

CHRISTMAS 2000



The year 2000 started off well, but a big event happened mid-year which was a very sad time for everyone. My father died August 25, 2000 in Nanaimo Hospital after suffering a fall at home. Dad had been in fragile health for awhile, and Mum was doing extra duty taking care of him. He had fallen several times over the previous year, but no serious injuries resulted. The last fall, although not too serious at first glance, seemed to take him down quickly. It was obvious while visiting him in the hospital that his life was slipping away. He responded to us sometimes, but mostly he was not aware of who was in the room with him. He had celebrated his 90th birthday on January 7th, 2000.

Mum is doing her best to continue with her life without Dad, but as I am sure you can imagine, she is missing him terribly after being married for 64 years to the same person. Thanks go to my relatives who live in Nanaimo for being very kind to Mum - taking her out for lunches and dinners, and including her in their family activities. This means so much to her (and to me). I have increased the frequency of my visits, and we are planning to have Mum down to Victoria for Christmas this year. Breaking with our tradition of celebrating Christmas in Nanaimo with our relatives seems to be appropriate this year. I think we need a quiet time – our first Christmas without our husband and father.

Now on to more positive news...



My high school graduating class of 1970 has held reunions every ten years. For a variety of reasons, I chose to not to attend the previous reunions. I was “persuaded” to help out with the arrangements for the 30th reunion held this year in early August. Most of my work for the reunion over the last year has consisted of hosting a website <http://Reunion.JoeTourist.net/>

Hosting the reunion website turned out to be a great deal of work, but by all accounts it was well used and much appreciated by everyone involved. Yes, I attended this reunion, and I found the two day affair was fun. Meeting so many classmates after 30 years was interesting (to say the least). From the comments of the various grads I had a chance to talk with, it appeared that this reunion was enjoyed most of all, as compared with the past reunions.



If you remember from last year's Christmas letter, I was planning a trip to **Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon in January 2000**. This trip turned out to be a great success. While in Las Vegas, I attended the Consumer Electronics Show (CES), and was very impressed with all the new gadgets and gizmos. The High-Definition TVs (HDTV) seemed to be displayed in every booth, and their pictures were amazingly detailed. Panasonic showed flat (and thin), gas-plasma HDTV displays, and I have decided to aim for one of those units, once the price comes down in a few years. See more details on my website, located at <http://JoeTourist.ca/LasVegas/>

While in Las Vegas, I rented a car and traveled to the Grand Canyon. Since this trip was in January, there were no crowds. As you can see by the "I was there" photo, the weather was cold and clear (some snow on the ground), so my helicopter ride over the canyon was near perfect. My visit happened to coincide with President Clinton's visit to dedicate some new national park land, so that added a bit of extra excitement to the adventure. You can see all of my photos and a complete travelogue of this trip on my website, located at <http://JoeTourist.ca/GrandCanyon/> This is the first vacation which I relied exclusively on my Nikon digital camera. It worked very well, and I seriously doubt I will ever use a film-based camera again.

Speaking of websites, I now have new domain names for my websites (the old ones still work) - the **JoeTourist.ca** domain name is already in active use. **JoeCarr.ca** points to my personal website, and I have plans for the **Carr.ca** domain name.

This seemed to be my year for purchasing electronics: a new 27" Panasonic Gaoo high quality TV to replace my 25 year old 20" RCA Colortrack, a surround sound audio system, a DVD player, a subscription to digital cable service and a Casio Pocket PC to replace my Palm Pilot PDA. I also decided to use my cellphone as my main telephone number, and dropped my wireline telephone with Telus. So now, you can reach me at (250) 744-9981 anytime. Kirk has his own cellphone and his own private number.

On the personal front, Kirk is doing pretty well. We are both happy and reasonably healthy, so I guess that is pretty good for a couple of *40-somethings!* Tucker (our Jack Russell Terrier) continues to try to keep track of us all, and Sylvester (our Manx cat) continues to outfox Tucker at every turn. Tucker gets 3 or 4 walks a day, and tears around the local parks as if he were still a puppy, despite being 3 years old now. He is a real *snuggler* as well, so if either of us takes a nap, sits in the easy chairs, or goes to bed not feeling well, he is right there to crawl under the covers. He makes a great hot water bottle! Sylvester is more circumspect - preferring to sleep on his own, but nearby. He is a friendly cat, but not a lap cat. His job is to keep track of the birds in the feeder, and also to say "hi" to his neighbourhood buddies, who often sit on the deck and peer in the window at him. We don't let him outside to make cat-to-cat contact, since there are so many deadly feline diseases going around.

I originally wrote a 4 page version of this Christmas letter - you can find the long version on my personal website at: <http://JoeCarr.ca/Xmas2000/>



***Kirk and I wish you very happy holidays...
and may you have a great Year 2001.***