

MERRY CHRISTMAS



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Dear friends,

We hope that 2017 has been a good year for you and we find you in both health and happiness. For us 2017 has not been a year to remember. Many of you will have been aware that for some years Frances has been suffering from the onset of dementia. This has been brought about by a series of mini-strokes. So for the past 7 years or so I have been acting as a carer for her. Christmas letters always tend to reflect on the bright spots in life rather than reflect some of the realities, so that I have not addressed this problem in any earlier Christmas letters. About 5 years ago, we received some government assistance to help us, and it has been invaluable in allowing Frances to stay at home during this difficult time. But, as is sadly the case with dementia, the problems that she has been facing have slowly been getting worse over the past 7 or so years.

Many of you may have noticed in the Christmas letters that, when I have gone away, there has always been someone to stay with Frances to look after her - her family and her friends have been very supportive during this time, allowing me to get away for a few weeks break each year.

However, during the first five to six months of this year, I noticed that Frances was having more difficulties with the problems of dementia. I was also getting exhausted with the demands of being a carer. In late May, while we were out to dinner at a local hotel, Frances had a turn and collapsed unconscious. We called an ambulance immediately, but in the meantime, after about 8 to 10 minutes, Frances recovered and within about 30 minutes was back to her usual self. She was taken to hospital and underwent a series of tests, none of which indicated the cause of the problem. There have been no problems of this nature since. I found the stress and worry of this extremely difficult to handle, and finally realised that it was necessary that I put Frances into a nursing home for respite care, as I was totally exhausted. I

had resisted putting Frances into a nursing home in the past, as I really felt that once I took this step it would not be very long before she would be in full-time Residential Care.

Initially, I requested 3 weeks of respite care, but soon realised that I would need to use the full 9 weeks that was permissible under government guidelines. During this time, I realised that if Frances should return to home, I would only be able to look after her for a few months before becoming totally exhausted again. In the meantime, Frances had settled in remarkably well to the nursing home, and so, after much anguish, deliberation and discussion, we finally decided that she should stay in the nursing home permanently, with full time Residential Care.

This was a traumatic time for Frances, for me, for her family, and for her extended family. Making a decision of this nature is extremely hard, and I am extremely grateful to all of the members of her family, and to Kirsten and Simon for all the support that they have given to both of us during this time, I hope I was also able to also offer them some support. When we took the decision that Frances needed to go into respite care, Kirsten in particular did a wonderful job - she took a number of days off work to try to help me to work out the best way to manage the situation. We were extremely fortunate to find a bed at the Freemasons Mount Martha Valley nursing home. It's about a 12 minutes drive from here, and I'm very happy about both the staff and the facility. On the day of her admission, Louisa came down from Sydney to help her settle in, and of course Suse has been a regular visitor. Frances seems quite happy there, and she is well looked after and well-dressed. And she welcomes visitors! She is living at Mount Martha Valley Residential Aged Care, 130 Country Club Drive, Safety Beach, 3936, Victoria. For those interested, the website is at

<http://www.royalfreemasons.org.au/residential-care/locations/mount-martha.html>

Recently we had a wonderful day to celebrate Frances' birthday. Louisa came down from Sydney and together with Frances' dear friend Margaret Kurrle, we had a great lunch at Steeples, and then headed off to the Eagle, the new Arthur's Seat chairlift. It was a great day for such a trip, and the Eagle is really the Rolls Royce of chairlifts. It is a Doppelmeyer, and has all very flash gondolas. At the top we had coffee and cake and admired the view, and then had a great trip back down to the base. It was a great day. Suse wisely said we should spread out the celebrations, so a few days later, she in turn came down and spent the day celebrating with her mum, going down to Mount Martha Beach with Chewbacca, their dog. And Frances had flowers galore.



And now of course, there is a substantial change in my lifestyle as well. Getting used to living alone and a fairly big house is an interesting exercise. However I really like the area that we live in, it's convenient to visit Frances, and I have no intention of downsizing or moving out whilst I can avoid it. With all of the other matters involved in last 6 months, I have managed to play only two games of bowls during this time. My time seems to be fully occupied around the house, visiting Frances and the various other matters that need to be attended to. I hope that some of these will settle down a little in the future, and I can get back to bowling and kayaking in the summer. I should add that I'm very fortunate to have our wonderful little poodle Mocha in the house - she is great company.

And so perhaps I'll move on to other matters. Earlier in the year, I had emails from two overseas friends who were visiting Melbourne - Larry Zadow (and his wife) and Edmund Renner. They were both due in Melbourne in March, about 2 weeks apart. Larry of course is a member of the Zadow clan and we've been in touch by email for quite some years. Edmund Renner is an old colleague of mine who worked in the dairy industry, and we have met in a number of places throughout the world. For each of them, we picked them up close to the city and drove along the beach on two perfect days to Black Rock, where we had a very pleasant lunch and a very pleasant conversation. It was great to catch up with Edmund, and to meet Larry and his wife. Frances enjoyed the days very much.

Also in March, Kirsten suggested that we might like to see the musical *A Chorus Line*. I had seen it many years ago and thoroughly enjoyed it. This production was by the Beaumaris players. I thought it was a great idea, and so together with Kirsten, Frances and I went along to see the show. It was excellent, very well produced and considerable talent shown by the performers. Five stars.

What do I want in musicals? Well firstly good music, memorable music, I want to walk out of the theatre humming a tune with a smile on my face. This is a deal breaker - no good music, not a good musical. It must have good music - for example, *South Pacific*, *Carousel*, *La Cage*, *Evita*..... And secondly I want to relate to the characters, to feel for them. Many musicals have brought a tear to my eye - think *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Carousel*, *West Side Story*. You do need to relate to the characters and have a good story. Thirdly, an important aspect is the dancing. Needs to be well choreographed, and well carried out - Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Gene Kelly. So really in a musical, it requires good music, a good story and good dancing. Simple - if you have great composers, great screenwriters and great choreographers and dancers.

Kirstie organised for us to go the Regent to see *My Fair Lady* for my birthday. We did see it a few weeks after the day, that was no hassle at all. The Regent is a big barn of a theatre, the foyers are magnificent 1930s Renaissance Revival style movie house, trying to be luxurious, and interesting. The interiors are of a rococo style. But it is a big theatre. When I was young I was told that the Palais in St. Kilda was the biggest movie house in the Southern hemisphere, and that the Regent was the second biggest. In fact the Palais had 2896 seats, the Regent 3250, and the State theatre Melbourne had 3371 seats! And of course, when I was younger(!) the Regent was a movie house. I recall seeing *The Robe* there, in about 1953. It was the first Cinemascope movie and it was very exciting. I also recall seeing *Carousel* there - I loved it so much I sat through it twice!

Of course, television came in 1956, and wreaked havoc on the movie chains. On 1 July 1970, Hoyts shut the doors of the Regent for the last time. There were calls for its demolition, but the unions placed a green ban on it, and it was preserved. It lay derelict for 26 years. In the 90s, the theatre was restored and redeveloped, and was opened again in 1996. Since then it has hosted many live shows.

I saw the first Melbourne production of *My Fair Lady* in 1959, with Mum, Roy and Betty. Bunty Turner played Eliza Doolittle, but her voice had problems in the higher registers. In spite of this it was a wonderful musical and I enjoyed it immensely. It was on at Her Majesty's, a more intimate theatre than the barn like Regent.

And so to the show. I will start with the criticisms, and they all relate to the theatre, not the show. We were sitting in the stalls, about two thirds of the way back. Firstly the acoustics were poor. The sound was clear and crisp and easily understood, but there appeared to be no

surround sound at all. It was quite noticeable from the start of the performance - it was as though there was a single speaker providing all of the sound. Secondly, it is still clear that the Regent was originally developed as a movie house - there is very little slope from front to rear. In the case of movies, the image is well up from the stage floor, and this is not a problem, But for stage shows, you need to keep moving your head around to see past the person in front, and you do need to sit very upright in your seat - and this applies even if you have a smaller person in front of you. The stage appeared small from where we were, but it did not affect our enjoyment one iota. None of these was any problem at all to the overall enjoyment of the show. The show ran for over three hours, with a 20 minute break.

Well the show itself - a magnificent production indeed, just amazing - the costumes, the sets, all of the performers - actors and dancers, the music, the orchestra, the story, everything was simply perfect. All of the stars were excellent, Professor Higgins, Eliza, and of course Alfred Doolittle played magnificently by Reg Livermore. The time flew, the enjoyment was great.

And now to Pygmalion. After the show, I bought the book and read it on my Kindle. To my amazement, a great deal of the spoken lines in the show were directly those used in Pygmalion (which was written by George Bernard Shaw, as a play). And quite often the music uses lines from the play.

And a final point - I suspect that very few of us know what Pygmalion is or means! (apart from not Pygmalion likely). Do you know?

****SPOILER ALERT ****

In ancient Greek mythology, [Pygmalion](#), fell in love with one of his sculptures, which then came to life.

Later in the year, I decided to go to the Book of Mormon as a number of people had told me that they really enjoyed it. I had earlier decided not to go, as I had read some of the reviews and thought that it would not be my cup of tea. In addition, I have spent quite some time in Utah (a big dairy state), and have met many Mormons, and have a great deal of respect for them. But I was convinced by those who had seen it.

So, the Book of Mormon. A great hit worldwide, but not for the faint hearted or those easily upset by very foul language throughout. But anyone who buys a ticket will be well aware of this. So how did it do?

- Good music. Maybe three songs that were OK - I Believe, Hello and Turn It Off. But no great melodies, and you could not remember any tunes when you left the theatre. There was a lot of music, and it was all OK without being memorable. Rating 6/10

- Ability to relate to the characters. It was impossible to relate to any of the characters, there was no way to sympathise with them, and the characters were all really one dimensional, almost comic characters. Even worse, there was no real development of attraction between any of the characters (and in this musical, it was not going to happen). Rating 2/10
- Dancing. Well done, good choreography, but virtually all male dancing, and clearly no romantic dancing in this show. Rating 7/10
- Storyline. Clever and well put together for the most part. The ending was a bit glib and too quick. Rating 7/10
- Humour. I did not get one great belly laugh for the whole show. Amusing in parts. Most of the laughs from the audience were either when they recognised some different beliefs on the parts of the Mormons, or in response to a couple of catch phrases such as "I have maggots in my scrotum". Definitely not for those offended by toilet humour or the like. Rating 5/10
- Cost - Substantially overpriced.

Would I see it again? No. Obviously my view of damning it with very faint praise is in the minority, it has been a great commercial success. Did I enjoy it? Well, sort of, maybe, but it is certainly not in my top 20 or 30 list of best musicals I have seen. Save your money.

On to other matters. Now that Frances is in the nursing home, I have also made a few other changes - I have sold both the EL Falcon and the caravan.



For the first time in almost 50 years, I do not own a Ford. I sold my trusty EL Falcon wagon to a wrecker. I know that it is stupid to consider inanimate objects as having any feelings, but I feel sad for my EL

I bought it in 1999, with 40,000 km on the clock, it having been built in 1997. It has seen a great deal of my life in the last 20 years, and almost feels a part of me. For the past few years,

since I bought the Mazda in 2013, it has been mostly just sitting in the drive at home, occasionally used by me in the summer to take me and my kayaking gear to the beach, but also for the use of any interstate visitors to our home who did not have a car available.

But with Frances now in a nursing home, this need is no longer on. And of course, it was getting old. Mechanically it was just fine - engine, transmission, brakes, suspension, tyres all to the best of my knowledge all OK. But there were a few problems - the locking system had not worked for years, the battery was on its last legs, the tail gate pneumatic lifters had failed, so that it shut like a guillotine - very dangerous. And the bonnet was not much better. The fabric on the inner roof had peeled away, and there was one other thing also that was a problem. To fix all of these would I'd estimate cost at least \$1500. And it badly needs a proper cut and polish, living under trees for the past decade or more.

So I decided that I must sell it. There was no hope of getting a roadworthy certificate as it stood, the tailgate alone would have been a problem. And reasonable unroadworthy EL Falcons, 20 years old, were not commanding much, often about \$1300-\$2000. But I could not see anyone buying this car given the fact that it needed so much work to be done at quite an expense - there seemed to be much better offers around.

So I decided I would have to go to a Cash For Cars site. These people will come and collect your car for a pittance, but at least it is pretty straightforward without any hassles. So I rang a few of these sites. The price offered ranged between \$100 and \$200 for the unregistered car, and they would pick it up and take it away. I should add that the car was registered and insured, so on sale, I would get a refund on these payments.

One of the sites said that gas (the EL was dual fuel) was a problem, as it costs them a lot to get empty and get rid of the tank. Julian's Subaru was also giving trouble at this stage, and I did offer him the use of the EL while the organised a newer car - but afterwards I thought this was not a good idea, as if he had been picked up driving it, and it was deemed unroadworthy, he would be up for points which he would not want. After some discussion on this with him, he wisely declined.

So, with my feet dragging, I rang a local Cash for Cars site at 4 pm, and they offered me \$200, and said they would pick it up at 8 am the next day. The week beforehand, I had emptied out all of the detritus of 20 years in the car - just amazing how much you collect, and the memories that they hold.

Sharp at 8, the tow truck turned up. I had taken the EL for a drive the day before, and it ran perfectly. I left it on the lawn at home to make the trucks access easier. The driver opened the bonnet and carefully examined the oil (?), and then said (and this was not unexpected) - Nah, we can't take this, It leaks too much oil. I was certain that the \$200 was always going to be negotiated! I pointed out that I had driven the car yesterday and it had never leaked oil. He

said you can see it around the head gasket. I replied that in my 50 years of driving Fords, they all weeped around the head gasket. He said no, I said, "sorry to have wasted your time", and started to walk away. He then offered \$150 and we settled. He started the engine and drove it onto the tow trailer, tied it down and away he went. I was sad.

In the 18 years that I had the car, I did 220,000 km (I nearly always keep cars until they are run into the ground). On average it takes about 24 hours to drive 1000 km, allowing for all of the stops and starts. So that for about 220 full days I had sat in that car in the last 18 years. But that is 24 hour days. So if we consider that I was driving 8 hours a day, that would be 660 8 hour days of driving, or allowing for weekends off, about 924 days, or 132 weeks, or 2 and one half years of sitting in the car and just driving Monday to Friday. We spend an enormous amount of time in our cars! No wonder I miss the EL. The drive seems so empty.

And the caravan. It has been sitting in the garage for the past 10 years, unused except for three weeks last year when Kirsten and Brendan took it away. I couldn't bring myself to sell it though when Frances was at home. However, last month I put it up on Gumtree, and after a few enquiries, I sold it to a couple from Shepparton. I was very sorry to see it go, but I know that I would not use it by myself, and it was just foolish to hang onto it any longer. But now the garage look so empty!

I still use my bike of course, and enjoy it particularly in the warmer weather. But....

The local baker in Mount Martha Village, about 1 km away, makes dreadful bread. So as a matter of routine, I buy our bread from a bakers at Bentons Square, about 6 km away. And on good days, I ride my bike to pick it up, a good ride, takes about 45 minutes including the shopping.

Today, early August 2017, was a beautiful day for bike riding, so at about 11 am I set off on my trusty machine. To get to Bentons Square, I avoid any of the main roads, as I can get there by side streets and bike tracks. About two thirds of the way there, I was in a quite small side road, doing about 30k, and really enjoying the trip, when suddenly, with no warning, a tradies big fully packed ute came screaming reversing out of a drive on my left hand side, right in front of me. When he hit the road, he must have been doing at least 30k in reverse. Skiing has taught me to make quick judgments about possible impacts, and I could see that I was headed to go under his rear wheels. Not good.

Time passes very fast and very slow at the same time in such matters. I shouted at the top of my voice, braked as hard as I could, and swerved to my right. He didn't seem to take any notice. Continued shouting, and with all of my actions, he missed hitting me by a few bare inches. The adrenaline had really set in by now, heart racing, and nerves all quivering. The driver put his ute into forward gear, and pulled up next to me. He leaned across, opened the passenger window and said "I didn't see you". I told him I had figured that out. He

apologised and off he went. I just stood there for a few minutes to let the heart rate slow and the adrenaline peter out.

But the sun was out, blue skies and no wind, and so off I went to the bakers. I did enjoy the ride again once I settled down, but wow, this was as close as I have been for many a long year to a bad accident on the bike. You can be as careful as you like, but life is full of uncertainties - you can't account for all of them. I was lucky.

The 14th of August 2017 was an anniversary of sorts. I can't believe it, but it is 50 years to the day that a beardless me joined CSIRO Dairy Research Laboratory. Funnily enough, that was also a Monday as it was this year. I was there for over 22 years, and many of them were happy and fulfilling, I did a lot of good work. But in the 80s, the organisation went down hill, sad to say. From this distance, I can really identify the turning point. It was when CSIRO management started to employ management consultants to re-organise what was a well functioning system, and at the same time, the Government demanded that 30% of income be obtained from outside sources. The results of these two measures made the research emphasis change from long term work of potentially great value to the country, to short term work of value only to particular companies. And we are still reaping the so-called benefits of these decisions today.

In the old CSIRO it was possible for maverick individual researchers to follow their interests as solo researchers. This often led to great results for Australia as a whole. Now with the emphasis on large scale team studies, any benefits seem much less clear. Certainly there still have been some great outcomes - wifi for example. But it is interesting to read the page on the CSIRO website listing their top ten inventions. Not too many after 2000, and quite a few from decades earlier.....

I've no doubt I had the best of CSIRO in the 70s and early 80s. I hope in the future it can be as free and wide ranging as it was in those days, unhampered by the restrictions of bureaucracy.

And speaking of anniversaries..... On Thursday 31 August, I went up to Mount Buller for the day skiing. It is a long trip for a day, about 4 hours drive up, and another 4 hours back, and in the middle of course many hours of skiing. It was a perfect day, blue skies and no wind. On the way up I realised that it was 50 years and 17 days since I first put on a set of skis, little realising that the sport would captivate me for the rest of my life.

I can still recall the first time I saw Mt Buller, on August 14 1967, at about 2 pm, travelling up in the Volkswagen with Betty. Simon was only about 5 months old, and Kirsten 22 months. They were cared for by relatives while we were away. As we left Bonnie Doon and headed down to Mansfield, we came over a rise, and there in all its glory was Mt. Buller.

Over the 50 years, I have probably skied there for at least 200 days, as well of course as skiing in Falls Creek, Thredbo, Perisher and Blue Cow in Australia, as well as in New Zealand and the USA. Perhaps 300 days of skiing or more overall. Wish there were more. And loved every minute of it, well except for the day that I broke my leg at the bottom of Boggy Creek at Mt. Buller, in about 1974. That was not so good. But it did not dampen my enthusiasm for the sport, always a beautiful outlook no matter what the weather, challenging and great fun.

In the famous movie, *Duel*, made in 1971, a man is driving cross-country on a two-lane highway when he encounters a large truck driven by an unseen driver who seems to enjoy annoying him with dangerous antics on the road. Unable to escape the demonic big rig, the man finds himself in a dangerous game of cat and mouse with the monstrous truck.

Well, as I mentioned above, on Thursday 31 August I went up to Mount Buller for the day. I left home about 5.30 am, and took the route I know so well. Out to Ringwood, on the northern outskirts of Melbourne then to Yarra Glen, then a steep section leading to about 12 km or so of high speed winding road through the State Forest to Glenburn, then Yea, Mansfield and Buller. I have done this trip many times, and the good thing is that over the years, the behaviour of the traffic has improved out of sight, probably due to the high incidence of police presences on these roads during the skiing season. No longer do you find cars passing at 120 or 150 or 160 kph, generally virtually all vehicles keep to 100 kph or a bit above - much more disciplined than in the past.

I guess I have done this trip at least 200 times, and I have never been so frightened as I was on this last trip. Just like *Duel*.

Out of Yarra Glen, I saw a large truck in front of me, barrelling along. I knew that in a few km there was a steep narrow section of about 5 km leading to the top of the State Forest, and I knew that the truck would be slow going up the hill. I was in no hurry though and stayed behind him as we slowly made our way to the top. I also knew there was a long passing lane just over the top giving me a chance to get past him. At the top he was doing about 45 kph, and as we got over the top into the passing lane it was easy for me to pass him. I sped up to the 100kph limit and relaxed, until a few seconds later, he was right behind me, no further than 6 feet from my bumper bar. It was of course pitch dark, and his lights coming through the back window were blinding me. He got closer and closer, and I had no option but to speed up - 110 kph, 120 kph and still he was there. I knew again that there was another passing lane about 8 km away, and if I could survive, I could let him pass me there - there was no way he could pass me where we were, it was a narrow road, and quite windy in spite of our speed. The next corner was marked at 80 km, and we went into it at about 110 plus and again he was still right there behind me. There was nothing I could do. Somehow I got to the next passing lane, hands sweaty, and slowly started to slow down. He got closer and closer until at the very last minute he violently swerved to the right into the passing lane and

went past me. This was perhaps the worst incident on the road that I have ever had. I could not identify the truck, no markings - it was however very big. The frightening part of course is that his attitude is not going to change, and he may well finish up killing someone.

For me, I put it out of my mind, and had a great day's skiing. But it brings home just how easy it is to get into serious strife with life.



I organised a cruise to Hobart from Melbourne last year departing in February 2017. Suse came down to stay with her mum while I was away on the 6 day cruise, from Melbourne to Hobart, via Wineglass Bay and Port Arthur. It was a great trip, and a few highlights follow.

For this trip, I had decided to book as a tour a trip in a small “rubber duckie” from Port Arthur, down and around Tasman Island and up to Eaglehawk Neck. I was quite nervous about it - it was a small boat I thought (up to 43 passengers), probably open to the weather, and depending on the weather and swells, could be quite an uncomfortable trip. So I watched the weather carefully. The day looked very good when I woke, and I had already packed much of the cold weather gear in the Princess bag. I threw in water and sunscreen. The trip involved a bus from Hobart to Port Arthur before embarking. I went back to the room put on a heavy jumper and the purple parka, picked up my bag, and went to the Princess theatre to meet the rest of the troops. They had no idea of what they were getting into. I started to chat to another lady there. She said she had been on 112 cruises, and had spent 3 and one half years at sea in the past 10 years! They called us to the bus, and I sat next to this women, and we chatted for the trip. Part way there, she asked if I was travelling alone. I said yes, with no explanation. She said that with so many cruises that she had done, there were a lot of perks, and would I like to go to the Captain’s lunch with her tomorrow. I did not have to think to long about this - a great opportunity!

Her name was Jill Spalding. She said she would have to set it up, as of course I would not normally get near such an invitation - she asked for my stateroom number and said she would get back to me with details and so forth. This lunch was by invitation only, and was only for

those passengers who had had the most trips with Princess. It was to be held in the Crown Grill. What an experience.

Jill and I chatted for most of the trip - she was quite interesting about the group of “frequent cruisers” - there seems to be a lot of competition between them all! She was not getting off the ship until the end of March - after this cruise going to Vanuatu and surrounds, back to Melbourne, then New Zealand and back to Melbourne.

It was a 90 minute trip to Port Arthur. We had about a 200 yard walk down a steep slope to the boat.



We then had to put on heavy red neck to ankle ponchos (with a hood). Some of the ladies were getting a bit nervous at this stage! Interestingly, the boat holds 43, but there were only 28 of us on board - amazing that only 28 out of 2500 passengers showed any interest!

And so off we went! Initially fast, fast turns, then out into Storm Bay. A strong swell from the south west, and a lot of pounding! Great fun!!

Do NOT MISS this Video:

<https://vimeo.com/130409494>

Our trip was out from near Gabriels, out the inlet, around Cape Pillar through the gap between the mainland and Tasman Island, and then up to the inlet just south of Eaglehawk Neck. It was simply amazing. Amazing. So many great sites. The driver gave interesting sidelights when we stopped, and we got so very close to the cliffs many times, quite frightening!





An incredible trip! Brilliant. Stunning. Wonderful. Everyone enjoyed it! The great news was that I was on the port side, the perfect side for the best views! Our weather was really perfect, it would not be fun in a big south westerly blow! No one wanted the trip to finish. I was really glad of the beanie and gloves, made all the difference!

We finished up on the south side of Eaglehawk Neck, where the bus picked us up and took us to Gabriel's for a buffet lunch - beef, veal, chicken curry and rice. Shortly after I got back to my room, Jill rang and said all was well for tomorrow- sounded entertaining!

The next day, I got ready for the Captain's lunch. White shirt, tie and leather jacket. Jill had said she was getting her hair tinted today, and I might not recognise her - we both looked different to yesterday, and she now had a dark coloured hair! We went in, and I had my picture taken with the Captain, John Foster (it is a dreadful picture of me)



*As a valued Princess
Captain's Circle member,*

MR GREIG ZADOW

*you have been specially invited to dine with the
Captain and Senior Officers of Golden Princess
on Friday, 17th February 2017*

*The space below has been left so that you may
collect signatures of your fellow diners, the
Captain and his officers as a treasured memory of
a special time spent onboard.*

*John Foster
Captain*



Menu

Lobster Cocktail

*With Rocket Leaves, Avocado,
Brandy Cocktail Sauce*

Or

Homemade Veal Agnolotti

With Cherry Tomato Sauce & Pesto



Cajun Spiced Baked Fillet of Sea Bass

*Served with Chef's Ratatouille, Fried Shrimps
and Saffron Sauce*

Or

**Grilled Fillet of Beef with Blue Cheese and Bacon*

*With Tarragon Sabayon, Red Onion Compote
Mashed Potatoes, Cumin Pumpkin, Cabbage
& Green Peas*



Semi-Freddo al Cioccolato Bianco Soffice

*White Chocolate Mousse with Drambuie
Cream and Honey Tuile
created by our Pastry Chef Rodolfo*



Petit Fours Elizabeth Coffee or Tea

*Consuming undercooked or raw meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish
or eggs may increase Your risk of foodborne illness, especially if
you have certain medical conditions.

The menu was especially done for us, and was delicious. But the most interesting conversation was the banter and comments between the frequent cruisers. Jill had the most of anyone on board, but the others were all ambitious to get past her! Interesting. And they all

spoke about saving money by using the perks and so forth. If you do so much cruising, money is not really an object.



Later the next day, I went to the Vista theatre for the Captain's Circle function. Jill was with her friend Mary in the front row. The Captain came out for his speech, and he was hilarious! Kept us in stitches for about 20 minutes. Just brilliant. He then presented Jill with a bottle of Veuve Clicquot for being the most travelled on board, as well as a glass memento.

Afterwards, Jill said let's get together tomorrow with her friends to drink it, and said she would be in contact with me to let me know the details. And we all did just that, on the back deck, served by waiters!



A shocking picture of me!

I had also arranged late last year for a cruise in September this year, well before I had any idea that Frances would be in a nursing home by then. Judy O'Toole had agreed to come down and stay with Frances while I was away for the 10 days of the cruise (of course, this was no longer needed). I mentioned to Kirsten I was planning this cruise and she discussed the options with Brendan, and they agreed that they would also like to do the cruise - this was great news. We flew up to Sydney in the morning at the cruise, and had a few hours with Simon and Patrick prior to embarkation. It was a wonderful trip, the weather was perfect and it was really great to share the vacation with Kirsten and Brendan, they're great traveling companions. There were many highlights of that trip, and to those of you that are interested I refer you to the blog below.

<https://jgzcerberus.blogspot.com.au/>



One thing that is worth mentioning however is the fact that, yet again, I managed to get a severe toothache starting on the first day of the cruise. This was very bad news. With no dentists on board there was little I could do but put up with it. However the good news was that after two or three days of letting me know that it was most unhappy, the tooth settled down. It did not interfere with my enjoyment of the trip one iota. We visited some wonderful places - Mystery Island, Paradise Cove, Champagne Bay..... It was a wonderful holiday.

Those of you have read my blogs will know that as a secondary student, for my last four years at school, I attended Wesley College. There was only one campus in those days, in Saint Kilda Road Prahran, and of course it was an all boys school.

It was virtually unheard of for a boy from very much downmarket St. Kilda to attend Wesley, and as I have mentioned elsewhere it must have been a dreadful strain on my father to come up with the necessary money each term. But he did, and I never ever heard him complain - he must have been happy to do it.

In August or thereabouts, I did something I rarely do, I attended a school reunion of my Class of '57 - of course we never called it that, it was our Final Year. So this was the 60th reunion (the only other reunion I had attended was the 50th reunion in 2007). And, as I expected, none of my cronies were present (with one exception) - we were a bunch of rebels at the time, and certainly gave our masters many headaches. Most of the attendees were

sporting jocks (definitely not me), talking about old time football matches and so forth. I did enjoy the day though, and ran into a couple of other old friends. Of the 120 who left that year, about 35 or so attended the reunion

I spent quite a bit of time chatting with my old crony, and we reminisced about the japes that we got up to. I had met him at first before we started at Wesley, in an afternoon for new boys designed to show us around the school. At the end, we all had to be interviewed by the Headmaster, and this was to be done in alphabetical order. The bane of my life. There were about 60 boys present, and this mate of mine and I were the second last and last in the queue which took about 2 hours to get through. So we had a good chance to chat.

When we started at Wesley, we were both put in a form called The Twenty (XX). We were in Sub-Intermediate or Form 3, or in today's speak, Year 9. But we were selected for that form on the basis that we were young enough to sit for the Junior Government Scholarships which provided some support in terms of fee assistance. Normally, most students sat for this exam in Form 2 (Year 8), but if you were young enough you could still sit in Year 9. Only about 25% of the Form 3 (Year 9) students fitted this bill, and we were in The XX (It was called this, because the first time it was set up, there were twenty students in the class). In my year there were about 25 in the class.

Now our curriculum was targeted at making sure that we stood a good chance of getting the Scholarship. The all-day exams were held in about October of my first year at Wesley. They were not held at Wesley, they were held at a secondary co-ed school in High Street, Prahran within walking distance from Wesley. A number of candidates from different schools all sat at this venue.

As a group, the Wesley students were very undisciplined at the lunch time break, throwing chalk and generally misbehaving. But my mate, who was generally a quiet sort of bloke and generally well behaved, did something that in today speak was "unacceptable" - or so the story goes.

The next day all hell broke loose, and there were concerns expressed about our behaviour by the Wesley staff - but as far as I knew then, there were no, again in today's speak, sanctions. We did know that my mate had done something not too clever, but I heard no more of it until the reunion.

"I got Six of the Best for that" he told me. It was a well kept secret. That by the way was 6 hits with the cane wielded by the Headmaster. Can you imagine if that had happened today! The outcry!! The Twittiverse would go absolutely berserk!! The Politically Correct Brigade!!! However, the outcome was interesting. After this, his behaviour changed, he became much less of a rebel, and in his final year he became a prefect - none of my mates nor I ever came near to that - so perhaps a swift cane for an offence can change lives!

Oh, and by the way, both he and I were awarded Commonwealth Junior Government Scholarships.

I have had some great day trips with both Probus, and the Carer's group that I belong to. We went to Warrook Farm, Moonlit Sanctuary and HMAS Cerberus with Probus, all close to Melbourne, and great. With the Carer's Group, we went to a glassblowers exhibition, and to Charlie's Auto Museum on the Mornington Peninsula. The latter was just great, don't miss it!

And so to family matters. Dan, Penny and Joe are doing well, and Ryan is still battling with chronic fatigue syndrome (also known as myalgic encephalomyelitis), but we are hoping he is getting on top of it.

Louisa and Steve and Keala are all doing well. Keala had a wonderful trip, touring the Baltic and Iceland with Gondwana Voices and Sydney Children's Choir. An amazing experience for her. I know that Louisa and Steve really missed her while she was away.

Suse, Patrick, Gemma and Tim have had a very busy year. They moved from their rental house in Northcote into the house that they purchased nearby for a few months while they organised builders to undertake extensive renovations. Once the contracts were settled, they moved out again into a different smaller rental house nearby until the work on their house is finished, hopefully by autumn next year. So much energy!

Fred and his family are doing well in the UK, the boys are growing up. He stays in touch by phone of course.

All of the sisters are doing well. Many anniversaries and some big birthdays this year for them. Jill is going to be a grandmother, perhaps on New Year's Day!

Kirsten and Brendan are also doing very well. Kirsten has had a tough time in the past month or two with an op, but is fully recovered and is fighting fit. The house at Paynesville is just great, and Brendan is planning to embark on a new project of building a 36 foot cruising boat. He expects it will take about two years to finish! Quite a job! Julian and Ania are very happy, living in Richmond with Ania's mother Stephanie. Julian has changed jobs, the personal trainer business did work out as well as he had hoped, and he is now working for a food company (!), and continuing with his tertiary studies.

And Simon and Michelle are doing fine in Sydney. The boys are growing fast. Patrick seems very happy with his change of course to Engineering, and Nicholas is doing well at school, but is a bit uncertain as to what he wants to do in the future

So, we hope that 2018 brings all of your dreams true,

Love from
The Zadows

ps. And just below, there are 2 pix

Cuteness!



