

Dear Family and Friends,

December, 2004

The year must be coming to an end – Thanksgiving is over, Christmas is a stone's throw away, the New Year is just around the corner and we are putting together another one of our annual letters.

This has turned out to be the year of celebrating births – two new additions to the (extended) family and 40, 60 and 80 year birthdays. Early in the year we were blessed with two additions to the Maung-Goh family – Maung Khyn Win and Ooi Jia Wen, born on February 6 and January 23, respectively. They are definitely a pair of cutie pies and a bundle of joy to us and, we are sure, their parents.



Besides celebrating these births, at the same time we were also celebrating Chinese New Year with the traditional re-union dinner, followed two weeks later with Chap Goh Mei. The only sad part was that Uncle Raymond's family was still in mourning following the passing away of Aunt Imelda after a long struggle with cancer. We will miss her greatly.

The traditional celebrations continued with Cheng Beng in early April, where we joined the extended Goh clan to visit the family graves to clean them up, pay our respects and burn offerings. While Lars sticks out like a sore thumb at these events, he has a great time. In middle of April, rather than go to Thailand as usual for Thai New Year (and the country-wide water fight), we returned to Penang to celebrate Burmese New Year at the temple there. After a light lunch inside the dining hall, we emerged and quickly got very wet in the massive water fight going on outside in the temple grounds.



Finally at the end of celebrated the 60th Elaine. The weekend Genting Highlands and attended by most and nieces, and good heart palpitations waiting for her at the quickly recovered and (we hope!!!).



April, before leaving Asia, we birthday of Jacqui's mother, surprise party was held at (Malaysia's one and only casino) of her siblings, many nephews friends. Poor Elaine experienced when she saw all those people restaurant, but thankfully she enjoyed the rest of the weekend

And then it came time to celebrate the birth of another child forty years ago. Yeap.... Lars hit the BIG FOUR ZERO!!!! And he celebrated it by doing the things he loved - traveling while driving the first car he has ever owned; tasting and drinking single malt whiskeys at numerous distilleries; golfing at the birth place of golf in Scotland; exploring, hiking and sailing in his favorite playground – Norway; taking thousands (and we mean thousands) of photographs with his new digital SLR camera; and, best of all, sharing it all with family and friends. As you may have guessed from this litany, for our travels this year we decided on a more “civilized” mode of travel through northern Europe.

On May 2 in Munich we picked up our new “Baby”, hot from the oven at the factory, a BMW 330 convertible. We then chalked up around 17,700 km driving around northern Europe for 3½ months before dropping off the car in Frankfurt to be shipped back to the US. Two thumbs-up

for European Delivery! So, baby to? Well, from Munich Neuschwanstein, the fairy tale Ludwig, seemingly suspended then drove east through the fresh snow) and Austria and



where did we take this new we headed south to castle built by the mad King in the enveloping mist. We Alps (with a coating of Switzerland into France.



We first savored the “Vins de Bourgogne” in and around Beune and then walked in the footsteps of nobility in the grounds and rooms of the chateaux of Loire Valley. We then decided to skip Paris for the serenity and bliss of Mont St. Michel (in the off season), which was just absolutely divine. We stayed for a night on the “island” and the village was gorgeous and the abbey was incomparable. It felt like the angels descended to Earth as the Benedictine monks and nuns sang during the masses. Just awesome.



Then across the English channel to the UK, where we first visited Lars’ brother Kevin and his family at Winchester. It was a short but sweet visit, a quick stop to see our nieces and nephews before we made the long drive north to Scotland in our car that “did not have a roof as we could not afford one” – good one Corinne. Our first stop in Scotland on the whiskey trail was at the Isle of Islay, which we felt was the best place for single malts.



Jacqui was kind enough to volunteer to be the designated driver while we were on the island so that Lars could take full advantage of the single malt tasting. And boy, did he take advantage of it. At Bowmore we shared the tour with only one other



couple and during the tasting we pretty much took over the bar, with Lars behind the bar serving so we sampled all varieties multiple times. At Ardbeg they were kind enough to leave the tasting bottles out on a table so we did some damage. And finally at Laphroaig, one of our favorites, Jacqui purchased Lars his present – a bottle of 40 year old single malt that he will be saving for future birthdays to share with whomever turns up.



It was then back on the ferry to head to the mainland and a short drive up the coast to Oban and then east towards the castles of Stirling and Edinburgh where our group of two began its expansion. We first picked up Lars’ parents Karin and Bill at the airport and then a few days later Lars’ brother, Carl and Carl Jr. From here we began a week long whiskey and golf tour, driving first to Pitlochry (a charming town with the world’s smallest distillery and a fun golf course), briefly visited Balmoral (the Queen was out) and then on to Huntley (where we played at the amazing and challenging coastal golf course of Cullen). As we made our way to St. Andrews it became clear that the golf was quickly sidelining the whiskey tasting.

In St. Andrews we were joined by more family and friends who traveled all the way from Winchester, Norway and Hamburg – thanks guys for coming so far. Over the weekend there was



more food, wine, single malts, golf, aquavit, and, with alcohol thrown into the mix, the inevitable Lohrbauer toes. It turned out to be a great birthday bash, held at the amazing Balbirnie estate, followed by midnight fireworks back at St. Andrews (the Queen even showed up for that). It was a smashing birthday celebration and we appreciate all that traveled so far to make it so special.



From St. Andrews we left the great isles of the United Kingdom and made our way across the North Sea to Norway. We landed in Kristiansand and then began our long journey up to the North Cape at the top of Norway, the northernmost point in Europe.

But first stop was at the southernmost point in Norway at Lindesnes and then onto Bergen via Stavanger along the North Sea Road. In Bergen, we loaded our car on the Hurtigruten (express “mail” boat) that took us north along the entire length of Norway’s coast across the Arctic Circle to Kirkenes. It is known as the “World’s Most Beautiful Voyage”, and it certainly lives up to its billing.



Once in Kirkenes, we began our long epic driving tour of Norway which included so many wonderful moments. We drove on some of the windiest, narrowest and wildest roads in the world putting the handling of our baby to the test (and she passed with flying colors); passed over, on and under countless fjords; walked to the true northernmost point in Europe at Knivskjelodden; hiked under the ever shining midnight sun; checked out the fascinating stone age rock carvings of Alta; hiked up to and explored glacier crevices and caves; conquered the 2,069 meter summit of Snota in Trollheimen; went whale watching off the islands of Vesterålen; were stunned by the absolute beauty of the Lofoten islands; explored the charming old mining town of Røros; sat on the edge of the 650 meter high Preikestolen (Pulpit Rock) overlooking the



Lysefjord (with Jacqui nearly giving Lars a heart attack – see photo!!!); celebrated cousin Jan’s birthday in Koppang and Tante Berit’s birthday at her rustic cabin in the woods; sailed in the Oslo Fjord in Jørgen’s new sailboat; and visited the parking lot overlooking the beautiful fjord of Geiranger where we slept in our car (all hotels were full) on our first night of our honeymoon after getting married in Norway six years ago. What memories!!!



Norway has always been a “home away from home” for us because of family and friends, and this year we were also joined by Lars’ parents and his brother Carl’s family for two weeks. We took a nostalgic trip down memory lane as we visited places that played important parts in Karin’s youth. In Koppang we got together with family and hiked in the woods and hills picking fresh berries, swam in the (cold) river, ate and ate, and had a milk urn throwing contest (don’t ask). In Skjerdingen we hung out in the mountains and visited the remote farm where Karin spent a very cold and isolated winter after the war. Boy, the grandchildren were fascinated by those stories which, in hindsight, are humorous, but must have been a struggle to endure at the time. Back in Oslo, besides visiting the Lohrbauer family grave, we had some great parties at Jørgen and Lise’s new home (we hope that our paint work is not peeling already) on the hillside overlooking the Oslo Fjord and at Live and Frode’s home in “Chicken Falls” (just loved all those homemade desserts). It was a great summer in Norway – for once we had outstanding sunny and hot weather that allowed us to drive most of the time with our car top down. Yes – summer does exist in Norway!!!



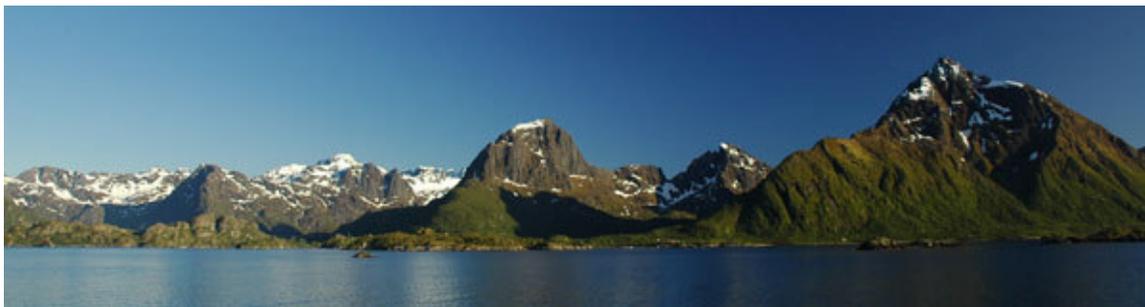
Other than Norway, we spent time in Denmark visiting ancient cities and driving on the sandy beaches of Blokhus, and in Germany where we were delighted by the wonders of old cities such as Schleswig, Goslar, Göttingen, Lübeck and Hamburg (where we visited our good friends Steffi and Olaf). After about 3½ months in Europe, we dropped our car off in Frankfurt (it was tougher than we thought to leave our baby) and then flew back to Kuala Lumpur in mid-August. But we barely had enough time to unpack, touch base with family and friends and then re-pack for our return to the States.



Lars wanted to introduce Jacqui to other parts of the US, so we had our “baby” shipped from Germany to San Francisco and then drove across the country to Florida. It was a great way for Jacqui to get a better feel for the States and a chance for Lars to visit some old, close friends he has not seen in over two decades, including Basma and her family in California and the Mann’s and Olson’s in Wyoming (where teenager Lars spent two summers pretending to be a cowboy). It was great to catch up with them all after so many years.

After returning to Florida, we dropped our bags and then made a quick trip to England for the wedding of Craig and Sophie, who met on our eight month long Trans-Africa trip in 2000/01. The best man, Paolo, was also on that trip and it was great to catch up with our old traveling companions. We wish them all the very best for the future.

Now back in Florida, we are enjoying the holiday season. We had one more very important birthday to celebrate. Lars’ father turned 80 this year and when Carl’s family was down for Thanksgiving we celebrated this wonderful occasion. Thanksgiving was enjoyed with family and friends and, as usual, Lars ate way too much. After that, other than preparing for Christmas, we have begun work on our brand new project. Last year we purchased a lot in a development on Lake Keowee in South Carolina and we have been making trips up there to begin the process of picking an architect and designing our new home. In addition to some travels, that will be our major activity in 2005 (and 2006). Come January, we will be heading back to Kuala Lumpur to celebrate Chinese New Year with Jacqui’s family.



**We wish you all the very best for the coming new year. Peace on Earth!!!**