. Today nickel mining pumps money into the region's economy.
Heading into the hot and dusty Northwest, during second term's break, I
covered 3,000 miles up to the Hamersley Iron Ore Ranges. This is a vast
empty, arid, and desolate land, with a blinding red bull dust, which
soon turns everything red. Colourful wild flowers, kangaroos, emus,
lizards, wattle, scrub mulga, spinifex grasses and sheep and cattle
are the main items of scenery on the flat plain. Hematite, untreated
at 65% iron content, is the mainstay with 3,000 rail cars being
daily shipped from two gigantic mines.

What of the future? At present I am planning a two month bicycle
ride around New Zealand in January and February, followed by work on
an export business with a friend in Auckland, and some study towards
a M. Ed. Beyond this undoubtedly lies more travel, with both South
America and Africa competing for my attention.

May you all realize the best of your hopes and dreams for the
New Year of 1977. Please keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Donald Pugh