

THE CROFT CHRONICLE

January 2022

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Dear

Greetings to all I hope that you had an enjoyable festive season and I send you my best wishes for a safe and happy new year. Thank you to those that have sent greetings, it is always enjoyable to hear from family and friends.

Wow wee, what a crazy year. In last year's newsletter that was sent out in February 2021 we had been putting up with covid19 for nearly a year and here we are nearly 2 years later still having to deal with it.

When I started this year's newsletter, I was absolutely determined to get it out by Christmas, oh well, I failed again but not to worry it's done, and I hope you enjoy my ramblings.

Everyone in the world is affected in some way by this covid thing. It does not matter if you are young or old or if you are working or retired, we are all affected in some way. I have had 6 covid tests and had the double jab of AstraZeneca. I have even booked myself in for the booster. I am not only doing it to keep myself alive and kicking, but all of you that are reading this would miss out on next year's newsletter hahaha.

Earlier this year I had 3 stays in hospital with fluid on my lungs. This is caused by the old ticker slowing down and not pumping hard enough. I had a look at my heart warranty, and it says it's good for another 10 years I may have to put in a warranty claim with the big man upstairs.

I manage the fluid by sticking to 1.25 litres of fluid a day. I worked out that equals 3.5 cans of beer a day, but the damn doctor says I must stick to 1 can a day and make up the rest with water, cups of tea and milk on my cereal. I still think my idea was better!!!!

I have had a big change this year I have finally decided to move in with my daughter Suzanne and her husband Ross. After my stints in hospital and the fact I was getting tired a lot and that I have not got the same get up and go I once had that maybe it was time. Also, a bit of gentle persuasion and badgering from Suzanne, I knew it was time.

7 years ago, after I lost Joan, the idea of building an extension onto their home was talked about so that I could move in.

The extension was built and finished in December 2015, but it has taken me this long to make up my mind. Some people do say I can be indecisive hahaha. But I don't like to rush things.

I still go back to Canterbury for a night now and then and to make sure that my lawns are still the best-looking lawns in the suburb. My lazy son-in-law even has me doing his lawns.

I do have to admit that living with Suzanne has a lot of advantages but the main one is I get to eat her delicious food for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Suzanne certainly took after her mum when it comes to cooking. Suzanne also keeps an eye on me and makes sure I get to all my doctor appointments and that I do as they say haha.

Last Easter, I had a few days away with Suzanne and Ross and was lucky enough to have my other daughter Jeanette join us. We went to a regional city of Victoria called Bendigo. The trip was to attend a celebration that marked the end of an event for charity that Sue and Ross are involved with.

My Father is buried in Bendigo, so this gave me the opportunity to visit his grave. He died in 1955 aged 65. His photo in this chronicle was on his return from the first world war in 1918.

Whilst in Bendigo we had the opportunity to visit a place ran by John Piccoli. He is known as the "Spanner Man," if you have a spare few minutes take the time to google him. The things he does with old spanners is amazing. Every statue made has the number of the statue welded into it somewhere. They have been valued at thousands of dollars, but he has never sold any of them.

His grandfather bought the property in 1876. When John was only a young boy, he became the victim of polio and has spent most of his life in a wheelchair, but this did not stop him from continuing to work the farm. As he got older, he started a very strange hobby of making sculptures from old rusty spanners and welding them together. In his time of making his sculptures he has purchased 143,000 spanners from various farms across Australia. I got to spend an hour talking to him, what a fascinating individual he was. I say was because sadly 2 weeks after sitting and talking with him he passed away.

Talking of amazing human beings have any of you heard of Eddie Jaku? Whilst at a friend's place I saw a book on the coffee table called "The Happiest Man on Earth." My friend said she had finished the book and I could take it and read it, which I have done.

Eddie was born a Jew in Leipzig Germany in 1920. He always says he considered himself a German first and a Jew second and he was very proud of his country. All that changed in November 1938 when he was beaten, arrested, and taken to Buchenwald concentration camp. For the next 7 years he faced unimaginable horrors. He also got sent to other camps including Auschwitz.

In his younger days he had trained as a specialist in engineering. This what kept him alive as he was needed by the Nazis to keep essential machinery running. His parents and other relatives were gassed but his sister survived.

He finally escaped whilst on a death march in 1945 and was rescued by allied soldiers. In 1946 he met and married the love of his life, and they were lucky enough to migrate to Sydney Australia in 1950. They had 2 children and he has dedicated his life to being positive and tries every day even at 101 years of age to make people he meets smile. He truly believes he is one of the luckiest men on earth and I would highly recommend the book.

He has volunteered at the Jewish Museum since its inception in 1992. He has written that even with all the tragedy and horror he has endured he has learned that "life can be beautiful if you make it beautiful." He made a vow to himself to smile every day. I was so moved by his book I wrote to him telling him how the book made me feel. I will never know if he got to read my letter as he died a few weeks after I sent it. But I am going to ask him if he read it when it's my turn and hopefully get to sit with him and share a beer. Maybe even 2 or 3 as I won't need to worry about my fluid intake hahaha.

My youngest son, Robert, has arrived back in Australia after making his home in America for the last 32 years. Robert was married and has 3 beautiful kids: Chelsea, Madeline, and James. They are all now grown up and living their lives in different parts of America.

Robert arrived at 11pm on 6th December. Because of more stupid covid rules he had to self-isolate for 72 hours after arriving. This meant that if any of us picked him up from the airport we would also need to isolate so what we did was drive out in 2 cars and then let Robert follow us back in my car to my home in Canterbury. We had a quick chat, but hugs and kisses were not allowed. He has been tested and is all clear so tomorrow I get to go back to Canterbury and stay with him.

He is proving to be very useful, in only 3 days he has washed my car, cut my lawns, and fixed my garage doors. I might let him stay if he keeps this up hahaha.

My Grandkids are all growing up fast and getting on with their lives now that covid restrictions are easing.

Danielle (John's eldest) my eldest granddaughter has gone back to teaching in the classroom after having to teach the kids by zoom over the last few years. At the same time as trying to teach her pupils she was also looking after her own 2 children very active boys Max and Charlie.

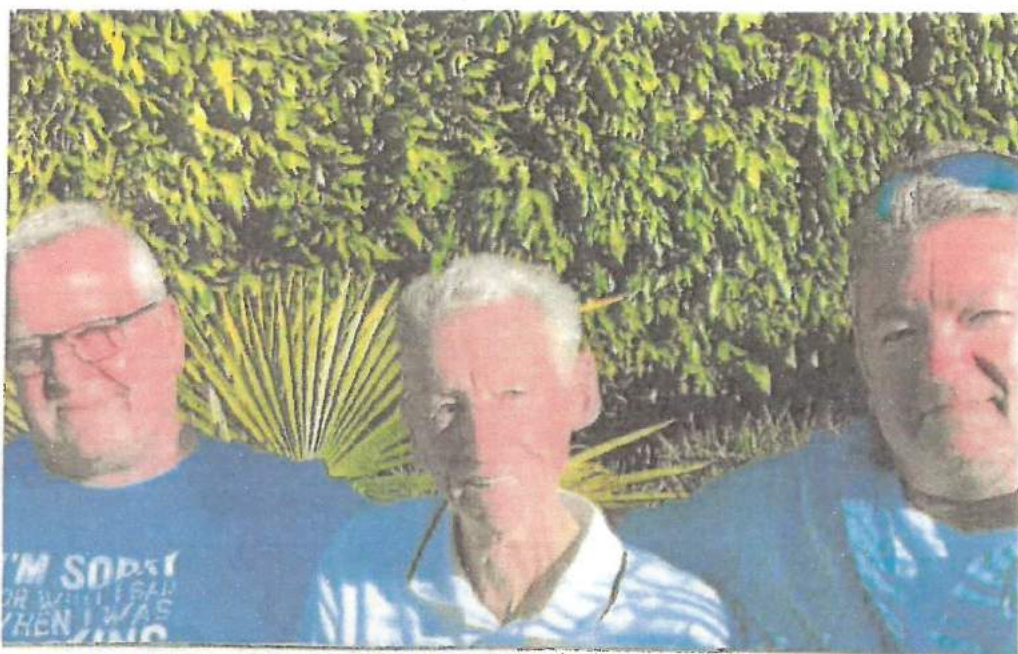
Mellissa (John's youngest) has also returned to work as an occupational therapist after having 9 months maternity leave after having her second child a little girl called Lily. Her Husband Dean was also trapped working from home due to covid, so their home was a very busy place.

Ben (Jeanette's oldest) has been living at home with Jeanette after returning to Sydney from Melbourne. Ben is heading out on his own in early 2022 with his partner Monique. They are heading to Newcastle which is a few hours North of Sydney.

Christopher (Jeanette's youngest) is still living his dream as a rocket scientist in Texas USA. He is very much involved with putting satellites into space with his company having a long-term plan of manned flights.

Paige (Suzanne's eldest) has started a new job working at BP petrol station. She does the morning shift and starts at 5am that is still the middle of the night. She is also doing courses on jewellery making which is her hobby that she will one day be her job.

Kahala (Suzanne's youngest) decided in June 2021 that she was fed up with Melbourne's lockdowns and on a whim decided to move to Queensland. She got herself a job on Fraser Island working in the bars and restaurant and so far, is loving it. Kahala is now talking of heading off to Europe in 2023.



Me with my two sons John and Robert

Australia has a federal election due in May 2022. I live in the electorate of Kooyong where Josh Frydenberg is the MP, and he is also the Treasurer of Australia.

Adjacent to Kooyong is the electorate of Chisholm where Gladys Liu is the MP. She won the seat for the Liberal party at the 2019 election, only by a small margin.

I have known Gladys for many years, and I plan to again be involved in her election campaign to help her retain the seat. This time by a large majority.

Gladys was born in Hong Kong in the 1960's and in 1985 she won a scholarship to study speech therapy in Melbourne. After completing her Bachelor of Applied Science degree at La Trobe University in 1988 she worked as a speech pathologist in the state department of education from 1989 to 2004. From 2000 to 2008 she also developed her own speech pathology practice.

She became an Australian citizen in 1992 and was interested in politics and joined the Liberal Party in 2003 and soon became an energetic spokesperson for the liberal cause.

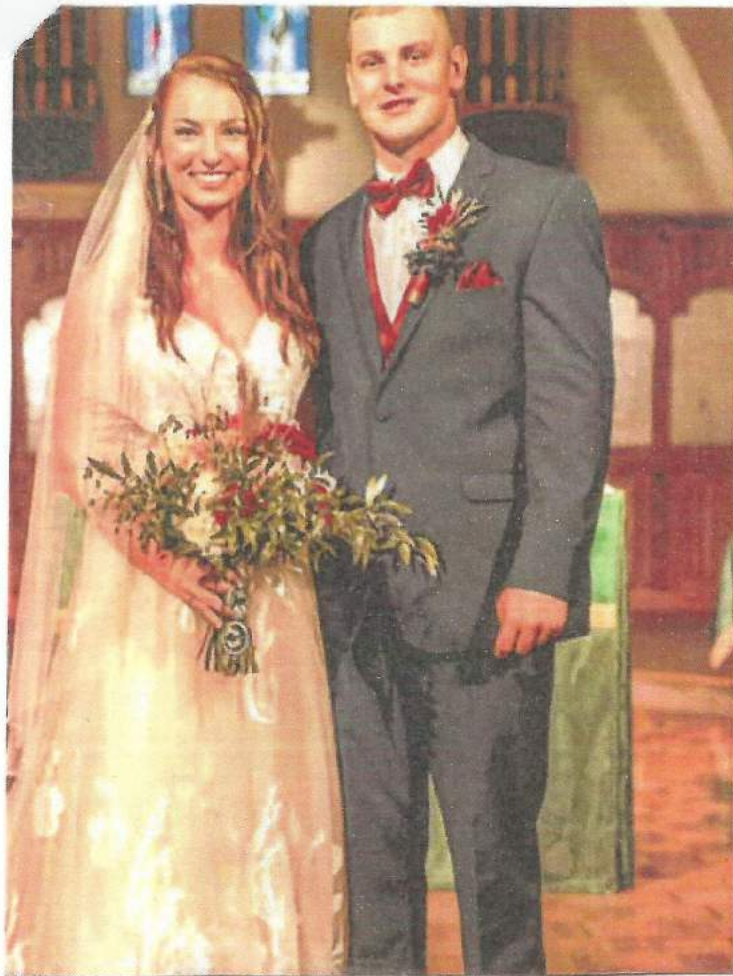
From 2007 she served as multicultural advisor to the state leader of the opposition Ted Baillieu, continuing in that role to advise him following his election as Premier in 2010.

She is passionate about our nation and is very energetic. She is proud to be a member of Prime Minister Scott Morrison's team and works hard for the constituents of the Chisholm electorate.

Love, best wishes and God bless,

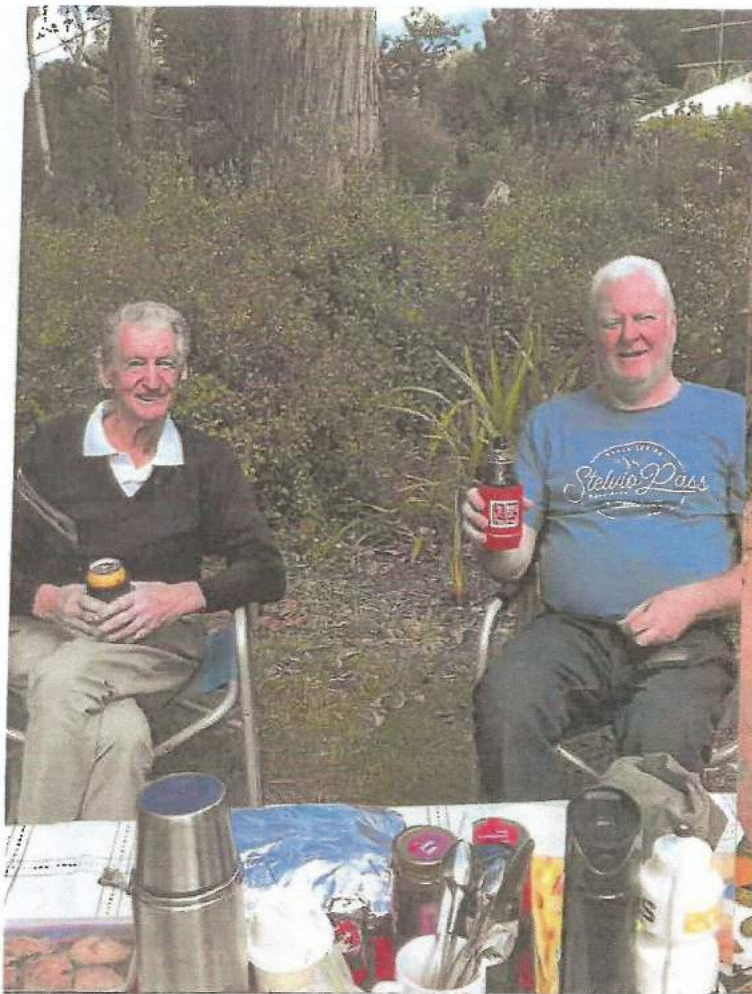
John Croft and family



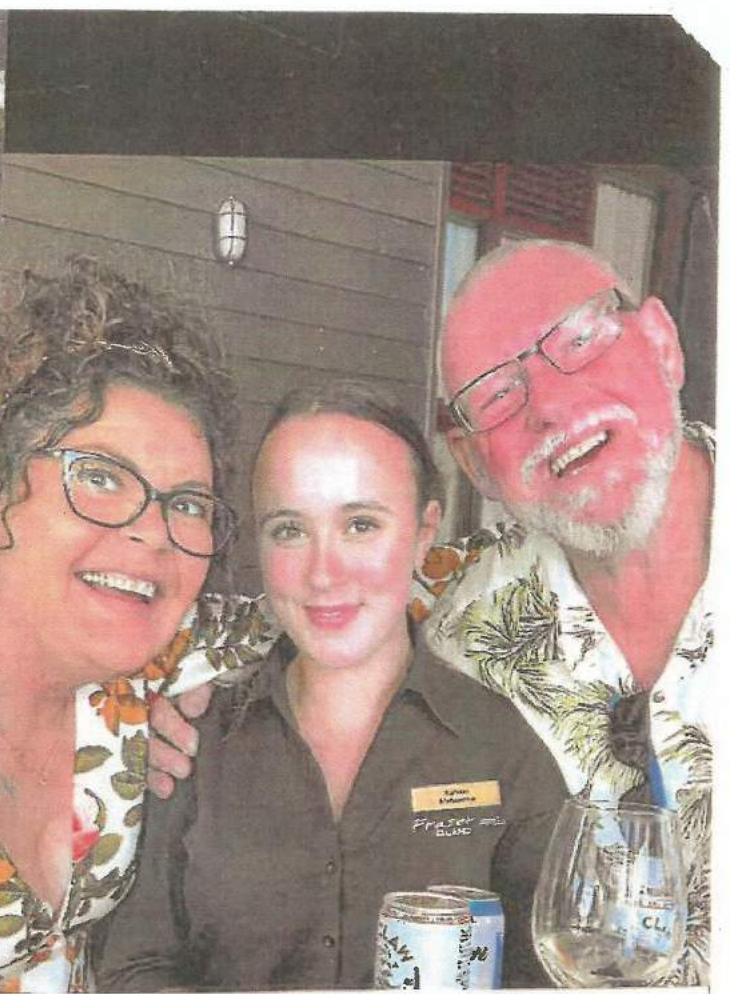


My GrandDaughter Madeline Croft and husband Brandon Fletcher on 4th Sept 2021 Nebraska USA

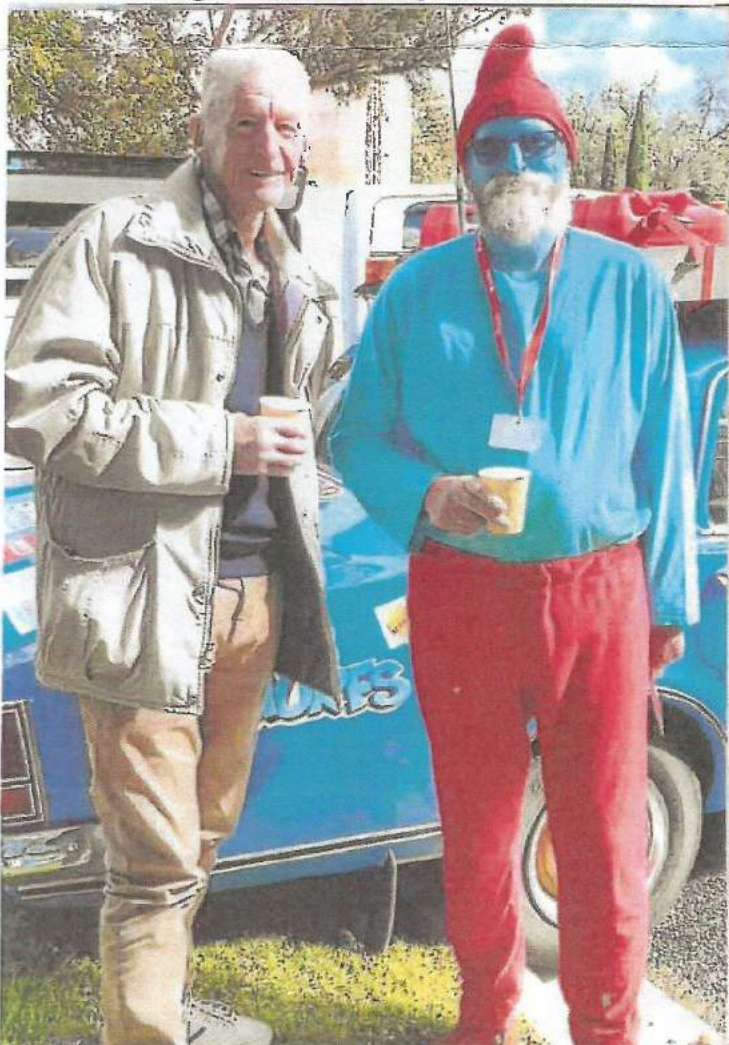




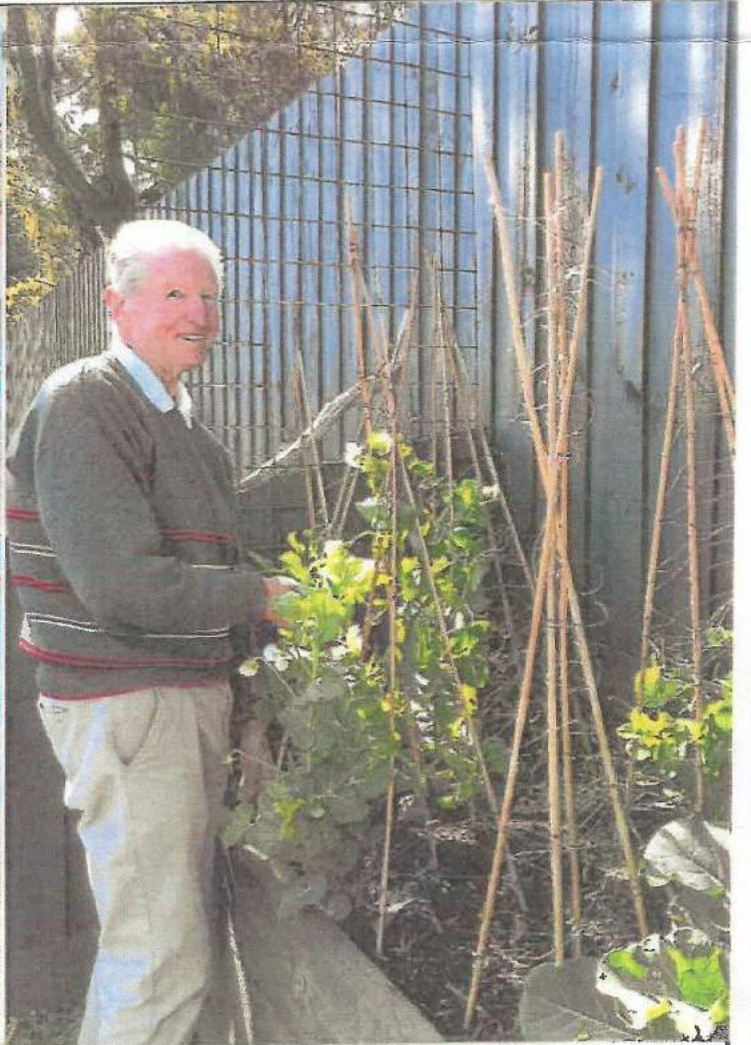
Having a beer with my son in-law Ross



Kahala with Derek and Denise Foulston



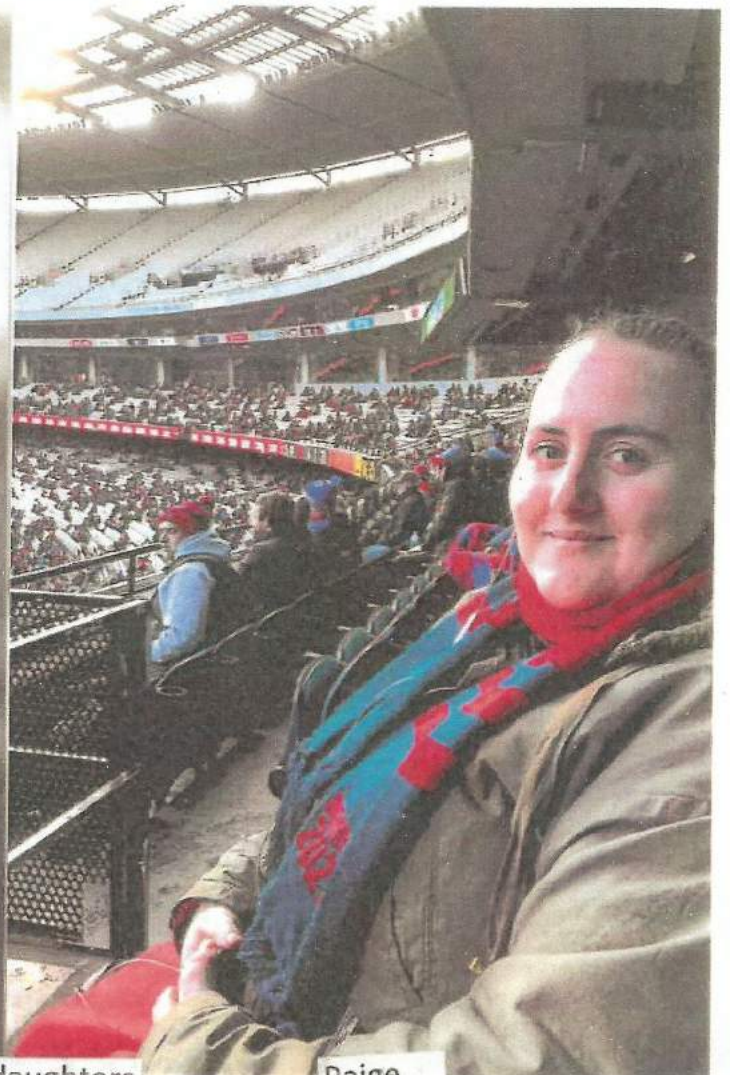
Having a Coffee with the local Smurf Eddie



Tving up snow peas in the veggie garden



Kahala

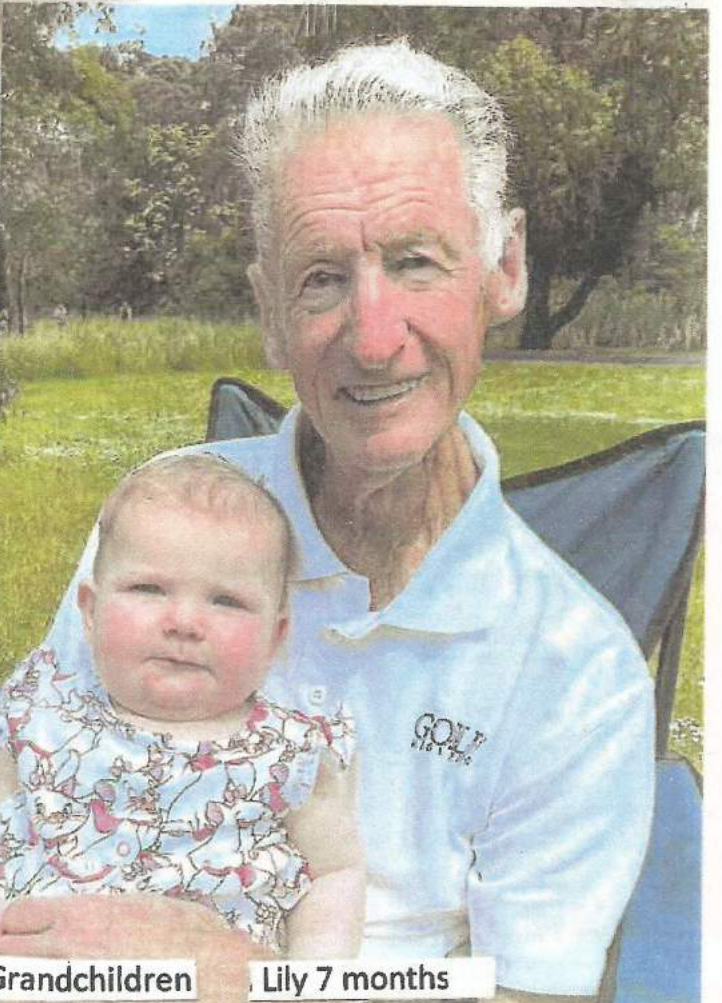


Paige

My Granddaughters



Josua aged 2



Lily 7 months

My Great Grandchildren



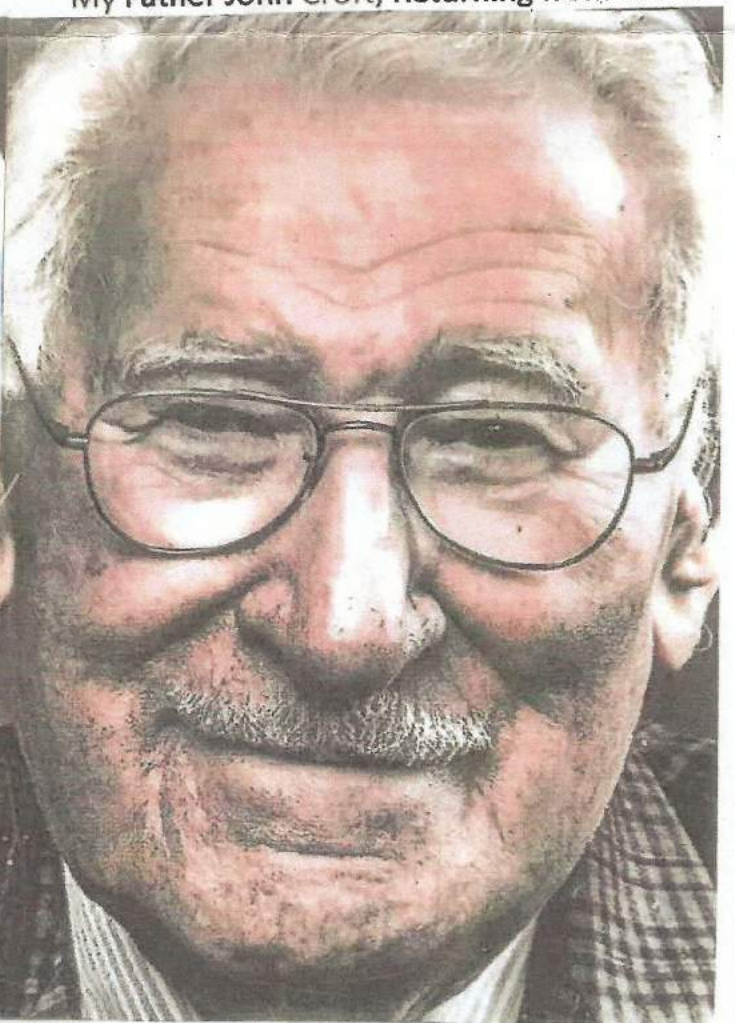
My Mother Ilene Croft



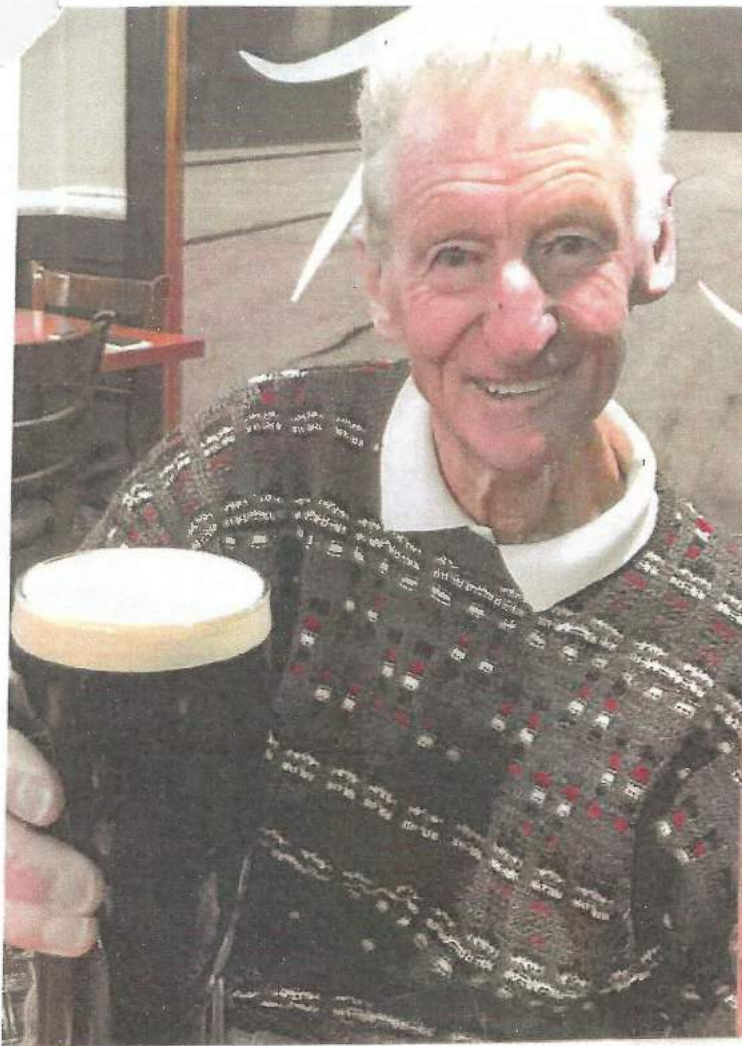
My Father John Croft, Returning from WW1



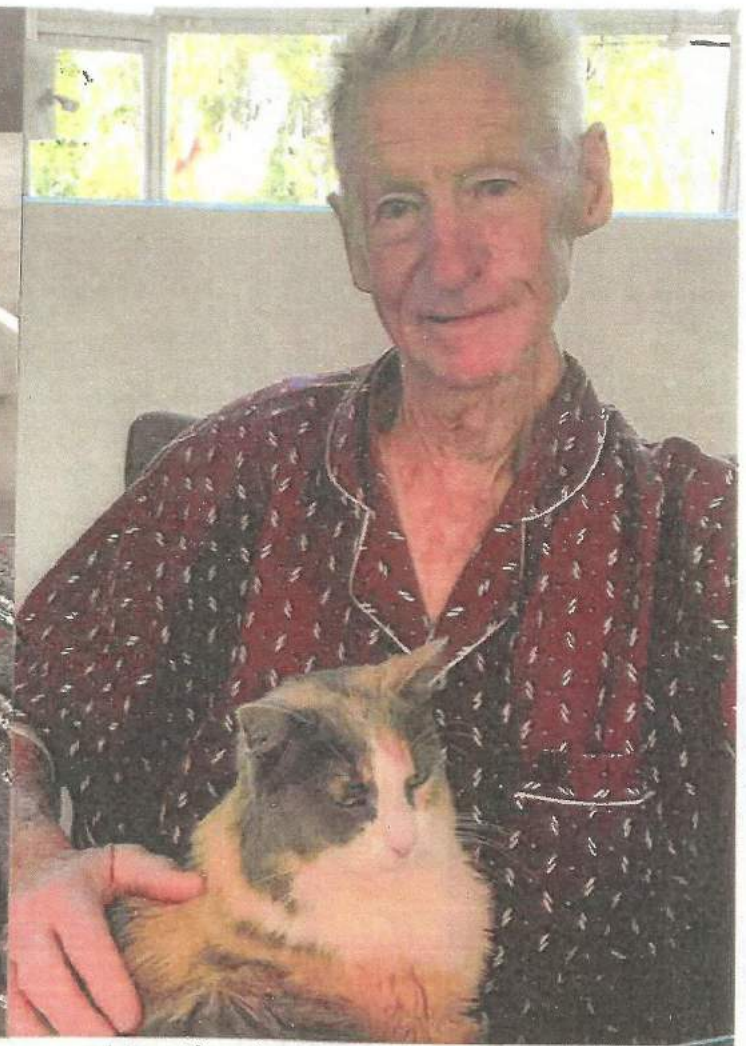
Captain Toby on the house boat



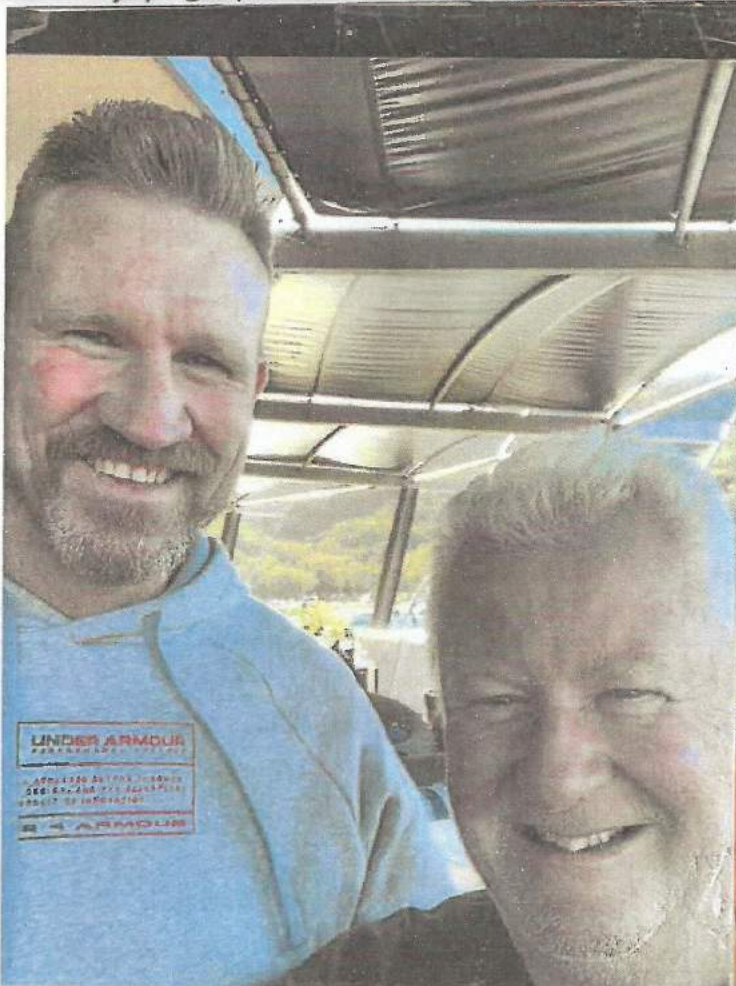
Eddie Jaku



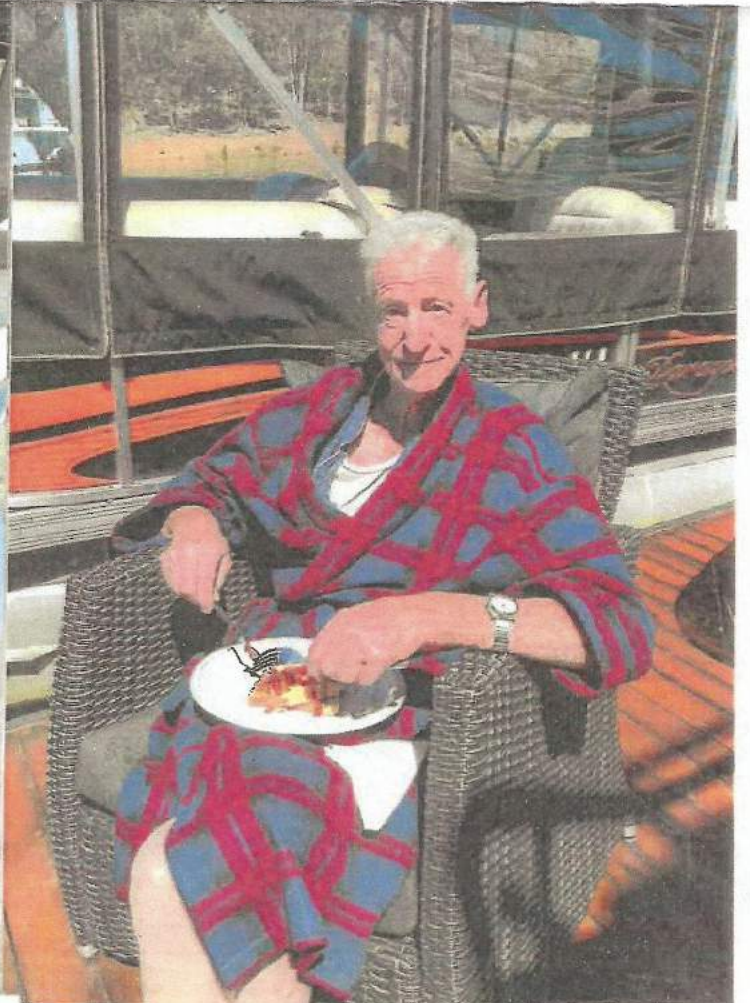
Enjoying a pint of Guinness at the Local pub



Myself and Millie One of Suzannes Cats



Ross and Nathan Buckley Ex Footy Star



Breakfast on The Houseboat In the Sun



first cousin John Godfrey and wife Kathleen



first cousins John Godfrey and Don Croft



My Fathers grave in Bendigo



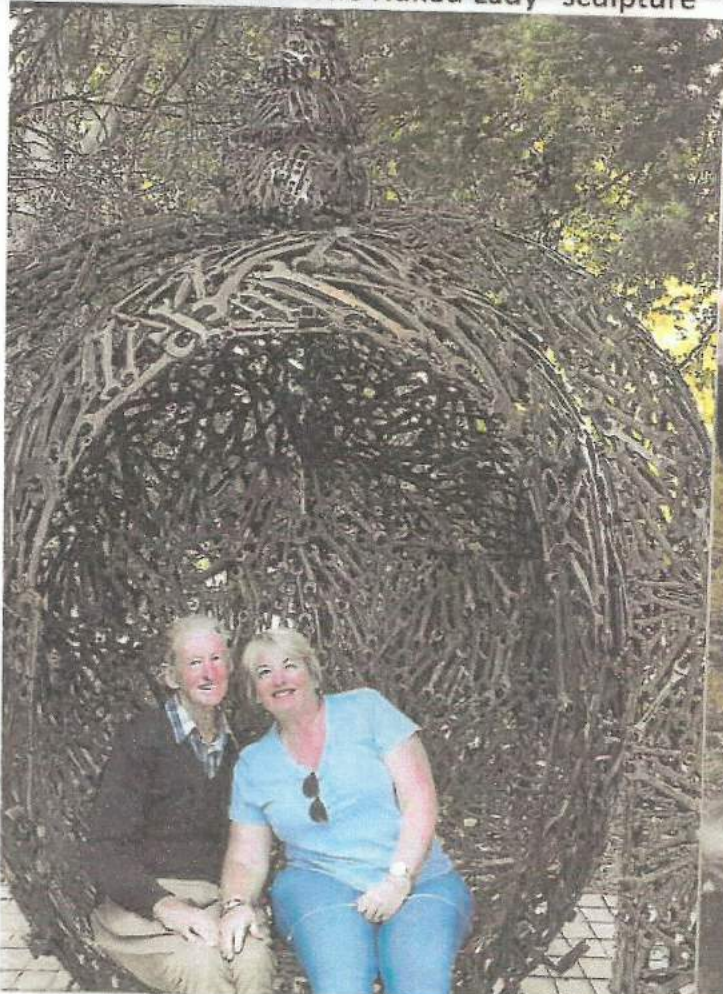
Chatting with my Wife Joan at Springvale Cemetery



John Piccoli with "The Naked Lady" sculpture



My Daughter Jeanette and the Deer Sculpture



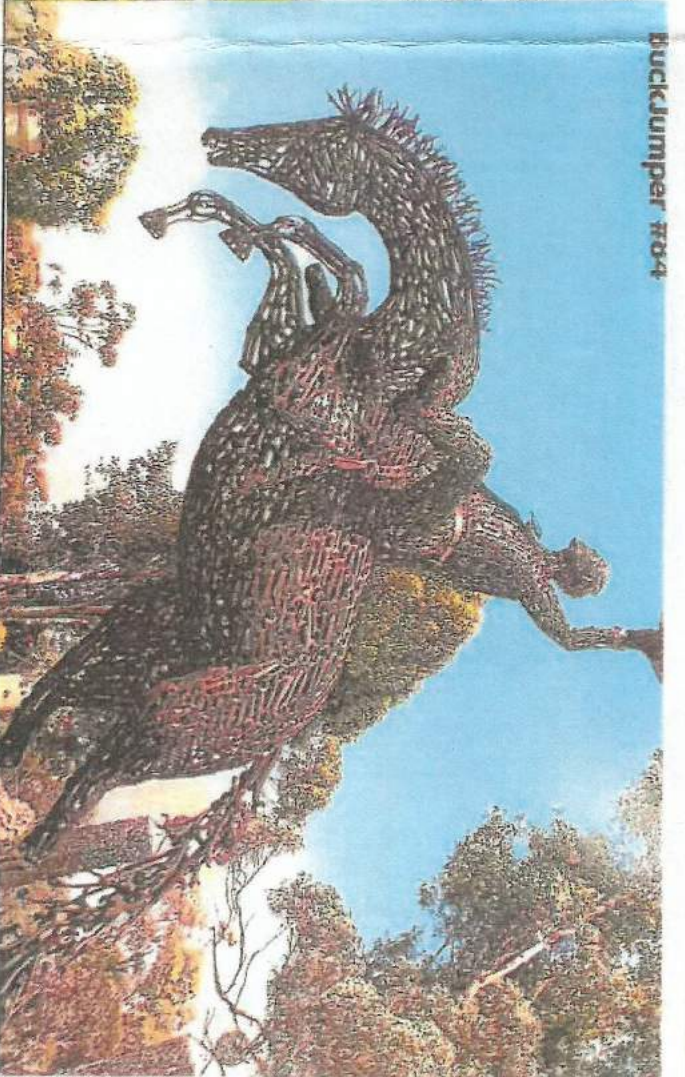
My daughter Suzanne on "The Garden seat Sculpture"



The "Spannerman" John Piccoli



Two stallions fighting

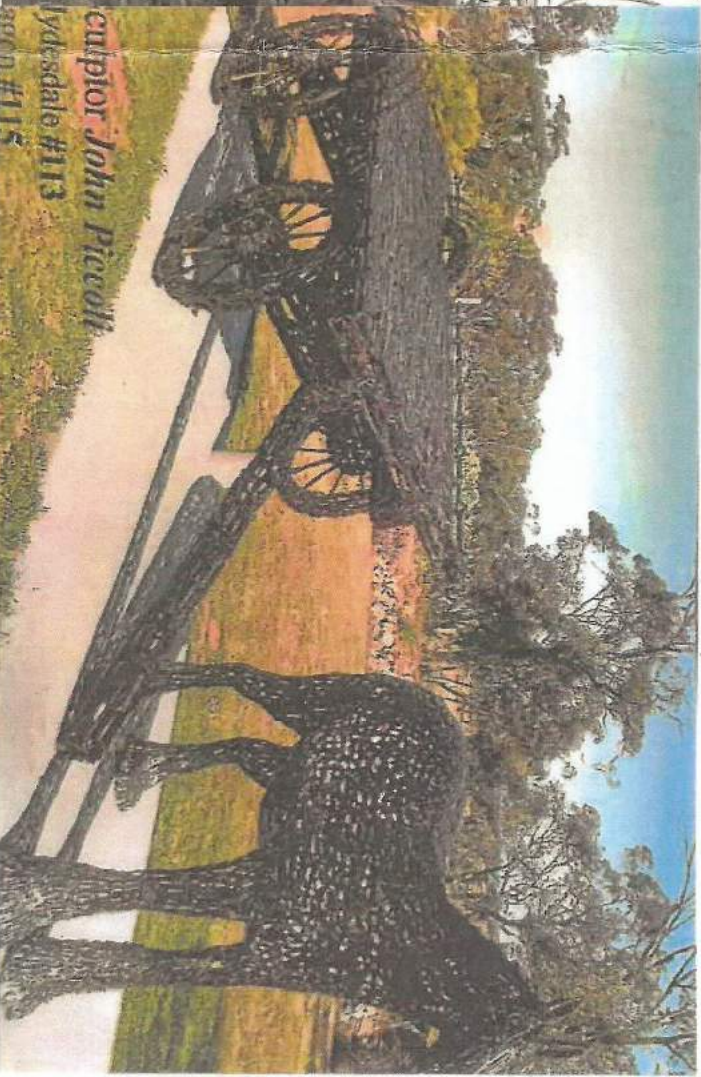


Buck Jumper 70x4

The Buck Jumper



Johns mammoth collection of spannars



sculptor John Piccotti
Lydesdale #113
8000 #115

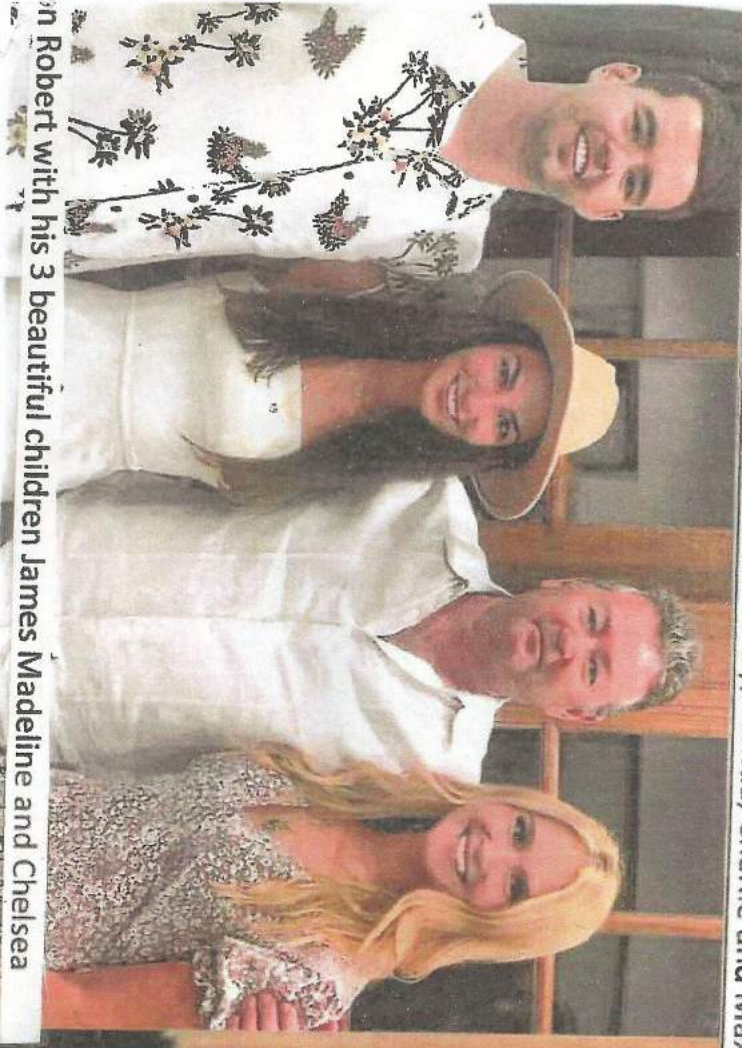
Horse and wagon



John with wife Lynne and grandchildren Lily, Joshua, Charlie and Max



Watching the Mighty Melbourne Football club with Son John and Ross



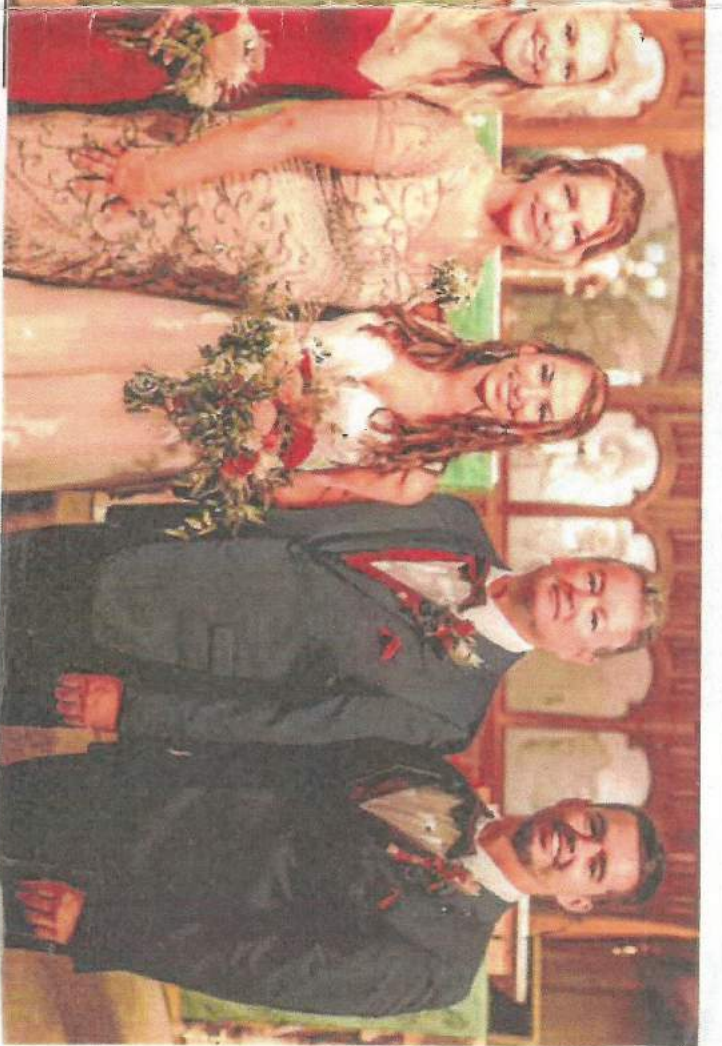
Robert with his 3 beautiful children James Madeline and Chelsea



Suzanne



Madeline with her new husband Brandon and her Mum and Dad



The Bride, with her Mum, Dad and siblings James and Chelsea



The Beautiful bride with her Bridesmaids



The wedding Party