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Dear Friends and Relatives,

The days have rolled into months and finally into a year. And here we are at the Christmas season again. The 96TH birthday came and went, leaving me in

reasonably good health for that ripe old age. There have been no basic changes in my life this past year. I am still living in my own apartment with the same group of women, plus John and Char, looking after my needs. My legs are a bit less sturdy and my hearing slightly less acute but my eyesight is still good — I read the newspaper without glasses, which many of my helpers cannot do.

Most of you have not seen my upside-down apartment. When you come in the front door there is a hallway and a flight of stairs before you. To the right on the hall is my "day room" where I eat meals and spend most of my time [photo at right]. Next on the hall is a laundry closet, then the bathroom, and my bedroom at the end of the hall. When you go up the stairs you arrive in the living room [photo above], directly over the bedroom. Toward the front is the dining room and kitchen. That's why it is upside down — the usual first-floor rooms are upstairs. I'm told that it was built that way because the view of the mountains is less obstructed from the second floor. I enjoy my living room but I do not go up every day. I can still climb the stairs but it has become quite a chore.



The dreadful war news in September brought us a flurry of patriotism and brought a gift of a flag to display in my front yard. It takes a jolt sometimes for us to appreciate our great country! I pray that we will have peace in the world one day.

I have not seen Roamer, the cat that disappeared last fall. John thought he saw her a few weeks ago but he was not sure, so there have been no confirmed sightings. Another neighborhood cat visits me every day, uses my lap for her nap and requests petting. I call her Gray Cat because she is one. She brings me joy for I do like kitty cats!

I hope that all is well with all of you and that the new year will be a super one for you. I am enjoying all the cards that have been coming in. It is great to hear from you by mail or telephone. You can even e-mail me at jrs@johnrsweet.com I'm not that up to date personally but John will print it and bring it to me and reply for me. He has been terribly neglectful of my web site but promises that he will work on it fairly soon and add some new old pictures. Go to <http://johnrsweet.com/Personal/MHS/index.html> but wait a couple of weeks so John has a chance to update it.

Mary Heath