

Christmas 2015

Wow! It has been a very big year for us. So in roughly chronological order....

Many pictures of all the following can be found in Betty's albums (of course!)

<https://picasaweb.google.com/111449380699947259580> or

<http://tinyurl.com/oh3bvyz>

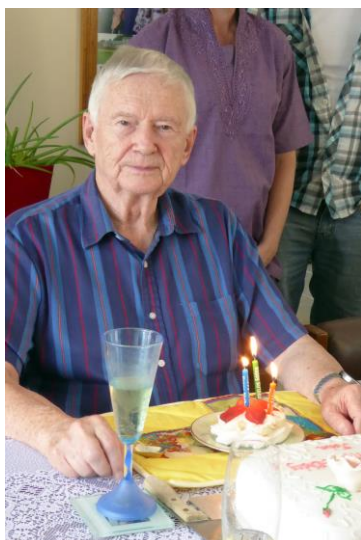


In late Jan – early February we visited India – mainly New Delhi. After much research, the main purpose of the trip was to get some dentistry work done on my



teeth. I ended up with 3 root canals and crowns – one extraction and 4 implants! A bit more than I anticipated, but all for less than the cost of **one** implant here in Canberra! During a 7 day break in the treatment we had a

great tour for just the two of us in a luxurious air conditioned car with driver and we were met by guides at each stop and stayed in 5 star hotels all the way. \$770/person and worth a lot more. See <http://www.compastours.com/golden-triangle.html> India was everything we expected and more – appalling poverty and worse, but we never felt un-safe even walking in the streets after dark.



Later in Feb, my 80th Birthday celebrations. It seemed like a milestone worth celebrating and everyone rallied around to make it a memorable event. Betty cooked a wonderful lunch at home and everyone brought plates of goodies etc. I received an electric lawn mower which thankfully I have not had to use too much, and all our children banded together and brought me a very fancy MOTO360 smart watch which worked very well for 6 or 7 months until Google started updating the companion program on my smart phone. Finally the company have asked me to return it and the courier should pick it up today! All should be resolved soon –

I'm hoping they will give me a new watch as a later version is on sale already 😊

We "keep on keeping on"



with almost daily walks up on Mount Taylor before breakfast. Certainly crisp during the winter but they keep our Cardio vascular systems going O.K! We decided that it was so nice up there that we would lobby for a seat in our favourite spot. After 3 years of



bombarding the head of the relevant government group with no response, I talked to the then Chief Minister of the ACT on local radio who promised to do something. I had almost given up hope but 6 months later the Parks people called and asked us where we wanted it installed! Wonderful panoramic views from there. The photo (note the early morning Kangaroos) is a small part of the panorama....We also took part in a 5 Km walk around the windmills on "Lake" George. Very up and down but we not last. Almost - but not last! See <http://runwiththewind.com.au/> if you are interested in having a go next spring...

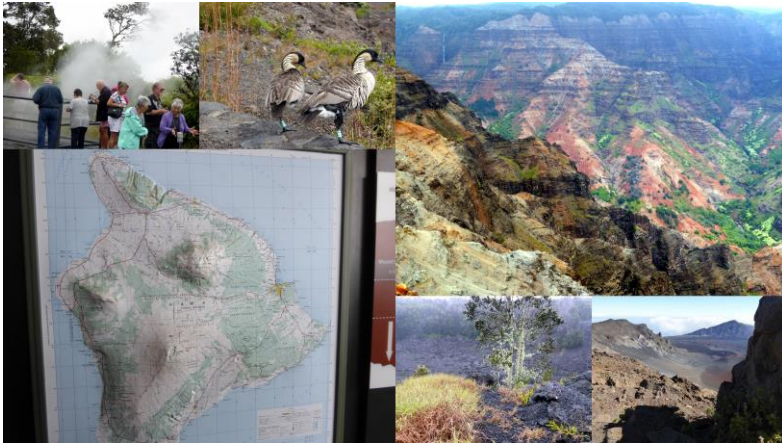
Then in early November – the big one! Our 50th Wedding anniversary 😊 Our great children



and ever increasing extended family treated us to a brilliant lunch celebration in the private dining room of one of our local clubs. It was complete with great food (and drink) and special cake, some very nostalgic photos and even cards and letters from the Prime Minister, and

the Governor General! It was a great celebration with all our extended family and a few of our good friends.

So we decided that we would wind down with a short 7 night cruise around the main Islands of Hawaii. We had been to Oahu quite a few times before – many years ago in the 707 era the Sydney to Los Angeles trip stopped at Nandi in Fiji and Honolulu on Oahu. But we had never been to the other Islands. We went on the Norwegian line "Pride of America"



to Maui, the Big Island and Kauai. The ship (see <http://www.ncl.eu/ships/pride-of-america/>) was fine, with a great crew/passenger ratio, and the crew were fabulous. The weather was mostly good, even sometimes on Kauai which has more than 400" of rain each year in places. We did too

much to describe here, but included a cruise down to around 150 ft deep in a real submarine, and walks up at just under 10,000 ft with fairly inactive volcanoes and canyons to rival the grand Canyon in Arizona.

During most of the above I had rashly agreed to serve as President (again) of our local 550 member PC Users group. At the time (before Christmas last year) the group only had



another 6 months or so to go before we had to fold it. We were living way beyond our means and regrettably we had to close our centre rooms (and sell/sort 25years of accumulated hardware etc.). And we were very sorry to terminate our great part time centre manager. We have

become a virtual group – see www.pcug.org.au but we managed to strike an agreement with U3A (University of the third age) to house our training systems in their rooms. It was at least 50 hours a week so I was happy to resign at the AGM in October – but we have a secured the clubs financial future for many years now. My contribution would not have been possible without a certain person who waits on me hand and foot 24/7!!

Of course all our extended families lives go on with mostly great highs. Our 2nd great



Grandchild is on the way. Hilary's 3rd daughter Emma is due in April next year. Tamara (2nd daughter) had our first Great Grandson last year and he is doing very well. Walking and starting to talk. Tamara's husband has 2 gorgeous children from a previous

relationship so we have 2 ring-ins as well! Our 3 daughters are all studying as well as working and heading for doctorates (where did that come from?!). Our son Timothy took his family on a huge 4 wheel drive tour of in-land Australia and they survived unscathed. We are delighted that he and Sheri have both given up smoking! An achievement equal to the outback trip in our opinion.

Now we are back home preparing for a nice Christmas and starting to panic about getting rid of 50 years of accumulated clutter, as we prepare to down-size to somewhere smaller, and a possible change of address sometime mid-2016. We are looking for something smaller and hopefully sustainable and passive solar etc.

Our love and very best wishes to all – have a great Christmas, New Year and superb 2016!

