

# THE CROFT CHRONICLES

January 2011.

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Greetings GLENIS & WANDA & FAMILY

*Please accept our apologies for the lateness of this letter. A special thank you to all those who sent cards and letters and to those from whom we have not heard, we hope that this will renew memories of the good times we have shared together. We do think and talk of you often and hope you all had a wonderful Christmas. We wish you and yours lots of happiness and good health for 2011.*

*We had a relaxing and happy Christmas with our daughter Suzanne, Ross and children at their home. Our other daughter, Jeanette came from Sydney with her two boys, Ben 18 and Christopher 17. Ben joins the electronics Department of the Army in March whilst Christopher has one more year of schooling. He plans to join the Air Force where he has been a cadet for a few years. Our Son, John spent Christmas at home in Blairgowrie with his wife Lynne. Both of John's daughters spent time there also. Danielle 23 and Melissa 21, have only one year each at University to complete their degrees – Danielle, a school teacher and Melissa, a physiotherapist.*

*John Jnr, has a very busy job as corporate accounts manager for a National Catering Supplies Company and covers most states of Australia. Lynne still operates her restaurant at Rye on the Mornington Peninsula and is also very busy.*

*On the health front, both Joan and I have regular check ups with our doctor who keeps us in reasonable condition. Both Joan's total knee replacements have been successful. She recently had a post-operation check up where the surgeon advised her that he doesn't need to see her anymore. I have been put back on Warfarin tablets which help to keep the blood thin as a precaution against a stroke. I see my cardiologist every six months. The by-pass operation I had on my right leg was a success and my visit to the vascular surgeon in March should be the last.*

*Gardening keeps me very busy but I can see that time is fast approaching where we will have to downsize. I also worked very hard for our two candidates Federal and State in the elections in the latter part of 2010. I turned 80 on 22<sup>nd</sup> of this month so, I shall have to slow down soon. Joan enjoys her Hydro-therapy class at the local swimming pool each Friday morning. She is still a great cook and loves cooking and eating curries.*

*The Australian Federal Election was held on 21<sup>st</sup> August followed by the Victorian State Election on 27<sup>th</sup> November. Two elections in the one year is a too much. The lead-up to an election involves a lot of effort from Party members who are volunteers such ourselves for*

instance, putting up photo's of candidates throughout each electorate, letter-box dropping, door knocking with the candidate, pre-polling for 2-3 weeks prior to the election and mobile polling for people in retirement villages, nursing homes etc., and a whole day on election day. Following Election day, all photo signs have to be removed and all equipment stored for the next election.

Our Federal candidate won on primary votes but lost on preferences from the minor parties. Overall, both Labor and Liberal shared the same number of seats but finally, the Independent and Greens candidates sided with Labor thus electing Australia's first female Prime Minister "Julia Gillard" which was bad luck – not a very popular choice.

In the Victorian State Election, the Liberal Party was victorious having been in opposition for eleven years. This was a great result. Our candidate did exceptionally well.

In 2010 the World experienced the Global Financial Crisis and a turbulent year of natural disasters such as earthquakes around the globe. A devastating 'quake in Haiti in January killing 250,000 followed in February by the 'quake in Chile where 800 people died and half a million buildings destroyed. In April, thousands of International flights were grounded by volcanic ash from an eruption in Iceland. In September other earthquakes occurred in Christchurch, New Zealand, China and Indonesia. In October, 33 Chilean miners were rescued after 69 days trapped underground but regrettably, shortly after, this miracle was not to be repeated when 29 miners (including two Australians) died in a mine explosion at Pikes River, New Zealand. The worst American oil leak occurred in the Gulf of Mexico which had a devastating effect on wild life, the fishing industry and environment along the coast of Louisiana etc.

In Australia, we have had the worst drought for many years and currently the Northern Australian States, particularly Queensland, are experiencing massive floods, the worst in 50 years. At one stage it just wouldn't rain now it will not stop resulting in such heartbreak with loss of lives, loss of houses, crops and animals. This will result in increase in the cost of food products and essential items. As 2010 draws to a close, severe wintry conditions are being experienced across Europe and the United States. By contrast, in Australia, our Summer temperatures are up in the 40 degrees.

The war in Afghanistan drags on with no ending in sight. When I was in my early 20's I, with 5 other Aussies spent six months travelling overland from London to India, through Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Khyber Pass, Pakistan and India. We were invited to a dinner in Peshawar (Pakistan) where six tribal chiefs were the guests. These six men controlled one million men with rifles who lived in the mountains of Pakistan and Afghanistan – You will never beat them!

In March 2010, Joan and I spent a few days in Ballarat, a City 75 miles from Melbourne. I had attended St. Patricks College there from 1940 to 1947 and each year on St. Patrick's day a re-union lunch is held for those who attended in the 1940's. What a buzz in the room when all ex-students get together. We will be there again in March 2011.

*In May 2010 our eldest son John 52, and his wife Lynne took a three-week trip to the U S A to Severn near Baltimore to visit our youngest son Robert 46, his wife Paula and their three children, Chelsea 18, Madeline 16, and James 14. The occasion of their visit coincided with Chelsea's graduation from High School and her winning of a full scholarship to attend University in Philadelphia. They also spent three days in New York visiting the tourist spots – Times Square, Central Park, Rockefeller Centre and an open-air bus tour of Manhattan. On returning to Baltimore they had a lovely weekend with the Croft family at Ocean City followed by a great day of fishing in a chartered boat.*

*Travelling home, they flew to San Francisco and spent three days enjoying the sights of this very historic City, Alcatraz, Pier 39, China Town, cable cars etc. They hired a car and travelled to Monterey and Carmel where they said the ocean views were truly magnificent. Big Sur was an area that time had certainly stopped with its wonderful trees and valleys. On to San Simeon, San Louis Obispo to Santa Barbara where they stayed three days enjoying long walks on the pier and the surrounding marinas where John enjoyed looking at the vast array of boats. Finally they toured Malibu, Santa Monica and back to Los Angeles airport where they returned the car and flew home on 9<sup>th</sup> June.*

*Our eldest daughter, Suzanne celebrated her 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday on 13th June with a fantastic party with friends and relations. She is truly a wonderful daughter. In September she with husband Ross and two children Paige 16, and Kahala 9, flew off to Europe. They had planned to renew their marriage vows on the Island of Santorini. They were married on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1985 at Porchester Castle in Hampshire, England and renewed their vows on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2010 in the Greek Islands after 25 years of happy marriage.*

*After arriving in Venice and spending a few days sightseeing, St Marks, Grand Canal, Glassworks of Murano, they hired a car and travelled to Rome via Tuscany calling at Padua, Bologna, Florence, Lucca and Piza then south to Livorno then down the west-coast of Italy to Rome. After visiting the many sights of this ancient city such as the Colosseum, Trevi Fountain etc. they flew to Athens where they were met by our youngest daughter Jeanette 48. Jeanette had been a bridesmaid at her sister's wedding in England in 1985 and wanted to be with Suzanne on this special occasion. She had travelled to London firstly to stay with a friend for a couple of days then on to Athens. On one occasion, Suzanne, Jeanette and Kahala walked right up to explore the ruins of the Acropolis.*

*A ferry trip from Athens to Santorini took seven hours where twenty-eight of their closest friends from Australia and England had gathered to celebrate with them. After a week in Santorini, Jeanette flew back to London for a few days before flying home to Sydney. Jeanette said she had a wonderful time.*

*Suzanne and Ross and children flew to Turkey spent time sightseeing in Istanbul, Blue Mosque, the Bazaar etc., then hired a small bus for a trip to Gallopoli with friends. My father landed there at Anzac Cove on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1915. He was lucky to survive. Suzanne and family arrived home safe and sound on 8<sup>th</sup> October but totally exhausted. They still have a very successful carpet and flooring business.*

Joan was born in India in October 1937 and lived the first sixteen year of her life there arriving in Australia in December 1953. She was educated at the Cathedral School, Bombay. The school celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> year anniversary on 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> November 2010. We had planned to attend but due to other commitments, including the State Election, we decided not to go. I am sure Joan would have loved to have seen some of her ex school friends who live there and those who came from around the world to attend.

Our computer is out of action again. We don't anticipate buying another one but would certainly love to hear from you with news of you and family. Should you decide to visit "Down-under" make sure you take time to visit with us. Please keep in touch.

Fondest memories

John & Joan.  
John & Joan.

P.S. DOES OTIS & BIRTH TWISS STILL LIVE IN ASHVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA?

23RD FEBRUARY 2011

HI- WE WERE TALKING ABOUT YOU RECENTLY AND THE WONDERFUL HOSPITALITY YOU EXTENDED TO BOTH OF US WHEN WE VISITED YOU IN 1990 - HARD TO BELIEVE THAT 20 YEARS HAS PASSED US BY - AND WE HAVE LOST CONTACT, SO I AM SENDING YOU A COPY OF OUR ANNUAL NEWSLETTER - Hoping THAT IT REACHES YOU AND WE CAN CORRESPOND AGAIN.

JOAN'S MOTHER "KEMIE TWISS" DIED IN 2010 - Aged 99 YEARS SHE HAD A GOOD LIFE.

AS MENTIONED, LAST MONTH I HAD MY 80TH BIRTHDAY - JUST WITH MY DAUGHTER SUZANNE, YOUNGEST DAUGHTER CAME DOWN FROM SYDNEY, MY WIFE JOAN (NEE TWISS) MY DAUGHTER-IN-LAW LYNN & MYSELF. WE WENT TO A LOVELY RESTAURANT IN THIS CITY.

HOW ARE YOU ALL? - WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU WITH ALL YOUR NEWS. WE DID MEET YOUR DAUGHTERS - SHARYL & CAROL. HOW MANY GRAND CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE? WE DO RECALL THE HAPPY TIMES AT YOUR LOVELY PROPERTY AND HOW A GOOD TIME ALL HAD ON THOSE MINI BIKES.

YOU HAVE PROBABLY HEARD THAT THERE WAS A DEVASTATING EARTH QUAKE IN CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND YESTERDAY 22ND A LOT OF DEATHS - DAMAGE TO BUILDINGS & INFRASTRUCTURE.

YOU HAVE NEVER MADE IT TO AUSTRALIA - WOULD BE GREAT TO SEE YOU ALL AGAIN. WE WERE IN THE U.S AGAIN IN 1997 VISITING ROBERT IN (MARYLAND) - LOOKS LIKE HE WILL BE LIVING THERE FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE. ALL THE BEST  
LOVE TO ALL John & Joan



THE CROFT FLY  
AT JOHN'S 70<sup>th</sup>  
BIRTHDAY 22/1/2001

L. to R.

JOHN JNR. in  
SUZANNE (BLUE  
JEANETTE (IN  
WHITE)

JOHN + JOAN  
ROBERT



JOAN + JOHN

MAY 2010



AT JOHN'S 80<sup>th</sup> B'kday  
22/1/2011.

L. to R.

SUZANNE  
JOAN  
JEANETTE  
DAUGHTER-IN-LAW  
LYNNE  
WITH THE OLD BOY!



WEDDING OF  
ROSS MACKINTOSH +  
SUZANNE CROFT AT  
POREHESTER CASTLE  
IN KENT, ENGLAND  
28<sup>th</sup> SEPT. 1985.



CEREMONY OF  
RENEWING THEIR VOWS  
AFTER 25 YEARS  
OF MARRIAGE ON  
THE ISLAND OF  
"SANTORINI" IN THE  
GREEK ISLANDS.  
28<sup>th</sup> SEPT. 2010  
SUZANNE + ROSS  
WITH THEIR GIRLS  
KAHALA 9 yrs +  
PAIGE 16 yrs.



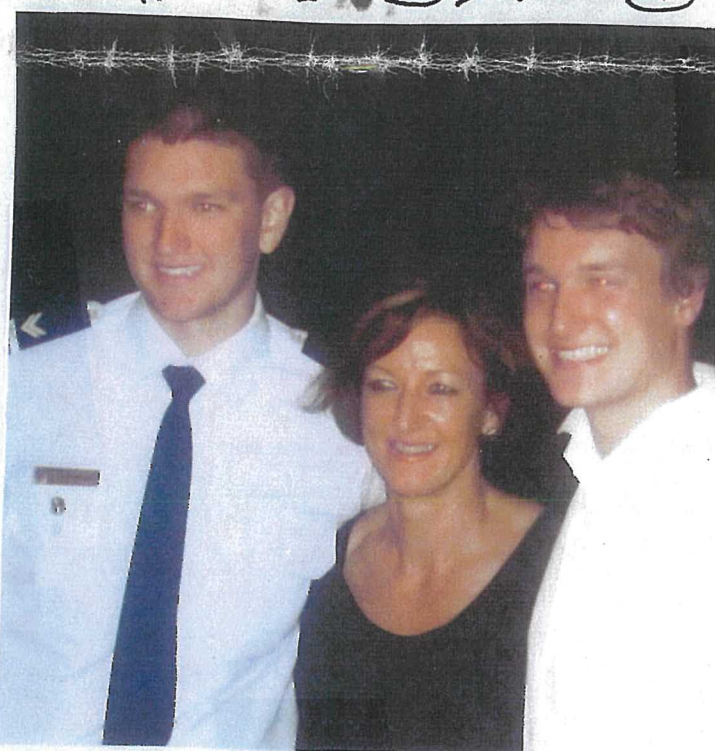
JOHN + LYNNE CROFT



JOHN'S TWO GIRLS - MELISSA (21) DANIELLE (25)



JEANETTE WITH HER DAD - 22/1/2011



JEANETTE'S TWO BOYS  
CHRISTOPHER (LEFT) 17yrs. BENJAMIN 18yrs



DEE + PAULA'S 3) CHELSEA



MADELEINE



JAMES