

# THE CROFT CHRONICLE

**January 2013.**

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## **Greetings from "the land down-under"**

*We hope that your Christmas was a happy one and wish you and yours all the best in health and happiness for 2013. Each year we make a commitment to have our newsletter out on time but – we never seem to make it. We are definitely slowing up.*

*We spent the festive season at Lake Eildon with our eldest daughter Suzanne, Ross and their two Children Paige (18) and Kahala (11) on their houseboat. The boat has double-decker accommodation with a further sun deck on top. It is well-equipped with five bedrooms, two bathrooms, three lounges and a kitchen. They also have a speed boat, jet ski and other forms of inflatable objects that the children enjoy. Lake Eildon is 70 kilometres long and is a two-hour drive from Melbourne. It was constructed in the 1950's damming water from five rivers to form a huge weir. Water is released daily generating electricity through the power station after which the water goes into a pondage for cooling before flowing down the Goulburn River for irrigation. There are approximately 600 houseboats in the pen that sail out and anchor on the shore of the various arms of the lake. Holiday makers can fish, swim, water ski etc. Ross still operates his very busy carpet and vinyl business but is planning to sell out in a couple of years.*

*2012 was a very busy year for us, not only with the move from Heathmont to Canterbury but with other commitments and medical problems. As we get older, the years seem to be rolling on faster than normal. Joan was 75 last October and John turned 82 on 22<sup>nd</sup> January. It was all hands on deck the day we moved. You can imagine, after twenty-two years of living at Heathmont what we had accumulated. Joan is now much happier with no steps to contend with here at Canterbury.*

### **Please take note of our new address**

*Joan has had trouble with her right arm. The muscle was torn from the bone and severed the tendon and for the last month or so has been in a lot of pain in her right hand. There has been limited elective surgery in the hospitals over the Christmas break but she is booked into the hospital for a "carpel tunnel" operation on 1<sup>st</sup> February.*

*John was involved in an accident last February. He got out of his car and didn't put it in park and no handbrake on. The car rolled backwards, he tried to stop it but was knocked over by the door and broke a bone in his shoulder socket. The shoulder popped out of its socket four*

or five times a day for some time but after a lot of "rehab" it is slowly repairing. Apart from these problems, we are fit and healthy.

Our eldest son John is doing well and loves his job with Reward Catering Supplies. He has to travel interstate regularly to Perth, Adelaide, Sydney and Brisbane. In his spare time, he loves to take his cruiser out on Port Philip Bay to fish. We seldom see any fish that he catches as it usually finishes up on the menu at the restaurant run by his wife Lynne at Rye.

John's two girls have completed their university degrees, Danielle (26) a school teacher has set the date for her marriage to Dim for Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014. Melissa (24) is a physiotherapist and although she has a boyfriend, there are no marriage plans.

Our youngest daughter Jeanette, continues in her busy life in Sydney, always involved in helping others. Her youngest son Christopher (19) is at University studying engineering whilst her eldest, Ben (20), had a very serious skiing accident last August. He and his mother went to Mt Perisher near Canberra for a skiing weekend. Ben is an experienced skier and went off skiing as soon as they arrived there. On his second jump, however, he landed on a rock breaking his back, leg and pelvis. He was operated on at the Canberra hospital where they inserted rods in his back and leg.

After a week, he was taken by air ambulance to a hospital in Sydney and after some time to a rehabilitation hospital. Apparently, the screws in his back had bent and the rod in his leg was too long so on 12<sup>th</sup> December he underwent another long operation at Macquarie University Hospital and is now in "rehab" again where he will be for quite a few months. He is improving, no more pain now and he enjoys swimming at the "rehab" centre each day. He is a very lucky boy that he didn't become a quadriplegic. Jeanette was very worried and spent time with him every day. Both Suzanne and John spent a week in Sydney in October visiting him and celebrating Jeanette's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Our youngest son Robert lives in Severn (part of Baltimore, Maryland, USA) with his wife Paula. We haven't seen them for over four years. Their three children are Chelsea (20), Madeline (18) and James (16).

In last year's newsletter mention was made of a trip overseas John and five others did in the 1950's from England to India over a period of six months. In 2011 the six had a reunion in Sydney and arranged another in March 2013 in Melbourne. Unfortunately, there will only be five next time as John McKinnon, (85) died in December.

Australia is one of the world's hottest and driest continents. In early 2009, Victoria had devastating fires where 2000 homes were burned and 180 lives lost. The small tourist town of Marysville was wiped out and now again in the first month of 2013 fires rage again in Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. As I write, fires are still burning in Victoria and New South Wales. Temperatures have been in the 40 degrees and on the Tasmanian peninsula where there have been over 100 homes lost there is only one road in and out through Dunally, Eagle Hawk Neck to Port Arthur, an area where in the 1800's convicts from England were transported there 'for the term of their natural life' and in some cases, for just stealing a loaf of bread.



*In the United States, President Barak Obama was successful in winning a second four-year term. His Secretary of State, former First Lady, Hilary Clinton, looked very tired and has just been discharged from hospital after being treated for a blood clot. What an amazing lady! She is retiring from the position and during the last four years, she has travelled 1.5 million kilometres and visited 112 Countries.*

*In Australia, our Federal Election will be held this year. Our present Labor Government would be the worst government in our history and I hope that it will be replaced by a Liberal Government when the election takes place this year which could be anytime before the end of December 2013.*

*During 2012, some overseas friends visited us:-*

***Maurice and Veera Harper** from Southampton (England) visited relations and friends right around the coast from Perth to Brisbane. We took them for a day to Lake Eildon on the houseboat which they loved.*

***Tina and Rudolf Kimbacher** and their two children from Austria spent three months in Australia and New Zealand. They only stayed a few days in Melbourne so we showed them the sights.*

*My school Friend – **Father Leo Donnelly** – a Columban missionary priest in Lima, Peru for 50 years visited us. It was wonderful to see him and reminisce our days at St. Patrick's College in Ballarat. He returned to Peru in November*

*Finally, Joan's cousin, **Marlene Robson and husband Tom** who live in Vichy (France) were here on their annual three-month summer holiday to visit a daughter living in Sydney, other friends in Melbourne before spending time in the sun in Queensland.*

*Quite often, with fond memories, we do think of the time we spent with you and certainly hope we may meet again. Please keep in touch and let us know if you intend to visit this part of the world.*

*Love to all,*

  
*John & Joan.*

*Please note that our email address is that of our daughter Suzanne.*



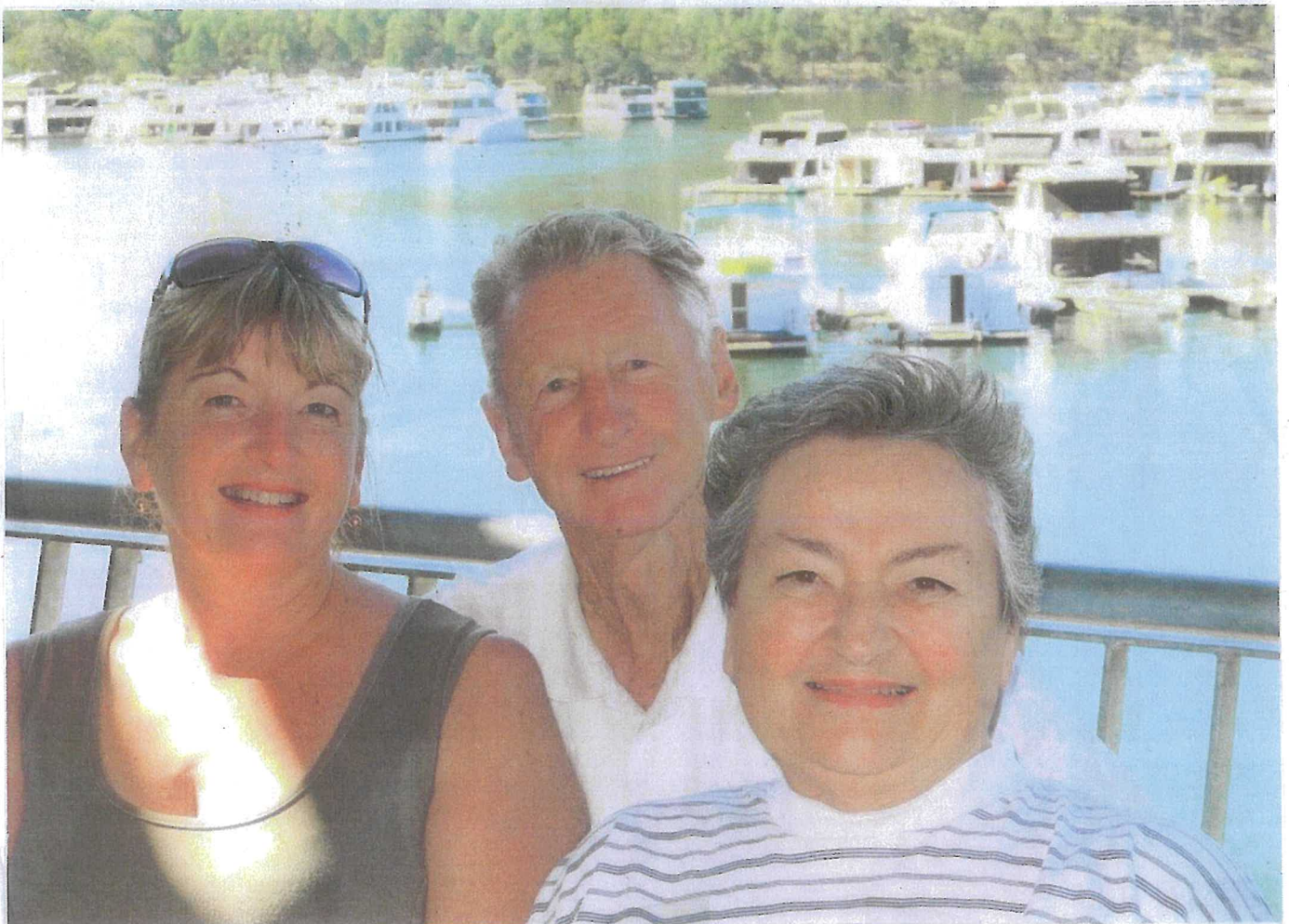


**MELISSA CROFT (23)**



**DANIELLE CROFT (25)**

University Graduation – Granddaughters



**SUZANNE WITH PARENTS - JOHN & JOAN**

Overlooking boat pen - Lake Eildon - Christmas 2012

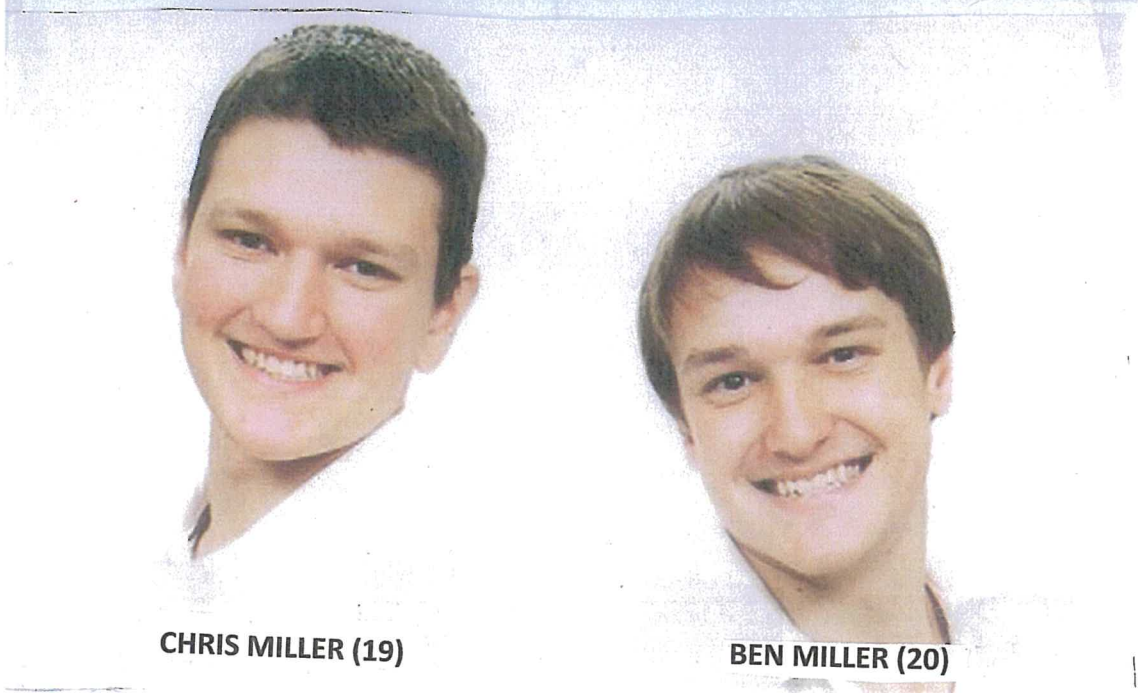




**SUZANNE  
& ROSS  
And  
Daughters  
KAHALA (11)  
PAIGE (18)**



**THEIR  
HOUSE BOAT  
ON  
LAKE EILDON**



**CHRIS MILLER (19)**

**BEN MILLER (20)**

**JEANETTE'S  
TWO BOYS**





**JOHN & SCHOOL  
FRIEND FATHER  
LEO DONNELLY  
IN FRONT OF OUR  
CANTERBURY HOUSE  
LEO IS A COLUMBAN  
PRIEST IN LIMA (PERU)**



**BACK GARDEN  
OF  
CANTERBURY HOUSE**



**MAURICE & VEERA  
HARPER  
FROM ENGLAND  
WITH SUZANNE & ROSS  
AT LAKE EILDON**