

Anne and Dave's Christmas Letter for 2025

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Dear friends and family,

Our activities have been somewhat curtailed in 2025, due to health issues and budgetary constraints. However, we have managed a surprising list of events and visits.

Health report

Anne started having leg problems in February. This quickly turned into nasty ulcers on one leg. Since then, we have been frequent visitors to our local medical facility for leg dressing (3 times a week). At weekends, Dave took over. We also utilised the Emergency Health Centres where possible.

The leg problem spread to her other leg, and water on the lungs meant that breathing became quite difficult, resulting in poor sleeping and reduced walking. Visits to specialists and a month's stay in Berkeley Vale Private Hospital have resulted in a significant improvement.

Anne is now able to walk well using her walker and breathe properly, so she can sleep at night. Onward treatments have been through a wonderful post-hospital transition program, and soon we will have Community Nursing supporting her needs.

Anne has remained cheerful and positive throughout this experience. "Getting old sucks" is a common statement in our village, quickly followed by "the alternative is not great".

Meanwhile, Dave has been a weekend nurse, hospital visitor, chief cook and bottle washer. Unfortunately, Dave's back has suffered, and frequent visits to our Physio have been required. Dry eye problems have not helped, particularly in bright light conditions.

Music and dance events

We managed to attend two concerts by the Australian Chamber Orchestra in Newcastle. Sadly, we couldn't make it to the last two concerts for the year.

In June, we enjoyed a fantastic performance of "Illume" by the Bangarra Dance Theatre at the Opera House. Leaving a phone and a bag behind necessitated a second trip the following day.

We have also managed to attend several events at Avoca Beach Theatre. Monsieur Camembert and Amy Dobson in March, Simon Tedeschi and George Washingmachine in May, and James Morrison and the Big Band Liechtenstein in November – all fantastic. We couldn't get to some of the other performances at this wonderful venue.



Avoca Beach Theatre enlarged stage for James Morrison and the Big Band Liechtenstein

Family and friends

We have enjoyed visits and meals with Alex and family in January, August and October. We will be seeing them for a late Christmas lunch at Terrigal Haven.



Jamie, Alex, Emma and Steve at Mingara

The family are very busy with school and work, plus Emma's basketball, Jamie's lights and sound "business", and Alex and Steve's music. Jamie is contributing to family movement tasks, now he can drive.

In January, we enjoyed a visit by Ian and Gwynneth, our long-time Canadian friends who insist on coming to Australia during our summer. We met up at Diggers in Long Jetty and again in the Hunter – lots of talking, eating and drinking enjoyed by all.

In March, we went to Lisa and Derek's farm near Orange – again more talking, eating and drinking, Dave had to dress Anne's leg during this part of the trip. We then travelled to Canberra for a reunion of Dave's work colleagues at the wonderful Marion restaurant on Lake Burley Griffin.

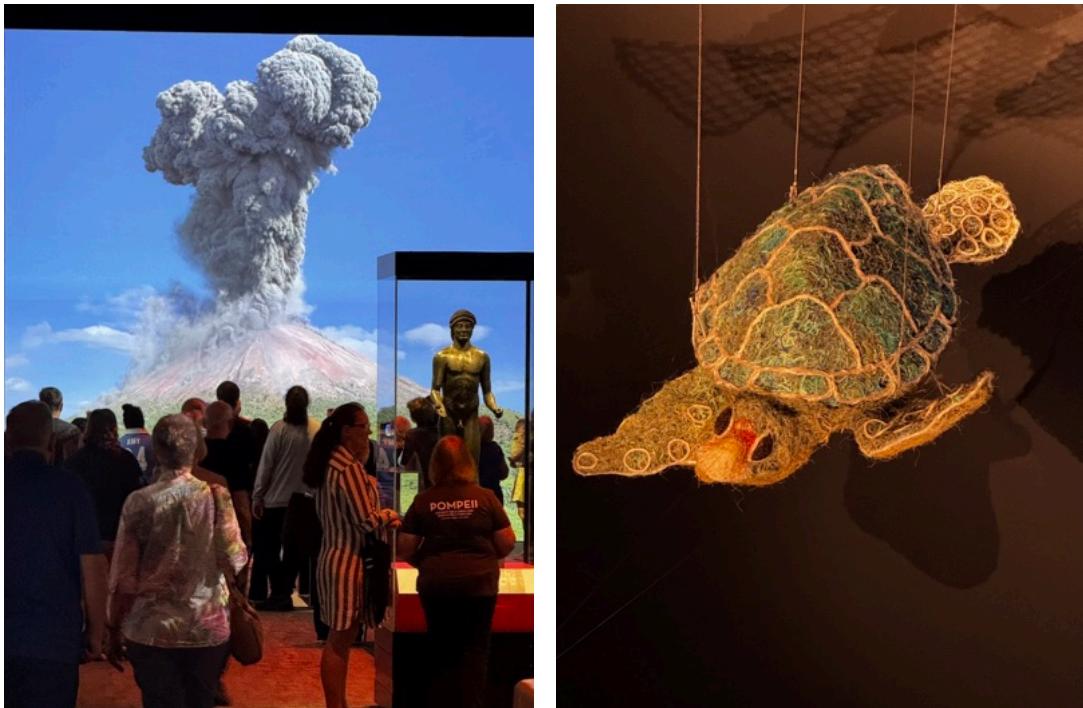
While in Canberra, we spent a day at the Australian Museum, the highlights of which were the special Pompeii exhibition (complete with sound and light experience) and a film on the Kimberley.



At the farm



Reunion at The Marion



Australian National Museum - Pompeii eruption scene and turtle sculpture

Village life

Dave and a few others continue to provide technical support to village residents. The most common problem seems to be the young who think their grandparents can and want to do all the things on their devices that they do.

A new website is being developed for village residents, and Dave is involved in design and specifications for this. The aim is for it to be more friendly and useful than the current site.

Anne has been unable to contribute much to village life other than the odd game of mahjong.

We both attend Community Nights on Fridays, and we were the lucky recipients of a magnificent bottle of port.

Once a month, a group of jazz musos play for us on Sunday afternoons. We are currently planning an event in January with Alex's small jazz group, The Bug Hunters, performing for us.

Christmas this year includes lunch in the Country Club, morning tea on Christmas Day (for the lonely people) and a quiet Christmas at home with a wonderful ham and other good things to eat and drink. Christmas with the family will be on the Sunday after Christmas Day.

**Have a wonderful
Christmas and New Year,
and stay healthy and
happy in 2026.
Love to all
Anne & Dave**



Sunset at Glengara