

## *At Home with the Harlands*

*Christmas 2018*

One more circuit around the Sun has passed it seems, and so we are onto another Christmas and New Year. We were saddened again this year by the passing of Linda's father Verne in November. He had sorely missed Eunice, who passed away just over a year earlier, and with the passing of Verne's cousin Lorna (known as "Aunty Lorna" to all and sundry) he was the last of that generation (on either side of the family). All of the grandchildren either read or sang at his memorial service, with Emily, Jeremy and their cousin Emma once again singing beautifully in a trio.



**Beau** is now, in dog years, the oldest of all of us, having recently turned 8. But somehow he seems to refuse to act his age, which is a trait he shares with some others in the same household. We presume one day he will learn that he will never catch a bird by barking at it, and that dirt does not have to be disturbed every couple of weeks.



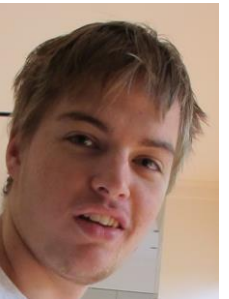
**Jeremy** has just completed Year 11. He was very pleased with his result in Australian History and even more so with his result in Theatre, which meant that he was invited to perform as part of Top Acts (for the best final-year performances) in 2019. With now only 4 subjects required to complete his VCE, it seems he is "over the hump" (not that his parents are counting, or crossing off calendars or anything like that ...) He has continued to enjoy his time playing bass drum in the Pipes and Drums band, including odd appearances as a snare drummer, or as the Drum Major ("the guy out the front with the big hat and big stick"). He is still very much involved in choirs, orchestras and plays, and had a lot of fun as Fleance in the School's production of "MacBeth Re-Arisen". He continues to work at K-Mart, and is not far away from the "magical figure" of 120 hours on L plates ...



**Emily** has revelled in the chance to explore her favourite subject of History, having just completed her first year at Monash. She has been working for a tutoring agency, expecting to work mainly with Year 11 or 12 students, but ended up with her very first client being a seven-year-old! Despite some initial misgivings, she has adapted quite well and found a way to utilise her skills, which some would claim is a genetic disposition towards teaching. She passed her driving test in March, and so has very much taken up the role of "spare driver" with enthusiasm, despite the odd outburst of "I feel like an unpaid Uber driver", which has her parents exchanging wry smiles and pondering the meaning of irony. She has also recently started working at Boost Juice at the local shopping centre, which means she is discovering in some detail the extended nature of shopping hours over the Christmas period ...



**Timothy** has continued with his studies in Engineering Technology at RMIT. He has applied to articulate into Mechatronics, which will require getting himself to the Bundoora campus rather than the city, but it looks like that will be a challenge for 2019 rather than 2020. In the meantime he will look for some full-time work. He has become quite adept at pounding the local pavements twice a week delivering catalogues, and has become very good at both estimating the number of catalogues in any given pile, and working out how many will fit into a given trolley basket. He still needs to use Google Maps every now and again in order to find a local barber, but manages to do so at highly strategic times, seemingly designed to minimise the number of visits per year. His home chef skills, though, get a lot more practice, which is very pleasing.



**Joshua** has also continued in much the same vein as the previous year. He has seen off several managers now in his job at the local Pancake Parlour. Being a 24-hour place, it means he often works some odd hours, and occasionally has a late-night shift followed by one the next morning. He has continued his studies of Japanese via an Arts degree at La Trobe, and has now about one semester to go. It has also been interesting to observe how he has sometimes made use of his younger sister's driving skills in order for transportation, but without in any way diminishing his expertise on public transport. It has been occasionally a logistical challenge with three drivers and two cars; we hate to think what this may look like if we end up soon as a six-driver family (which may well be the case by next Christmas --- watch this space!).



**Linda** has continued at Haileybury, with another recent visit to China. She has ridden her bike to work a few times, which may become more common in 2019, especially if Jeremy delivers on his promise to drive himself to School after February!



**James** has had a very busy but prosperous year at RMIT, with the result that he can now be called more or less officially "Professor of Chocolate Frogs". Having finally worn out his bike of almost 13 years, it seems a new cycle will begin soon!

With best wishes from all of us for a refreshing Christmas and a prosperous New Year,

James, Linda, Joshua, Timothy, Emily & Jeremy Harland