

The Croft Chronicle

March 2008

Greetings, we do apologies for our lack of correspondence, and special thanks to those who have kept in touch. To those we have not heard from, we hope this will renew our friendship. We think of you and talk of you often and the good times we have shared together. We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and wish you and yours lots of happiness and good health for 2008.

Both Joan and I have had our share of medical problems over the past couple of years. In late 2005, Joan was experiencing pain in her left knee and the surgeon advised she needed a total knee replacement; the operation was in Feb 2006. After a week in St Vincents Hospital she spent a further 2 weeks in a rehabilitation centre where she had therapy and daily exercises. The pain was gone but it took a total of 16 months for the new knee to become fully operational. She goes to the local swimming pool every Friday morning where they have organised hydrotherapy classes. She is now having trouble with her right knee but she has told the surgeon she doesn't want another operation, she wants to try an arthroscopy.

At Christmas 2005 John was in severe pain, after several checks, it was diagnosed as acute hernia, but the operation was not until Feb 2006, the same time as Joan was in hospital. John stayed at our eldest daughter's house on discharge. Then in July 2006 he gave the family a lot of concern, with this dreadful cough.

He went to bed one Friday night at

9pm, got up at midnight gasping for breath. Joan rang for an ambulance. John's heart went completely out of whack and beating irregularly. The fluid and blood could not be pumped around his body, his lungs filled; he was virtually drowning in his own fluid.

The paramedics worked on him non-stop. Without them he wouldn't be here today. They took him to intensive care. The doctors and nurses were wonderful. However, he will be on medication for the rest of his life.

Joan celebrated her 70th Birthday on 18 Oct and John his 77th Birthday on 22 Jan. For Joan's Birthday we motored to Adelaide via country towns, vineyard districts and the Adelaide Hills and enjoyed a lovely old village called "Harndorf" founded by Lutheran migrants from Germany in the late 1800's.

We took 3 days to reach Adelaide, spent 5 days enjoying the sites and a further 5 days returning home via the coast road along the southern ocean, it was a long drive but very enjoyable.

On 20 Dec 2007 we flew to Sydney to spend 2 weeks with our youngest daughter Jeanette (45), she picked us up at Sydney airport. It was lovely being with her and visiting the sites of the city with its beautiful harbour and Opera House.

26 Dec was a lovely sunny day, we took a picnic to the park near North Head where the Pacific Ocean flows into Sydney Harbour. We watched the start of the Sydney-Hobart yacht race.

Jeanette lives in a lovely north shore suburb called St Ives with her two boys, Ben; 15 and 6'2" tall and is a leading cadet in the Air Force. Chris is 14 and 6'3" tall and is talking about switching from Navy Cadets to the Air Force to be with his brother. They are attending Northern Beaches Christian School and both excellent students. Our eldest daughter Suzanne (47) and husband Ross have had a busy year, their carpet shops are doing well. They have also had extensive landscaping around their home including installation of a large swimming pool. They live in a suburb called 'The Basin', only 10 minutes away from us in Melbourne. In December 2007 they and the children; Paige (13) and Kahala (6) went on a South Pacific Christmas cruise visiting Vila, Ouvea, Isle of Pines and Noumea, returning to Sydney on 27 December (Ross's Birthday).

Jeannette had organised a celebration. They had a week in Sydney, where we all had a lovely New Year's Eve together, celebrating not far from the Sydney Harbour Bridge and witnessed the fantastic fire works display at midnight from the bridge.

In 2006 Ross, Suzanne and girls went to a wedding in the UK. They

spent 2 weeks there before flying home via USA. They stayed in LA (Santa Monica) and visited all the tourist spots. They flew to Los Vegas staying at the 'Luxor' for 4 days then 3 days in the Disneyland complex at Anaheim where they had a great time.

On 19 April, this year they are off to Disneyland (Hong Kong) for a week. They do have a good life.

Our eldest son; John (49) and wife Lynne have sold their catering supplies business to a large company 'Bidvest'. John and Lynne have been kept on in the business, John is the General Manager. John's 2 girls; Danielle (20) and Melissa (18) are both at Uni, Danielle has switched from nursing to teaching and Melissa is studying Sports Physio Therapy.

Last August (2007) John and Lynne took off for a five week overseas trip; (22 August to 25 September) they flew from Melbourne to Rome with an overnight stop in Tokyo. After 5 days exploring and enjoying the many tourist attraction of Ancient Rome they spent a few days in Sienna then Florence before travelling by bus to Venice. They brought home some beautiful pieces of Venetian glass works.

After 3 days in Amsterdam and 5 days in Paris they flew to Baltimore (USA) to stay with John's younger brother; Robert (43) his wife Paula and their children Chelsea (15), Madeline (13) and James (11). After 5 wonderful days they flew to Las Vegas also staying at the 'Luxor'. John said 'wow - what a place'. They spent 4 days of 'on-the-go' in this unique

place with its gambling night life, shows, shopping and food, it's got the lot. They had a great time and even won some money.

Robert (43) and his family came to settle in Australia in Nov 2004, but returned to live in the USA in Feb 2005. Only 3 months here. We were all disappointed; they really didn't give Australia a chance. Robert says the children are much happier in the USA, so if that's the case so-be-it. Life is where you make it. Unfortunately we don't have any current photos of them.

For those of you that have visited us and met our beloved English Springer Spaniel 'Dougal' we are sorry to report that he is now in doggy heaven and very dearly missed, he was nearly 15 years old.

We have had a change of Government in Australia last November, much to my disappointment. The Labour party (controlled by Unions) and who spent \$50 million on promoting Labour, won. Our Prime Minister for the last 11 years was John Howard (Liberal). He has now been replaced by Kevin Rudd (Labour).

The election of a new President of the United States will be later this year, looks like Hilary Clinton or Barack Obama for the Democrats.

We have seen a couple of overseas visitors this year, from England. At Christmas we heard from Joan's cousin Marlene Robson

(nee Twiss, also Joan's maiden name) who lives near Vichy in France, with husband Tom Robson. They are Scottish. Marlene has two daughters one living in Glasgow and one in Sydney. Tom and Marlene stayed with us a couple of years ago and have advised us that they will probably be here next Christmas.

Suzanne & Ross will celebrate 25 years of marriage in September 2010 and plan to renew their wedding vows on the Island of Santorini in the Greek isles. Quite a few have said to them that they will try to attend from Australia and England. Hope we can make it?

We would love to hear from you with up-dates of what you have been doing and any family news. We treasure the opportunity to share with you and hear your stories.

Love and best wishes,
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HI - WE GOT YOUR ADDRESS FROM PAULA AND NOW YOU ARE HARRIS WITH TWO CHILDREN. LONG TIME SINCE WE HAVE SEEN EACH OTHER - YOU WERE SUCH A YOUNG GIRL WHEN WE VISITED BHOVAL

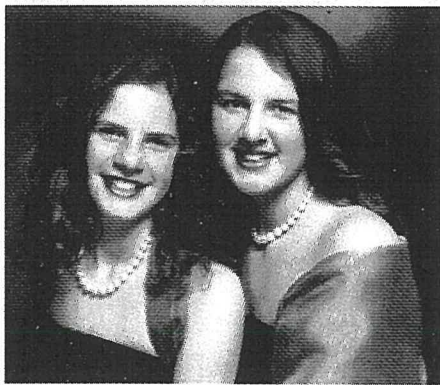
PLEASE GIVE OUR REGARDS TO YOUR MUM & DAD - VERA & JOHN - AND WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU - WITH ALL YOUR NEWS.

IT'S VERY HOT HERE IN MELBOURNE AT PRESENT - WE DO NEED RAIN WE ARE GOING TO SYDNEY AGAIN FOR A WEEK - 25/3 TO 3/4 TO VISIT JERRARD.
LOVE T. ALL
JOHN & JOAN

Our Family



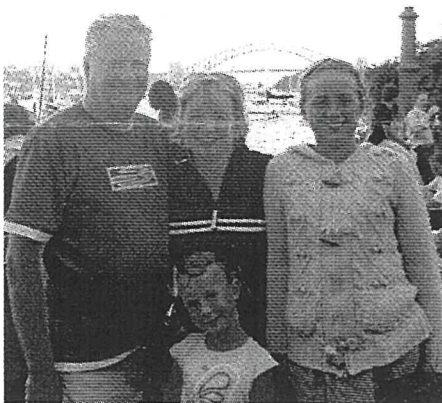
Kahala & Dougal



Melissa & Danielle



John & Lynne



Ross, Suzanne, Paige & Kahala



Ben, Jeanette & Chris