

Creetings from  
The Band's West  
Christmas, 1985

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Although we are not sure that we will ever be more than "winterers" by necessity, we are now permanent residents of Illinois. In March Tom ended his nine-year association with Howard and accepted the Capron Professorship of Classics at Hornmouth College. In May we bought a large, five-bedroom house, christened "The Band's West," where we envision ourselves living for the next thirty years. We have already added a deck, a patio door, several fruit trees and a half-bushel of daffodil bulbs to the house and grounds. The solar air-hot water system we installed in the house has made us avid sun-worshippers. Our new garden plot is quite fertile and we had a bumper crop of tomatoes and peppers this summer. In September we sold our house in "The Painter, which we shall always look back upon for fond memories and good friends!

Anne's commitment to "co-lead" Marie's Prommie troop last year led by spring to single-handed leadership. Despite having had one girl struck by a car before the eyes of the whole troop in May, Anne has volunteered to go solo again this year and has even added a couple of Daisy Scouts, including Julia (aged 5). Somehow Anne finds the time also to teach French to a few grade schoolers, including Marie (aged 8), once a week, as well as the odd hour devoted to more scholarly activities. Anne now finds she has to bake bread every ten days to keep up with domestic demand.

Marie received her First Communion in May and is now in third grade. She really likes her teacher and seems to be doing well academically. She is progressing by leaps and bounds on the piano and is now playing better than either of her parents did at her age. Julia entered Kindergarten this year. The curriculum, which basically centers around learning how to sit quietly and to follow directions, poses no challenge to Julia who nevertheless takes her school time very seriously. She is also beginning to learn piano from Tom and can now read music even though she cannot yet read a book. Both girls are also taking swimming lessons at the YMCA and lead very busy lives indeed.

Meanwhile, Richard (aged 3) is majoring in mischief. He does things neither of the girls ever dreamed of doing. He does give the home environment some rest two mornings per week, when he attends nursery school (the same one Julia attended last year). Pray for his teachers and his parents.

We spent an interesting but complicated summer back east. While Tom was at Harvard for eight weeks to attend a seminar on myth, Anne and the kids went to Maine to mingle with lions and watermen. The wedding preparations were held on evenings, but the seminar was worth the sacrifice. At least Tom now knows what Harvard is really like. Our other travels this year have included trips to Chicago, Springfield, St. Hannibal, Mo, and Kansas City, where we visited some of Anne's cousins and saw some of her childhood haunts.

The watermen are all fine. Anne's father surprised us by retiring in September. He now spends a lot of time out in the woods with Carl, who has become a self-employed machinist and sometime manufacturer of a fancy wood-chipper he designed himself. Anne's mother attended art classes this fall and even felt well enough to visit Boston twice this year, once with Anne to see an incredible Chinese crafts exhibit, and once with Debbie to see the Fenix display. Jack now has the medical practice to himself and is, from all indirect reports, very busy. Anne's Gramma Kath has had an operation on her retina which has miraculously restored much of her faltering eyesight.

The news from Tom's family is a mixture of good and bad. Margybeth and Billy, still in Western Australia, are expecting their first child in March. They plan to return stateside in June, despite an offer of a five-year job extension. Tom's brother Eddie has bought his own house in Scullville NJ and spends many non-casino hours fixing it up. Boris was transferred to Hoboken High where she now teaches English and Math. She has opened a video store in Jersey City Heights. It is called "Off the Wall" and is doing very well. Toni plans to spend New Year's in Rio de Janeiro. The bad news is that Tom's husband Steve has decided he doesn't want to be married anymore and has left Toni and his two adorable daughters, Chris (aged 3) and Terry (aged 2). Toni has returned to work part-time and is coping as best she can. Tom's dad and his wife Josephine have had some sickness this year but felt well enough to visit Hornmouth for Thanksgiving.

Don't miss Halley's Comet. You won't have another chance for 75 years. Isti mirant stella.

Richard  
mark  
Tom Anne  
Maria Julia