

# Greetings from Geoff Alves and Christine Ledger

**W**e bring you best wishes for Christmas and the New Year, but **not** the millennium. In case Geoff has not pointed out to you already with typical editorial correctness, the new millennium actually begins in 2001 so we will reserve our greetings to the appropriate time!

If you have somehow missed out on the far-flung gossip loop, we were married on 23 October 1999. You can read all about it on our website ([www.users.bigpond.com/galves](http://www.users.bigpond.com/galves)). Or failing that, once you have picked yourself up off the floor, write back and we'll tell you all about how a crusty 57-year-old bachelor and a forty-something career woman found themselves walking up the aisle within twelve months of going to a concert together at the Shatin Town Hall in Hong Kong.

Anyway, here we are back from a wonderful honeymoon in Tasmania where we not only enjoyed the wilderness, the walks, the beaches and the B&B breakfasts, but also bought a house by remote control. While we were away our neighbour sent us a message to say he was ready to sell us his house so we exchanged contracts by fax and spoke to solicitors and banks from public phone boxes. The house will be ours on 2 December. So please note our new address below.

1999 has been a particularly memorable year and one full of "rites of passage" tinged by both sorrow and joy.

Chris's mother died, aged 84, on 8 August. She had spent sixteen difficult months in a nursing home pretty much immobile after breaking two hips and with dementia. Chris's Dad remains at home in Toowoomba and is coping well.

Geoff retired (again) and moved his base from his beloved farm at Wroxham to be closer to his newly found beloved in Canberra. We now both enjoy the occasional escapes to that wonderful bush property to unwind from stresses and strains.

Chris's PhD study progresses well but slowly for obvious reasons and will take off with a bang in the year 2000 (promise). The topic is "The Theological and Ethical Responses of Australian Churches to Technological Change in Society".

Geoff has more than enough work, mainly voluntary labours of love, to keep him occupied, eg as editor of *CCA News* and as Chairman of the National Literature Board of Churches of Christ in Australia. He hasn't done much reading this year, again for obvious reasons.



Chris travelled to Beirut where she was elected Honorary Treasurer of the World Student Christian Federation. Geoff travelled to Hong Kong to do some work for the Christian Conference of Asia.

We have lost count of the number of times we have travelled to Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Toowoomba. We were on the road to visit Chris's aunt in Deniliquin at the time of her sister's (Chris's mum's) death so had a particularly meaningful time with her before driving on to the funeral.

Though we have been in Canberra only a matter of months we feel right at home. We have made many new friends especially through the two churches we worship at—Holy Cross Anglican in Hackett and Ainslie Church of Christ.

Then there was the wedding. We were completely overwhelmed by the number of people who came (about 230) from all over the country and two from overseas. Our lounge room has no visible flat surface left—all of these being covered by wedding cards. It was a wonderful get-together and reunion with so many wonderful friends and family members.

Last but not least, Jerry the Cat is thriving, having two staff now instead of just one. He spends most of his day standing sentinel on the back gate in case Nelson, the cat next door, might dare to visit. We are also visited by crimson rosellas and many other birds, which Jerry, fortunately, ignores.

We have a spare bedroom so please come and stay but do check that we are here. The year 2000 is shaping up as a year to rival this one for excitement. We plan to go to Europe in July for Chris to attend various meetings to do with her study and WSCF responsibilities and to attend a family reunion of Geoff's in the Shetland Islands. Other possible destinations for one or both of us include Indonesia and Cuba.

We hope this finds you happy and well, that Christmas is a time of joy, and that 2000 is a great year for you and those dear to you.

Christmas 1999

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