



## *Holiday Greetings from Beverley and Doug*

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Greetings Friends,

We started 2019 in Singapore, walking across the Padang after the spectacular New Year fireworks. Whilst in Singapore, before the end of 2018, we had a visit from Sarah and Jean who were researching near Chang Mai. We also met up with the Kishores, good friends and neighbours from our 1990 time in Malaysia. An excellent finish to 2018.

In March, Beverley took off for New York – her annual ten day visit to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The Asia Pacific region is the largest and most diverse UN “region” so with formal UN discussions, “Side Events” inside the UN as well as literally hundreds of civil society/grass roots panels - from 8.30am to 6.30pm within 10 minutes’ walk of UN itself – timetabling one’s day is definitely challenging!



SeniorNet set up “Outreach” sessions at a local Retirement Village in 2018 and in 2019 we worked through the process with two further local villages. The links we developed brought the club a good number of new members.

Our travels for many years have been connected to a specific event and this year it was the Centenary of Graduate Women International, a three day conference in Geneva. Getting us there and eventually back to NZ gave Doug an interesting project. However, to start, we made a bee-line for Switzerland but changed at Munich with Beverley going to Geneva and Doug to Zurich. During her time in Geneva Beverley took the opportunity to hand over the reins of Pacific Graduate Women’s’ Network to a vibrant team from Fiji. Doug caught a bus to Constance to meet up with school friend Janice.

After the conference we joined a coach tour around Switzerland which morphed into a cruise down the Rhine to Amsterdam. Doug joined the coach in Zurich and Beverley joined on day two in Geneva. We paused at the home of Évian water, to fill our bottles before a visit to [Gruyères](#) castle which impressed more than the cheese

did, and on to Grindelwald via the obligatory chocolate tasting at Broc. After a day riding up and down the Jungfrau we moved to Bern noted for its bears and rose garden outlook; it was a delightful old town to explore. On to Lucerne: again we had a good explore of the city and an ascent of Mount Pilatus. On the mountain we were caught up in National Holiday crowds, and had visions of spending a "Night on a Bare Mountain" but our guide pulled a few quick tricks and we were fitted into the cable car.



We coached to Basel (via Zurich, it's a small country) and set sail down the Rhine. A day in the Black Forest included open air museums and cuckoo clock makers, while from Strasbourg we visited the Maginot Line and cruised on, visiting Heidelberg, Mainz and Koblenz. Time in the Mechanical Musical Instrument Museum in Rudesheim was a highlight. We had a good walk around Cologne and sailed right into Amsterdam's canal system and our final port.



During a couple of days exploring Amsterdam we happened upon an exhibition by Banksy which gave an interesting prelude to the Rijksmuseum. Then a day trip to The Hague for a great catch up with old friends Lydia and Peter whilst exploring that city.

Eurostar runs from London to Amsterdam, but not Amsterdam to London. We had to catch a local train to get to Brussels to connect with

Eurostar and the local train sat silently outside Brussels for an hour and a half causing us to miss our Eurostar connection. However, sister Janet was still waiting for us at St Pancras - we braved the Underground together and enjoyed our time with her in Pinner.

Our short stop in London included a concert at St Martin's in the Fields and a visit to the Bolshoi Ballet's "Don Quixote" with. Our delightfully friendly "Z Hotel" backed on to Covent Garden and shared an entrance with the Artists' Church in Covent Garden. The church and its gardens were full of memorials, tablets and benches, many of them with names familiar from the last forty years - Doug reminisced whilst sitting on Morse's bench.

Janet joined us for our last expedition in the UK – taking the train to Edinburgh. The Edinburgh Fringe Festival kept us all well entertained; but we were really there for the Tattoo that was definitely an evening to remember – now ticked off Beverley's bucket list. We recommend a visit to the National Museum of Scotland.

The final train ride to Manchester was "standing room only" – and a demonstration of how not to run a railway, but that night we had a good time with David and Diane. We broke our flight home at HCM City (Saigon); wandered the streets, temples and markets and then joined a group heading for the Mekong Delta. The ship was the Jayavarman, named after the Khmer king around 1100AD. There were tours ashore every day, and each day we had a different form of transport – local boats, cyclos, bullock carts, motor bike trailers, most of them manageable. We visited local home industries, restored temples, schools... Our cabin was larger than expected and the meals and view from the cabin, were great. At the end of



the cruise we stayed on in Siem Reap and with a local guide made return visits to Angkor Wat and Thom Wat, and the City museum, which was excellent.

It's hardly surprising that our family motto is "If in Doubt – Travel" and we realise how very lucky we are to be able to do so.

In September, a week after arriving home, we flew to Wellington for Beverley's Investiture by the



Governor General - she received the MNZM for her work with women, particularly in the Pacific. Visiting the capital enabled us to hold a reunion and celebration dinner with friends and relatives and we were thrilled with our evening. Also, in September, SeniorNet Glenfield held its AGM and Doug was able to hand over the role of Tuition Manager after eleven years. So, both Beverley - who has stepped back from many years on the Pacific Women's Watch Board and also convening the Pacific Graduate Women's Network for nine years - and Doug are both ending 2019 feeling a little less tied to their responsibilities. We are almost fancy-free octogenarians.

Christmas 2019 has been special with Sarah and Jean with us and Chef Doug's Dinner lived up to expectations.

Healthwise things are pretty good, and although Beverley requests a wheel chair for flights she is keeping the garden in good shape. We now have a treadmill and Doug is walking his way around Europe and Egypt, courtesy of his iPad clipped to the machine.

We send you love and best wishes for the Holiday Season and a healthy and prosperous 2020.