

Christmas 2005

Dear Family and Friends,

Already, we have been down here in Florida for a whole month of privileged living and during that period had the pleasure of visits from friends, with two of whom we celebrated our four sagittarian birthdays, as has become somewhat of a tradition. We miss all of you here, but not the weather conditions you have to put up with !

Looking back over the past year, we can rightly claim to have had a busy time of it, including the delight of spending time with many of you.

As expected in last year's letter, Henk's son Albert and his wife Anoush, now living in Ottawa, became parents for the first time last January, a healthy boy called Aris. He visited us in May and we returned the favour in his parents' new Ottawa home, where we also enjoyed meeting Anoush's parents. By then he had grown into quite a neat little boy !

Our summer became a wonderful and never-ending period of socializing with many friends and the children in Toronto, followed by our journey to the Netherlands, where we lived in the comfortable home of a niece and her family, from which we could readily visit with many of the Dutch family, highlighted by a reunion of most of the family at the home of brother Leo and his wife Elly. A grand gathering indeed on one of the warmest days of our vacation.

While in Holland, we also were very happy to have a chance to visit with the family of Gardien and Henk te Hietbrink in Arnhem in their nicely renovated home. These visits with them were especially precious, as poor Gardien would pass away recently, after a lengthy struggle with cancer, leaving a devastated family.

Our Christmas this year will be relatively quiet, Linda's aunt Mary, so instrumental in our having come to Florida and so much fun to have around during our hibernation years, suddenly having passed away last January.

However, we look forward to Linda's mother, Ruth, coming down right after Christmas to stay with us into February, escaping her winter like she did last year, much to our mutual delight.

We were also happy to learn that Henk's brother Ab, now of classical retirement age, and his wife, Will, have made arrangements to spend time with us here in April and stay on by themselves to enjoy the ambience of our condo for several weeks.

So, as you can tell, we should be starting the New Year in the right place and with wonderful company.

We wish all of you health and happiness throughout the New Year !

Linda and Henk