

Hamilton Senior
Purvis St.,
HAMILTON HILL, WEST AUST.
6153. 28 Nov., 1977.

Dear Friends,

Seasons Greetings for 1978. It's embarrassing to send out a mimeographed letter. Yet to be honest, I find it difficult to write and beg your forgiveness. This letter marks two and a half years since I have left Canada on my 'world trip', and this letter is perhaps a last attempt to keep in touch with old friends, to whom I haven't written.

After resigning my position at Rockingham High School, in Western Aust. last year, I spent two and a half months travelling to and around New Zealand. The train trip across the Nullabor to Sydney is quite an experience. The landscape is totally flat and barren (gibber plain) with no natural features whatsoever. The temperature was well over 40 C. although the train itself was fully air conditioned and comfortable. Once the train reaches Victoria, rolling farmland, followed by the rugged rain of the dividing range, provides a pleasant contrast. Sydney reminds me of Toronto without a rapid transit system or freeways.

New Zealand is a great place for a visit but I wouldn't want to live there. The scenery is pleasant, with many unusual and unique trees and plants. The South is beautiful with the lush Canterbury Plains and rugged mountains, with distances small enough that travel is easy. However salaries are very low, about two thirds of the Australian level, while prices are much higher, particularly for luxury items such as cars. I spent about a month on the North Island, and two weeks travelling the South Island with my parents who had flown out from Canada. My parents and myself then returned to Australia, for a pleasant trip by train from Sydney to Brisbane on the Gold Coast. Brisbane is Australia's Miami with tropical climate, high rise hotels, and miles of open beach.

Following my parents departure for Canada, I returned to Perth to commence a Master's Degree in Education. Perth is one of the most beautiful cities I've come across with good planning, no pollution, and is located directly on the Swan River and Indian Ocean.

With free room and board as a boarding master at Christ Church Grammar School, a private boys school, the year has been a pleasant, relaxing one, studying curriculum. In September, I obtained a

position as curriculum coordinator, responsible for undertaking a needs assessment of a large secondary school. The position is a non-teaching one with private office and secretary, which complements my university studies. I am presently computer processing a curriculum questionnaire which has been completed by 400 students, teachers, and parents. Next year's activities will involve a closer look at the curriculum areas which have been designated as needs by this survey.

I have five remaining courses to complete next year for my M. Ed. These I hope to complete. Unlike Canada, there is a great shortage of graduate degrees in Education here, and the State is beginning a program of evaluation and surveys. Consequently there's good opportunities to obtain educational research positions, or posts such as university tutors, and liaison officers. Living and working conditions are generally relaxed and easy going, with the price of living being still quite low. Steak, for instance, is around \$1.25 a pound. Temperatures seldom drop below 10 C. in mid-winter and tropical flowers bloom all year around.

On Dec. 14, I'm leaving for a seven week trip through Indonesia. Flying to Kuala Lumpur, I expect to take public transport through Sumatra and Java to Bali, then fly to Singapore and East Malaysia. With some luck, I hope to climb Mtn Kinabalu, the highest mountain in South East Asia, located in the state of Sabah on the Island of Borneo.

Its hoped that 1978 is another prosperous year for all my friends. I am anxious to keep in touch, and hope you will drop me a Christmas card. Best wishes to you all for a very happy New Year.

Sincerely,

Don Pugh.