

THE CROFT CHRONICLE

December 2017

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Dear

Greetings from the "Land Down Under" and wishing you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy & Safe New Year.

The year has gone so quickly. In Melbourne we had a cold Winter with very little rain and even during Spring cold winds blew in from the Antarctic. Thankfully, Summer is here with lovely warm days. All foliage is back on the trees and shrubs and the gardens are in full bloom.

As you know, it is now 3½ years since Joan died. I live by myself and it is not the same without her. My year hasn't been very exciting with very little to write about. Therefore, my Newsletter this year covers a few worldly events. Next year, it should be more interesting with reports of my European trip.

Joan was born on 18th October 1937 in Lyalpur, India. She would have turned 80 this year so on her birthday, my daughter Suzanne and I went to Springvale Cemetery where she is buried. We took two chairs, two beers, two sandwiches and spent two hours beside her grave remembering the good times we had when she was here. I'm sure she knew we were beside her.

The 31st August 2017 was the 20th Anniversary of the death of Princess Diana. What a shock it was to hear of that fateful accident in Paris. Everyone loved her and what a breath of fresh air she brought to the Royal family. During her eleven-year marriage to Prince Charles, she was tormented by his affair with Camilla Parker Bowles. Diana said there were three people in the marriage; herself, Charles and Camilla. She experienced many lonely and unhappy times and referred to Camilla as "The Rottweiler". It is hoped that when the Queen steps down, the succession to the Throne will not go to Charles and Camilla who are not very popular with the British people, but to William and Kate.

Donald Trump has now been President of the United States of America for one year. It is reported that he is the most unpopular President ever. His manner is completely different to any other President before him but he definitely has the best interests of America at heart. He is still working on his commitment to "Make America Great Again". He was well-received by the Leaders of Japan, China and other Asian Countries on his recent visit there and he discussed the imbalance of trade that exists between his Country and theirs. He is providing strong

leadership and just maybe, he will turn up "Trumps". During the next three years, he must prove himself, otherwise, he will not be re-elected for a second term.

Last February, I had a visit from some American friends, Dave and Nancy Lippincott from Colorado. They spent one month in Australia, the first nine days of which they spent with me. I enjoyed showing them around. They then flew to Alice Springs to see some of the outback before joining the Ghan Train for Darwin. The train stopped at Katherine for four hours where they had a cruise on the Gorge. They spent four days visiting Darwin and Cairns then Brisbane where they hired a car and drove down the coast to Sydney and spent the last five days with Jeanette. Jeanette and I stayed with them last year in their lovely home in Colorado Springs.

Everyone has heard of Hugh Hefner who died on 28th September aged 91. Judging by his lifestyle, it is a wonder he lived to that ripe old age. Previously, he had put his mansion on the market with an asking price of \$US200M and a stipulation that he could live there until he died. His next-door neighbour, Mr. Daren Metropoulos bought the house for \$US100M and to live there Hugh paid \$US1M in rent. The new owner is going to undertake a massive renovation and connect both properties.

When Jeanette and I were in Los Angeles last year, we took a Movie Star Houses tour. We pulled up outside his house which is in a dead-end street at 10236 Charring Cross Road, Hollywood Hills. You could not see his house from the street and naturally, it had a high security fence as well as audio and camera surveillance. It was in the same area where Alan Ladd, Humphrey Bogart and Bing Crosby had lived. Hugh was the founder of the Playboy magazine and his first cover girl was Marilyn Monroe. A few years ago he bought the crypt next to Marilyn for \$80,000 in the Westwood Memorial Cemetery in Glendon Avenue. He is now next to her for all eternity. In the same cemetery Jack Lemon, Roy Orbiston, Dean Martin and many other famous actors are buried.

Another great tour we had last year was through the Hollywood Wax Museum and some photos are enclosed.

On Sunday 21st February 2018, I am having a get-together at my home for some of the descendants of my Croft Grand Parents (my father's parents). They had nine children who produced twenty-one grand-children. Only four grand-children remain – myself, brothers Doug and Don Croft and Phil De Gruchy who's 92nd birthday I attended in June. I am expecting approximately 80 people to attend.

In the past year the world has seen so many disasters, too many to mention but some that stand out are:-

The hurricanes that brought floods, destruction and loss of life in the Caribbean, the Virgin Islands, Antigua, Haiti, Cuba, Florida and Texas.

Bushfires in Northern California and Oregon with many deaths and missing people. Australia sent fire fighters to help in the Nappa and Sonoma Valleys where fires were out of control. The entire town of Santa Rosa, north of San Francisco had to be evacuated.

Earthquakes in Mexico.

Landslides in Vietnam where forty-three died and over 17,000 homes evacuated.

Floods in Nepal, Bangladesh and India where over 1000 drowned and the collapse of a five-story apartment block in India killing dozens.

The inferno that completely engulfed the Grenfell apartment tower in London where 80 died.

The crazy lone gunman in Las Vegas who shot 58 dead and injured over 500. Also in November, another shooting in Texas at a Church where 26 were killed.

Terrorist attacks in Spain, London and Paris.

The fleeing of over 600,000 from Myanmar (Burma) into Bangladesh.

The threat from North Korea by Kim Jong Un.

Another earthquake on 13th November. This time in Iran on its northern border with Iraq with over 500 killed, 8,000 injured and approximately 70,000 looking for accommodation.

What is the world coming to?

My eldest son, John and his wife Lyn are always on the go. Both work very hard. John's two daughters Danielle (30) and Melissa (28) are now both married. Danielle's husband is Dimitrios and they have a son Maximus who turned one last August. Danielle celebrated her 30th birthday with a family luncheon on 1st October. Melissa was married on 5th March to Dean Helberg. They went on a cruise for their honeymoon calling in to various Pacific Ocean Islands.

My youngest daughter, Jeanette, lives and works in Sydney. She recently enjoyed two weeks holiday in Fiji. Her two sons, Ben (25) and Christopher (24) are well over 6ft tall. Ben has moved to Melbourne and works in Accounting. He is living temporarily with my daughter Suzanne and husband Ross. Christopher left on 14th November for America where he plans to do some travelling before continuing the last six months of his Course at the University of Los Angeles. He has completed his Mechanical Engineering and now only has the science part of his Physics to finish. He says that on completion he wants to work in the U.S. for N.A.S.A. Both boys have dual Australian/American Citizenship.

My youngest son, Robert, who has lived in Maryland, U.S. for the past 28 years, wishes to return to live in Australia. As yet, I don't know his plans. His daughters Chelsea (25) and Madeline (23) are both working in Nebraska and his son James (21) is with his dad in Baltimore.

Suzanne, my eldest daughter and husband Ross sold their English Pub business last December but still own the freehold from which they receive rent. They built up the business to such an extent that it became very demanding. Ross occasionally works for Choices Flooring as a consultant often travelling Interstate. They enjoy many social outings and love spending as much time as possible on their houseboat on Lake Eildon. Their two girls Paige (23) and Kahala (16) are fine. Paige has moved into a lovely 8th floor unit. Kahala studies hard at Aquinas College and has a part-time job at McDonalds. She loves to save money. We all went to a Gala Event on 21st October where she and others made their debut. She did look beautiful.

Next year, Suzanne, Ross and Kahala are off to England for a month in June to attend the wedding of a son of friends. This has motivated me to make the trip also. Possibly, I shall go before them. I have a few friends to look up in England, Scotland and Wales and some on the Continent that I have not seen in many years. Ross and Kahala are returning to Australia on 29th July whilst Suzanne is staying the extra month of August with me when we will visit Ireland. I have a friend in Dublin to look up and one of Joan's cousins whom I have never met lives in Ireland also. We fly home on 26th August.

Health-wise, I am still fit and well. I shall be 87 in January, so hope the old body doesn't decide to pack up. I walk each day and don't overeat but I eat and sleep well. I cut my own lawns and look after quite a large garden. My daughter looks after me, she cooks meals for me and does my washing. In turn, I endeavor to help her in her garden and also cut their lawns. It all helps me to keep fit and my mind active. Thank heaven for daughters.

I think of you often and would welcome you if you visit the Land of "OZ". I still hope to have a big 90th Birthday celebration in January 2021. You are invited.

Love to you and yours

As ever

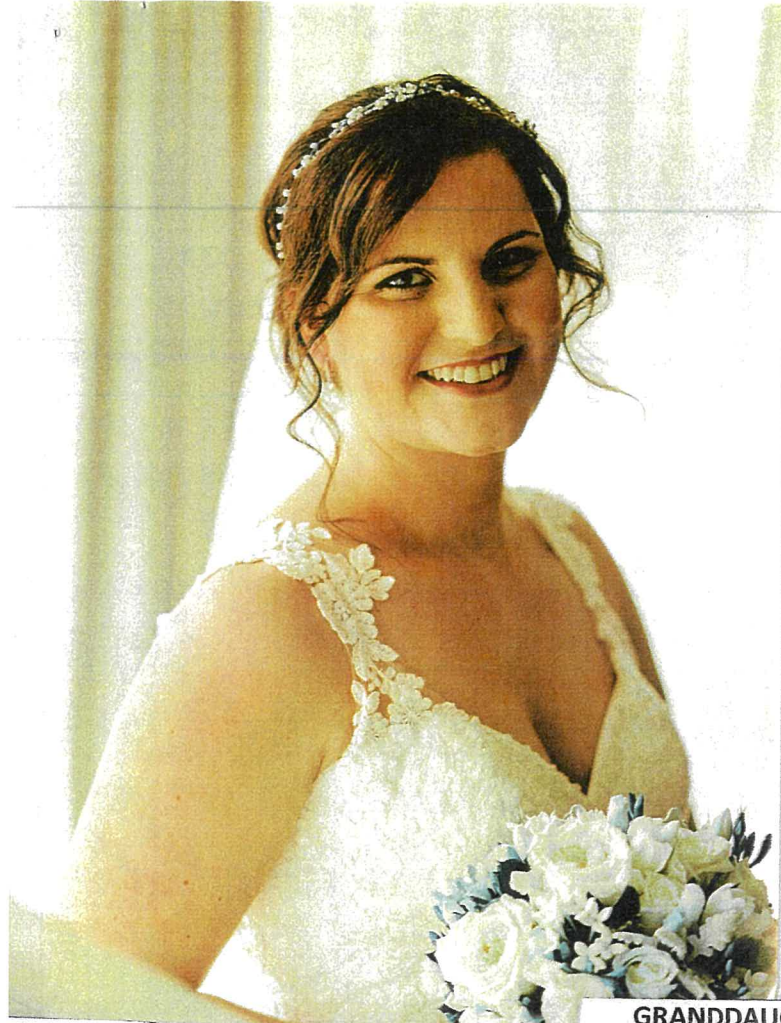
John



JOAN CROFT (NEE TWISS)
18 OCT 1937 – 17 JUNE 2014



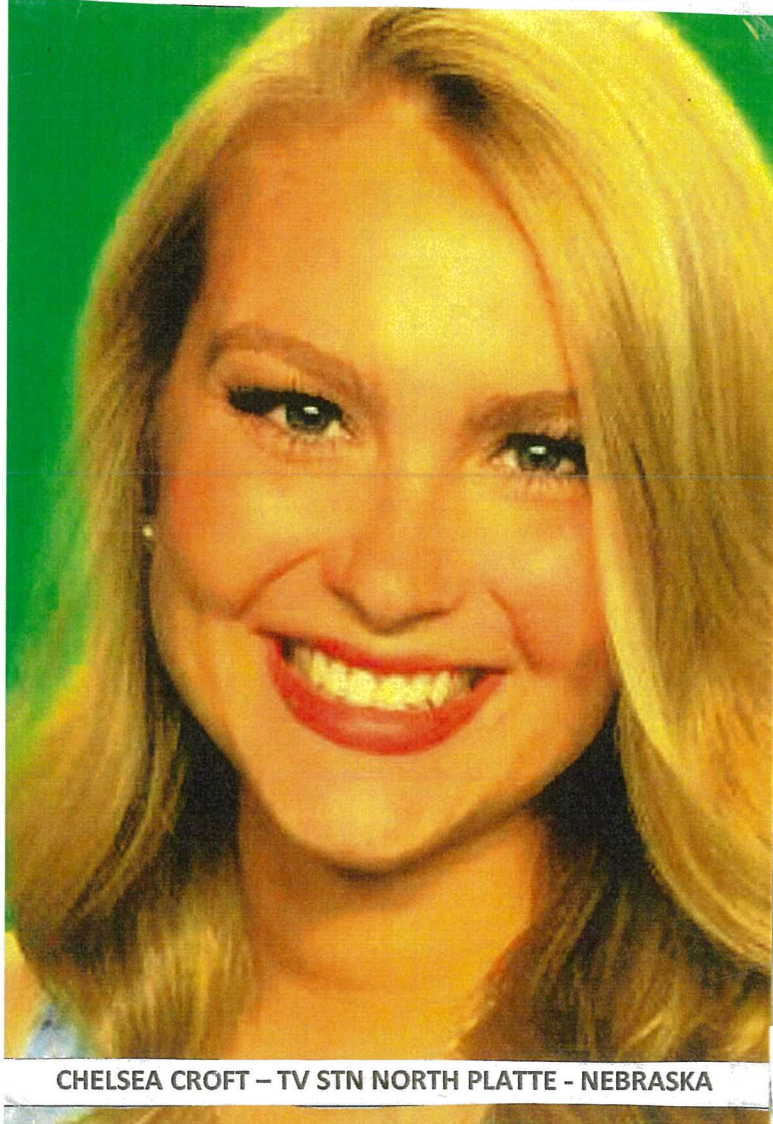
THE 'AUSTIN' VAN WE DROVE FROM ENGLAND TO INDIA IN THE 1950'S
BACK: ROMA HEPPELL – FRANK KERLEY – BERYL GRAY
FRONT: JOHN MACKINNON – FRED MARGETTS – JOHN CROFT



MELISSA CROFT – WEDDING 5TH MARCH 2017



PAIGE MACKINTOSH



CHELSEA CROFT – TV STN NORTH PLATTE - NEBRASKA



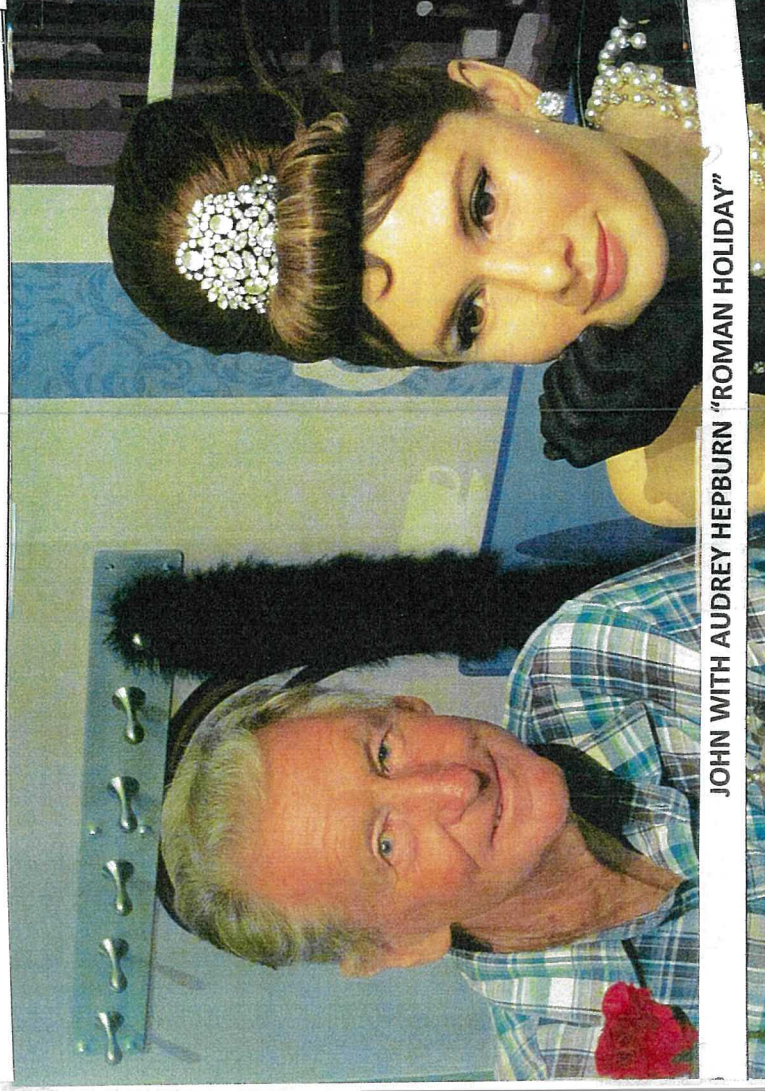
MADELINE CROFT – GRADUATION – DECEMBER 2016
BACHELOR OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE



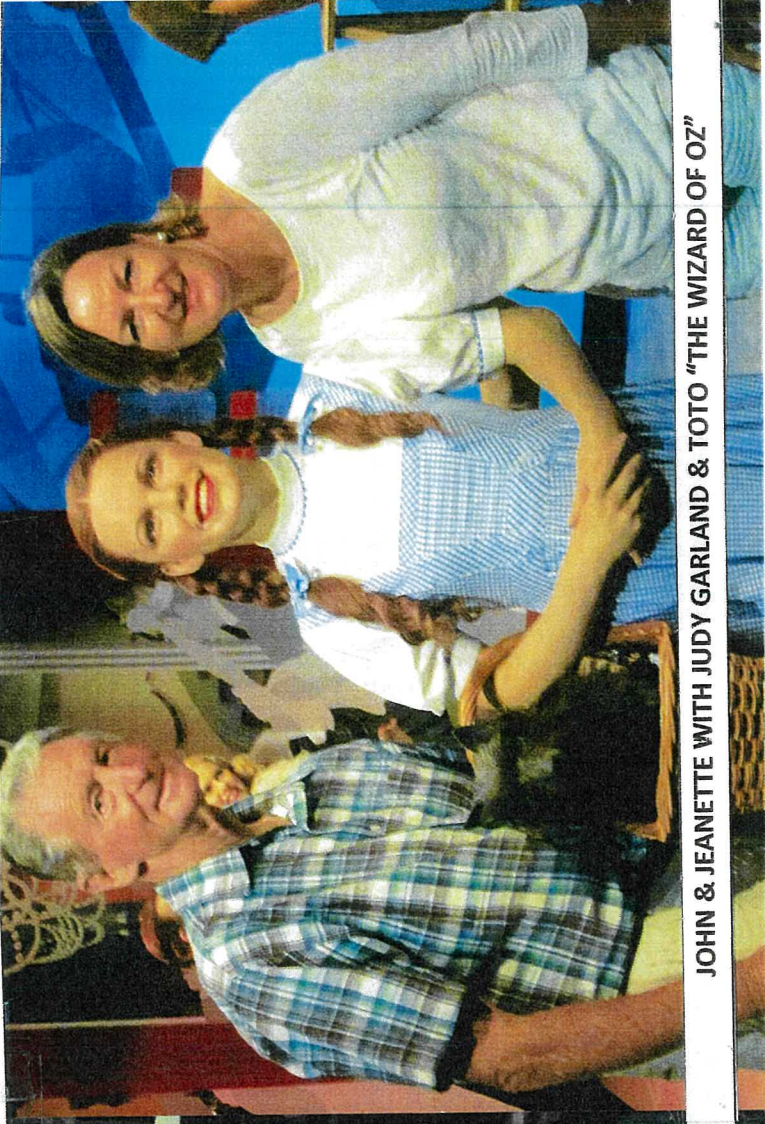
JEANETTE WITH TOM HANKS "FORREST GUMP"



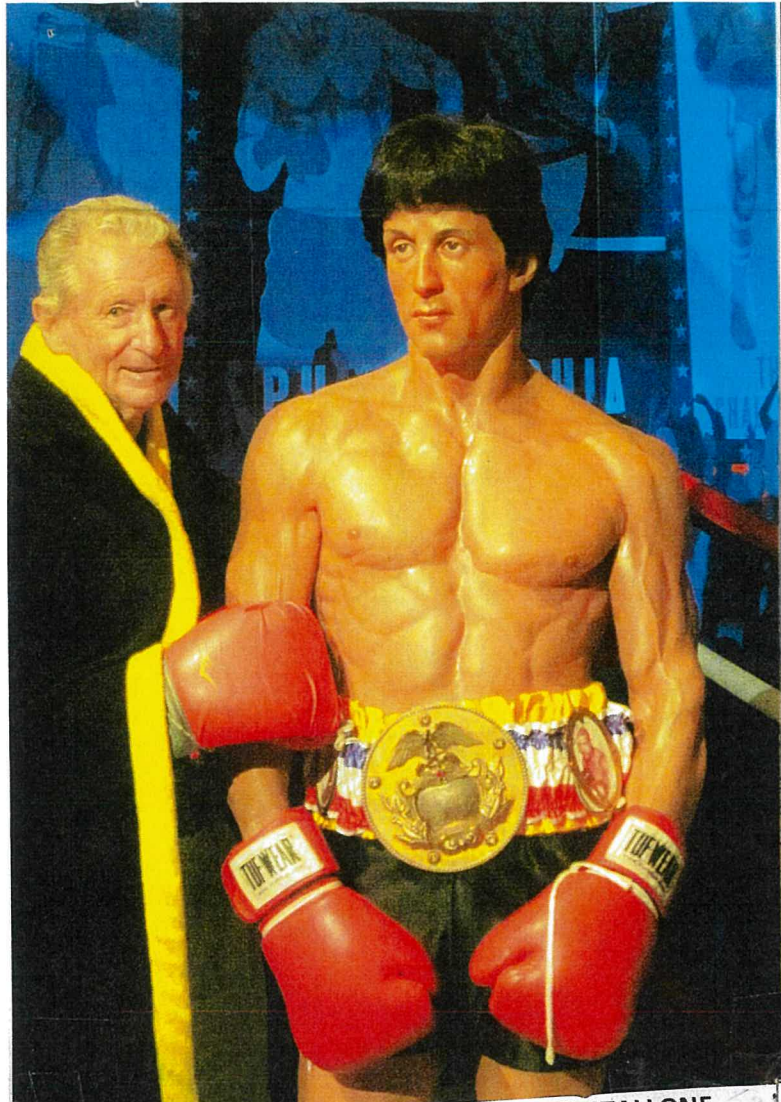
JEANETTE WITH CLARK GABLE "GONE WITH THE WIND"



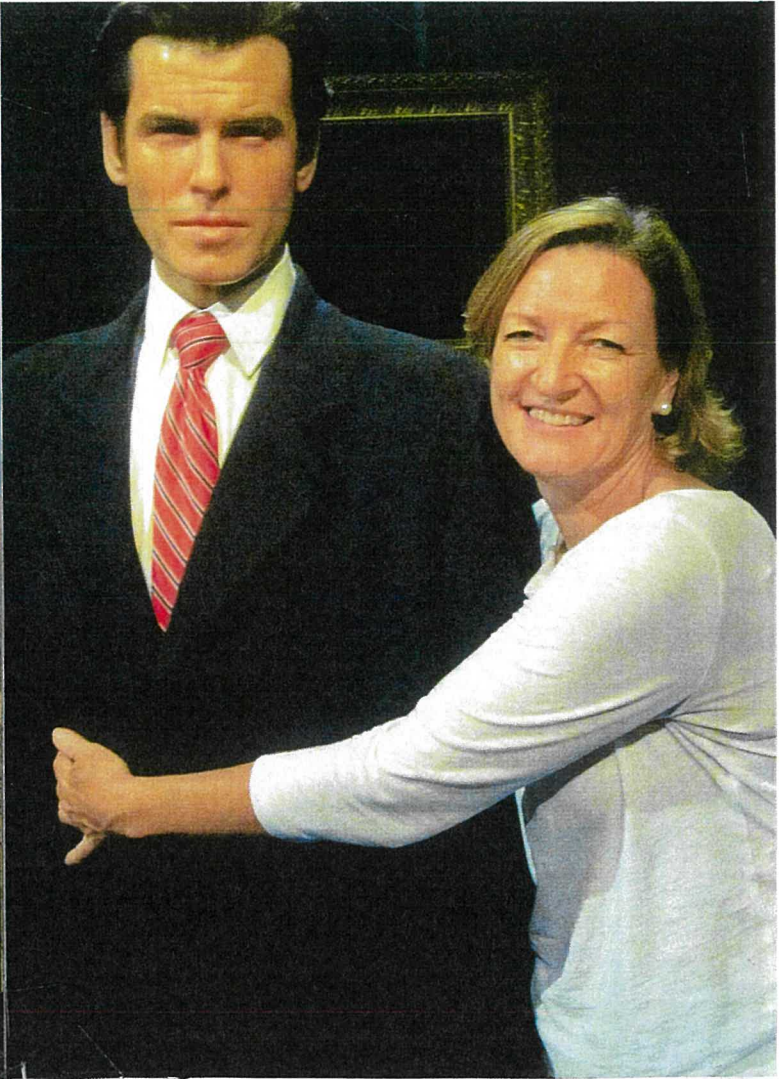
JOHN WITH AUDREY HEPBURN "ROMAN HOLIDAY"



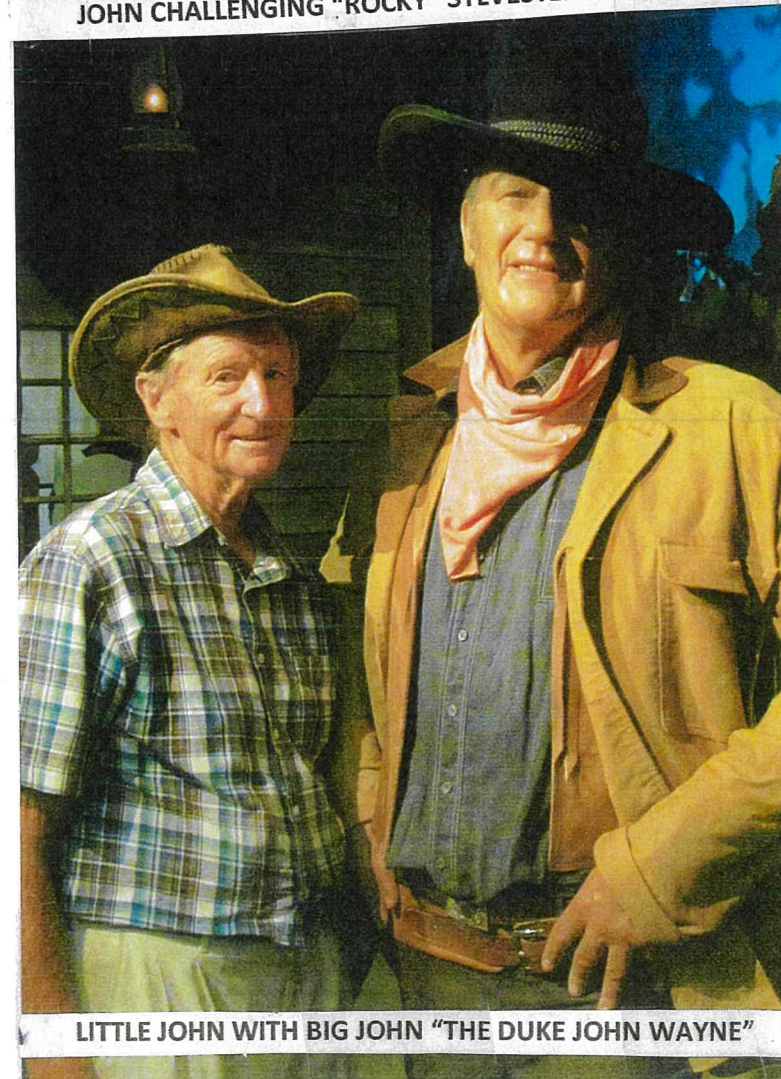
JOHN & JEANETTE WITH JUDY GARLAND & TOTO "THE WIZARD OF OZ"



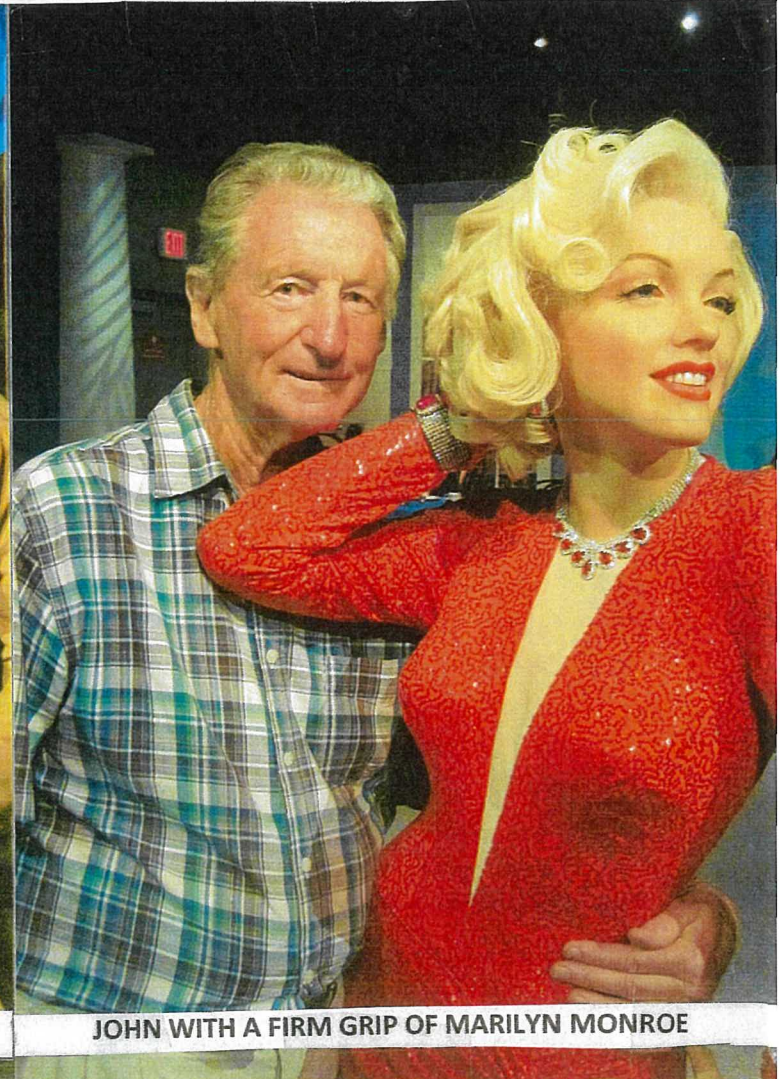
JOHN CHALLENGING "ROCKY" SYLVESTER STALLONE



JEANETTE WITH 007 – PIERCE BROSNAN



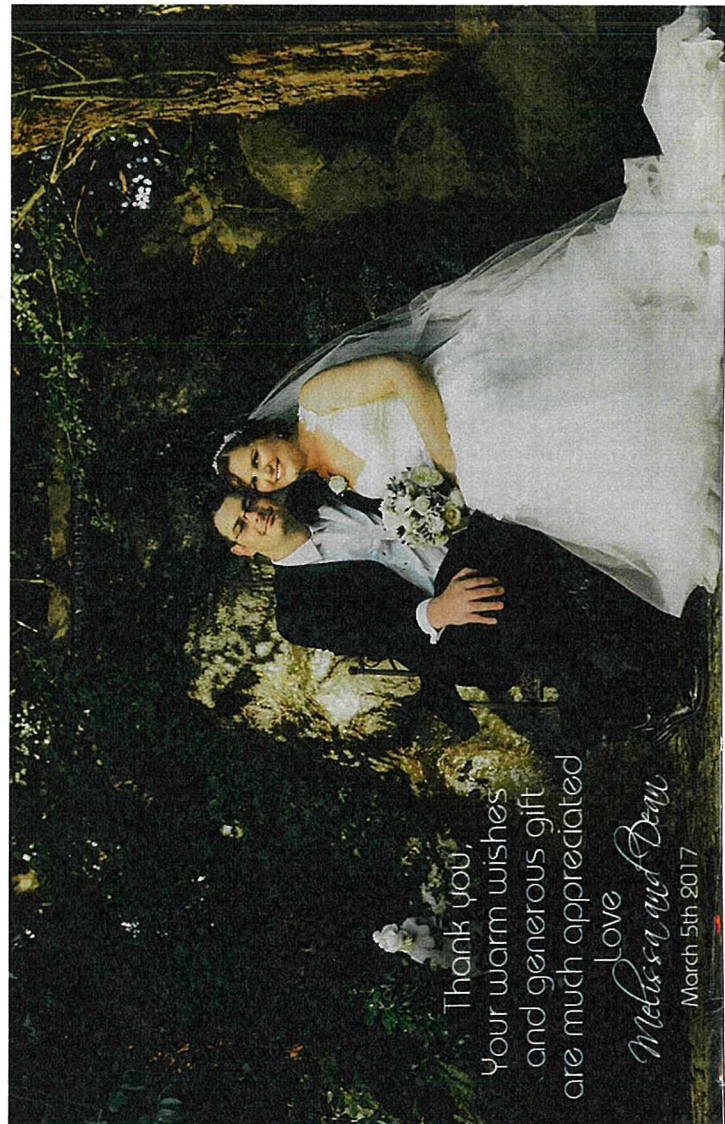
LITTLE JOHN WITH BIG JOHN "THE DUKE JOHN WAYNE"



JOHN WITH A FIRM GRIP OF MARILYN MONROE

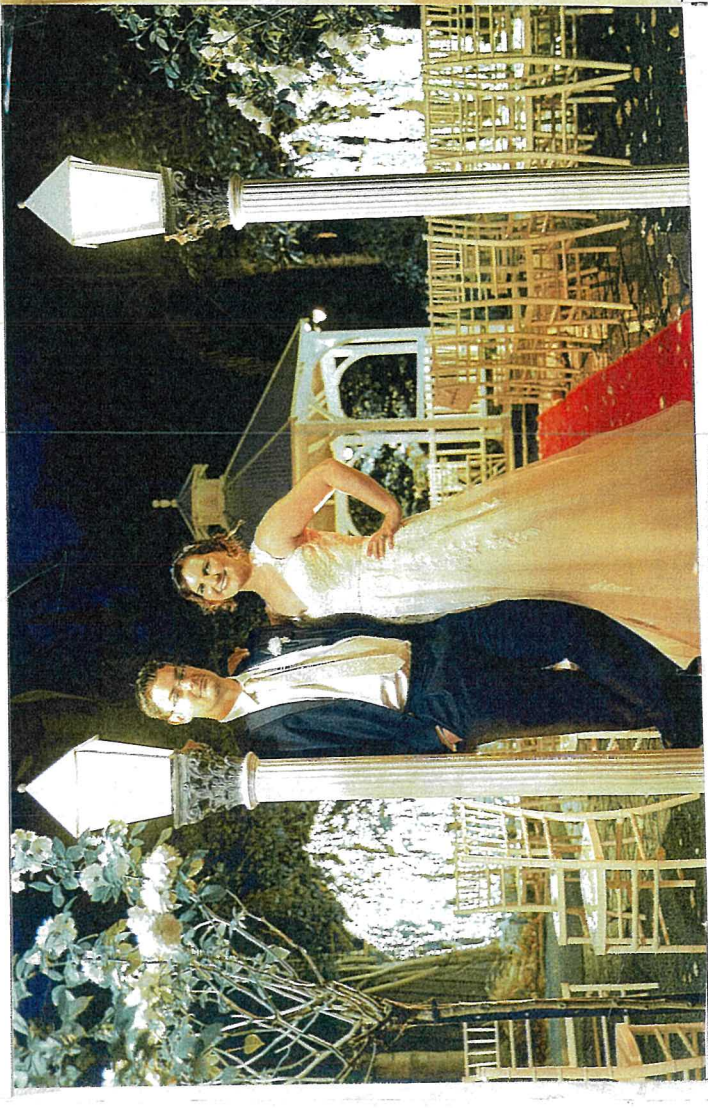


WEDDING DAY - 5TH MARCH 2017
DEAN HELBERG & GRANDDAUGHTER MELISSA CROFT

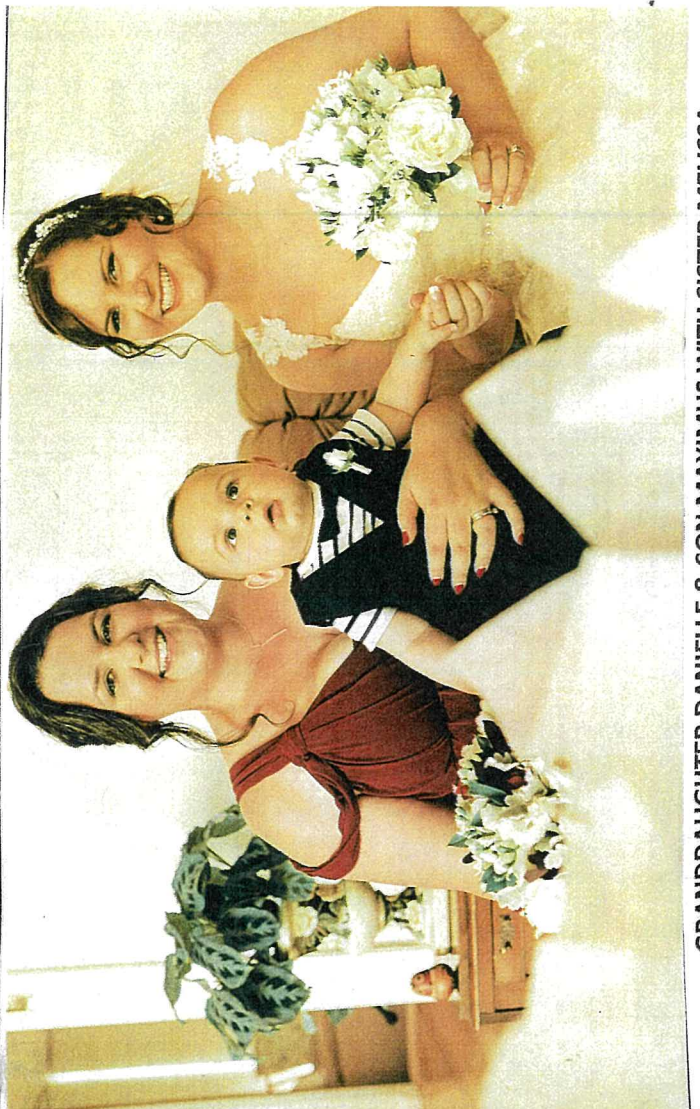


Thank you,
Your warm wishes
and generous gift
are much appreciated
Love
Melissa and Dean
March 5th 2017

DEAN & MELISSA



DEAN & MELISSA



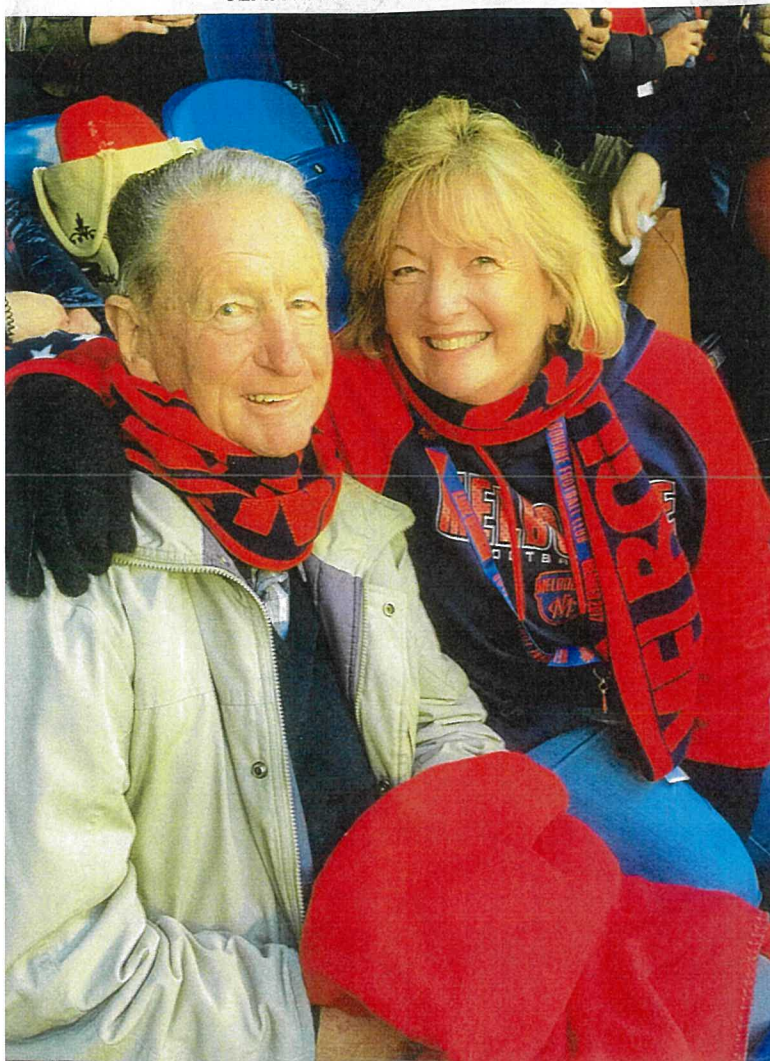
GRANDDAUGHTER DANIELLE & SON MAXIMUS WITH SISTER MELISSA



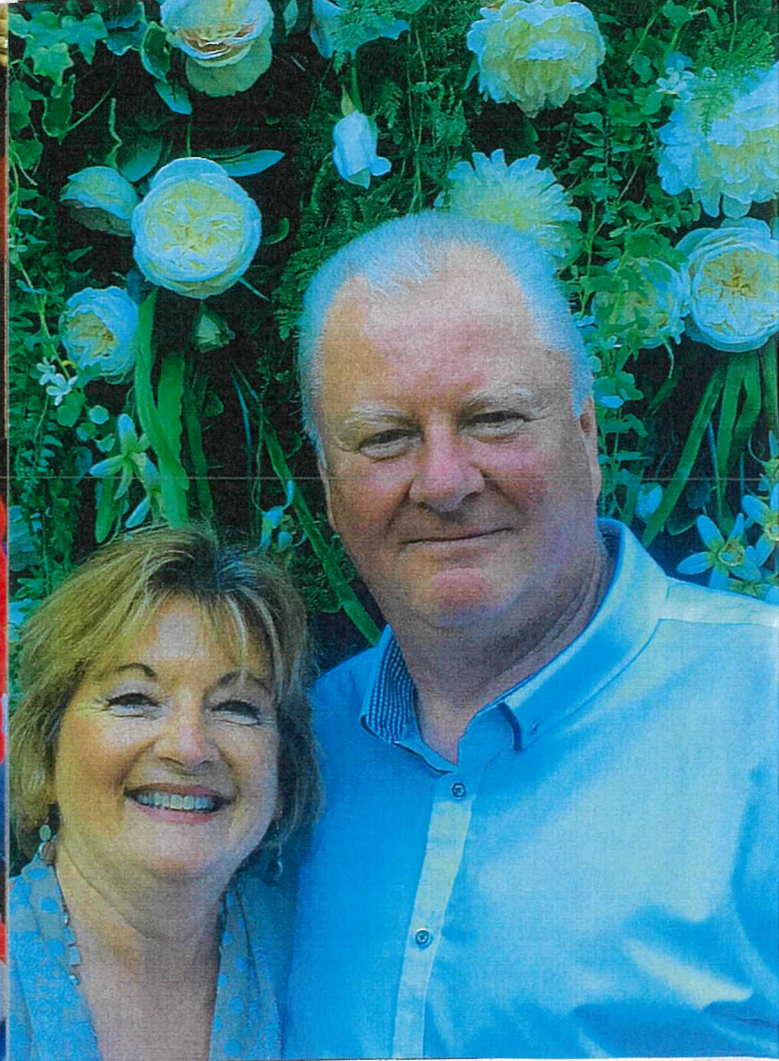
JEANETTE – JOHN - SUZANNE



**DANIELLE – 30TH BIRTHDAY
JOHN SNR – JOHN JNR – MAXIMUS - DANIELLE**



JOHN & SUZANNE AT MELBOURNE FOOTBALL



SUZANNE & HUSBAND ROSS



JOHN CROFT SNR WITH CHILDREN JOHN JNR – JEANETTE - SUZANNE



FATHER OF BRIDE JOHN & WIFE LYN WITH BRIDE & GROOM,
JEANETTE & HER SONS BEN & CHRIS



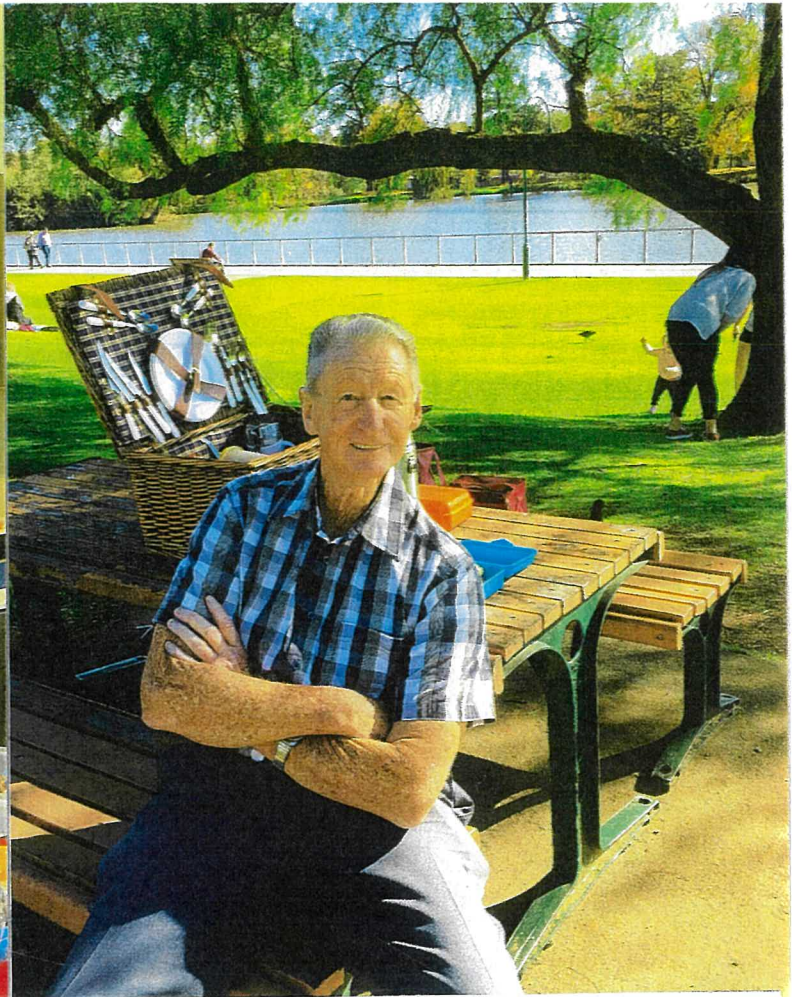
JOHN CROFT SNR WITH LYN & JOHN JNR, BRIDE & GROOM,
PAIGE, KAHALA, ROSS & SUZANNE



JEANETTE & SONS
BEN
CHRIS



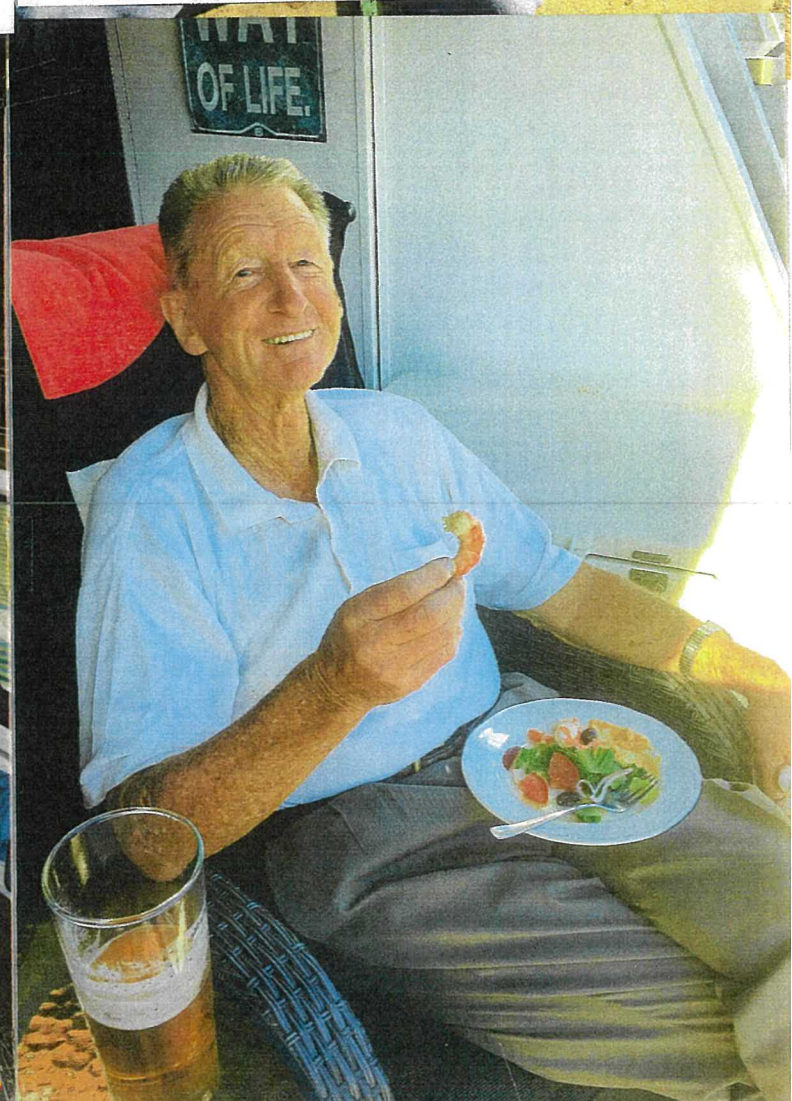
**MAXIMUS – 1ST BIRTHDAY PARTY
WITH PARENTS DANIELLE & DIM**



PICNIC AT BENDIGO LAKE



JOHN & JOAN MANY YEARS AGO



LUNCH ON BACK OF HOUSE BOAT – LAKE EILDON



JOHN WITH HIS COUSIN MICHELLE DE GUIRE
AT CATHEDRAL OF ST LOUIS, MISSOURI 2016



NANCY & DAVE LIPPINCOTT (AMERICAN FRIENDS)
AT MAROONDAH RESERVOIR, HEALESVILLE 2017



JOHN WITH A SCHOOL FRIEND OF JOAN GRACIE LERNO – OUTSIDE HER HOME
SIMI VALLEY U.S.A. 2016



JOHN & JEANNETTE AT TOP OF GATEWAY ARCH
ST. LOUIS 630 FT IN 2016



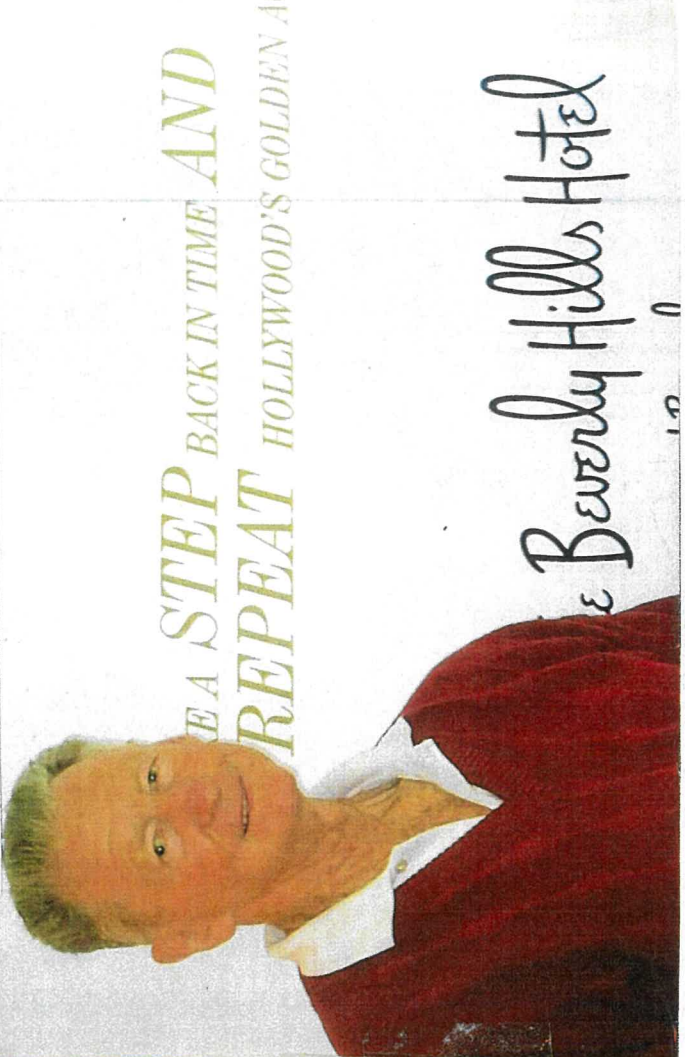
THE CROFT HOUSE IN SEVERN MARYLAND WITH JOHN & SON ROBERT



JOHN & SON ROBERT IN ARLINGTON CEMETERY WASHINGTON DC
GRAVES OF JOE LOUIS (BOXING WORLD CHAMPION) AND LEE MARVIN



JOHN & JEANETTE -- CENTRAL PARK NEW YORK 2016



TAKE A STEP BACK IN TIME AND
REPEAT HOLLYWOOD'S GOLDEN AGE

Beverly Hills Hotel

JOHN AT BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL -- LOS ANGELES 2016



GRANDDAUGHTER KAHALA MACKINTOSH – DEB BALL OCT. 2017