



As ever, it seems to be less than year since our last letter, but somehow the calendar never lies! While in some ways it was another “normal” year, somehow it seems no year is really quite normal ...

The big occasion was of course the wedding of Bev’s daughter **Millie** to Siebrant in August. While they live in the Netherlands, the ceremony and reception were held at Amarti’s in Cowwarr. The setting is gorgeous, with a heritage-listed building based on a French chateau surrounded by beautifully landscaped gardens, including a pond. Being in the depths of a Gippsland winter having an outdoor ceremony in the gardens meant that the weather was a little chilly (and with the rain just about managing to stay away), and a relatively narrow bridge over the water made for some interesting routes to the altar. Despite the weather the gathering was warm and there was lots of laughter, music and general catching up, as well as meeting several of Siebrant’s family who had made the long trip from the Netherlands.

We managed a couple of weeks in Hong Kong in July, where James’s work commitments for once fell in the school holidays, which meant Linda was able to come as well, and so we had an extra week which was purely holiday. Of course there was no shortage of great food to eat and sights to see, but we soon realised why the locals often walk around inside giant shopping centres, especially when it is hot and humid outside! It seems it was either hot & humid or pouring with rain! We also managed to leave about a day or so before typhoon closed the airport for some considerable time

We also managed to get a new car this year, although perhaps not quite as well timed as our travel. In April, our car was parked outside in our street (which is nothing unusual) when some who lives nearby came around the corner, lost control and managed to side-swap all of the driver’s side panels and knock off the front panel. Fortunately no-one was hurt and the only damage done was to the cars involved. With the car written off, we started the process of buying a new car but we soon learned that it can take months for a new one to arrive, so it was nice when it finally did!

Our two resident rascals **Sammy** and **Rosie** have a carried on as usual, although often with their new friend **Franklin**, who is Jeremy and Naomi’s dog (does that make him our grand-dog?). Franklin is still a pup but is already bigger than both of them put together, and has managed to enthuse Sammy into chasing balls. Sammy is now quite possessive about it when the two of them play together, with Rosie joining in with “social ball-chasing” only. It seems the mischief is only just beginning ...

Jeremy has continued to make his way in Melbourne and has not only repeated his role in Love Actually – the Musical Parody at the Athenaeum recently, but also co-produced and co-directed a full production of Fresno in Chapel Off Chapel for a week. He is also looking forward to more work with the Australian Open in January and some further work involving travelling around various parts of the country.

Emily is getting closer to completing her degree in Creative Writing, although with some recent escalation in her duties at Bonds, it is progressing a little more slowly (which has meant less assignments for James to proofread!). She is still quite the footy watcher, and is always keen to provide advice to those participating, especially about their decision-making ...

Timothy has continued his expertise in precision driveway parking, particularly as the new car is a little bigger than the old one. Nonetheless, we can still fit two cars in whilst being able to operate both the gate and garage door, even if the latter can give bystanders a heart attack when they see it in operation. He is also quite a helpful shopper and cook.

Joshua is also still with us at home, continuing his work at the Pancake Parlour, including training some less experienced staff, and continues to be involved in event organisation.

Linda has maintained her 0.8 load at Haileybury which means the work-free Tuesdays have continued, with the added benefit of no Saturday sport. The electric bike has certainly proved its worth on several occasions, especially when returning home after a long day.

James has continued his Digital Innovation role at RMIT, which this year included a trip to the MotoGP at Philip Island, so you just never know where work will take you ...

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

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