

The Clarke-Spinaze Christmas Letter 2012

Our 35th anniversary in January was confused by dogs, baby-sitting and grasslands, but we caught up with fellow 77'ers Kate and Doug Crocket for a weekend in Daylesford in Victoria. Another pleasant weekend was spent at Sussex Inlet, much of it on Roger's sister Carole and Peter's boat.



We spent 6 weeks in Europe in May-June. The first, very successful week was in Montepulciano in Tuscany with the Chapman OWWBANC Gang (Once-Were-Walkers-But-Are-Now-Cyclists). Another week was spent walking from Penzance to Falmouth along the cliffs of the Lizard Peninsula. Gardens in Cornwall, Kent and Sussex were interspersed with Roger's relatives and our friends.



Then we had a lovely week in the Austrian Alps, where we were joined by our Mühlviertel friends Pepi and Christl Elmer and Peter and Annaliese Hofer. Roger invested a lot of time organising a 9-paper Special Section for the Bled Conference in Slovenia, as part of its 25th anniversary celebrations. Linda came home, and Roger rounded off his trip with a presentation in Copenhagen.

Fashioned after the Long Lunch idea, Linda's 60th birthday lasted from August to November, and extended from Heron Island off Gladstone to Tasmania's Huon Valley. It culminated in a Spinaze family celebration over a weekend at Beechworth in Victoria.





Linda continues as President of the large dog club, now in her 8th year (in two blocks). She's less active for FOG and has retired from the Garden History Committee, but still attacks weeds on the adjacent ridge and on another in Yarralumla. She eased back on her work-hours after returning from Europe in July, because it was interfering with Monday's Troy-sitting, Wednesday's strolls with the Aust Native Plant Society, Fridays spent gazing into a microscope identifying obscure grasses, and agility training for her sprightly new dog Brunig – a fairly rapid and tall Border Collie.

Roger's consultancy work has still been well below what it was 1995-2009, but there have been plenty of projects to fill the gaps. Work on the history of the Bunhybee block and Linda's family-tree didn't earn any money, but research funds paid for trips to Tokyo (a first) in November, and Brussels in January 2013. He continues as Chair of the Aust Privacy Foundation, but in his 7th year it's grinding him down. He's also been driving changes in the Internet Society of Australia, and is currently Secretary. He finally achieved the top grade of Fellow of the international Association for Information Systems, a quarter-century after he became a Fellow of the Aust Computer Society.

Russell has recently got himself into Business Analysis work. Since Karen came on the scene a year ago, they've had three overseas trips including training across western Siberia and central China. They celebrated their first year at our favourite top-end Sydney restaurant, Rockpool. Russell's still doing vocals for The Knights of the Spatchcock. They did quite a few gigs this year.

Kasia was told by a colleague that she was very probably the only pregnant drummer in the world who has a 2nd Dan in Kung Fu and is doing a PhD in nursing. Late in the year, she suspended the last 9 months of her scholarship to go back to work, and will shortly go onto maternity leave for child number 2. Troy is going through a growth spurt at 3-1/2. Given the way he throws his weight around, that could be a challenge for us old people.

Linda's brother Allan, and Fiona, moved from Townsville to Canberra after 30-odd years. Rick and Helen Jones stayed with us for some weeks, while shifting from Brisbane to Canberra after 12 yrs. Other visitors during the year included Robert Portner from Switzerland; Robert Davison from Hong Kong; Jake Siewwright, a Portsmouth cousin, and Tamara; and Georgie and Margaret all the way from Bundagen. Puff, pant, got there. **Have a great Christmas!**

