

Christmas Greetings from Chris and Geoff



We can now relax and enjoy our lounge room as our house renovations are finally finished!



Dad Ledger watching his well-fed birds from his room at Symes Grove in Brisbane



On a hot day in Malacca in Malaysia we sit in the window of the ruins of the old church of St George

Christmas greetings to one and all! We trust this letter finds you well and anticipating a Christmas season of hope and peace.

Marriage seems to suit us. Having celebrated our silver wedding anniversary (counted in months, that is) we continue to be amazed how much excitement we pack into our lives. And Geoff thought he would spend his retirement quietly reading books on the back verandah!

This year, 2001, has been a year of travel, house renovations (complete at last!), visitors, illness, another wedding, study (still squeezed in there), increasing church involvement, more publishing, and organising a conference.

2001 began in Queensland. Dad Ledger had moved into Symes Grove, an Anglican residence in Brisbane, just before Christmas 2000. After celebrating Christmas together, the Ledger siblings and in-laws spent some time clearing out the old family home in Toowoomba, now being cared for by housesitters. One year later, Dad has settled well into his new home and, though frustrated by a memory that plays tricks on him, is very well and soon to turn 86.

We are still a few years behind him. If 45 is the definition of middle-age, Chris has now reached that hallowed state and Geoff is about to turn 60 and get a seniors card. Meanwhile, Jerry the Cat keeps forgetting he is 12 and races around like a kitten. Geoff also revisited his youth this year by contracting glandular fever (a disease normally associated with 17-year-olds). He suffered a particularly nasty variety that affected his liver and forced him to spend a week in hospital and two months doing very little at all. He's fine now. However, his younger brother Ian recently shocked us all by suffering a heart attack and having double bypass surgery. Please pray for him now in the recovery phase.

The Big Trip this year took us around the world: Hong Kong, Malaysia, Geneva, New York, Toronto, Berkeley and Tahiti. This spanned about seven weeks in May and June and included Geoff working in Hong Kong, Chris attending a meeting in Geneva, both of us attending a conference in Berkeley and visiting many friends and enjoying their wonderful hospitality. While we were in Geneva, great-niece Emily was born to Giz and Brett and we enjoyed photos of her through the wonders of email. We have now resorted to a map with coloured pins



Our view from the Empire State Building of the twin towers of the World Trade Centre, 30 May 2001. Little did we know ...

Château de Gruyères, in Switzerland. Gruyères is the home of the famous cheese. Delicious ...



Waving palm trees, the surf breaking on the reef—Tahiti was everything we imagined it to be ...



Jerry the Cat sleeping on the bed in the spare bedroom. He will grudgingly give this up for you when you visit ...

stuck in it to keep a record of our travels. A trip to New Zealand was abandoned because of Geoff's glandular fever, however we still managed to fit in several interstate trips, including another trip to Queensland—this time for the wedding of nephew Tony and his new wife Liz.

We have become firmly established and quite heavily involved with our two church families—Holy Cross Anglican and Ainslie Church of Christ. Both have inducted new and excellent ministers this year. Chris is on the parish council, and Geoff is on the board of elders.

Workwise, we are both involved in the organisation of a science and religion workshop to be held in Canberra over the 2002 Australia Day weekend. The workshop is being funded by the Templeton Foundation through the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences in Berkeley. Geoff's voluntary work with the Christian Conference of Asia and the National Literature Department of Churches of Christ keeps him at his beloved Mac computer. Chris's PhD study is going well, if in fits and starts, and recently received a good shot in the arm from a thesis-writing workshop in Bathurst.

And Canberra is now well and truly home. We are thoroughly enjoying our house free of tradesmen and are now turning our eyes to the patch of weeds pretending to be a garden outside the laundry door. We hope you will be able to visit us (again if you've already been). Our guest room is there to be used and enjoyed as it has been this year by visitors from as far afield as Norway. Don't believe all those weather reports about Canberra. Even when it is cold, it is usually sunny and pleasant ...

Our other home, Wroxham, remains a wonderful oasis of peace for us, surrounded as it is by East Gippsland bush and wildlife. With our renovations in Canberra complete, part of Geoff's library is finally being transferred to Canberra. Maybe one day both of us really will sit on the back verandah and just read ...

With our love and prayers,

Christine and Geoff

Christine Ledger and Geoff Alves
54 Grayson Street, Hackett ACT 2602, Australia
Tel: +61 2 6262 5975
Email: chrisledger@bigpond.com, galves@bigpond.com
(Note that we will soon be changing our email addresses—Geoff is waiting impatiently for our connection to TransACT, a new high-speed data, TV and phone service being installed in Canberra.)