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Editorial

I hope, by now, we have all recovered from our Christmas and New Year festivities! I think I have, although at time of writing I am not quite sure on this point!!! Mind you, with the turmoil of moving to a new home just four weeks before Christmas, I could plausibly blame this event for my occasional mental confusion during recent weeks, rather than an excessive imbibing of the wonderful goodies of the Christmas / New Year season?!!! Be that as it may, I can report that we love our new home and as all except the eldest of our children live in or near New Plymouth, they think its marvellous being only five to ten minutes away by car, from Mum and Dad! And, you know what? I'm already quite fond of being a 'City slicker'! Me!! A 'country boy' all my life! Scary, isn't it?!!! Christine said just a few days ago, she felt as if we had already lived here nearly a year! So, with her obvious satisfaction with our new home makes for a double warm and fuzzy feeling for me!

But now on a different thought-train! I assume all our readers had a good look at the centre-fold of our December issue, the children's

Christmas-card picture competition. I had a long look at these beautiful pictures because I was so very impressed by the children's efforts! But two of them particularly caught my eyes, not only because they were nicely painted, there was something else about these two contrasting pictures! It took me quite a little while to realise why these two pictures had caught my attention so strongly. I perceived strong lateral thinking in these two pictures, but at two quite different angles. I refer to the paintings by Sonja Bartschi (13) and Natalie Hess (10) first and third in the 10-14 years age group respectively.

First, to Natalie's picture; it brought back memories of long ago, for me! I well remember the little Advent wreaths our mothers made with Holly twigs with its' beautiful dark-green leaves and little red berries, the only plant tough enough to stand in all its' glory into the beginning of the Northern Hemisphere Winter! Mothers usually wove a few Pine twigs into these wreaths as well. If I recall correctly, one of these Holly rings was hung on the outside of the front door of houses in December, and

a few were hung on the graves of departed close relatives in the cemetery around the local church. Hence, for me, Natalie's picture gave me a sense of quiet and peaceful contemplation and memories of a spiritual nature!

Now, Sonja's picture caught my attention from a quite different angle, one immediately sees the humorous side obviously intended by the Artist! Here we see Santa Claus in colourful shorts and jandels sitting on a fold-up camping chair on a quiet beach on what appears to me a remote spot of the Australian Coast, complete with sunglasses and a large cup of?? Something in his right hand and a barbeque on his left, looking for all the world as if he intends to have a jolly good holiday Down under!

And why not? No-one deserves a good holiday more than Santa, straight after Christmas. After all, he has been one awfully busy person for eleven months of the year! So, January belongs to him, so he can have a jolly good Holiday!!! And for this he is not going close to his home in the Northern Hemisphere where it's usually freezing cold during January!! No, I have it from a very reliable source that Santa loves his Holidays in the warm Januaries Down under!!!

So, thank you very much, Sonja and Natalie, for your two great pictures. But many thanks to all the other children, also, who sent in all those beautiful drawings. This old Grandpa is delighted with all this artistic talent so obvious amongst the very youngest generation of the members of our Society! I think there might even be a future budding Michael Angelo amongst them!!! Too optimistic? Nah, no way, with all this talent!!!

I hope you are all well! Cheerio from Paul.

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