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December 2023
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Dear All,

Another year has passed very quickly as do all the years since we moved to Australia in 2008.

First, just after writing the last letter I was cooking some meat on the BBQ in the back garden. Once I had got the cooking underway I went and sat in an armchair that we keep under the veranda attached to the back of our house. The next thing I knew was that I was surrounded by Jan, Steve, Ruby and two paramedics! Apparently (although I cannot remember any of it) I got up from the chair to go and check the BBQ and walked into one of the blinds that are along the back of the veranda. I hit my forehead and fell backwards and hit the back of my head on the concrete floor and knocked myself out.

Jan thought I was dead and I must have been out for quite a few minutes because she called Steve and he would have taken a few minutes to arrive. Anyway the paramedics arrived and started asking the usual questions like; "What day is it?" "When is my birthday?" etc. Steve asked me "What is happening on Thursday?" I replied that nothing was happening, but apparently I had ordered a new car (more later) but I could not remember anything about it. Finally Jan asked if I knew who she was and apparently I replied, "You are a beautiful woman!" The next thing I knew was I was in the back of the ambulance and taken into hospital!

I had a mild concussion but not even a headache and was home later that day. I had an MRI scan which proved I had brain! I have to say that my experience of the Australian Health Service has been very good to date.

I did collect my car later on that week. We have gone down to one car and the replacement is an all-electric MG that has



proved to be very good so far. It has a range of 380k per charge, which is more than enough for travelling around Adelaide. We often get asked why we don't go on holiday and the answer is that we have everything here on our doorstep with weather that is like a Mediterranean summer. So the car is more than enough for our needs.

After Christmas Ruby flew home to the UK and the following day we were back at the airport to pick up Linda Moore. She is an old work colleague of Jan's. They are both keen on

tennis and went to the local international tournament held in Adelaide. Linda then travelled onto Melbourne to go to the Australian Open Competition.

In February Jan had her 74th Birthday and on the 21st we celebrated our 53rd wedding anniversary. (More about that later). However the following day we both contracted COVID for the first time. Having avoided it since the first outbreak we finally succumbed and just before we were due our 5th booster jab. As a result we were crook all through March.

By April we were better but I had a lingering cough for another couple of months, but we were back into supporting the grand children in their sporting activities. Jack is at quite a senior level with his soccer and Oscar is similar with his swimming and Australian Rules football and soccer.





I am still going to electronic classes every other Wednesday, which I find challenges my brain. I wish I had started to learn earlier. One of the four of us made his first radio when he was five years old as a result he is the "Google" of our group and I have learnt a lot from him. One of the team is another Bob and we were invited to the Adelaide Model Railway exhibition. We wanted to demonstrate our electronic gadgets so we built a simple layout for the kids based on Thomas the Tank engine. It was called "The 2 Bob Layout" and was very popular with the kids.

We have regular lunches with old Kent Police colleagues Neil & Colette OSBOURNE and Keith & Denise BUTLER, who also live in Adelaide.



Neil OSBOURNE

In September I celebrated my 75th birthday!! I am not one for parties usually, but when Steve and Abi said they would host it at their house I agreed. We were able to invite about 50 people and because we are all getting older, held it on a Saturday afternoon.



Keith & Denise BUTLER

But back to the anniversary. Our fiftieth anniversary occurred during the height of COVID. We did not publicly acknowledge it then, so the party was also to make up for the lack of celebration of this event.

Jan & I first met when we were 18. She was leaning over the snooker table and I was impressed!!At her ability to play snooker of course. We have been together ever since.

I put together a slide show for the party and when looking at the pictures I realised all the good times and adventures we have had. There have been some challenges along the way, but we have always supported each other and I can honestly say with seldom a crossword.



We had two cakes, one birthday cake and the other a wedding anniversary cake!

Steve, Abi & Oscar ably assisted by Jenny Jack & Emma did us proud and it was a really good day.



Steve, Abi & Oscar have recently been to New Zealand for a holiday and visited my brother Peter. While they were there they visited a farm owned by Pete's daughter in laws parents. When they returned Abi flew out to Houston in Texas as part of her work for Deloittes.





Jenny is progressing well with her job at the school although it sounds like some of the pupils are very challenging! Emma is doing well academically. Jack has just passed his driving test so that makes it a lot easier to transport them all about. He has soccer training four evenings a week, which was quite demanding. He has also got himself a job at the local pub clearing tables and restocking shelves etc. that allows him to earn some petrol money. He has one year left at school!



Dave has been working at Yeovilton Air Base since January and seems to be enjoying it. The main building of their house has been constructed, but still needs a lot of work to fit it out inside. They also do events and camping on their ground, the latest was for Halloween and now they are gearing up for Christmas. Heather & Ruby both have part time jobs. Heather is doing online shopping a Woolworth's

She is considering University to learn about the film industry and has one year left at school. She has also just passed her driving test. Look out England! Ruby is still very much into her ballet.



Finally Jan & I are good. Summer is here and we spend a lot of time in the garden and in our pool.

We havebooked to visit the UK in August 2024. We hope to spend a couple of weeks in Somerset with Dave & Sarah, a few days in Kent catching up before going by train to Poitiers in France to visit Barry and Chris GEORGE. Then fly home from Paris.

So that is it for another year. Best wishes to you all and lets hope 2024 will be a safe and peaceful year.

Bob & Jan.