

Greetings from Chris and Geoff

Dear far-flung friends and family,



Chris and Geoff in Chiang Mai

This year, 2004, has been a bit of a watershed for us. The PhD is finally finished and arrived in the post in time for Christmas. Dr Ledger will walk across the stage, for effect, in June at the next graduation ceremony. So the early months of the year were consumed with proofreading, checking, correcting and tidying up the thesis. This was when Chris realised why she had chosen to marry an editor and publisher just as she embarked on the journey of a PhD.

Soon after submitting the thesis at the end of March, Chris started work as centre manager of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture here in Canberra, a job she is thoroughly enjoying. In the two weeks

between the PhD being submitted and Chris starting work, Geoff discovered that the funny pain in the chest he



Chris with her Aunt Meg and uncle, Jack Bull, at Aunt Meg's 80th birthday in Deniliquin

had been suffering from when getting up was actually angina. By the end of April, his blocked artery had a stent in it and he was launched on a program of cardiac rehabilitation. Not before we went overseas again though.

When accepting her new job, Chris made arrangements to have time off to discharge her remaining responsibilities as treasurer of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF).

This meant a meeting

in Geneva in May and the

general assembly in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in August. Geoff recovered from his

surgery in time to travel to Europe

and lug suitcases on and off trains. We visited Italy briefly to meet with Caterina, then vice chairperson of WSCF, who just happened to live in Tuscany, in Carrara, the home of the marble quarries. Geoff went to Chiang Mai with Chris and helped her through the long

days of meetings with energetic students. He also did a bit of homework there with printers etc. as he will go back to Chiang Mai next March for the general assembly of the Christian Conference of Asia to do the daily newspaper. We came home via Perth for the Australasian Religious Press Association convention, and Chris was able to introduce Geoff to her old home and friends there.



Geoff with his Aunt Rita when she lived in Bendigo



The Ledger siblings—Peter, Alison (Dorman), Helen (Hampton) and Chris on the seat donated by them to St Luke's in Toowoomba in memory of their parents



Chris at the marble museum in Carrara



Chris at the ancient walled city of Lucca in Tuscany



Geoff's nephew, Thomas, on a visit to Geoff in Hong Kong

While Chris has been kept busy with her new nine-to-five job, Geoff has been (reluctantly) adjusting to life as a house husband with only Jerry the cat for company. Books and magazines continue to be produced from his office, most notably the two volumes of *A History of the Ecumenical Movement in Asia*. He made two visits to work for CCA in Hong Kong and a trip with his friend Simon to Shanghai, so he hasn't been completely housebound.

Other places visited in 2004 included Melbourne, Deniliquin, Katoomba, Wagga Wagga, Wangarabelle and Moruya (when Geoff helped his brother Ian move there from Sydney). In September we travelled by train to Moss Vale to pick up our new silver Peugeot 307. We have kept the red 306 for the time being, so we are a two-car family again.

Health-wise, we're both doing pretty well now. Geoff's much improved since the stent was inserted. Chris decided to go the whole hog with her change of lifestyle from student to worker and has shed heaps of weight (17 kg so far). We walk up into the nature reserve near us each evening and often see the glossy black cockatoos that have made their home there, along with numerous other birds and the kangaroos. Jerry, though, is starting to age. He needs steps (literally) to get up on the bed now, and the vet tells us his kidneys aren't what they should be. But for 15, he's not doing too bad.

The two churches keep us pretty busy too. Chris is minister of the word, chair of parish council and rector's warden at Holy Cross, and Geoff is on the board at the Ainslie Church of Christ and often leads the worship and/or singing.

It's been a year of big birthday celebrations for family and friends—Alice Butterfield's 1st, Elizabeth Butterfield's 30th, David Bull's 50th, Robert Alves 60th, Auntie Meg's 80th, Gordon Stirling's 90th and, biggest of all, Marjorie Spooner's 100th—and we managed to get to almost all of them.

We are heading north for Christmas to spend some time with Chris's family and will base ourselves in Nambour.

We hope you all have a joyous Christmas and a new year of peace.

With love from us both.



Chris takes delivery of our new Peugeot 307 with a bunch of flowers from the salesman



Chris at the house in Bowral where her mother once lived as a child



Chris with Marjorie Spooner on her 100th birthday, with Marjorie's sister Bonnie



Chris with her friend Elva in front of the house they once shared in Fremantle



Chris gives her final financial report as treasurer of WSCF