

**T
h
e
N O D E**

March, 1998



THE NODE

The Node is published four times a year by
Sheighlah Hickey, Heidi Holmes, Sandra Rafos & Jeanette Stanfield

New mailing address:
Heidi Holmes
7 St. Denis Drive
Suite 1102
Toronto, Ontario, M3C 1E4
e-mail: icacan@icacan.ca

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITORIAL: Sheighlah Hickey
COVER ART:

A Celebration of Transition of Ministry: Margaret Oakley

TRANSITIONS, LIFE MARKINGS:

Jan Sanders 50 Celebration: Jan Sanders

Lin Wisman's Journey: Lin Wisman

LiDona Wagner's Journey: LiDona Wagner

Celebration of The Completed Life of Phillip Hugh Townley:

ARTICLES

Advent 1997: John Epps

Health Care In The New Era: James LaTrobe

Three Years To The New Millennium: Bill & Barb Alerding

REFLECTIONS ON THE YEAR

Bill & Ilona Staples, Linda Roling Barnes, Magie Tomlinson, Sharon Turner, Bob & Cynthia Vance
Abe & Janice Ulanca, Elaine & Nelson Stover, Tom & Connie Reemstma, Gail & Dick West, Rod & Priscilla Wilson,
David & Lin Zahrt, Mary & David Hoff, Betty Pesek, Joel & Alice Wright, Brian & Jeanette Stanfield,
Bruce Robertson & John Burbidge, Jack & Judy Gilles, Mollie & Jesse Clements, Joe & Marilyn Crocker,
Lynda & John Cock, John, Thea, Miriam & David Patterson, Bill & Maxine Norton, Betty McGee & Janet Hughes,
Meg, Mike & Judi Tippett, Judi White, The girls, Ken & Paula Otto, Jim & Sue Oberg, Ike,
Charlene & Joseph Powell, Ken Fisher

BOOKS AND FILMS

Angela's Ashes: Charles & Doris Hahn

Places In The Heart: Mary & Stuart Hampton

A Brief History of Everything, Born To Rebel,

Measuring The Zone: Barb & Bill Alerding

The Unconscious Civilization, Sex, Econolgy and Spirituality

A Brief History of Everything, The Eye of The Spirit,

When-Corporations Rule The World:- Richard & Maria Maguiere

POETRY & QUOTES

Crossing the Bar: T.C. Wright

I Made A Footprint: An Osage Woman's Initiation Song

In Oaxtepec: Marilyn Oyler

Our lves...: Jeanette Stanfield

Most of the Successful Journeys: Unknown

Thousands of Ways: Joseph Chilton Pierce

People Get Called: John Epps



EDITORIAL

It has been 11 years now since the inception of **The Node**. The Node began in February, 1987 as an ICA Research Newsletter, through the Research Synergism Node, ICA Toronto. Here is a bit of history I discovered in our Node archives.

Original Intent

"The Node is an informal publication Intended to keep the assigned Order and its close colleagues informed on matters of interest to the research and transformation process going on as this process emerges both in our programmatic life, house and core life. It will endeavour to give a picture of what life is like for us as we proceed together on the transformation journey."

And a transformation journey it has been. In 1987, it was The Primary Units' programs, Jean Houston in Caracas, and many people attending the Mystery School. In 1988 it was Our Common Future: A future dialogue on Planetary Transformation. The book being read was The Chalice and The Blade. From 1986 - 1988 creativity and many reflections, ponderings & prayers were about the future of the Symbolic Order. Program reports came from the Primary Units & Stony Point Conference.

"In Oaxtepec, November 1988 we celebrated the reality of the Order community beyond the limits of the Residential community." Marilyn Oyler

In 1989, The Node's subtitle shifted from 'An ICA Research Newsletter' to 'An informal Newsletter for the Global Covenanted People. There were reports on Oaxtepec with titles like: Certificate of the Right to Play, Something happened to us, Thank You, Thank You, Dialogue: With Thomas Merton, Restructuring or Reconnecting, Full To Overflowing. Words that kept popping up were transformation, planetary change & change masters.

In 1990 The Node began to shift from ICA program reports to diverse articles such as: Approaches for the 90's, Earthwise learning, Planetary Ecology, History's Harbingers: we who build the earth. People & Events: Life is continually an adventure, A wise elder speaks, Individual & Family Reflections: Two Journeys, Life is continually an adventure and I got invited to a conference on the Future.

The Node Team over the years has received articles on work, individual and family stories and letters sent to us which were diverse, creative & rich in depth stories covering the transformation of ICA &

the Order. The Node has celebrated the completed lives of many friends and colleagues, life transitions and markings. It has celebrated the creativity of many colleagues as we have forged our new lives and transformed ourselves into who we are today.

"Our lives were thrown into radical discontinuity. Patterns, values, modes, journeys were turned upside down and intensified day after day after day. We were thrown into the fiery furnaces and turned into pure gold."

In the last 10 years each gold piece has been finding its own unique way to be this new fabric in the midst of the old. The very texture of the old society is being re woven by the big US growing larger daily."

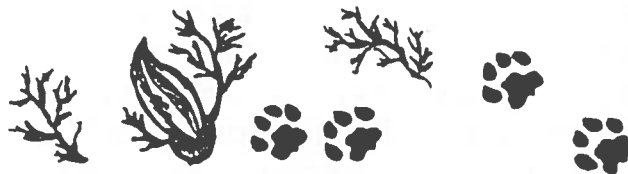
Jeanette Stanfield

We the team are grateful for this issue of The Node which is filled with articles & stories as diverse in scope as in depth.

We thank you for your creative contributions over the years and look forward to receiving your letters, articles, and poetry. for the next issue.

Sheighlah Hickey for the Team

I have made a footprint, a sacred one.
I have made a footprint, through it the blades
push upward.
I have made a footprint, through it the blades
radiate.
I have made a footprint, over it the blades float in
the wind.
I have made a footprint, over it the blossoms lie
gray.
I have made a footprint, smoke arises from my
house.
I have made a footprint, there is cheer in my
house.
I have made a footprint, I live in the light of day.
An Osage Woman's Initiation Song.



A CELEBRATION OF TRANSITION OF MINISTRY

When the idea was first voiced several months ago to celebrate his 40 years of ministry, the family asked Barry what

would be important elements to include in it, if, (tongue in cheek) such an event did happen. After some thought Barry's list went something like this: 1) our whole family be present, 2) that the old Oakley's Orchestra would play again, 3) that his ordination be honoured, 4) that part of Tillich's "Your Are Accepted" be read, 5) No long speeches and that it be a night of entertainment, 6) All aspects of life be celebrated, warts and all.

On Sunday, November 16th, 20 colleagues and family gathered at our home for food, drink and stories. Elaine and John Telford and Shirley and Jim Mayfield brought greetings from interstate folk and memories in prose.

At 7:00 p.m. we were all gathered at the Tea Tree Gully Uniting Church for a memorable evening. Brian Robins had put all our ideas into a liturgy that was profound, full of surprises, music, singing and celebration. There was not a long speech all night, only a few stories, most of them humorous.

We began with the lighting of three candles and a short Taize style liturgy, a hymn and some Scripture, then it was time for the band to play. Barry took his trumpet and introduced his brothers as a bunch of old blokes that wanted to make out they were 40 years younger. There was Peter on keyboard aged 66, Ralph on drums age 73, and Don on tenor Saxophone, age 85. They played really well and had two encores and a standing ovation. Toes were tapping all over the place and John Telford and I danced out in front of the church. A hard act to follow, but soon it was time for the family, lead by Geoff, to remind Barry that we had been a traveling family

for as long as he could remember. Grown from the original 3 children to a total group of 14 people we sang our family traveling song and read a poem or two. The greatest surprise came when Geoff presented Barry with a beautifully bound copy of his Children's Stories, "The Adventure of Iggillywomp".

The Liturgy continued and Bruce Martin read Paragraphs 12 and 13 from "You Are Accepted". (I have had two requests for the paper since that night) Jim Mayfield read a piece from Thomas Berry's "Befriending the Earth." Brian Robins, in a delightful fashion from Barry's book, read the Harvest of Years, "Our Old Truck". Three friends sang a couple of songs, one of them, "We're building New Communities". Barry was called to respond at various points, so there were no long speeches there either. He used some of his poetry, told the story of being pee'd on as he slept under a seat in a train in India and told the story of Robert Roberts as a symbol of faith in his people.

All the greetings from across Australia and the globe were presented to Barry in a book and your "presence" was joyfully felt. The most often mentioned memory of Barry seemed to be his reading of "the Loaded Dog" and his determination to get things done. To conclude, Friend Rev. Dean Brook, led Barry on a tour of the symbols of the church and then had us kneel as we were sent out into the next phase of our lives.

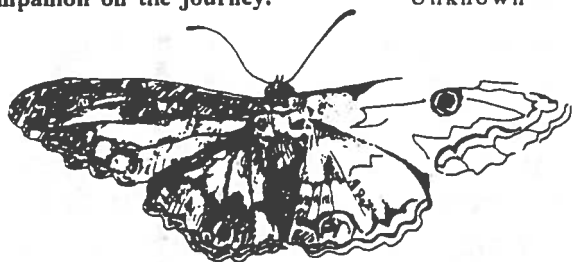
All of this and more was completed in 2 1/4 hours amongst 200 people who had come from home town, Karoonda, our 1st and 2nd. appointments at Penong and Bute, Round Table colleagues, Square Dance

friends, the Minister who married us 44 years ago and, clergy friends and people from 2 parishes in which we are working. Over tea and coffee much networking was evident. Old friends and family met and talked in an atmosphere of deep collegiality. It was a high moment in our lives. Barry says he has now had his obituary, all he needs to do now when the time comes is to "fold back into the mystery." But there are many good years left yet and we look forward to seeing you all again on our travels.

Margaret Oakely

"Most of the successful journeys are made so because of the blessed presence of a guide - a companion on the journey."

Unknown



TRANSITIONS/LIFE MARKINGS

Thank you for helping me mark my passage into the 50's. It meant a lot to me to have new and old friends around to share stories and help me ponder my future. It is helpful to create new rites of passage. Two voices are vying for my future. One is the voice of whimsy (I bought a used canoe for exploring) the other is an understanding found in some cultures that you enter adulthood at fifty-one. Hopefully, with your trust and friendship, I will continue to weave both voices in creating the future. *Blessings!*

Guardian/Crone/Wise Woman:

She who keeps the circle of life whole. A peacekeeper with the power to tell the truth and when necessary to be a warrior for

justice. A modern female elder who is a beautiful, savvy woman who uses the knowledge she has gained and the inherent spiritual wisdom of interrelatedness that continues to grow throughout the years, to impart values that support and encourage the growth of others and the preservation of life.

(from Joan Borysenko, *A Woman's Book of Life*)

Jan Sanders

Our letter this year will be brief for our work here is drawing to a close and we are starting the packing in preparation to move to our retirement home! This year has brought us a great deal of happiness and satisfaction. Rhonda has been increasingly involved in the management of Presbytery affairs. She has been appreciated for her administrative skills and affirmative hostessing. Brian has continued the task of enabling the people of our cluster and that has brought its own joy. These folk have courageously and faithfully explored a whole new form of ministry and have succeeded in ways beyond our imagination. We are grateful to have been part of what we can only see as the activity of God. The releasing of lay people brings all the rewards that so many of us know in this time when local people continue to rise again.

This thought of retirement holds both fascination and fear for us both. Fascination because we will be living at the beach and a good deal closer to our families. Fear, because perhaps people will get on without us! The phase of the elder statesperson holds a great deal for us yet to discover. There are some parameters we have begun to set. We intend to put some energy into reconciliation, particularly between Aboriginal folk and whites. Our

concern for work in rural congregations will continue. Perhaps this will have ramifications for the urban also. Gardening has increasing interest for us both and our house in Christies Beach offers some scope! We have just brought a new computer and got ourselves on the Internet. And my restricted interest in carpentry should at last gain a more focused expression.

Brian & Rhonda Robins



There are thousand of ways to say no to this decision for spirit. Our culture furnishes us with them all and applauds our negation. There is, however, only one way to say yes and that way is given by our spirit, anew in each moment for the ongoing affirmation our lives must become. We can shout our no on the safe din of numbers; but your yes is said in the solitary silence of the heart. -- Joseph Chilton Pearce

LIN WISMAN'S JOURNEY

This has been an unusual year for me. For almost five months of 1997, I was in hospital. My life of good health came to an abrupt end in March. I went to the doctor 3 weeks before my stroke. I had low-normal blood pressure (usual), normal cholesterol, etc.

On Thursday evening March 6 I was feeling bad and so I called my sister leaving a message on her machine to call me when she got home. She called and got my answering machine, figured I had gone to bed, and decided to call me in the morning. When I didn't answer the phone at 6:15 a.m. she came to my apartment and found me comatose on the bathroom floor. She called 911. I was taken to the closest hospital and Marge was told that I had had a

cerebral hemorrhage and that there was little hope that I would live. After 6 days I was transferred to St. Josephs. I was comatose for about 10 days. After that I recognized people, answered questions appropriately, etc. But, I don't remember anything until the end of May. It is very strange to have that much time justnot there. From my perspective I went to sleep on March 6 and woke up 21/2 months later.

On June 2, I was transferred to Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. It is the top rated Rehabilitation Institute in the country so I was lucky to be there. I was there until July 30. They got rid of my feeding tube and my foley tube and taught me to walk with a walker. On July 30, I went to my sisters. She rented my apartment as I could not live alone. I began with two caretakers -- one during the day and one at night. I now have a live-in. She was the night person and is very good. She is from Poland and has been here 6 years. She does the cooking (but with my help), the cleaning, the clothes, and sees that I don't get in trouble.

I can now walk with 2 quad canes, but still use a wheelchair for long distances. I am walking without help in therapy. But I am too unsteady to walk by myself (yet). My right cheek is numb so my speech is only good when I talk slowly. My balance is not very good. I cannot write very well. I am working on all these things. I go to physical therapy twice a week and do exercises every day. Every week I have an acupuncture treatment. It seems like I am always busy. I hope to be able to work by spring. We will see.

My Mother died at 83 on May 26 (Memorial Day). I was still asleep when

she got sick and died. It happened over a two-week period. She had Alzheimers for several years so it was not a surprise. We had decided to have her cremated and to do the memorial service at a later date. On November 29, we held the memorial service at Vermont Street UMC in Quincy. About 30 people came. Twenty-five of us went out to lunch afterwards. It was very nice and I'm glad I attended.

I am now living (until August) at my sister's apartment, which is in the same building as mine. Marge has moved to Michigan (4 hours away). My current phone is 773-338-3840.

What I am thankful for this Christmas:

My sister

My niece and nephew, who came to see me several times, phoned, sent flowers, etc.

My cousins Deanna and Jack who both came twice while I was in the hospital.

The many people who came to see me, wrote, and/or phoned.

My sister's friends who helped her through this time.

Prayer. Many people mentioned they had prayed and I was on several lists.

My caretakers who have helped in so many ways.

How I am different

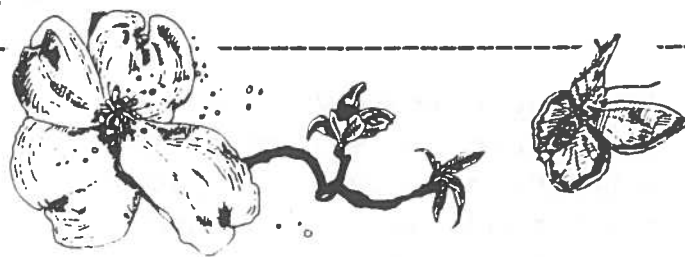
I have a different sense of what is important.

I have a new appreciation of people. Many people were very kind.

I can't take good health for granted. I may not live to be 80.

That is all the reflecting I've done so far.

L.in Wisman



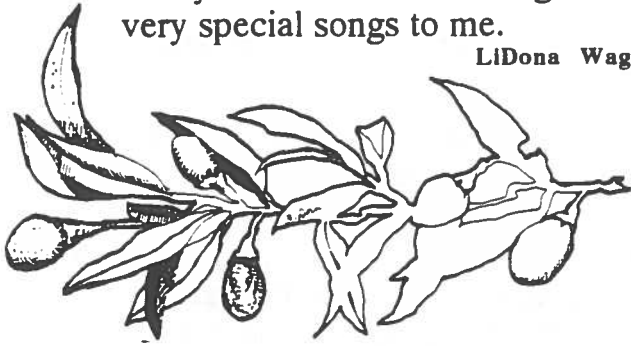
LIDONA WAGNER'S JOURNEY

The last six months has been a journey from seeing my healthy lifestyle and commitment to natural healing as an alternative to Western curative medicine to understanding that there are no right answers or final guarantees. I prayed up to the last moment that I would not have to take Innana's journey into the underworld of anesthesia and surgery - that I would not have to relinquish a piece of my body. But the Goddess had chosen me for this descent. Down I went and when I returned I no longer had my left breast. Three weeks later, on a snowy full moon night, four other women and I dug a hole under a spreading Maple and buried my breast-with the intention of planting flowers there in the spring.

"I can't go through this alone," was my strong response when the cancer diagnosis disrupted my longed-for sabbatical. I am deeply grateful to the many new and old friends who have cared for me with phone calls, cards, rides to the doctors/hospitals, gifts, healing energy, flowers, and their physical presence. They have communicated clearly, "It's you we love, not your breast." but I find it's hard to be without a shield for my heart. Recently Kay Townley, another breast cancer survivor, sent me a charming little book called, *If You're Afraid of the Dark, Remember the Night Rainbow*. It tells me, "If you find your socks don't match, stand in a flower bed."

I'm trying to see the scar over my heart, where I feel so excruciatingly vulnerable, as a ledge upon which all of my friends can sit to sing their very special songs to me.

LiDona Wagner



THE CELEBRATION OF THE COMPLETED LIFE OF PHILLIP HUGH TOWNLEY

A memorial service celebrating the completed life of Phillip Hugh Townley was held Saturday, January 31 at the Howe Chapel at Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL. Some sixty family, friends and family participated in an adapted form of the Daily Office with the family offering prayers of appreciation for Phillip's life. Liturgists for the office were Joe Crocker of Warwick, RI, Lyn Edwards of Chicago, IL and Jack Baringer of Washington, DC.

Following the service was a reception in the Guild Suite, 4750 North Sheridan Rd., Chicago, IL. Joe Thomas of Daphne, AL led a reflective conversation giving the family and community an opportunity to share stories and memories of the creativity, style and sensitivity that were Phillip's gifts and providing the occasion to reclaim the totality of the rich legacy of his life.

OBITUARY

Philip Hugh Townley was born on May 25, 1929 in Lennon, Michigan, the son of Hugh Smith Townley and Lucile Kempf Townley.

He graduated from Arthur Hill High School in Saginaw, Michigan in 1947. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Asbury College in Wilmore Kentucky in 1951 and a Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1954.

While attending Asbury College, he met and married Joyce Biber in 1950. They had three children, Stephen, Laura and Brian.

Phillip was ordained a minister of the Methodist Church in 1954 at Adrian, Michigan. He served the Detroit Conference of the Methodist Church at First Methodist Church in Midland, Michigan from 1955-1957 and the First Methodist Church of Warren, Michigan from 1957-1967.

In 1967 Phillip and his family moved to Chicago to join the staff of the Ecumenical Institute. He served the Institute in a variety of roles, including master pedagogue, fund raiser and Panchayat member.

In 1976 Phillip married Katherine Rash Slattery. Together they served the Institute in Brussels, Belgium, London, England, Pune, India and Sydney, Australia.

Phillip died on December 14, 1997 of congestive heart failure at his retirement home in Port Sanilac, Michigan.

He is survived by his children, Stephen, Laura and Brian and his grandchildren, Asha, Sonya, Brenna and LuAnn.

ARTICLES

ADVENT 1997 another message

Everything about the Christmas story is filled with surprise--the angels appearing in the middle of the night, the single bright star, the virgin birth, the baby in a manger--it's as if the storyteller were out to jolt our sensibilities and pull us out of our preoccupation with the ordinary.

The contemporary occurrences of the Christ Word in our lives are similarly and inevitably filled with surprise.

Its commemorative celebration, however, has become locked in predictability--the same colors, moods, songs, decorations, and food, year after year. I love it all, from the classic to the funky. No other festival has the depth of tradition and nostalgia that marks Christmas. We spend weeks in preparation for the familiar rites and rituals that mark the season.

Maybe that's the best way to get ready for surprise: to be preoccupied with the customary. When Mystery occurs, the familiar is no shield. Our lives, jammed as they are with the conventional, don't impede the surprising incursions of Mystery, any more than they did for the shepherds or the wise men. John Epps



HEALTH CARE IN THE NEW ERA

All around us the great shift is going on. We are moving from the Scientific Technological Era with its emphasis on

rationality and materialism to what Thomas Berry calls the Ecological Era with its holistic perspective and emphasis on intuitive faculties. The evidence is there in greater or lesser degree in many arenas of life such as education, politics, sexuality, spirituality and art. One of the most dramatic changes is occurring in our approach to health. I would like to contrast "established" western Allopathic medicine with the new "alternative" medicine by looking at several key points.

Established medicine views the body as a sift machine to which the individual inhabiting the body can make little contribution towards any cure. The uniqueness, the state of mind or spirit of the patient is of little concern. The professionals of established medicine have acquired a power and prestige that results in little questioning of their methods by their patients who largely leave their own health up to the professional. Cure is effected primarily by drugs or surgery - in essence technological methods which coincidentally are the most expensive (with most potential for profit) and the most impersonal. Health is seen as a case of either/or - being well or being sick.

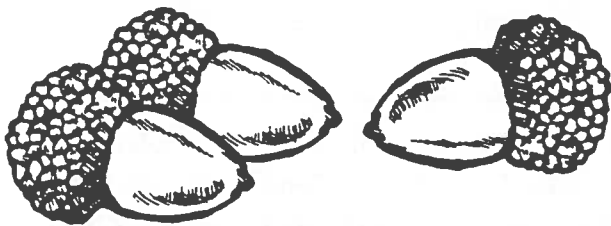
The new alternative medicine sees wellness as something that is relative - for example the immune system of a "well" person can still be enhanced by various means. Health is a result of physically, mentally and spiritually "being well". Treatment for any disease should utilise mental and spiritual techniques (as well as physical) such as visualisation, ceremony, meditation, healing circles, prayer and the working through of interior blocks and imbalances. The individual has the key role and the primary responsibility in his/her own well being.

Good health is a result of our learning to live a certain lifestyle and learning to use holistic self-healing techniques to deal with any illness that does arise. Every headache, every cold, every health concern is an opportunity to learn how to heal ourselves and wan ourselves away from a dependence on drugs and experts. Who is the final expert on our interior processes if not ourselves.

The challenge is to take responsibility for our own health. The rewards are a sense of control and improved health, strength and energy not just in sickness but in every day and every minute, not just in body but in mind and spirit as well. And of great value is the opportunity for us all to experience ourselves as the mind/body/spirit unity that we are.

There are many of us who are enjoying the challenge of moving toward the Ecological Era. A strong focus on learning to enhance our own well being from the standpoint of the new medicine can be one of the most powerful ways to begin to embody the new consciousness - and improve our own health in the bargain.

James LaTrobe



THREE YEARS TO THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Three years before the new millennium and the Christmas spirit is upon us once again. 1997 has proven to be an event-filled year for us. Two events stand out. First, both of us completed our course work and received our Master Practitioner's Certificates in Neuro-Linguistic

Programming by attending a series of weekends in Chicago. NLP is a very important addition to our personal repertoire of helpful methods, which dovetail perfectly the major philosophy we have practiced with the Institute of Cultural Affairs for 30 years. The second event was setting up and saying good-bye to the project that brought us to Indianapolis in 1993. After spending the year searching for funding, we finally collaborated with Goodwill Industries and a neighborhood association, changed our name to Technical Training Services, Inc., found funding with government and private sources, hired a new Executive Director and started our 14 week training program in September. After four and a half years of focused effort, we believe this program is finally in good hands. So, we think this is the best time to depart. We have decided to take a one year "sabbatical" in 1998 to do research and reflection on our new direction. It's been a great journey working with unemployed and under employed men & women. As a response to poverty, victimization can be as addictive as drugs or crime. It has been a huge challenge to make standing tall in a new career even more attractive than being a victim.

When we returned to the U.S. almost five years ago, it was clear that black Americans had made great strides in American society. In fact, in the past 30 years, they have achieved more economic gain and educational advancement than any ethnic group in the entire history of the U.S., including Jews and Asians. There are also two million Americans, like Tiger Woods, who are of mixed races and who do not easily fall into any of the old ethnic categories. Isn't this the future of America? We have discovered in our 25

years of traveling the globe that there are ancient, historical hatreds which trap people into rigid, stultifying styles of life in almost every country of the world. What makes America so refreshing is its welcoming of so many diverse cultures into one country thereby creating something new in the world-different people mixing with different people and forming a multi-cultural and multi-colored nation. But it takes courage for many Americans to push out of their cultural "comfort zones" into the uncomfortable mixing with people who are different. The main reason we have persisted with our program, sometimes without funding, is because it offers black men and women an opportunity to gain a new career where they must decide to push themselves beyond their comfort zones and enter a different culture in the workplace. Here is where integration of the races occurs. It is not easy overcoming past hatreds and victimizations that are still present. But strides are being made daily. It is clear it will take about two more generations of Americans to create a country that is completely color blind.

Bill & Barb Alerding

People get "called" into a life of discontinuity by the irresistible appeal of a vision, an insight, a perception, an ideal, a cause or simply a vivid sense of presence of that which is not yet. john Epps



REFLECTIONS ON THE YEAR

1997 began with simple pleasures like early Saturday morning walks to the Sunset Grill. Over coffee and muffins, we debated repeatedly the pros and cons of building a large addition to our recently purchased home. We asked Ilona's mother, who at 86

still lived in an apartment on her own, if she would move into a self-contained apartment we would build for her at the back of our house. Ever since she moved to Toronto two years ago, we had been wondering how she could live closer so we could visit more often. The construction would also double the size of our own living area on the second floor. The winter and spring months were spent making architectural drawings, getting cost estimates and municipal permits. Bill had a steep learning curve designing the new building. And while an architect suggested a few improvements, the design was quite sound so he had enough confidence to become the general contractor, hiring and supervising the tradesmen.

On July 14 the big earth moving equipment moved in. The rest of the summer was spent in a state of planned and unplanned chaos as 30 subcontractors ripped, dug, mixed, chugged, cranked and banged together the 1800 square foot addition. Every day we saw new concrete blocks and engineered trusses swung into place. Ilona closed her gallery to the public for 6 weeks and completely walled in her labyrinth installation to protect it from construction debris. All the staff at ICA, especially Brian, Jeanette, Duncan, Jo and Wayne tactfully looked the other way as Bill regularly arrived at work shell-shocked and forgetful in the midst of it all.

Mrs. Monden-Jeszenszky moved in on October 1. Now we can visit her more often and are able to host guests in our new open and airy space with huge skylights. In the meantime, construction of a subdivision across the street is slowly blocking off our view of Lake Ontario.

This year I Ilona, focused on selling and showing my artwork, not just making it. With less design income, more time for artwork and a storefront studio on a major street, I began to learn the intricacies of showing and selling art.

I participated for the first time in the Beach Studio Tour & Sale in May and again in October. In August an expensive cafe invited me to hang my paintings there for their opening month. My studio was listed in a Toronto Life magazine insert to half a million people during Artsweek, a city-wide arts festival.

In the spring, I painted a 10-foot labyrinth pattern on the front sidewalk and opened up my studio on Saturday afternoons so passers-by could wander in for a look. I averaged about 8 people a day, but lots of small kids run around the labyrinth pieces. At one gallery, I shared my Doodles (paintings). In a student group show I Vertebra Seat. This was the most fun of all.

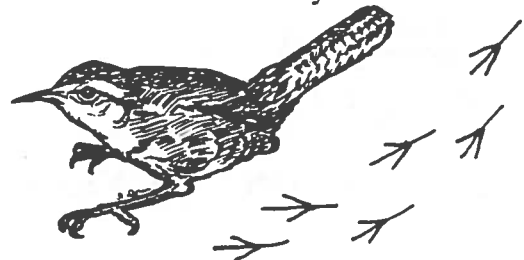
I'm taking a couple of courses at the Ontario College of Art. The focus is strictly on quality, forget sales.

I Bill, shuttled constantly to Ottawa & Burlington on consulting contracts and regularly traveled two thousand miles between Winnipeg, Regina, and Toronto teaching several of ICA's new advanced courses. I have earned enough air miles for two free return air fares anywhere in North America (unfortunately on different airlines!)

Teaching team-building courses to medical staff, consultants and government workers is rewarding, but two-day courses only scratch the surface. Fortunately

participants want depth and bring complex issues to the table. My consulting practice, on the other hand, generates some mind-bending situations. For instance, I led workshops for a Crown Corporation with a group of research consultants who were competing with each other for a government contract. At the end of the workshops the consultants decided that they would rather work together on the project because they were learning so much from each other.

In February, we went to Solana Beach, near San Diego to visit Ilona's Aunt Herta whom she had not seen for 25 years. At 83, she filled in many gaps about Ilona's family background, especially between the first and second world wars in Germany. Having lived and worked in Germany, Portugal, Britain, Canada and the United States, Herta had lots of gripping stories to tell. During the trip we enjoyed the Scrips Aquarium, Balboa Park, the 1850s Star of India sailing ship, and sitting in oceanside coffee shops watching dolphins jump. In less than one hour, we drove from the hot, stony silence of the Anza-Borrego Desert to snowy Mount Palomar. Best wishes to everyone and to those of you whom we do not cross paths very often, we hope to see you in the 21st Century. *Bill & Ilona Staples*



These years have been eventful with births, family creations, and partings as I experience very concretely the wondrous cycles of life. Since the fire that burned my apartment in the East Village in April, 1995 I have been living with the Sisters of St.

Joseph in Brooklyn where we are involved in providing a home for women released from the New York State prison system. I have found my almost three years here rewarding and have gained a much deeper understanding of the overwhelming issues women who come from mostly disadvantaged backgrounds face in America. I continue to be active in the midwifery community in New York City at Bellevue Hospital where we are about to open the first birthing center in the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation hospitals.

Ashleigh Norment is now working for the Alzheimer's Foundation in Chicago so our relationship is sustained by frequent use of trains, planes and email. We both attended Angeles Arrian's year-long program. "The Four Fold Way" and appreciated her use of global images grounded in challenges for daily practice in the workplace (which both of us struggle with mightily!). I have begun to rediscover Chicago and many friends and colleagues still in the Chicago area. Ahsleigh was present at my dad's memorial service at home in Durango in June and was also with me at Daudi's and Elena's wedding last August in Wisconsin. We look forward to being in closer proximity someday. Linda Rolfling Barnes

On March 6, my sister, Lin, had a cerebral hemorrhage - at 46 without warning. The neurosurgeon says that the tests do not reveal how this happened! For ten days I was told that she would not live and that I should call the family to come and say their good-byes. By divine intervention and the prayers from many places, she began to awake. After three months at St. Joseph's hospital she was able to transfer to Rehab Institute of Chicago for seven weeks of intensive rehab. On July 30 she came to

live with me. The skilled hands of doctors, nurses, therapists, priests and others, your prayers and her tenacity and will to live have created a miracle. Her long term memory is all there and except for these few months, she is no more forgetful than she ever was! She still has a very intensive physical therapy routine, receives professional therapy, and has a full-time caregiver. I learned the difference between a catholic hospital, St. Joseph's, and a secular top-flight institution, Rehab Institute of Chicago. Two of our cousins each came twice to lend support. My son came for four days while I made a presentation at a national conference. My friends, especially my small Christian community, centering prayer group, and my parish who prayed at four masses every Sunday all the time she was in the hospital, supported me. Lin can walk with the assistance of two canes, she can talk and is clear when she speaks slower than her brain works, she can take her own bath and do some of the kitchen chores. On December 8, she walked 10 feet unassisted! She will be flying to Michigan for Christmas with Kent and me.

Margie Tomlinson



Hooray! I completed my masters degree in Community Health Education this past summer. I can't believe I did it.

I gave the keynote speech at the Statewide Domestic Violence Conference in Sacramento this Spring. The conference, Embracing HERSTORY, Setting the California Agenda to End Domestic Violence had 500 participants from all over the state. It was an exciting moment. My speech was entitled: "Where Are We As

the Battered Woman's Movement?" It was fun to research social change movements and interview people about their impressions about the topic. It is also awesome to think of our work in the Domestic Violence field as being part of a larger movement. Anyhow, the speech brought back many memories and stories from my work with the Institute of Cultural Affairs and some of the stories found their way into the speech.

Another miracle of sorts: I now sit on the Department of Health Service' Statewide Strategic Planning Committee for all the Shelters. I get to design training programs for domestic violence agencies. I've also been selected for the Statewide Women's Health and Leadership Program, a one year leadership program for women who are involved in Health Issues. I figure this gives me more visibility as well as a larger network in which to prove future career choices.

It would seem that all this work would leave little time for play. I have found time for play in bits and pieces. I treasure my moments with Shapeshifters, the circle of women that I've been involved with for a number of years. They have been a foundation of community in so many ways, even to the point of helping me write and deliver my speech. I've found time to go to several conferences this year including the Peace Conference with the Dali Lama. I've sat by the ocean and let my toes feel the granules of sand many, many, times. I walk for at least thirty minutes daily and I went to Hawaii for a long, long, luxurious vacation.

Sharon Turner

The "Bird of the Year" was the Great Gray Owl. It is the largest owl in North

America (reaching a height of 27 inches) and is very rare in the United States. There are estimated to be 50 in California - almost all in the mountains above 7000 feet. On our first trip to California this year, I contacted a friend there who told me how to go about looking. While Cynthia was in a meeting, I drove over to Yosemite Park and went up to the area where the bird had been seen. The way most people see this bird is that they arrive at the spot at 4:40 a.m. and stand in the woods for an hour (in April it was in the 30's at that hour) and hope for a glimpse of the bird at dawn as it flies over the meadow. And I was prepared to do that - even though I did not relish it.

I thought it would be smart to arrive the afternoon before so I could see where I needed to stand since the forest is full of large broken logs and much of the snow water had not run off yet. So I arrives at 4:00 p.m. in 65 degree weather and started to walk around the rather large meadow. I was 20 minutes into this awesome undertaking (hundreds of dead trees and no one around) when I caught a quick view of some kind of owl flying away from me. Great, I thought, this would probably be my only view and I could not be absolutely sure it was THE bird. So I went after him and after 8-10 minutes I found him sitting in a tree watching me and not more than 50 feet away. It clearly was the target bird! We then proceeded to stare at each other for about 5 minutes. He then closed his eyes and I started my walk back to the car. And I didn't have to get up at 4:00 a.m.

On an August trip to California, we both went to Yosemite to see how lucky we could get. Although we carefully walked around the area for an hour, we saw no owls of any sort. We talked to one of the

rangers there who is into birds. She told us she had lived and birded in the Park for 20 years and had never seen this bird!

However, we did have another "once in a lifetime" experience. We were climbing over a fallen tree when not 50 feet away, a tree 2 feet in diameter that had probably been standing there for hundreds of years, picked that very moment to fall. One thing for sure is that if your ARE there at that moment, there is a loud noise!

Bob & Cynthia Vance

Janice has been delving into the worlds of young child development and media literacy in connection with work at our public broadcasting station. She thinks that what's happening to so many of our vulnerable children should make lots of us angry. Why in the WORLD don't we do a better job of supporting all parents and all childcare providers in their work with our future?

A memorable weekend with colleagues from the Philippines was spent at Stony Point, New York at a reunion of Methodist missionaries and friends. Besides lots of visiting, highlights included a boat trip on the Hudson River, a fine worship service and picnic at the Fellowship of Reconciliation headquarters in Nyack, and an inspiring chance for Janice to play duet arrangements of some Bach with a friend who is a concert pianist.

In the words of a Habitat for Humanity Christmas card we received, we wish you "Tools to build, and the glad hearts to use them." We remember with much affection the gifts you have brought to our lives.

Abe and Janice Ulanca

As our fifth year on our 5 acres of property draws to a close, we appreciate the virtues of staying in one place (we've now lived here longer than anywhere we've lived since each of us graduated from high school). The 50 foot circle around the three old pine trees ---an area which we haven't mowed since the summer we moved in ---has become an outdoor room, we just let succession happen. We "edited" the trees which have grown up in the area, cut pathways into the center and hung a hammock between two big pines and an Indian temple bell on an outspread oak.. We've followed advice from our landscape consultant and Sara Stein's book "Noah's Garden-- Restoring the Ecology of Your Own Back Yard." After sheet mulching over the grass and clay two years ago, our terraced no-til garden now produces luscious carrots, cabbages and herbs. Something can be harvested year-round. The gladiola across the front of the house provided a spectacular array of color throughout the summer. The Stover Sejour (a place to stay while on a journey) provide a gathering place for groups and individuals: the staff of the Sandy Ridge Correctional Center (on whose advisory board Nelson serves) held an ice cream social in July, Intelligent Technologies' (where Nelson works) staff and families got together for a "pig pickin'" and numerous guests passed through from points around the world.

The ICA at Greensboro is completing its most productive year ever. With the arrival of Bill and Marianna Bailey in Asheville, the ICA now has 8 program associates in North Carolina and two centers from which to conduct programs. Half of the group spent five days in Miami, Florida facilitating an "Integrative Thinking

Process" for a conference sponsored by the American Institute of Architects. This allowed all 300 participants at the conference to move beyond data collection and interchange and to reflect on the significance and implications of the material being presented---a much needed deepening of the standard conference format. The Lifestyle Simplification Lab continues to awaken people to the benefits and possibilities of making self-conscious decisions about the quality of their living patterns. We were invited to give a lecture series at a summer institute sponsored by the Episcopal Church in Cashiers, NC. While in the area we stayed at a mountain cabin and took walks in the beautiful Smokey Mountain woods, visited awesome water falls and gazed at the huge poplars in the last stand of virgin timber in the Eastern US--the Joyce Kilmer National forest.

On our bi-annual trip to India this year we were joined by others. Ads for cell phones and pagers line the streets of Pune and all the hotels have cable TV. Simultaneously, visitors continue to flock to the ancient temples at Ellora where the rock caves still exude the holy aura of the monks which chiseled them from solid rock cliffs 1500 years ago. At the conclusion of our trip we worked with the ICA India staff to convene a curriculum design workshop at the new Environmental Education Center which they have built, largely with funds from the Japanese government. Elaine and Nelson Stover

To live part of the year in Toronto, and part of it in Sun City Arizona has been quite an experience for us. Challenging at times, but we love it. We were happy to have seen some of you again this summer. We attended the Canadian Club's BBQ last

month, and have made some new friends from Brampton and Kingston.

--Tom and Connie Reemstma



Another great year has passed for us here in Taiwan, our 20th in Asia since we first came to Kuala Lumpur in 1974. Three and a half years each in Malaysia and Sumatra, then back to Iowa for 3 years, nearly 7 in India and now nearly 7 in Taiwan. We're looking forward to 1998, the Year of the Tiger, in Taiwan and anticipate many more years here with short periods away. Gail turned 60 this year, a couple of years behind Dick. We feel that somehow we are in a different situation which will become clearer over time.

We are helping Asians (and others) learn to thrive on chaos of which we have plenty. We find it not so much threatening as it is exciting, as old protective ways which avoid authentic participation are exposed as preventing learning and "dangerous for future political health".

We have made only a few forays so far into China, but others on all sides are working there and will send us or take us when the time is right. We did work in HK and India this year while Dick continues his regular facilitation work in West Virginia, always with the some company.

Both of us are building our skills in Holographic Repatterning (a process that helps people discover limiting unconscious patterns keeping them from making the changes they want to, and then let them go). We see it as a way to support associates, clients and friends in transformation skills. Interestingly enough in the newest (Dec 29)

Fortune magazine there is described in the management section something called PAM, Pain Avoidance Model, which suggests why we avoid making necessary change because of the threat of emotional pain. We think repatterning will find a place in our company work and have some openings.

--Gail and Dick West



Although I have often been accused of being an incurable workaholic, I do love my work as the executive director of a non-profit senior service agency in Atlanta. It has enough challenges on a daily basis to keep me motivated and excited about the prospect of making a difference in people's lives.

When one works with older adults, time is an important and limited commodity. We joke about living to see things happen "in our lifetime" only to realize that life is often over for those in need, before essential services can be rendered to them. So there is always a sense of urgency about my work: knowing that many of our clients are in their last days. This awareness makes the holidays even more special: a time to be thankful for the love of those we hold dear - if only in our memories.

We observed our traditional Thanksgiving dinner in Duluth, Ga. with John, Judy, Tim, and Matt Montgomery plus John's parents from Missouri. Our families started sharing this meal together in 1985 in Chicago! It is always a wonderful way to launch the holiday season. --Mary Lou Vergara

In April, Rod joined a Volunteer Medical Mission team from our area for a trip to Haiti. He did the documentation and video work for the team as they served the remote villages in the area. Twelve doctors, nurses and lay people made up the cadre. When not filming his job was to assist in the weighing of the babies and infants. His big learning was that as he placed a baby on the scales the odds were that they would tinkle either on him or on the scales. At least a 97+% accuracy rate.

In July 49 people (35 singers and some spouses) of Village Presbyterian Chancel Choir participated in a concert tour of Switzerland, Austria, Germany and Italy for two weeks. We sang in twelve locations among which was the Milan Cathedral and St. Peters in Rome. What a fantastic talented group to be with for this quality time. Rod says this was another highlight of his life.

---Rod and Priscilla Wilson

Lin loves her job as administrator for the County Public Health Service. This October she arranged for the staff to celebrate two employees with long tenure (15-20 years). They pulled it off as a surprise to the two and made a cabaret out of it. Her Mother, Miriam, died in November. She had made her peace and was ready to go. Lin is now appropriating the shock of being the older generation.

David celebrated his 60th birthday and made the move from farming to share-cropping the farm. That gives more time for the Bed and Breakfast. B&B business is growing gradually. The Homestead Room was remodeled and a private bath added.

David and Lin took summer bicycling seriously. In July they rode the first two days of RAGBRAI, 85 and 55 miles of hills, respectively. David turned a 62 mile ride into a century ride in August.

--David and Lin Zahrt

1997 has been a wonderful year for Mary and David Hoff. The highlight was our trip around the world in June and July. As you might suppose, there is a story here. The American Chamber of Commerce has an annual ball in Hong Kong's Convention Center. 1200 elegantly dressed Americans and friends enjoy a marvelous dinner and dancing to one of Hong Kong's popular bands. I wasn't going this year because I didn't have an escort. However, several of my colleagues helped me reconsider my decision and ...I won the grand prize in the lucky draw - two round-the-world business class tickets on United Airlines and a four day/four night cruise on the Royal Caribbean Line to the Bahamas!

What a fine time we had! We flew first to Delhi, and stayed at Cyprian and Mary D'Souza's flat where Padma was our excellent guide. The Ghandi Memorial Museum told well of one man's courage and persistence in pursuing a great vision. We rode the train to Agra and visited the Taj Mahal, Our appreciation of the intricacy and beauty of this wonder of the world overwhelmed our experience of the heat of India in June.

---Mary and David Hoff

For me: Simple Abundance is my favorite book. I'm making plans to move nearer the city. Kanbay, Inc. still employs me. It's growing by leaps. My body says, "let up on excessive physicality" grow in depth.

For my family: My family is a source of constant joy. Chris and Sheila will be

married in August in Maine. They work in Chicago. Annie and Matt Nixon joined their parents in seeing Annie's birthplace: Bombay India. Nicholas and Marie are robust, healthy twins who are typical 2 1/2 year olds.

For the world: My heart is touched by the world's outpouring of care, seen in deaths, births, suffering. I am thrilled to see the groundswell of the human energy used in discovering the spirit. The awe is present in our technology revolution, bringing about knowledge access (noosphere). I experience the movement toward making the earth whole, being initiated by the economic dynamic.

---Betty Pesek



Stuart moved to Nashville in April. He is the representative in Tennessee for Swingster Inc. So far he thinks it is a great place to live and business is good too.

Alice is now number 2 in the dental business. She has been so important to the growth of Dental Smile Makers that this year the Dr. showed his appreciation by creating a very nice profit sharing plan.

Joel is about to begin the tenth year of business. He is still very passionate about what he is doing. Several new projects were begun this year following a week long company retreat in the Hill Country of Texas.

--Joel and Alice Wright.

The Stanfield's are grateful: For a book called "The Art of Focused Conversation", crafted by the staff of ICA Canada, and edited by Brian.

--For the workshop, "The Marriage Basket", attended by Jeanette who experienced her first sweat lodge and found it to be a rite of passage into her next phase of becoming.

--For our visits to Niagara Falls and Niagra on the Lake where Brian and Jeanette enjoyed the ice-filled Niagara Falls in April, and where, later in August, Brian, Jeanette and Dottie, Jeanette's mom, took the ferry boat to Niagra on the Lake, rode in a horse and carriage in this beautiful "English village, attended a play at the Shaw Festival, and took the Maid of the Mist boat trip into the intense spray of the Falls.

--For our wilderness trip to Kilarney on Georgian Bay where we boarded an ocean-going yacht to experience the white rocks and the bright blue water set in the wilderness of glorious trees and rivers.

--For Dottie, Jeanette's mom, becoming part of the Stanfield family this year who is known by the condo social club as an expert bridge player and fun to play with. She swims every day, goes to exercise classes, and is becoming active in a local congregation. --Brian and Jeanette Stanfield

Sometimes, a year turns out to be significant in the life of a family in a way that couldn't have been predicted. 1997 certainly was one of those years for us. When the year began, we knew this was to be the year that Bruce turned fifty, John would publish a book, Miko would travel to Australia, and Duncan would enter high school. All that happened and much more.

The book John edited, "Beyond Prince and Merchant", was published in August. On

the theme of "citizen participation and the rise of civil society," it has received good reviews from its intended audience of development scholars and practitioners. Although he couldn't attend the event, John was delighted that his mother celebrated her 80th birthday in Perth with a great party organized by his eldest niece Joanne.

Bruce indeed turned 50 this year and marked the occasion with a big Halloween party at home with friends dropping in all evening long. This was also the second year of surviving entirely on private practice income. In May, the informal "Low Cost Therapy Associates" became a limited liability company. Securing a contract to provide the HIV test counseling services at the Seattle Gay Clinic prompted this move. Bruce was named managing director of the group.

--Bruce Robertson & John Burbidge

A facilitator's week-end workshop in August brought a number of old friends to Atlanta: the Bailey's, the Caruso's, the Stover's, the Grow's, Ike Powell, Jean Watts, John Kloepfer, David McClesky, George Packard, Dick West and others who I had worked with around the world. It was great to catch up and see how relevant our engagement still is.

--Bruce and Martha Donnelly



This was a year of great beginnings. The construction on our house in Mexico was completed and we moved into this beautiful structure on May 22. We call it the Casa de la Mariposa, or the house of the butterfly a symbol of transformation. Immediately we unpacked years of lovingly collected decor from suitcases and put it on

the walls! It was a grand event. We intend to spend 3-4 months each year in Mexico and are looking forward to lots of visits from family and friends! We held our first Litibu (the name of our beach community in Mexico) research seminar in May and enjoyed hosting guests in the completed homes.

--Jack and Judy Giles

Jesse went from full time administration in a community development corporation to part time consulting on youth and community development at the same agency. His canoe is also constantly calling to explore the waterways for more and bigger fish. Mollie traded full time local church responsibility for care of two to three lovely grandchildren whose mother, Claire, with six children under 12, is completing her last year of college. We both enjoy caring for Helen Fehr, 96, a former missionary of some 40 years and a constant source of inspiration with whom we are co-housing.

For ponderings and an experience of being enveloped by nature and the universe we are going on an 8 day trip to a whale nursery off the coast of Baja, west coast of Mexico in January. They say there are seven varieties of whales there, and the great gray whales will be birthing. It is reported that the moms like to be touched, their backs rubbed or their noses scratched in the weeks just after giving birth. It will be wonderful for both of us to be back on the water and back together again in some unbroken time of intimacy. A retirement celebration and portent of adventures to come.

--Mollie and Jesse Clements



This year 1997 has been, as we somewhat anticipated, a swirl of high celebration and mobility. We marked 30 years of marriage; Joe's 45 years in ministry; Ben and Jon's new Mds, with internal medicine residencies in progress at Boston Medical Center; Marilyn's culminating a 10th year expansion of consulting by a week with Indian Head Start Regional Directors in Anchorage, Alaska. The month of June was the vortex. Graduation from U. Mass. Medical School was a "button-popping" occasion. There followed the retirement session of the New England Annual Conference of the UMC and the bringing to a close of Joe's three-year urban pastorate at Washington Park UMC, Providence, with a memorable reception of parishioners, family and lifetime friends. July took both of us to Nova Scotia for a reunion with all of Joe's Canadian relatives.

--Joe and Marilyn Crocker

Lynda's three-week trip to India with the Stovers and group in January: returning to the familiar grounds of Sankli Street with its restored interior...to Maliwada with its growing population as people recognize that the village is a wonderful place to be...to Chikale with its over 300 children in school... to Panvel with its new Training Center for Women's Development and wonderful sewing operation...hosted by old colleagues who are doing great things with projects and programs... being in India for the 50th Anniversary of India's Independence (we were honored on that day at the Malegaon village school which our church helped build)...visiting the Gandhi memorial and being in the country when Gandhi's ashes were scattered in the Ganges...and being in the country when the discussions about Mother Teresa's successor was going on...these were some of the

events that made this return trip so memorable.

--Lynda & John Cock

The trails of Hong Kong have beckoned us once again this year. What a delight-having those immense vegetation-covered mounds of granite to traverse. Thea and I spend many wonderful weekend hours communing on the trails, frequently with friends. The season included again this year, the MacLehose Trailwalker - the 100 Km charity trek of which we have spoken other years. Miriam joined us for half of the trail on our team and may even have caught the "Trail Bug". Time shall tell. Age (or is it weight?) must be telling-it took us 34 hours to complete the mountainous 100 Km this year.

The handover of Hong Kong to China has surely been one of the great highlights of our year. It is not often in human history that a major sovereignty transition like this has occurred so totally without bloodshed or social disruption. Could it possibly be that we human beings are learning something as we proceed? We are grateful for the opportunity to be present to this remarkable moment for China, for Hong Kong and we believe, for the world.

John, Thea, Miriam & David Patterson



Maxine found her heart work in her new business, Healing Spaces. It must be the reason she is here because, in doing Feng Shui and aromatherapy, she is finding such true joy and happiness that it doesn't feel like work at all! Her clients have included a 4th-8th grade school class, small business owners and many private homes. When she works with people to help them arrange their space, small miracles happen as the

flow of energy is improved. She learned about therapeutic essential oils in Egypt and finds they are so wonderful and healing for people and space. As one satisfied client said, "Not only does she move furniture, she changes lives!"

You may wonder where all this new creativity has come from. In March we went to Egypt. In the temples, we were filled with new spirit and joy, and at the pyramids (the star clock of Giza) the sense that something special is required of us all right now. Bill found his true name and work in Abu Simbel on the Nile in Egypt. He uses his new name, Billy Crow Song, as a storyteller and preacher at his home church in Shoreline and around the Pacific Northwest. His home business has expanded from part time computer programming to motivational training and change consulting. He feels this is his true work. Luckily, he pays the bills by developing a computer program used in private session with the Director of Training of the Buba Port Authority who was visiting Seattle learning about worker motivation. Very motivating.

Bill & Maxine Norton

Jan's work in Rockhampton has grown significantly this year. There is always a waiting list! Our friends who own the Vegetarian Restaurant where she lives and works while there, bring her clients. Others come through the grapevine of satisfied clients. She has begun a similar service in Hervey Bay and already the one day a month is full. There has also been a steady stream of people coming for retreat. Usually a weekend or two each month goes into this work.

Betty had a wonderful trip through N.S.W. visiting her brothers and sisters. Her

journey took in Castle Hill, Yoogali, Wagga, Albury Wodonga Beechworth, West Ryde with a visit to the Blue Mountains thrown in!

Betty McGee & Janet Hughes

This year of 1997 was filled with many new, and some old, familiar challenges. Through most of the year, we still had no solid weekend nurse, so we were unable to get away for any weekends. So, for the first time, after spending our traditional week on Long Boat Key with Meg (Kit & Colin too), we were able to send Meg home with her nurse (after several weeks of planning, meal pre-prep, etc.). Brooke met them at the airport and kept a watchful eye on things as Mike & Judi spent an additional week in the sunny south. We had long wanted to travel to the southern Keys to learn more of the two places which allow challenged persons to "swim with the dolphins", on Key Largo and one on Marathon Key. We drove the length of the Keys, a wonderful experience, and spent several hours talking to the people at the Dolphin Research Center about the possibility of bringing Meg there. Their program is great, but probably not for us, at least at this time.

The rest of the week we spent on Key West, a place we highly recommend. Rented bikes and never drove once on the Key. We snorkeled (I got sea sick), biked around the Island, relaxed around the pool (hardly any beaches there), enjoyed the night life and took a 25 mile guided tour around several Keys on Waverunners (a larger, 2 person version of Jetskis). This was the highlight of our stay on Key West, having always wanted to try this sport, but never the opportunity. (Dear Santa, we want a Waverunner for Christmas.) We were a week late for the "Hemmingway-look-a-

like" contest, but Mike was told he surely would have won had he been there (interesting what a beard and fisherman's sweater will do!) Meg, Mike & Judi Tippett

This year, as ungratefully alone as I have been, I am grateful for the home I built for the sharing with my family and friends. I am grateful for the freedom that comes with finishing the M. Ed. in Counseling and becoming an M.Ed., NCC - happy to be a guidance counselor, yes, but most folks know that "permeation" and this creative spirit don't make a forever marriage. But, I have no aspirations at the moment--except to hang out with my cats, Amber and Apollo. BEING me for the first time in my life!!

.....Judi White

The highlights of our year have been: Hosting the 50th anniversary celebration of Paula's parents in Paw Paw, finalizing the interior of the house to qualify for a "real bank loan", losing our babysitter (we've grown used to the luxury since 1994), co-leading a Discipleship Committee at our UM Church, have produced our first crop of echinea (a medical herb for immune system strengthening) from the farm. We have been reading books on natural or traditional healing methods.

The girls, Ken & Paula Otto

Our 1997 has been a year of: Settling into our new home and watching our new garden unfold throughout the winter, spring, summer and fall. Golfing adventures at the Oregon Coast, in Eastern Oregon, British Columbia, and across the Willamette Valley. We have had visits with friends through e-mail (oberg@europa.com). We share our home with two frisky cats, 'Nosey' and 'Blackjack' and play cards and golf with friends and family. We have hosted friends

and family in our new home and enjoyed good health.

Jim & Sue Oberg

We have fallen in love with Ike's hometown and have decided to stay indefinitely.

Cairo is a small (10,000 pop), dynamic community, with a number of innovative social projects. We have been instrumental in launching one of them, a youth center (the Neutral Zone) located in downtown Cairo. The three story building was built by Ike's grandfather and reclaimed by him and his brothers and given to the community as a memorial for their parents, grandparents and families. The community raised the money for renovation, furnishings and equipment. Grants and donations have provided operational funds for the past two years.

... Ike, Charlene & Joseph Powell

I have devoted a great deal of my time to the bilingual Tourisme PONTIAC Tourism association. I am currently the president and co-editor of the quarterly newsletter.

The bed and breakfast business< Wanaki on the Ottawa is up 91% over the first year. Of course, I am happy with this. The vast majority of clients hear about Wanaki by word of mouth. However, my web site is also increasingly generating contacts as well. One family has come back 14 times. Wanaki hosted a wedding reception of 50 and a fortieth birthday party of 60. In each case, about 15 folks stayed overnight.

The annual men's conference held at Wanaki drew 24 participants overall. It was a great pleasure for me. For once, the politics were not divisive or intrusive. It was a truly relaxing and restorative event; story telling around the fire, dancing to

Cheza and fine cuisine. Imagine a weekend with 12 of your best friends joined by another 12 like-minded souls. It was great.

And then, there are the logs. These are part of the 'treasure' of the annual May flooding of the Ottawa River. I have retrieved a number of century-old square timbers, 50' being the longest. I use them as benches around the fire pit and as a border around the gardens. With the help of Ajit and Aidan, I am building a deck (8'x40') on the point, which will be supported by 6'-high log cribs filled with rock. The base is on dry land, dry during every other month but May and June that is. For fun I am building a pyramid out of 16' pulp logs (600-900lbs each).

In any case, these are remnants of a bygone era re the last of their kind. The logging on the river which began in the early 1800s to supply the British with timber during the Napolionic Wars and to rebuild Chicago after the 1880 Fire, ended 20 years ago.

For the past two years, Michael Deloughery, my best friend of 26 years, has been working for a software company and doing extremely well. In May, his boss at 37 had made his millions and wanted to retire and offered him the company. He refused. Too old for all the pressure, he said. But he wanted to protect his place in the company, and started to keep his eyes and ears open for someone whom he could trust to move into the company, take over the ownership and be the new boss.

At the same time, Aidan was asking me if I knew anyone in the computer business. Although he was making very good money, his company was family-owned and he wasn't ever really going to advance. So

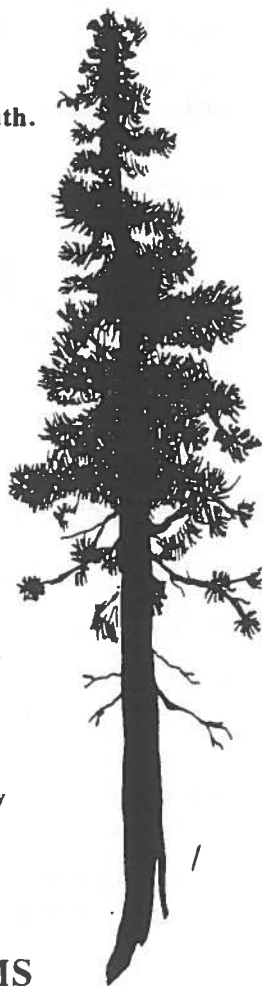
Michael and Aidan chatted. Then Aidan met the boss. Six months ago, Aidan joined the company. He will likely have a six-figure income in his first year. Yes, he is only 21.

As for the extended family, music is definitely a common characteristic. Brother Brian's L'ensemble Contabile is a quartet that sings Renaissance music in Latin, French and English. They recently performed in Boston, Ottawa and Montebello. His family is fine, and Mira is happily studying in Montreal. ... Ken Fisher

Crossing The Bar

The man exuded bitterness, the lingering aroma of knowing the truth. With each moment he seemed ready to accelerate into flight, the more distance the better, sweet speed nestling in his mind, his focus on the loud presence of the whole earth for the first time in his life. He had never gone to the moon and looked back on Earth, never touched the flame that consciousness brings with that kind of leap.

Like white chocolate and the savory bouganvilla it was a life scent that he had never come close to> He was more nearly ready than we thought: his energy settled to a whisper of hope, a smooth touch of reality and nearness, intensity of lilacs fading, his running no longer producing a blur but now the strong awareness of this new dimension of life. T.C. Wright



BOOKS & FILMS

Green! Lush green! Vibrant green! Ireland--the Emerald Isle! If you have seen it, you know it to be true. There is no greener place. In his Pulitzer Prize

winning memoir, Angela's Ashes, Frank McCourt paints a picture of a crushing desert in the midst of this lush green land. And as one reads, one wonders how so glorious a flower as McCourt could have bloomed in the midst of such squalor, suffering, aridity, and death.

As we neared the west entrance to Big Bend National Park, we began to see dead looking plants with a fiery orange glow lighting the ends of branches. We stopped and looked and took pictures. The plants were from three to seven feet high, and the gray-black viciously thorny branches were 3/4 to 1 inch in diameter. The unknowing eye would tell one that these stems had been dead for months or years from lack of water in the burning desert. But, these dead sticks had blooms on them--fiery orange blooms. At the park entrance the ranger said it was Ocotillo, and that it was the most beautiful it had been in his 20 years in the area. There had been showers a few weeks before and the desert was in bloom--glorious bloom. Cactus of many varieties, other scrub brush, tiny little plants, and Ocotillo--all in bloom.

The season reminds us it can happen any time--blooms coming in the desert. The only reason we can stand to read Angela's Ashes or watch the movie Schindler's List is that we have had our own deserts--not the poverty ghettos of urban Ireland or the Jewish ghettos and death camps of Nazi Germany--but our own minor or major deserts. To read or see the promise of the bloom emerging from the urban ghettos or the death camps, allows us to live and trust and hope Ocotillo in Limerick! Ocotillo in Auschwitz! Ocotillo in Bastrop, Texas! Ocotillo in Vienna! Ocotillo in my life and in yours! Can it possibly be? Yes, it can!

Charles and Doris Hahn

As we began to reflect on these past 12 months we found ourselves strangely moved by the Movie "Places in the Heart." For those of you who are unfamiliar with the film, or who have not seen it for a while, it is about a woman in Texas during the Depression and her struggles to keep her home after her husband, a local law official, is shot to death. To make ends meet, she hires a black drifter to tend her land, and takes in a blind lodger.

On one level the movie is a simple story of how this trio and a few friends pull together to win a cash reward by harvesting the first cotton crop in their town, and thus save the house. (Sally Field received an Oscar for her performance as the widow).

But the film plays on a deeper level too. The characters involved do not change the limits imposed on them. The fixed realities of racism, sexism, discrimination against the disable, poverty, and loneliness are not changed. This movie is not about political reform or social justice.

The limits are not broken down, they are transcended. Racism, sexism and poverty are met with resolve, moral courage, and compassion--those places in the heart where good overcomes evil. The last scene is particularly compelling. A communion service is taking place in a small Baptist church, the camera moves slowly along the rows of worshipers, all in their Sunday best, as they pass the wafer and grape juice sacraments to each other. The adulterer passes the peace to his estranged wife, the black drifter (who has just been run out of town by the Ku Klux Klan) receives the sacrament, he passes in turn to a KKK member -- and you suddenly realize that

there is reconciliation going on between all the characters in this movie. The widow is there and passes the sacraments to her dead husband, and he in turn passes the wafer to the young black man who killed him, who closes the movie by turning to the man he slayed and saying "the peace of God be with you".

The last scene is not realistic--in the world of limits, of barriers, divisions, poverty and death -- but it is very true. The good and the bad, the courageous and the cowardly, the living and the dead, find themselves united in communion, where the peace of God -- perhaps the deepest place in the heart -- transcends all division, and all human endeavour. Mary & Stuart Hampton

Among the many readings we have done this year, three books stand out as pioneers into new thinking of what it means to be a human being. Ken Wilber's **A Brief History of Everything** is a brilliant analysis of the Spirit as it unfolds from matter to life to mind, including the higher stages of spiritual development. Wilber is undoubtedly one of the greatest synthesizers and thinkers of the Western world. You look at life through the prism of Wilber and everything falls into place within a multi-layered and multi-faced schema. The second book is Dr. Frank J. Sulloway's **Born to Rebel**. This M.I.T. Research Scholar has done an awesome job of applying evolutionary insights about family relationships to the broad sweep of human history. This is a definitive work on firstborns and laterborns and the strategies they use within the family and in society. The greatest differences among humans, says Sulloway, are not between families or cultures, but within families themselves.

Half the book is references to his enormous research. It's a very convincing book. The final book is Measuring the Zone by Dr. Barry Sears. This book was recommended to Bill by his doctor, who was alarmed at his hypertension and the fact that medicine was not lowering a dangerous blood pressure level. In one month on the eating plan, Bill's blood pressure and weight dropped dramatically and has remained in the normal zone for the past seven months. Dr. Sears gives a very persuasive context on maintaining a hormonal balance. He uses the latest research on what causes people to get fat. Since 1995, American now suffers from an alarming rise in obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart attacks and cancer. All of which is basically derived from a diet that increases the one thing that causes all of the above: too much insulin. The major culprit in this drama is hyperglycemic carbohydrates. Simply eating a balanced diet puts you back into the "zone" and releases more energy than you have ever had while eating the normal American diet, including a strict vegetarian one.

Barb & Bill Alerding

You might like to know of some of the Books that influenced, challenged and supported us this year. Here are a few of them: the Canadian John Ralston Saul whom we met on his tour in Australia (The Unconscious Civilization and Voltaire's Bastards--i.e., rationality divorced from social justice and democracy), Ken Wilber's Sex, Ecology and Spirituality, A Brief History of Everything, and The Eye of Spirit), the American economist and philosopher Robert Theobald whom we also met here on several occasions (Reworking Success), Joanna Macy with whom we spent a week in April (World as Lover, World as

Self), a wonderful description of the creation of the Grameen Bank and its founder Professor Yunus from Bangladesh, now working in over 50 countries (including the USA or Australia and enabling the poor to create their own financial future, The Price of a Dream by David Bornstein and the intriguing new Report to the Club of Rome called Factor Four-Doubling Wealth and Halving Resource Use by Ernst von Weizsaecker, Armory and L. Hunter Lovins. We also greatly appreciated the revelations and reflection of people like David Korten in When Corporations Rule the World, Peter Schwartz's The Art of the Long View or the description of 16 years Environment Action Movement in Australia by Parliamentarian Ian Cohen, Green Fire,-- not even talking about the important reading of The Stolen Generation Reports and other Aboriginal and "Australian" Spirituality related books. Another jewel speaking the language of our life philosophy and practice is Simplify your Life-100 Ways to slow down and enjoy the things that really matter by Elaine St. James. In addition we were captivated by biographies or autobiographies-of the Australian-American Medical Doctor and Social Activist (for Nuclear Disarmament etc.), Helen Caldicott, former Prime Ministers Keating and Whitlam, recently beatified Australian social justice advocate and religious order founder Mary McKillop and Nelson Mandela. I get less chance for intensive reading than Richard who enriches his twice daily forty minute train ride with great books. He also opened a totally new field for us with lots of reading in finances, financial management, taxation and retirement, for our own sake and for other people who want and need it.

Richard & Maria Maguire