

Croft Annual Newsletter 1999

Dear

Greetings from sunny Australia – it certainly has been hot – but we are not complaining – it could have been worse, like the snowstorms in the US, or the icy cold winds of Europe. Saw pictures of iced over Niagara Falls. To those who made contact with us this festive season – we thank you for your greetings and good wishes – it was great hearing from you – and to those we haven't heard from yet we hope it is not too long before we have some news. Both Joan & I extend our very best wishes to you and yours for a safe, happy and healthy 1999.

1998 seems to have slipped by very quickly – our children are all OK. John (40) is still progressing in his catering supplies business. He was married on 23rd May to Lynne – the lady of his life. This is the 2nd marriage for each of them – both having two children to their previous marriages. John's two girls, Danielle (11) and Melissa (9), are growing up into lovely young ladies. Lynne's two girls, Jodi (23) and Sally (21), both live with John & Lynne while John's two girls live with Merylyn. John has them once a week and every second weekend. Lynne works in the business with John and prior to Christmas they were very busy, so on Christmas Day they left for a well-earned holiday for two weeks in Bali (Indonesia).

It is now one year since Suzanne (38) & Ross opened their magnificent new carpet & vinyl shop. They have worked hard and the sales have escalated so much they have had to put on two other sales people in the shop. Ross and Suzanne are very good to their staff and in return receive good value from them. They also have their own carpet and vinyl layers. Ross and Suzanne had a holiday in Bangkok and Phuket (Thailand) in June '98, courtesy of the Carpet Choice Group, along with other carpet people.

Jeanette (36) and husband Michael have had a busy year in their photographic business. They live in Sydney with their two gorgeous boys Ben (6) and Chris (5). Joan and I went to Sydney on the 17th November – initially to look after the boys whilst Jeanette and Michael went off to Honolulu for a holiday cruise around the Hawaiian Islands. Michael brought his Mum and Dad from South Carolina to Honolulu to go on the cruise with them. They had a great time and all returned to Sydney so his Mum and Dad could catch up with the Grandchildren. Bob and Kay returned to the U.S on 4th December and then on Friday 5th December Joan and I sailed out on the Fair Princess for a 13-day cruise to the South Pacific spending time in Vila, Dravuni Island, Suva, Mystery Island and Noumea. We arrived back in Sydney on 18th December and flew home the same day. The entertainment on board was excellent – great meals. We made a lot of new friends from Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and New Zealand. There were 1500 passengers on board. On Dravuni Island (Fiji) and other ports John always took a bag of candies (sweets) and fruit for the native children and enjoyed watching the happy smiles on their faces.

The weather prior to Christmas was beautiful – temperatures around 30 degrees each day and on Christmas Day it was 37 degrees – that's 104 Fahrenheit. It was

a week of intense garden work – watering each evening and covering azaleas with shade cloth during the day to avoid severe burning. Then a welcome relief on Boxing Day - the forecast was for a change so I was up early to cut the lawns and at 10am, down came the rain – wonderful!

Our Christmas was quiet – we only had our eldest daughter, Suzanne, and her husband Ross with us for Christmas dinner plus Dominic, a Philippino friend. Dominic's parents live in the Philippines so he calls us his Australian Mum & Dad.

Robert (34), our youngest, and his family didn't make it to Australia this year but they advise us they hope to be here by Christmas 1999. They will have been married 10 years this coming November. Robert's wife Paula keeps very busy looking after Chelsea (6), Madeline (4) and James (2) as well as doing some part time work in a store in Annapolis (Maryland). Robert is very happy working for the Marriott Group in Maryland.

During the past year we went to various morning melody shows – also to the musical "Fiddler on the Roof" and to see a couple of great movies "Titanic" and "Saving Private Ryan". Sadly we attended several funerals of dear friends and relations. During 1998 the world lost several great entertainers including Frank Sinatra, Roy Rogers, Lloyd Bridges and Sonny Bono etc.

We had a visit from dear friends from Bombay (India) who Joan went to Cathedral School with in the 1950s. The last time we saw them was in 1985 on our visit to India so it was lovely to see them. We had a reunion of the Cathedralites at our home here on 15th November – about 65 people attended, all now living in Melbourne.

The new year commenced again with Saddam Hussein of Iraq causing more problems and finally the U.S has given him another taste of his own medicine – let's hope they can silence him forever. The El Nino and global warming continues to bring various disasters throughout the world – floods, landslides etc.

Well, dear friends, we again offer our best wishes for 1999 with good health and happiness. We do look forward to any correspondence from you so please do keep in touch and we hope that in the not too distant future we may see you 'Downunder' in the Land of Oz.

Again, please note our correct address and postcode:

John & Joan Croft
47 Coven Avenue
Heathmont 3135
Melbourne
Australia

Tel: (3) 9729 8085
Fax: (3) 9850 8788
Email: ross@hard.net.au