

2001 The Murdock Muse 2001

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FAREWELL 2000, HELLO 2001

Nancy Murdock

With some regret, we say goodbye to the year 2000. This was the year of our eagerly awaited 50th wedding anniversary; the year my classmates and I had discussed in about 7th grade, guessing who might still be alive among the people we knew. To the best of my knowledge, none of the parents of the four of us remain, and Barbara Green did not make it herself. It was with elation that Bob and I greeted this special year. Now we are looking back and forward at the same time. We will never forget this year. *But the future beckons.*

What do you expect from 2001? Some of our Muse families do not look back fondly at 2000. They are hoping for a better deal this year. Maybe for you, 2001 is an important anniversary, a graduation, the birth of your first child/grandchild, or the expected start of your new job or your own business.

Did you know that the *Murdock Muse* celebrates its 10th birthday with this issue? In January 1991 we sent our first issue, all three pages, to our children, our grandchildren, and Mom Murdock. We invited our small readership to submit articles, drawings, etc., and grandsons Jason and Nic were among the first to respond. Now we send the Muse to **90** families! And every time we question whether it's time to stop, someone sends a nice note telling us how much they enjoy this newsletter. We appreciate all your support, both personal and financial.

We are considering a goal to get the Muse online in 2001, but we would continue to send a printed copy if you have no online access. As those who are mourning the death of the Montgomery Ward stores know, life's changes are coming faster than ever in this Information Age. Someone was asked why MW couldn't make it any longer when others are flourishing; he said that you have to stay ahead of the curve, and MW didn't. We intend to stay ahead of the curve!

Happy New Year 2001

A CHARLTON MINISTRY

Priscilla Januskiewicz

Great Grandfather Emanuel Charlton ministered in many Methodist churches throughout New England. One of these was the United Methodist Church in Townsend, MA. My mother and I have been in the foyer of this church and have seen Emanuel's name in the list of pastors in a big open book inside a glass case in years past. He was the pastor there from 1915-1916.

Recently, when I read in the newspaper that there would be a holiday fair with tours of the church, I jumped at the chance. Roy and I went, and when the lady minister (tour guide) found out about my great grandfather, she asked the church historian to give the tour for us.

Emanuel had written about the church's runaway slave (or Negro) pews, overlooking the sanctuary, in his book, *The Squanicook Parish*, in 1917. As we followed the guide, Roy and I climbed up two steep stairways to the tower to get to the four very narrow hidden pews, "which still remain as originally built." As we sat in the pews, (we had to sit up very straight) we noticed some old square wooden collection boxes beside us. Presently there is a glass window in front of the pews, but perhaps there were peepholes in the beginning.

After we went back down to the foyer, we were allowed to ring the 2500 pound bell, installed in 1876. There were two ropes which came down through holes in the floors. The small rope was for tolling the bell when someone had died. It has a dull, mournful clang, and would be tolled for as many years as the person had lived. The large rope was for pealing (back and forth.) What a joyful sound we heard as we pulled the rope up and down several times!

We each received a pamphlet about the church and noticed that Emanuel's name and book were mentioned. I am currently looking for the book, but they are hard to find. A bookseller has one, but it looks as though he's going to keep it even though I've asked him twice if he'd sell it to me.

UPDATE

Christie Murdock

Well, it's been a little while since I've written, so I have a bit of an update. School is going well.. I'm just hoping to maintain my 3.25 GPA and it looks like I'll do better than that. I sent in my application to Chapman and I found out that I was accepted! Now, my big worry is financial. I know that I really want to go to the school so if I'm stuck with getting loans (which my school gives out at 0% interest - thank goodness!), then I'll deal with it. It's so exciting knowing that I'm accepted. I've been filling out every scholarship application that I could find.

My internship at NBC is over. I was required to work 60 hours to earn my 1 unit from the school, so after the 60 hours were over, I told them that I needed to use my time on school. If I had been learning something from the internship, I would have been glad to stay, but they hired someone new and someone else quit, so they spent all their time training the new permanent workers and I was set to the mind-bending task of... filing. However, not all was wasted in my internship at NBC. I did learn a bit about all the not-so-fun work that goes into entertaining and selling advertisements to the masses. AND I have a great little addition to my resume!

But I really could use the extra time for school. I've been slacking on quizzes in my Biology class.. we have two a week.. grrr... Tuesday, I have an exam and I haven't even begun to study.. BUT I am Queen of the Last-Minute. I will do fine. I'm having a great time in my media class, my company's called "World Broadcasting Media Systems, Inc." And we're creating a cool little radio station. All we have to do is sell it to the instructor, and he's cake.

Anyway, my life has been rather uninteresting, mostly work and very little play. I can't wait until I have Chapman all figured out.. and CHRISTMAS!!! I can't believe it is a little more than a month away. They've decorated the Rite-Aid near my home all Christmassy.. and I'm getting so excited! My room mate and I bought a quart of egg nog (non alcoholic) and got into the Christmas spirit. I'm ready to get all my Christmas shopping started... as soon as I get my next paycheck.. :)

GREETINGS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Continuing our tradition, we bring you excerpts from the many greetings we received from friends old and new, and from family.

Carol & Jim Wilkinson, former members of our church: We were so sorry to have to miss your 50th, but glad it was such a blessing to you. Have a warm and blessed Christmas and a very good 2001!

Keith Murdock: Peace to you and to all creatures on earth. Very best wishes this holiday season.

Donald Lytle, Muser and Nancy's 7th/8th grade teacher: I enjoy being one in your larger family.

Happy New Year

Rev. Peter Shoji Yoshimura, Tokyo All Saints Church:

Congratulations on your golden wedding anniversary! I wish some of your luck would rub off on me. Have a joyous Christmas; let us seek out new ways of spreading the word to all who will listen.

Jean Ogawa, Tokyo: I wish I could have attended your 50th anniversary celebration events.

Rev. John & Barbara Larson (CA): At a clergy Christmas dinner we ate with Bruce & Ruth Duncan. He's interim pastor of a Chinese congregation in Alhambra. He remembers Nancy well, as he was still in Baltimore when you moved there.

Chris & Donna Estep: Can we still wish you happiness and offer congratulations on 50 years of marriage? I guess we got that in just under the wire for the year 2000! We appreciate receiving the Muse. We are getting the house ready to sell so we can move to Vermont. You will have to visit us there; we'd love it!

Toy Bouley & family: Wishing you wonderful holidays!

Scott & Nancy Murdock and "The Kids" (their cats): May the music of the Christmas season fill your holidays with joy.

Joyce & John Mortison (Bob's former coworker): That was wonderful that you celebrated your Golden Anniversary! What did you think of our Election? I bet all punchcard machines will be replaced in every state!!

Akiko & Jiro Matsumoto, Tokyo: We enjoyed your writing on your golden wedding anniversary. It's so nice to hear that you both had such an exciting time at this particular occasion. Wishing you a peaceful life and good health.

Margo Cramer, Quilt Guild: Wow - 50 years together!

Mala Reddy (after returning from 6 months in India): Wish you a very happy, healthy New Year. May God bless you.

Claudia & Dennis Lindsey: We are going to be grandparents for the first time, in July!

Annelore Polzin, Germany: It's hard to believe that the much anticipated - and feared - year 2000 will be over in less than 2 weeks.

Irene Saccoccio, SSA Maryland: You certainly have a flair for writing a wonderful Christmas newsletter. Belated 50th anniversary wishes to a very nice couple and many more.

Bob Fredrickson, Bob's former coworker: Congratulations on your Golden Anniversary! I'm fine, enjoying retirement and farming. I'm looking forward to next year's farm activities. Keeping busy.

Diane Thomas, former coworker, CA: I had a freak car accident and ended up 7 days in the hospital. I had your 50th anniversary announcement in the car (which was in the shop until October.) I hope it was a great celebration.

Meri Murdock: Merry Christmas from the Kitty Crew!

Sri Poedjastoeti, Quilt friend (a Muslim): Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and joyous 2001.

Rose & Carl Martz: Your anniversary publication was outstanding!

Happy New Year

Pat Robertson, CA coworker: 50th wedding anniversary!!

Hard to believe - congratulations. Best wishes in 2001.
Juliann Nankerivs, Quilt friend: Sharing your anniversary was one of the highlights of my year. Happy occasions are so great. No quilting without friends - you think you will get a lot done, but you don't.

Daryl Worley, SSA Lunch friend, now retired: The year 2000: It was the best of all times; it was the worst of all times. It was the worst when on 3/31 Daryl was diagnosed with insulin dependent diabetes. Three days later, we were told she had a malignant tumor in her colon and a different type of cancer, lymphoma, in her right leg. It had been mis-diagnosed as erythema nodosum (red sores) over a year before. It was the best of times when our daughter had a healthy, beautiful baby girl 12/ 16.

Clyde Howlett, age 91 (pictured at breakfast on his Bermuda vacation): Breakfast is my favorite meal. It means I have another day to live. I wish for you in the coming days to look forward to a Happy New Year. [*His was the most creative computer card.*]

Huddy White, Glen Burnie neighbor, 1960: I sold my house and moved in with David to take care of his girls. Boy, is it different from raising boys! In July I took them to Disneyworld and on the Big Red Boat. Neale and Erica and their 4 also went. Their karate school is doing great. Ken is going to Ohio State and teaching inmates. Jim is renting a trailer and looking for property to buy. He's still not married and no prospects. Everyone was here for Thanksgiving. Email Smadgee9@aol.com.

Lorna & Russ Lass, CA friends from Art League: We are enjoying retirement with our usual clubs and activities. We had a great picnic in the desert with our gem & mineral club in November. I still work on toys for needy kids and Russ on stained glass. He is getting our daughter interested in wire wrap jewelry and art.

Della & Lou LeConte, Quilt guild: As the years flow by and our age count gets higher, we learn to appreciate every day and are thankful for our family and friends, who make life so worthwhile. We got to Australia and New Zealand this year, adding another continent to our travels. Travel has always been one of our joys.

Charles Lister, former coworker: Thanks for remembering me. So glad you had a good year. Bill and I are both retired now so 2001 should be interesting. So many options. We both still love FL.

David, Cindy, Tim, Lisa, Caiti, and Brett (Leskinen household): Love always, xo's. [Sent photos of the 4 kids.]

[Most photos.]

Bill, Denise, Mike & Nick Chapman: Love. **[Best family photo.]**

Debbie Castner, Quilt friend: My daughter has been offered a job at NASA, contingent on security clearance. She seems to be at a point when change is a good thing. For me it would be the best Christmas present.

Sean & Kris Howlett: Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. (Picture of patient dog, IDI Howlett.)

Phil & Judy Schwarz, Bob's former coworker: As we're

sure you know, moving is a hassle. We had collected 23 years of valuable stuff that suddenly became junk. We made many trips to Goodwill and filled many garbage cans.
Bradford Howlett: Hope this finds you both in good health. Happy holidays to you.

Lisa & Doug Howlett (and Chloe): With love and God's blessings. **[Funniest dog photo.** Chloe looked really embarrassed, with all the decorations.]

Bernice Wilson, church: Peace, Joy, Love.

Kris, Dawn, and Amber Knox: Wishing you happy holidays.

Bob & Jeanne Giguere, West Brookfield friend, 1950: You certainly had a busy year with lots of fun and newfound friends and family togetherness, which makes life worth living to the fullest. We wish you a happy 2001 with many more exciting things for you to do. Don't stop, as that is when you get old!

Uncle Euel (92) and Aunt Sadie Charlton (89) and Joan Calder: Thank you for the Muse. We anxiously await each issue. All is going great for us and hope the same for you.

Priscilla & Roy Januskiewicz: Blessings to you at Christmas and in the New Year.

Hillary Fay, Quilt guild (veterinarian with lizard pets): Hope you can get together with all your kids. All the best!

Jean Savalchek, Quilt guild: Merry Christmas, Happy New Year. **[Best handmade card, fabric.]**

Guy Wolf, Diocesan committee friend: Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year. Fondly - Bill and Guy.

Ferri Walsh, United Kingdom: Season's Greetings (7 languages). With best wishes. **[Most languages.]**

Barbara Thorne, CA friend: I took a class so I could tile my shower. It is simple enough. I am now looking for the tile. I have also been experimenting with plants - so I have an orchid plant. I will be waiting to see if it blooms again next year. I have a gardenia plant, which is now in bloom. This summer I took the first half of my 3rd level training for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, the children's program we do at church. I started this training in 1996. I need 2 more weeks of training, and then I'll be done. It is a lot of work, but I feel it is worth it. My other big job is getting rid of stuff I don't use or want (not as easy as it sounds). I have a lot of papers to go through and destroy. I have found a way to reproduce pictures of my mother (who died this year) for her grandchildren, so this project is also on the "list." This year I celebrated my 70th birthday by taking four grandchildren to Great America, an amusement park.

[Most projects we need to do, also.]

These are, of course, not all the cards we received. We thank all who sent greetings, photos, updates, and words of wisdom. As you can see, we celebrated our 50th anniversary right up to the end of 2000. This was a year when we were especially aware of all the love we are blessed with. It is truly humbling.-N. Murdock]

* * * Happy New Year * * *

JASON CHECKS IN

<murdock55408@email.msn.com>

(Nov. 10) I have been going to night school full time while working full time for the past 2 1/2 months. The name of the school is "Herzing College" also known as the "Minneapolis Drafting School". I am working on a 3 year Bachelor's degree as a Designer/Drafter. My GPA up to date is a 3.7 for the 1st quarter.

I have also received 2 awards at work this last month, one being Employee of the Month for taking on this new printer made in Germany that was about to be farmed out to another vendor. But I took the challenge to figure out how to fix this elaborate printer with no documentation by researching information through the Internet and calling around.

I really enjoy reading the Murdock Muse because everybody has great stories and things to say.

REPORT FROM KHENDRA

<murdock5@greene.xtn.net>

I've found some new hobbies lately, one of which is walking. Mom and I have started a walking activity that we do every day. The area we live in is beautiful, so the scenery is an added bonus. Basketball season started on Halloween, so I have been enjoying that, too.

I have been thinking a bit ahead as to what career I want to pursue, which I think may be in the medical field. I continue to read my medical book. There's so much to learn in that book, and I really like it. My web page activities have decreased, but I still have my home page up, and I maintain Ben's Memorial Site.

Reviewing my year, I'd have to say it was a great one. I remember back on New Year's thinking "Y2K" might cause immense Internet problems, but that was all thankfully fixed on time! I just continue to learn and grow and look forward to the future.

COFFEE WITH DARREL

darrelmurdock@webtv.net

(Dec. 26) Today I went to the Science Museum with my new friend Vickie and it was very enjoyable. I picked her up at 10 AM and we spent the next seven hours together. She navigated us through the museum like a pro, even though she hadn't been there before. Every morning I send her an updated web-page. It's called "Coffee with Darrel."

HOSPITAL DAY SHIFT FOR JOHN

<Cathyjohnhowlett@cs.com>

Though it sometimes seemed like it would never happen, I'm finally working the day shift. Even better, I'm still on the same psych unit where I've worked for the past couple years which means I'll be vested in their retirement program in three years.

I told my director that nights were not working out for me and I would have to put out my resume to places that were hiring for day positions - I was offered the day position on my unit the next day. Gotta love the power of the nursing shortage.

Cathy and I are much happier now that I'm on days. We have more time together at night and I'm really off on my days off rather than sleeping, because I'm not exhausted all the time.

The work on the house keeps on plugging along. Last week I painted the bathroom walls and ceiling and installed new lights in the bathroom, kitchen and living room. The bathroom is almost complete as I replaced all the baseboard registers two weeks

ago. Now we just need to install a new fiberglass tub enclosure.

NEW WAYS TO SHOP

Roy Murdock <murdock5@greene.xtn.net>

No software for Christmas presents, but we are utilizing the Internet. Khendra got money from us for Christmas and she is spending the majority of it at Internet auction sites- getting great deals on a variety of items!

Khendra also had a great time shopping with your gift of a JC Penney's card! We got three fantastic deals because we shopped the day before Christmas and a lot of stuff was on sale. She got a gorgeous red sports jacket, a huge makeup set, and a really cool set of lotions and gels. Three days earlier these things would have cost over \$100, and we got them all for \$48.70. It was great!!!!

CHANGING MY IMAGE

Natalie Murdock <LM-ROXYCHICK-55@webtv.net>

(Nov. 9) I recently got "laid off" from school, for living out of district. (Keep the pride, I'm a good girl). It's minor, I know, but I still am not allowed back under certain terms. So, next week I will be enrolling in La Habra High. I know nobody there and so, am a little scared. But that's ok! I have a chance to change my image.....it's great. Maybe I'll wear a skirt....nope, don't think I can change that drastically. But hey...who knows.

As far as anything else goes, I am happy with my social life. My friends and I always go to movies and the mall and tomorrow, my friend Dot (Spot), Carolyn, Amber and I will be hitting the beach, because I'm looking like Casper here - I need me a tan!

Well, my job is going great. I like being a cashier and seeing so many people, and love getting paid. I buy bunches of clothes and I love to buy Tim stuff. I just bought him a Skateboarding shirt. His b-day is in 7 days, and I bought him a brand new bike! Sssshhh. But for 70 bucks there was no going wrong.

In addition to my social life, I have a really cool guyfriend. His name is Johnny and he is just SO cool. He is training to be a cop (he's 18).

NO PROBLEM, WE'LL JUST MOVE

Becky Murdock <bandi-m@webtv.net>

Natalie was devastated about getting kicked out of La Mirada High last month for living outside of district. The school they wanted her to go to was not the kind of school I wanted her to go to. She has been in the La Mirada district since kindergarten and had all her friends there along with the environment we wanted for her and Timothy. Also, Tim, who starts high school next year, couldn't go there either.

So Ian and I started looking around and came across this house, which is what we needed for the room. We released the mobile home back to whom we bought it from with no penalty. It was probably a good thing because we were having a lot of problems with it. Our new address is 12145 Goldendale Drive, La Mirada CA 90638, (562) 946-8748. We know now that we can't move out of La Mirada till they finish school, so we need to stay put because houses are hard to find to rent. Our landlord had over 100 applicants and he chose us. We feel very blessed.

WEATHER REPORT

Gene Murdock <gmurdock@scottsboro.org>

(Dec. 19, in response to query from son Rick)

As usual one tornado passed twenty miles north and another passed twenty miles south. I only got about an inch of rain and a lot of noise, but the Paint Rock River just to the west went to flood conditions. As soon as the severe weather passed we went

into a winter storm advisory and Monday morning I looked out at a dusting of snow! The higher elevations got several inches of snow and ice, so there are a lot of closings all around.

We went from the 60's on Sunday to the chill factor of about ten below on Monday night. Some Change! It snowed again this morning covering the ground again. Just enough to make the local kids feel like they are having a white Christmas.

This cold snap brought the finch flocks in so they are dominating the feeders. I have switched to a "songbird" feed consisting mostly of larger seeds and nuts. The finches think that is great and totally ignore their own separate thistle feeder. Even with an ample supply of corn on the cob, the now fat squirrels still try to get at the bird seed and started eating away at the plastic feeders to get inside. I bought an 8-perch heavy plastic feeder with metal perches which so far has kept them from destroying it. It's hard to stay one step ahead of them.

One ear of corn gets mounted on a steel rod attached to a fence post. The squirrels sit on top of the post and nibble away at the ears. Recently I have looked out in the morning and seen the steel rod, about twice the thickness of a coat hanger, bent over and the whole ear gone! Something larger than a squirrel is manhandling it. Probably a raccoon or a possum.

THE GROWING WORLD OF eBooks

Gene Murdock <gmurdock@scottsboro.org>

Have you looked into the fascinating world of eBooks? I have seen them advertised and kind of ignored them as a passing fad, but this morning (Dec. 23) I saw an ad in TV Guide that spoke of some of the great possibilities, so I went to <www.gemstar-ebook> to read up on them.

I am fascinated with the possibilities. Right now they are clumsy and expensive but that will change rapidly as demand and competition increase and the capabilities of the device improve. You can write notes as you read, bookmark your place, use the built-in dictionary, do a key word search, etc. They especially intrigue me as you can hold several books and magazines at one time, so are great for traveling and being CONFINED TO A HOSPITAL BED, or they can be attached to a treadmill.

It's hard to find the prices, but the small 1100 model is \$300 and the new larger 1200 model is \$700. Barnes and Noble has some good comparisons and discussions on them, comparing them to the PC readers like MS Reader and Glassbook Reader.

NEW ADDRESS FOR ROBERT AND JANA'

Bob Murdock

Just as we were finalizing this edition of the Muse, grandson Robert called from San Diego. He and Jana' just moved into their new home, after doing some painting and fixing up which reduced the rent. Here's the new info:

Robert and Jana' Murdock
3950 Arizona St.
San Diego, CA 92104
Tel. 619-297-3490

This is in the North Park area of San Diego. And how is the weather? "It's been averaging a high of 68 degrees," he said. But it can get down to 40 at night. That's really cold!"

*****Happy New Year*****

OUR HECTIC...OOPS, HAPPY HOUSEHOLD

Lori Howlett <Lourain@aol.com>

In Jan. the kids and I moved to Norwood MA to live with my fiancé, Michael. Our apartment is fantastic! Ground floor, 3 BR, 2 baths, twice as big as the NH apartment. The kids have all made friends and are doing well in school.

Amanda is a typical teenager: interested in makeup and styling her hair. She tends to prefer the darker side of teen angst, though - that whole "my world is black like my lipstick."

Alyssa is her usual cheery self, filling her world with Barbies and baby dolls. She's quite proud of her achievement in reading at 4th grade level now, and studies hard.

Patrick continues active (to say the least). He performs on a 1st grade level so was retained in 2nd grade to get time to catch up. Fortunately he's small for his age - and has a great smile!

We welcomed our new son, Nicolas Amerigo Brown, 10 lb. 8 oz, on Aug. 23. He's incredibly sweet tempered: lots of smiles for all and adores big brother and sisters, including Michael's daughter Kayleigh, who spends alternate weekends with us. We have one Howlett, 2 Browns, and 3 Rogers. Are we the stereotypical family of today or what?

Michael and I both work at Charles River Hospital: he as a mental health counselor in the child/adolescent unit, me as charge nurse on the geriatric unit. I never thought I'd enjoy geripsych, but it's turned out never to be dull.

We still plan to get married, but I don't know when. We planned to wed last May, but I refused to get married looking and waddling like a penguin. Dad was sad to miss a great photo opportunity: pregnant me, Michael, and Dad with his shotgun. Can't win 'em all!

SPORTS NOTES

Tami Murdock <murdock5@greene.xtn.net>

Yes, the Wizards are off to a awful start again. We saw that horrible game (as we have DirecTV and catch their games) and we were so disappointed. Khendra is the moderator of a hoops board for the Wizards and it is hard to keep fans. We wish MJ would put his expertise into teaching these youngsters that the game is not about money, but doing the best you can - which they haven't done!

We are thrilled for Gannon and he was in the pro bowl last year - validating our belief in his talent! He is having a great year again - with a coach who doesn't yank him when things go wrong - like his defense being so bad that he has to put 42 points up in order to win!

TRAVEL TIMES

Nancy Murdock

We spent a relaxing, enjoyable Thanksgiving with Polly and Carl Soberg and cousin Clyde Howlett in NH. Lots of good food, good visiting, and good shopping. Yes, Polly, Bob and I spent the Friday in the hallowed traditional way: shopping till we dropped and then going for Italian food. We worked in a game or two in the evenings, too. They were fine hosts, and we appreciated the invitation.

We took a break in early December at a timeshare in New Bern, NC, home of the original Pepsi. It was way off season there, so we had few other vacationers at Fairfield Harbour resort. It was wonderful. We did a little touring, ate at some interesting places, played games, sewed on quilts, and dyed fabric, the day we went to the beach, it was 73 degrees. Next day: 43!

*****Happy New Year*****

AROUND THE NET**Jeanne Giguere** <BobGiguere@aol.com>

(Nov. 14) We are all fine up here and getting ready for the holidays like everyone else. I have been working quite a bit at the nursing home and it has been fun doing different jobs and filling in for vacations. We went to North Carolina (Asheville area) for a week as our friends were there and enjoyed the foliage again. Rob has finished getting the house and yard ready for winter but the weather has been so nice our flowers are still in bloom.

Polly Soberg <carlpoll@tds.com>

(Nov. 18) The cat got me up early and I went shopping for about four hours. Carl cooked lobster for my birthday supper so I had a great day... Both my kids are off somewhere else for Thanksgiving. Kevin is in Florida with his family and Rennie and Maria are going to Warren's house.

Chip Martz <cmartz@eee.org>

There is one irony in your wonderful Memoirs publication that I want to pass on to you. You noted that you went to New York on your honeymoon in 1950 and stayed at the Dixie Hotel in Times Square. Well, 18 years later in 1968, Rose and I also stayed at the Dixie for our honeymoon. You recall a grand welcome by the manager. In 1968, the Dixie and Times Square were obviously not what they had been in the early 1950s. I remember when we registered at the desk, the clerk was involved in a violent with someone. We did not get the wine and roses that you did. But, we had a good time there anyway.

Orrel Frost <highledge@cybertours.com>

Charlie has been working as a substitute teacher at York High School. He has subbed in chemistry (his worst subject in high school), physics, cooking (Derek cracked up over this), phys ed, sex education, history of various types, French, German, math, and metal shop. He's having a blast!

Meredith Murdock <MeriCat@webtv.net>

(Whittier, CA - Dec.19) We had an outdoor catered BBQ yesterday at work, and it was almost too hot outside. 80 degrees! Hope you popsicles aren't too cold!

I've been writing a lot. I even have a few little friends who are writing with me now. They have pens and notebooks here and are writing mysteries! It makes me so happy to see them doing this, I just can't believe it.

Claudia Lindsey <lindseyd@flash.net>

In reading your newsletter I noticed that you lived in Downey in 1985 and what a shame we didn't know that as we have lived in this same house here in West Covina since 1969. Downey is only about 30 miles south of us.

[Ed. Note: Claudia's Email address is correct above. We had it wrong in the Nov. Muse. RDM]

Doug Howlett <DPHOWLETT@aol.com>

Just for the heck of it, I searched for the Neiman Marcus cookie recipe online and guess what? -- I found the official Neiman Marcus web site featuring the recipe (for free) and a little write-up on the \$250 recipe myth. Here it is:

<http://www.neimanmarcus.com/about/cookie_recipe.jhtml>

POST OFFICE ALERT

Effective Sunday Jan. 7, first class stamps will cost 34 cents, up a penny. So you can still use the 33 cent stamps through Sat. January 6. For instance: Mail a little something to us for the next Muse: family news, drawings by the kids, a poem or short story. Snapshots are good, too. Maybe we can do a picture page. You can get the list of all the new postal rates at this USPS web page: <<http://www.usps.gov/news/2001rate.htm>>

CELEBRATIONSAnniversaries

Jan. 2 Derek and Roz Revilock-Frost (20th)
Feb. 1 Nancy (Bowers) and Michael Shepherd (4th)
16 Teddie (Salminen) and Bill Doane (27th)

January Birthdays

Jan. 1 Jacob Keller (4), Lauren Boudreau (13)
2 Teddie Doane, Rebecca Bacon Whalen
6 Gene Murdock (69), Patrick Rogers (9)
14 Nancy A. Murdock (69)
15 Darcy Heald
18 Walter Scott Murdock
20 Steve Howlett
22 Ron Murdock
23 Amanda Lynne Howlett (9), Roz Revilock-Frost
25 Patryk Heald
27 David Aliquo (12)
29 Kristen Reese (11)

February Birthdays

Feb. 5 Jayson Howlett (14), Nikki Oman (14), Dawn Hiscock
9 Natalie Murdock (16)
10 Sandy Fontaine, Lori Howlett, Missi Howlett,
Eunie Johnson
11 Joan Charlton Calder
12 Danielle Leary (14)
13 Mary Reese
14 Kevin (the Elder) Leary
16 Sheryl Aliquo, Shawn Blakley (18)
19 Vanessa Boudreau (9)
20 Ernie Bacon
22 Sarah Howlett
23 Jonathan Coppolino (8)
26 Doug (the Elder) Howlett
27 Sanghee Johnson (15), Willow Howlett
28 Desiree Michelle Howlett (2)

POLITICAL PREDICTION

Ian Murdock <IanMurdock@webtv.net>

(Nov. 11) Whaddya think of the electoral snafu? So many weird scenarios that could play out! Who will emerge victorious, and when? My prediction: Strom Thurmond, 97-year-old (and petrified - not scared, actually petrified) Senate prez pro tem, will take the reins following the much more libidinous Clinton on Eggnogeneration Day, and hold sway (or totter) until the legal battles over Florida have played out (about two years).

House Speaker Dennis Whoever, actually in line ahead of Thurmond, will decline the position when Dems threaten to expose that he once accidentally dropped the flag and stepped on it during a Boy Scout ceremony.

ARRIVEDERCI

Meredith Howlett

I love getting your newsletter, but unfortunately you're going to have to take us off the list. Eric and I are moving to Italy, after spending Christmas in Hubbardston. Eric has been named Managing Director of European Operations for his company. [It's called Rotary Lift.....they make the kind of car lifts that you see in service shops.] Anna and Lindsey will be going to the American Overseas School of Rome and we'll be learning to speak Italian. We'll give you a buzz when we get back in a few years. Be well and keep up the good work.....

Happy New Year 2001