

Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year, 2014

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Dear Friends

It's December and we write our annual Christmas letter. As we've become older, time seems to accelerate, with the years blending together from one to the next. It seems like yesterday that we produced last year's letter, hastily produced the day before Christmas. That letter was never snail mailed, but was emailed and also posted on Don's Facebook page.

Don is 67 in the New Year, and with thirty-six years as a quadriplegic, confined to a wheelchair, he's feeling less motivated to the extent that he didn't make any home movies this year. He's hampered these days by low blood pressure causing bouts of dizziness and a need to recline partially some of the time when sitting.

This irritating issue is combined with skin damage that requires an afternoon rest to alleviate pressure.

Still almost all of his quadriplegic friends of his vintage have 'permanent addresses', so he's doing well. He's avoided hospitals and enjoys life: daily outings to coffee venues, dining or enjoy quaffing Guinness with friends and longer twenty to thirty kilometre outings on cycle pathways in his speedy 20 km/hr. chair. Now Don truly appreciates the warm climate and is an incessant reader finishing newspapers and three or four books a week on his iPad.

Don has managed three one-week regional trips this year as well as a fortnight international trip. Don spent two weeks in a lovely house in Geraldton, a coastal town 400 km north of Perth. Situated a hundred metres from the beach he relished fresh BBQ'd seafood meals, barramundi, snapper and prawns nightly and the sound of ocean waves breaking rhythmically.

One week was spent in Bunbury, 200 km south of Perth. With James Wright, as carer, Don also visited Bali for a fortnight, his sixth visit, using some of the time to drive around this beautiful volcanic island.

One of Don's main activities this year involved seeding the small pond in the garden with all kinds of wildlife. Of all things, the plethora of tadpoles has kept both Don and Mike greatly occupied with feeding, shelter, adding plant life and general animal husbandry.

At this stage about 20 frogs a day are leaving the pond, and will hopefully aestivate in our garden during the very long Australian summer.

Don is planning a trip to the northern hemisphere in the Australian winter. He will be travelling with James Wright - they will probably be coming to a town near you.

Don's Itinerary

Singapore from 3-6 June Metro YMCA
New Delhi 6-10 June at Hotel Shanghai-la Eros
Istanbul 10-13 June at the President Best Western
UK 13-20 June
Toronto 20-24 June at Holiday Inn Express
Sault Ste Marie 24-26 June at Holiday Inn Express
Wawa 26-30 June at Wawa Motor Hotel
Toronto 30 June - 1 July at Holiday Inn Express
Roblin, Ontario with Vanwarts 1-7 July
Ridgetown, Ontario with Richmonds 7-20 July
Toronto 20-21 July at Holiday Inn Express
Vancouver 21-27 July at Accent Inn Richmond
Waikiki Hawaii 27-30 July at Ramada Plaza
Guam 30 July to 2 Aug at Guam Hilton Resort
Manila 2 -6 Aug at Sofitel
Bangkok 6-8 Aug at Shanghai-la
Return **Perth** Aug 8th



Images (L-R)

- Don in Geraldton with Crayfish,
- George (Don's Brother) and Pat at Cottesloe Beach
- Don in Bali
- The Liebecks (Lily's Sister and Family) Farm at Muntadgin
- Our family of tadpoles in the pond.

Lily is in her fourth year of work at Slavin Architects, a well established architecture practice in Fremantle. This year, the firm moved to a purpose built office in North Fremantle with views of the only road out of the busy Port. Along with keeping busy with her workload, she has become adept in truck spotting. With the state still producing lots of revenue from mining, the equipment coming out of the port is amazing.....and the work is greatly enjoyable.

Lily took her niece, Britt to Sydney for a couple of days early in the year. We greatly enjoyed meal after meal of celebrity dining and lots of shopping.

Sydney is such a beautiful city and a couple of tours of the harbour convinced Britt of its splendour.

In the winter, Lily visited Melbourne to house-sit with her friend, Terri. Apart from a gallery and a garden tour, it was pretty much like the Sydney trip. Tour down the river to Williamstown, shops and dining in restaurants with celebrity chefs.

We've been fortunate this year with visits by a number of friends. Jonathan Crowther and his wife spent three weeks over the Christmas of 2012, and enjoyed a visit with us to the Liebeck farm for Christmas. Jonathan filmed a Scuba diving expedition through the wreck of the Swan III. See Jonathan's underwater footage [here](#).

Don's brother George and his wife Pat also visited for a week before departing on a cruise to NZ. George scanned all his 35mm slides and fixed capacitors in Don's computer motherboard. We've also enjoyed the visit from Chris and Katka Beeby and their baby Elena from the UK.

Michael Hand has also been staying with us, giving him a break from living in his campervan.

Unlike previous years, the Liebeck family haven't stayed over with us on their frequent trips to Perth. Britt, having finished year 12, has been renting a flat and accommodating her parents while

working as an intern at a private girls school, Mercedes College. In 2014, she will attend the University of Western Australia. Curtis has finished his third year at Curtin University, and is working at the farm this summer, before commencing his final year. The Liebecks are enjoying an excellent crop this year after last year's disastrous drought.

Sincere thanks for your continued contact, through letters, card and email. We love getting your correspondence. We hope that this finds you well and best wishes for a happy, healthy, enjoyable and prosperous year.

Don Pugh and Lily Auld