

December 2001

Hallo again everyone,

It's about time, I hear you say! Yes, well you notice that I didn't entitle this "Christmas Letter", being the realist that I am! Closer to New Year's Greetings I imagine, by the time this epic is completed. Let's hope you feel that it was worth waiting for! Well, I have lots of news for you anyway - it's been quite a dramatic year, one way and another.

First, of course, came the arrival of my dear little grandson, Daniel Amos Vidberg, who made his appearance on January 24th. 2001, just one day before his Mum's 30th birthday! What a lovely present! Michelle and Marko have had an exciting year watching him develop from a tiny baby to an active little boy. Naturally I made many trips over to Kitchener to visit them all and share in the fun! (Yes, my faithful old Volvo is still holding together enough to get me back and forth - can you believe it? I was told the other day that in 3 more years it will be classed as an antique!!!)

It's hard to imagine that Daniel will be 1 year old pretty soon! Where has the time gone? He's a real going-concern now, and crawls around so fast I can't keep up with him! He's standing at the furniture too, and loves to sweep everything off the coffee table onto the floor, just for the fun of seeing Grandma bending down to pick it all up again! He's a real little mischief, and when he gets that twinkle in his eyes - watch out! - he's thinking up some new trick to try out! Now I know why Nature plans that we have children when we are young - I'm not so good at getting down and up off the floor as I used to be! Still, I guess it's good exercise, and 'it keeps you young' as they say!

The next item of news can be described as "from the sublime to the ridiculous". In July I tripped over a blade of grass and fell and fractured my hip!!! Yes, literally! I was walking Sunshine out behind my apartment, when I just turned to look at something, lost my balance and fell like a tree! Not having the strength or range in my arms to protect myself, my whole weight (which is considerable!) landed on my hip. Oh boy! For those of you who haven't done this yet, just don't! The pain was something else again (- and I thought childbirth was bad enough!) I can remember lying there on the grass, calling up Michelle on my friend's cell phone, and saying "Guess what I did today!"

So we went through the ambulance fun-and-games again, and I spent the night in Emergency in one hospital, then was transferred to another for surgery the next morning. It couldn't be too soon for my liking. I sure don't want to experience that again. Anyhow, they got me up walking the next day - "You want me to do what???" - I couldn't believe it, but you know how cruel and sadistic those Physios are!

The nice part was convalescing for 3 weeks in Parkwood Hospital, where I shared in a big room with a wonderful panoramic view over London! They have beautifully landscaped grounds, with graded paths for wheelchairs - raised beds for the patients to do their own gardening - and a lovely little fish pond with a waterfall trickling down into it! Guess where I

spent most of my time! Oh yes, and there is a wonderful rose garden that was opened in 1997 by the Queen Mother! Part of the hospital is a Veterans' Home (I guess that was why she came) - and part is a geriatric wing, so yours truly was the young kid on the block! Ha!Ha!

Thirdly, the big news item in December is that Michelle and Marko have bought a house! It's a lovely brick bungalow, situated on a quiet street (with a school just down the block!) - and actually it is really close to their previous apartment, so they are still in Kitchener. Most importantly, from my point of view, it has a nice apartment in the basement, which is to be used as an in-law suite by you-know-who!!

Michelle and Marko moved in on December 1st, when Marko's parents came down from Sault Ste Marie to help them. Marko's sister and her husband also live here now, so that it was a whole family affair! The next weekend, I moved over from London, ably assisted by my trusty friends Leottia and Gavin. They were the wonderful people who moved me down here from Thunder Bay, so they have plenty of experience with all my stuff!! I can thoroughly recommend them, so if you need to move.....! Just kidding!!

Anyhow, what I'm getting around to saying is that you can see why my newsletter is late this year!! (It took me a long time to reach the point, didn't it?) As it is, I'm only just starting to get organized in my new home, and it will be some time before I finish unpacking. So Christmas has rather become lost in the shuffle, as you might say. I have treated myself to a lovely artificial Christmas tree, with lights already on it, which is easy for me to decorate. This is the first year I've had a tree since I moved from my home, so it was fun digging out all the old decorations!

Well, I'd better be going and wrap some presents, or else I'll be late with that too! I'm really looking forward to watching Daniel experience all the excitement of his first Christmas! He's already exploring the packages under their tree, but hasn't figured out that there is something inside them yet.

I do wish you a very happy, healthy and safe New Year. God bless you. With love from Lola and Sunshine.

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