



After the very unusual year that was 2023, for us 2024 seems to have been the year that everything went back to sort-of-normal, with no “bucket list” trips, renovations or new pets. We did have a nice break with Wendy and Ruby in Airlie Beach for a week early in the year which was very relaxing. Hopefully we will fit in a few more breaks during 2025. As you can see above the garden is maturing. It seems our efforts to weed and mulch have been for nought. Hopefully the weather will suit some efforts in the garden during January. So an update in no particular order...

Sammy is now fully grown, but seems to be able to chew like a puppy – with various clothing and manchester biting the dust. He seems to have perfected the “art” of hearing and responding to other dogs miles away. Surprisingly, he responds well to walks at Caulfield Park and although he enthusiastically runs around like a crazy “person” he always comes back. On walks he doesn’t feel the same need to respond to other dogs with barking. At night he loves sitting on a lap and watching Linda eat – he knows a sucker when he sees one.

Rosie has a similar enthusiasm at the park for the first few minutes, although she is far less likely to chase other dogs, and after a while tends to trot around happily looking for new things to smell. We have learned to avoid going near the lake at one end of the park, as it seems that water is no barrier for a couple of crazed cavoodles when they spot ducks peacefully swimming in the pond.

Jeremy has settled back in Melbourne with Naomi after a long but successful house hunt. He has had a number of performances during the year, including Fresno (which he co-wrote), a play for the James Joyce themed Bloomsday Festival in June, a trip to Edinburgh Fringe with “You Can’t Escape an Aussie Boy” and a part in Love Actually – the Musical Parody at the Athenaeum Theatre in December. He is also still playing with Hawthorn Pipe Band including a trip to New Zealand earlier in the year. He has managed to fit in 2 dance courses, work for e-Store, Robata in the city and the Australian Open kids zone. Jeremy was very pleased that his cousins Millie and Stephanie managed to catch up with him in Edinburgh.

Emily has continued to be nearby in Murrumbena with Phil, Lauren and Ruby whilst working at Bonds. She continues with her online course in Editing and Creative Writing. This keeps her busy, although James has on occasion helped out by proofreading an assignment on proofreading! In her spare time her household and friends have been regular fixtures at a local trivia competition. They do well – just can’t seem to crack the bonus prize at the end of the night. She is also quite fond of attending football matches and usually has a rather strong opinion on certain decisions made by the officials. It seems she is very much channelling her grandfather (and father) when doing so!

Timothy continues to be with us at home and has very much perfected the art of knowing exactly where to position the cars so that we can fit two cars in the driveway whilst still being able to open both the gates and the garage. Linda appreciates his ability to help with last minutes shopping requests and on occasion his cooking skills.

Joshua also continues to be with us, working at the Pancake Parlour, sometimes on drinks and sometimes as a supervisor. He also is increasingly working with a colleague organising games events and other live entertainment in the city. He is great at puzzles so can be a great help to Linda at times.

Linda has settled back into the rhythm and routine of teaching and has negotiated a 0.8 load for 2025. Importantly, that means Tuesdays free, unusual for teachers, but at Haileybury possible. After returning to work she had to pick up some duties like Saturday sport that caused some stress. With her new arrangement there is no sport – just teaching and leading the Methods 3&4 team which has its moments. Her new electric bike has had a few outings - hopefully more regular in the new year. It would be great with all the building work at school if they created a secure bike lock up...

James has continued in his Digital Innovation role at RMIT and is rather chuffed at having been able to engineer the acronym for the centre to be HuDIni. That may be ambition outreaching talent, but it is certainly a good conversation starter! He has continued to sing with the Monash Chorale and the Astra Chamber Choir, which makes for a rather full schedule coming up to Christmas.

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

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