

Anne and Dave's Christmas Letter for 2024

Dear friends and family,

Our one and only trip overseas this year was to Fiji from 25th May to 1st June at Musket Cove Island Resort on Malolo Lailai Island to the northwest of Viti Levu (Fiji's main island). The weather was a bit cooler than anticipated, and it even rained a few spots. We had a good exploration of the area we were in and took a very damp small-boat ride to a nearby native village on an adjacent island. Dave managed a walk up to the higher parts of the island with great views and some fancy houses.



Fijiian Welcome Choir and Beachside Buras at Musket Cove Island Resort

During the rest of the year, we stayed in Australia but did get away to Mollymook and Nelsons Bay for a few days of enjoyment and relaxation.

At the end of 2023, we stayed with Derek and Lisa on the farm before returning home to meet up with Alex and family. Alex and family also stayed with us for a couple of nights in mid-February as we are fairly close to a basketball stadium where Emma was playing.



Anne's 90th – Friends Lunch at Glengara Country Club

The big celebrations in March were for Anne's ninetieth Birthday. The celebrations started with a village party for various friends in the Glengara Club House on the 5th March. Next was a birthday party for

family at the Ocean View restaurant on the 10th. Finally, we drove down to Rick Stein’s place at Mollymook for three nights of indulgence.



Anne's 90th – Family Lunch at The Ocean Restaurant



Anne's 90th – Our Time at Bannisters, Mollymook (room with a view, special Rick Stein dinner, view of Banisters from below)
We tried out Rick Stein’s other hotel at Bannisters in Port Stephens for two nights in mid-September when it was freezing cold and blowing a gale. However, good food and explorations were enjoyed. The whales were pretty neat too!





Whales and Coastal Views at Boat Harbour, Port Stephens

We managed an overnight stay in Sydney at Easter with Alex and family. Our next visit was at the end of November when we spent the weekend with them before Steve and Emma departed for Xmas in Scotland with Steve's parents.

Bev has recently moved into a retirement complex near Bayview, to the north of Mona Vale, in the northeastern part of Sydney. We had planned to see her after visiting Alex on 1st December, but we were unable to as she had a prior engagement.

In mid-June, we went to Sydney by train to see Bangarra Dance Company at the Opera House. It is easier for us to travel to Newcastle for ACO concerts, and have fitted in three this year – the first on 1st February to see and hear “River”, the second on 21st June to hear a program of “Alstaedt-Haydn & Tchaikovsky”, and the final concert was on the 5th September with a program of “Tognetti Mendelssohn Bach”. We managed to get to a Musica Viva concert in August, also in Newcastle.

In July, we enjoyed a very indulgent lunch at 8 on Trinity at Morriset Park. An amazing experience with wonderful seafood, fabulous pizza and an affogato “to die for”. We promised that we would return and so will be there again for a Christmas lunch.



Dave and Anne enjoying lunch at 8 on Trinity, Morriset Park



Derek, Anne, Lola and Lisa on the Boardwalk at Terrigal

On 17th August, we met up with Derek and Lisa at Terrigal. We enjoyed a coolish breezy lunch at Terrigal Haven (sadly, our favourite eating place in the area has now closed its doors) and a walk on the Boardwalk to find some coffee. Lola, their dog, enjoyed the doggy area at the Haven.

On the 11th September, our Retirement Village Glengara celebrated its 25th Anniversary with speeches, a cake-cutting ceremony, morning tea and lunch which we attended. Decorations, displays, slideshows and plenty of chat helped to complete the enjoyment. A very successful occasion with many past and present staff and residents.



Glengara 25th Anniversary – storyboards (view and chat), decorations, speeches audience, cutting the cake ceremony

From the 12th September, Anne had an ongoing auto-immune problem, which has necessitated various visits to a Dermatology Clinic and lots of medication.

On 17th December we are travelling to the Hunter Valley for two nights at The Lane Retreat near Pokolbin, before proceeding to 8 on Trinity for our special Christmas lunch.

Christmas will be spent at home – we have various indulgences planned. We will catch up with Alex and Jamie who are planning to camp at The Entrance for a week after the New Year, while Steve and Emma are enjoying a Scottish winter.

Have a wonderful
Christmas and New Year,
and stay healthy and
happy in 2025.

Love to all
Anne & Dave



Sunset at Bannisters, Port Stephens