

Christmas 1994

Dear Richard, Renee and the girls

Herewith a copy of our annual Xmas letter - hope it finds you well. Hilly and Mel have now moved to Cape Town - every time we move into the same town as them, they move on!! Hope it is not us who is chasing them away each time - I'm getting a complex. We often see Lynne Mattison and her daughter Keagan - they are both very well.

1994 seems to have been a long year. I guess it really was only 52 weeks - they just all seem to have been so different. As you will recall the year began with me being unemployed. Fortunately things did improve and the signs are good for the future. However, first to the more stable members of the family!

Ryan and Lauren have again turned in excellent school results. Ryan had a deal with Cheryl related to the number of "A"s gained and is some R150 richer as a result. He continues to be a computer whizzkid and is working at a local computer store during the holidays. Of course, the boy's toys get more expensive and top of the list right now is a Pentium motherboard to replace his obsolete 386SX!! He had a chorus part in the school play earlier in the year and I was volunteered by Cheryl for the lighting role. We were able to woy the production team with a few fancy effects. It was my first stint at a lighting board in 21 years and was great fun. Ryan continues to have a wide circle of great buddies - we had nine of them for a sleepover two weeks ago.

Lauren has had a really good academic year - to the extent that she was assessed for leaping a year and going straight to Standard 2. Cheryl and I are both somewhat relieved that the advice is to stick with her peers and to continue to lead them. She is a very confident young lady and completely unintimidated by me or anyone else. She is one of the few ladies I know with a devastating logic - whoops, my chauvinism is showing!

Cheryl's timeshare rental business has started booming in the last few months. I am sure that some of it has to do with the recovery of the tourism industry in the country. We are seeing rental levels greater than ever before. At the beginning of the year, Cheryl did a lot of Kelly Girl work whilst I manned the home-based businesses. Her secretarial clients thought it rather novel to have a male secretary doing their word processing! She is now looking at a partnership with one of her contacts at RCI to do some service work for RCI. The secretarial business is also very busy with 3 regular attorney clients.

I started the year looking after Cheryl's businesses and applying for what seemed like endless numbers of jobs. At 49 you simply don't get to many interviews and most positions in the sales and marketing field are limited to under-35's. Through a friend I eventually got a position with a Sales Training company in April. Although I enjoyed the work the company was really after a sales rep rather than a solutions salesman so we parted company at end of July on good terms. I then started work with Documentation Associates. It is a most unusual company which specialises in the development of user manuals for large computer systems. It is an international company with offices in London, Houston and Dallas. Opening in January in Australia and then Singapore. In South Africa there are 30 staff all under 28 and the overseas directors felt they could benefit from my experience in the services field. Our contracts are typically worth around R1-million and last between six and eighteen months. With the general youth of the project managers they have great difficulty negotiating and dealing with the senior executive teams of our clients and I fill that role for them. I have also been busy getting clients together for a Cape Town branch opening in January 95. It is great fun and I hope to have a long stay. The money is not yet back to good ol' Sage days but the signs are that it will be early next year.

So to the more exciting news for us. Next year is a momentous one with my 50th birthday and our 25th anniversary. So we decided to break the bank and take an overseas trip. Although not yet finalised the broad plan is to go the States from 2 - 16 July and then to UK from 16 July to 7 August. Once we have more details we'll be in touch with those around our route.

*Looking forward to hearing all your news!*

*All our love  
Tony, Cheryl, Ryan & Lauren*