

GREETINGS * * * Can it be Christmas time again? Looking back, though, we realize we've had a busy and full year. Now it's that pleasant time of year when we renew touch with folks, especially with those whom we do not see or communicate with often.

Mostly, it has been a year of work and play in our California orbit. We've spent much time around the property, partly catch-up work for the years we've been away. Several improvement projects have been completed, but where expert help is needed it is maddeningly slow because most skilled people want only contract jobs. The old-world craftsman and the competent, dependable handyman are endangered species!

Norman spends stimulating hours in the garden, finding fresh air and change of activity to be complements to his study work, which he also pursues with interest and which is enriched by exchange with colleagues all over the world. Our place is three-eighths of an acre with four houses and quite an inventory of plants to which Norman adds, exercising his green thumb, with an ever-expanding collection sprouting in pots, some of them native food plants for various Lepidoptera he is studying as one of his research diversions. He keeps the grounds ship-shape and free of weeds. We have a 5-year-old persimmon tree (Hachiya) which rewarded us with 25 fruits, the smallest 9 ounces, and the largest 7/8 pound each! -flavor far superior to the market variety. Muriel enjoys outside work, too (not weeding!), but that inside makes persistent demands. Norman throws up his hands at those obstacle courses numbered "1040" and "540", and Muriel begrudges the springtime hours they usurp. Actually, things are done cooperatively around here and Norman does his share inside too. For example, we set the breakfast table at night, and in the morning Norman brings Muriel a cup of coffee, and, having made a motion-time study, now gets breakfast "from scratch" in five minutes, plus or minus a few seconds, depending on the time of year and the temperature of the water in the pipes and the eggs set out the night before. Muriel gets dinner and does up the kitchen with the aid of a marvelous gadget in a remodelled cabinet, the dishwasher. Muriel fritters time making sugar solution and sterilizing feeders (homemade from test tubes) for our hummingbirds who reward us the year 'round with their iridescent colors and flight ballet. They are great entertainment when we have lunch in the patio (which we do at every nice-day opportunity). One of Norman's garden projects was to devise a small hothouse out of bits and pieces: a defunct bamboo window screen, a window frame with most of its glass, wire mesh that in summer is the frame for growing tomatoes in tubs, a sheet of plastic from a painting job, a saw horse, -and there must be some baling wire in there somewhere- all this supported by a shed wall and an arm of the passion vine trellis. It may not be an architect's visual delight, but it's neat, and it works!

Norman has been collating years of field work notes and writing an anthropology section for an updated work on Australian biogeography and ecology, including a summary of the advances in the field, working with Allen Keast of Queen's University in Ontario. Allen visited several days here and the two of them enjoyed hours of discussion toward developing the project. Now, with contributions from other writers also, the two-volume work is in the process of publication.

In July we made a long-planned trip to the White Mountains of Arizona where Norman had "dates" with two new species of moth, seeking data for his recreational research on the Hepialidae of North America for a Smithsonian Institution monograph. These primitive creatures fly only on a certain few nights in the year. A fellow Hepialid researcher, Ron Wielgus, and his wife, Alyn, from Phoenix guided us to the area. Miraculously, these plans dovetailed with visits from some of our folks in Australia. Our son, Tony, returning from Europe on a mission for his Adelaide company, joined his wife, Geraldine, as they flew in to S. F. Airport from opposite directions, and we were there to meet them. We had a day in Muir Woods, then, as the first leg of our Arizona trip, took them to Yosemite (a thrill for them, as it always is to us -if we stay away from the commercialized centers!). Getting lodging so late was good luck, and it was fun sharing it with our Keith Bardin family who went in their own car. Leaving, we parted at Madera, Tony and GERAL in a rented car, and we headed for Arizona. Our trip, through some country new to us, was a holiday as well as a research mission. and on the way back we had another of those great visits with the Birdsell's at Malibu. Two weeks after returning to Palo Alto we met another plane from Australia, bringing Bruce and Ruth Wallis (nephew and niece) and Robert and John, twin teenagers. One day we took them to Muir Woods, next day they saw sights in San Francisco on their own, and the following day flew to Grand Canyon, enroute to England. Our Australian kin packed an amazing amount of U. S. sight-seeing into about one week each family!

Last year's severe drought finally broke, and by February water rationing was discontinued in this area. At season's end we had had 150% of "normal" rainfall. This year has started promisingly, with early snow-pack in the Sierras and some rain here after an "Indian summer".

We are looking forward for the new year to another visit from daughter Beryl, Ron, and family who plan to spend every minute they can get exploring our West. For spring and Christmas "Down Under", if all goes well, we may find ourselves on another field trip!

We hope that you and all your family are enjoying life as we are. Be sure to stop in to see us when you are near - we are good at meeting planes and buses. We look forward to hearing news of your year when you can write. * * ALL GOOD WISHES for CHRISTMAS and the coming NEW YEAR

DECEMBER 1978 * 2314 Harvard Street, Palo Alto, Ca. 94306 * * CHEERIO - From the Tindales

Norman and Muriel

Dear Don,

We have had little news of you lately, except that my great friend Julian Hayden mentioned in a recent letter that you had been planning a trip to Australia, but that it had been cancelled because you had been ill. Hope that by this time you are on the mend, and that perhaps next year will be a time for your visit "down under".

Muriel & I are planning to spend three or four months in Adelaide & on a car trip across the Nullarbor in the Spring (Australian) of '979, and then to visit with my Australian family over Christmas.

We see references to your progress in educating anthropologists to the importance of understanding stone tools, and we are also realising, as you must, that the now established long term occupation of Australia, by the Karlar tool users, is affording a glimpse of the way in which stone tools developed in the mother continent of Europe/Asia/Africa. Australian tools represents an early complete sample removed from Asia (the Kuban phase) & then ages later several other samples arrived, culminating of course in the arrival of Western Europeans. I've got on to my 'hobby horse'. I started out to wish you all happiness in the coming New Year.

Norman

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