

Christmas and the New Year are on us once again, and as ever they seem to come in a rush. Don't ask us where all the time went, but we can tell you what happened to some extent! We were saddened this year by the passing of Linda's mother Eunice in September, after a long struggle with pancreatic cancer. There was a very moving memorial service, which filled the chapel to overflowing, in which all the grandchildren featured prominently, and Emily, Jeremy and their cousin Emma sang beautifully. Eunice would have been very proud.



Beau is of course one year older, but still does the same silly old things, such as digging various holes in the garden and drinking water from anything but his bowl. Perhaps one day he will learn some sense, and hopefully pass it onto some other household members ...



Jeremy has now finished Year 10, made a start on Year 11 and is now our only child at secondary school. He had a trip to East Timor in September, where he spent time digging compost heaps and building roads, and learning the local culture and history. He has also spent a lot of time playing the bass drum in the Pipes and Drums band, which has had him performing at competitions, a School Ball and several graduations and speech nights, meaning that he has got very used to wearing a kilt! He has also continued in the string orchestra and choir, as well as the Year 10 play and the school musical. He and some friends also had an entry in the International Youth Silent Film Festival. He has continued working at K-Mart (somehow squeezing work in on weekends), and has also joined the club of those learning to drive. This means the L plates are getting quite a workout, but the P plates are still gathering dust ...



Emily has just completed her final year at school, and was very pleased with her results. She was very keen on English, and on Australian History, and has applied to study History at Monash as part of an Arts degree. By all means, ask her about what she found interesting in her studies, but make sure you have a spare afternoon to hear her response! She has also had a busy time with drama and music, playing Mrs. Cratchit in an adaptation of A Christmas Carol (in August!) and also taking part in the School musical, the choir and being the Captain of the Wind Symphony. She has continued to set the pace in the learner driver category in the family, and will almost certainly be the first to get a driving licence over the summer break (as if it is a competition or something!). She had a quiet break at a friend's parents' holiday house for 'Schoolies', and it will be interesting to see what kinds of activities she will get involved in once she is outside the familiar surroundings of Haileybury.



Timothy has motored along in much the same mold as the previous year. He has continued his studies in Engineering Technology at RMIT, and still manages to avoid bumping into his Dad while on campus. He has also been rather infrequent with his visits to the barber, but has been able to ensure that these occur at strategically chosen times. He has recently had some work delivering the local catalogues, which at first had him testing his ability to determine the appropriate route, organising the various paper packages onto a trolley, and sorting out which addresses should not be delivered to. It seems more routine now, although there always seems to be a variation in the materials sent. He is developing into reliable home chef, with no apparent problem with organising various bits to come together at the same time. He is planning to resume his studies of Japanese in 2018.



Joshua has also continued in much the same vein as the previous year. He has maintained his work on an Arts degree at La Trobe, focusing on Japanese. He also still works at the local Pancake Parlour, with a variety of shifts across the year reflecting some further training that he has undertaken. While he is still an expert on public transport, and has managed to improve the travel time and experience in his commute, he is still yet to obtain a driving licence! He did seem to think that if he ever needed a lift, he could get his younger sister to give him one, but we will believe that when we see it! He has also discovered some innovative approaches to the provision of the classic Australian kids' treat known as Fairy Bread, and is always ready to offer an opinion on a variety of topics, especially if the argument involves something that can be said in Japanese ...



Linda has continued at Haileybury. A lovely family holiday at Kennet River was a nice break. Also a trip to China in June was a nice change from the cold weather later in the year. With one child left at school, she is looking forward to some freedom. Maybe some afternoons she will be able to leave before 5.30!

James has had a busy but enjoyable year at RMIT, with a new role requiring various changes and new things to learn. Six weeks of leave seemed to disappear in a whizz, and once back, it was like he never left!



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

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