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OUT OF THE BIN December 2007
From MERV BINNS

Dear Friends,

Well, events in 2007 have meant some big changes to my life style, but at least I am still here. If it was not for the scars on my chest I would find it difficult to believe I could have died and that only by being opened up like a tin of beans and otherwise cut and sewed up, I would not be writing this. Did I really have a heart attack and did I really have a triple heart by pass operation? Apart from being tired most of the time, having a few aches and pains from gout and arthritis and finding it difficult to do any garden work and such, I guess I am not feeling too bad. Medications I am still on, probably permanently, are also causing side effects I could do without.

I do not actually miss having to do the lawn mowing jobs I did for some people for up to twenty years, but of course I do miss seeing all the friends I made while working for them. I also miss the money I was earning! Having to rely entirely on the aged pension is my wife Helena's and my major problem. This last year with extra costs related to my operation, has been a real problem time, but with assistance from friends and other sources we have just managed. Careful planning, limiting our costs and using our income to the best advantage, will hopefully keep us afloat from now on.

The heart attack came only a few months after our big move from Oakleigh Road late 2006 and we have still not got all our stuff organised and we probably never will. Just looking at the boxes still stacked up everywhere is enough to tire me out, but I have plenty to keep me occupied otherwise. I have been catching up on reading my collection of books, that I have had sitting on the shelves unread for many years, watching TV, cooking, which I enjoy a lot, doing a little garden work – keeping all my potplants and herbs and vegetables alive in boxes – and occasionally getting to see a movie. We took advantage of the free travel and events during seniors' week. I find it very tiring driving long distances but I hope that I might get over that in due course.

We do have many friends in the Science Fiction fan fraternity and we are pleased to see them at conventions and various get-togethers. However I would like to be able to communicate with more people, perhaps via email or even a blog if someone can help us get one going. (So if you send us a reply to this, please include your current email address if you have one.) We wish we could resume producing our personal newsletters such as *Out of the Bin* on a regular basis. The cost of producing them has more or less put an end to that (except for the occasional simple letter like this one) but we would like to do more if and when we can get our computers going properly again and afford the cost of photocopying and postage.

So, this missive is just to let all my friends with whom I have not had much or any contact for many months, know that I am *alive* and reasonably well and to wish you all a Great Christmas and holiday season and a Happy New Year.

Merv B