



Well that was a weird year. We seem to be saying that every year now, though. For us at least, we have some tangible progress, in that after finishing off our landscaping in the back yard, we turned our attention to the front (which badly needed doing due the ancient front fence being blown down in a storm). As you can see we now have a new fence, gates, litch gate and tiled paths which have greatly improved the front look. Many of the plants have been retained, especially the mature trees, but often having been put back in different places (after a lot of levelling, scraping and installation of pipes). So it is like a reset rather than a totally new garden, and there is a bit of growth to be expected over the summer. Sadly we lost our long-time beagle companion **Beau** in August this year. He had been coughing for a little while and it turned out that this was lymphoma, and by the time it was diagnosed, it was fairly advanced. We made him as comfortable as we could, but it was clear that his time was near, and when the end came it was pretty swift. After almost 12 years, it was hard to feel cheated. Rest in peace, our furry friend. His little mate **Rosie** has continued on her merry way, despite being a little lonely. She will still gravitate to wherever the most people are, and has been getting very keen on short car rides, almost to the point where picking up the keys puts her on high alert. She has also made an art form out of barking like mad whenever someone is at the door, only to try to lick them to death once they come in.

Jeremy continues to thrive in his Performing Arts course at Federation University in Ballarat. He had a change of house at the start of the year, and a move to a location a little closer to the campus. He seems to have no trouble in finding local work, and has been able to gradually organise his working time into a more regular schedule. We attended a couple of the performances that the student cohort put on ('Twelfth Night' and 'Momo') which we felt were very impressive (although perhaps we were showing our bias!). He still seems to exist in a state of quantum uncertainty between Ballarat and Melbourne, particularly on weekends, and has re-established his bass drum activities as part of the Hawthorn Pipes and Drums.

Emily has had nearly two years in Oakleigh South, not far from us, but is currently looking for somewhere new in a similar area. She has become quite a keen football fan, which means she and James often meet up at matches during the footy season. For some of the major matches, it can be quite an extended family affair, all cheering for Melbourne of course, which would gladden the heart of James's father Tony. She has continued working, and has developed her cooking skills. However, she and her housemates really need to learn the art of lawn mowing, with James having had a few visits with the mower to 'de-jungle' the front lawn!

We seem to have settled into a rhythm with ``only'' four of us at home. **Timothy** obtained his driving licence earlier in the year, and seemingly had so much fun in doing so that he followed up with a forklift licence soon after! This has been very useful at work for him, where he spends time moving and unloading containers. That not only means we are back to a situation where we have more drives in the house than cars in the driveway, but also that **Joshua** has the greatest incentive of all to complete the driver's licence collection. Sibling rivalry clearly doesn't seem to be an effective incentive in this case ... Joshua continues his pattern of past years, working at the Pancake Parlour and inching closer to completing his Arts degree. **Linda** is has now completed 20 years at Haileybury, and has chosen to celebrate by taking most of 2023 off. Long service leave was well overdue, and although it has only been a couple of weeks so far, it has been very welcome. So with only 11 months of leave to go (but who is counting?), it will be a very different 2023 for her. **James** has also managed to get three months of leave from April to June, so there are some significant plans to be made over the summer break. The team at the STEM Centre for Digital Innovation has now grown to 6, which is good news, but means more management issues and yet more meetings reports and the like

*With best wishes from all of use for a refreshing Christmas and a prosperous New Year,
James, Linda, Joshua, Timothy, Emily & Jeremy Harland*