



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Greetings to all - as this year leads into that wonderful celebration of our Saviour's Birth.

This year for us has had its interesting moments, just like yours. Often I know it does seem hard to remember those special days and how seldom we get a chance to share the raw edges of our lives as they happen. Remember we are always interested in all that goes on in your space: all your pains and joys we would share with you as if we could be there. So we try to share some of the things that are happening to us, that you may know something of what we are going through, and know we are thinking of the happenings in your lives even as we try to go on with ours.



Peter has entered his second year at U. Of T. His focus seems to be changed (for the times being) to a concentration on Canadian History and Politics. Some of the flavour this year has been provided by professors such as Bob Rae and Mel Watkins. Peter is quite realistic about teachers, yet thinks Rae has been one of the best he has had. No doubt Rae's recent political experiences and comments helped keep the thinking current. Perhaps Peter's working at an assembly line job (doing great things like cutting and crimping wire) for the summer was a factor. The highlight for Peter is not just the studies but that he had the opportunity of singing and touring with the Ontario Youth Choir, directed by Elmer Iseler, this past autumn. Peter has greatly renewed his interest in singing as a result. Not only has the Hart House Chorus benefited from his renewed enthusiasm, but Peter also acquired a job singing, as a paid soloist at College St. United Church. This also means that he is up and worshipping regularly on Sunday Morn. O happy day!



Margaret is now completing her OACs in her final year at Huron Heights. I don't agree with the Provincial Gov't fazing out this 5th year of high school as it has kept my pet home and under my eye for yet another year. She is putting out her applications for university, and hoping to major in Music (Performance) at either McGill or U of T. Since completing all her RCM Theory requirements, Margaret is busy practising for her ARCT (Piano Performer's) in June while playing horn in the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra. But it does take a great deal of time, what with practising every Sat. with the TSYO, piano and horn lessons, choir practices, band practices, concerts, camps, and working with various levels of student gov't. She was also very excited to take part on a school



trip to Germany and the Low Countries this past spring. And, as if all this wasn't keeping her busy enough, she has been chosen as her school's representative at the Forum for Young Canadians - an annual conference for youth from all around the country - to happen in the spring.

For Kathleen, things keep moving steadily along despite the numerous potholes she faced this past year. Between having surgery in May and a bout with pneumonia in August she had plenty to contend with. Thankfully she has fully recovered from all her ailments albeit just in time to take in her numerous other daily challenges and activities. Teaching 25 gr. 1's and 15 Ktg. students is not easy in these times of budget cuts and latch-key kids. Being organist in the church and directing all the church choirs is still a large part of her week. However, she somehow always seems to bring her same high level of enthusiasm to everything she does with each new day. She quietly prays for a healthier 1997.

I am still grumbling about my knees and have been considered becoming part of a study on the use of WD-40 to lubricate joints. I have begun to swim 2 - 3 times a week when I'm in the mood and feel better for it. I just have to use the excuse that I am the Moderator of the Presbytery this year, and everybody seems to understand. I have been on the Assembly Council as well and as usual when ever I say anything everybody does just whatever they please. It is no different than at home. The congregation continues to turn out for the simple offerings I try to feed them with. I try to bore just as a ministerial friend once told me to, but sometimes things just slip out and I find the people laughing out loud.

Through the year Kathleen and I took holidays in Saskatchewan, as usual, which is great relaxation. The relatives were healthy and busy celebrating the 90th anniversary of Skudeness Lutheran Church in Loreburn where we enjoyed fun and food. Talking with all the good people there helps put things in perspective, makes us ready for what may come, and starts the mind in motion again. We found it renewing as a holiday should. It made us aware that we are poorer and lonelier when we are away from the friends and family we care about.

We would like to see more of you, but until we do, remember us in your prayers and keep in touch, that we may know what you are doing and what is happening to you. May your Christmas be a special and blessed time of renewal and love.

Peter & Margaret, Kathleen and Angus McGillivray.

