

## **CHRISTMAS**

**2005**

Hallo to all you dear friends and relatives wherever you are on this great world of ours! With the advent of computer technology into my formerly sheltered life, my circle of friends has widened to include many countries! For instance, how interesting it is to talk to people in Australia, who are enjoying their Christmas parties surfing the waves and suntanning on the beach!!

Well, having already received cards and letters from you noble people who start your Christmas mail at the proper time !! - I realize that I have very little news to compare with your active and interesting lives.

I did get out of Kitchener a couple of times this year. In March, Michelle and Marko took me to 'Canada Blooms' in Toronto, which is one of the big flower shows in the Spring. What glorious displays of every species of flower you can imagine! It really inspires one to go home and start digging.

Also wonderful landscaping ideas, especially water gardens which are the 'in' thing now. Everybody has one. When I think of the struggle I had to buy the necessary ingredients for my pond - that would be nearly 20 years ago now! Nobody had one then. People thought I was crazy, digging a huge hole in the back yard! But it did look lovely when it was finished, with fountain playing!

I always seem to do things way ahead of everyone else! Take scrapbooking, for example - it's all the rage now. But when did I start mine? It must have been 20 years ago too, when there were no special stores or supplies available! Why do I always do things the hard way?

The other trip I had was when my good friends Leottia and Gavin took me to the lakeside, and Sunshine and I had our lovely paddle in the waves! This is a real joy to me, having spent my English holidays at the seaside. There is nothing more relaxing than sitting on the beach, watching and listening to the waves. What a great way to spend the day! Actually we went twice, and enjoyed our fish and chips supper each time!

As usual, my greatest joy has been to spend time with dear Daniel! He is growing up into quite a young man already! He will soon be 5 years old, and started school in September, which he seems to be enjoying very much. I understand that his teacher is pleased with his work. Each week one can see him making great strides in his 'homework'. These last couple of weeks he has also been helping me make Christmas cookies, with lots of 'tasting breaks'!

Daniel already has plans for his birthday party, which will have a 'soccer' theme - with a chocolate and white ball-shaped cake!! (I can see it all now!) He played soccer this summer for the first time. All those little players in their long team shirts and striped socks were so cute to watch! They seldom knew which goal they were heading for, and when they changed ends at half-time, that confused them completely!! And then there would be the odd little player on the sidelines, sitting down and picking dandelions instead!

On the health front, it's been an interesting year. For some time I've been having trouble with my balance, which resulted in many falls. You never knew which part of me would be black and blue next! From a broken wrist last winter, to a couple of black eyes, which didn't add to my beauty!! And bruises in other spots we won't mention! I was getting an undeserved reputation for being quite drunk and disorderly!

My doctor took it on herself to be a detective, to find out the cause of all this. Consequently, she's had me booked in to many different specialists through the year, most of whom could find nothing wrong. (That's nice to know!) Finally the neurologist ordered an MRI of my spine and discovered that my spinal cord is being compressed all the way down. This could land me in a wheelchair if nothing is done. So I'm being seen by a neurosurgeon in Toronto, and will be having spinal surgery in the New Year. Oh great!

Well as usual this will be late in arriving at your door. But the way I look at it is this - after all the hubbub of the Holidays, there is always a lull, when nothing much happens. So this is - wait for it - "Lola's Lovely Letter for the Lull" (Ha Ha!!) I also rationalize the fact of not sending a card, by sending photos instead! I know that you will find them much more exciting!!

Once again I apologize for typing my letter, but truly I don't have the strength to do lots of writing. I most sincerely intend to reply to your nice letters soon, but I thought I'd get the news part done all at once! Then I can just get personal when I do write. I'm thinking of each one of you, and I do hope you have a very Merry Christmas, and a healthy and happy year in 2006.

With much love from

**Lola and Sunshine.**