

Ross and Kathy Callaghan's 2023 Christmas Newsletter



Christmas greetings from Ross and Kathy Callaghan.

These Christmas newsletters are a wonderful way of keeping in touch with family and friends, aren't they? We hope you enjoy reading our newsletter and trust that you will have a wonderful Christmas and a great 2024.

Here are the main things that have happened for us in 2023.

- Sadly, Ross lost his brother, Brian, in February, and Kathy lost her sister, Sue, in November.



Lots of shared experiences and many memories. RIP.

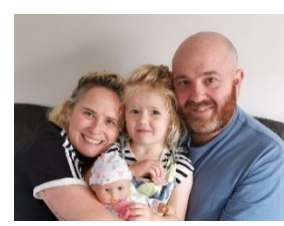
- We have kept pretty healthy throughout the year and are grateful that we can still do much of what we could do when we were younger. Kathy has continued with family history research, this year focusing on her great-grandmother, Louisa Williams. She has enjoying getting back into singing after joining a new choir, Beachside Harmony. Kathy keeps fit with regular aquafit and walking. **Ross** keeps fit by walking 11,000+ steps a day and still plays golf regularly. He is working on a big model of the 'Cutty Sark' and is developing his musical skills learning the complexities of a new Korg keyboard.
- **Debbie and Fraser's** new house in Melbourne has been completed and they are enjoying their lovely (big) new place. **JJ** (into playing the guitar), **Heidi** (into trampolining and calisthenics), **Luke** (into designer shoes) **and Dan** (into soft toys) have all done really well despite the disruption of changing houses. **Debbie** is really enjoying her work as a speech pathologist and still can't beat her father at golf.
- **Sarah and Michael** have completed extensive alterations to their house and are enjoying their new electric car! **Blake** (into air cadets and anything computerised), and **Isla** (into Guides and soft toys) continue to delight. Michael has a new job and Sarah continues to provide support for teachers as an RTLB. We see them all regularly which is great.
- **Phil and Mo** have had a good year and **Billie** is excited about starting school next year. **Mo** has one more year to qualify as a nurse. **Phil** was able to sell off part of his cricket franchise and his conventions are picking up, so things are much better than a couple of years ago.
- It was wonderful to see the Melbourne families three times during the year, especially to build a relationship with Billie, who up till then only knew us through a screen. We have already planned to see the Melbourne families again three times next year!



Heidi, Debbie, Dan, Fraser, Luke, JJ



Michael, Sarah, Isla, Blake



Mo, Billie, Phil

- This year we continued our **travels** with three cruises and a trip to Melbourne. Making up for the last few years?? In February we flew to Melbourne, enjoyed time with the family and then cruised back to NZ on the Grand Princess. We discovered that combining one-way cruises with visiting the family really suits, so have planned to do this more often. In June we flew to the Gold Coast and Cairns then cruised back to Auckland on the Pacific Explorer, via the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Norfolk Island. A truly wonderful experience, especially learning about the World War 2 history and seeing how people live in very primitive cultures (even if we came home with covid!). In September we flew to Melbourne to see the family (and had our first stay in the new house) and we have just got home from a lovely cruise around New Zealand on the Pacific Explorer.
- We continue to support elderly people in our community - this year with more getting alongside those who are going through hard times. We still do our regular singalongs in rest homes and hospitals plus, of course, Youth Group which meets at our place every Sunday morning (great singing of the old songs and great Bible study!). Right now, we are leading a series of carol services which are wonderful times of celebration of the birth of Jesus.
- Next year is our 50th wedding anniversary (August 31) so plans are underway for quite a few celebratory family times and travels.

Our blessing for you this Christmas is based on the old carol 'While shepherds watched':

"All glory be to God on high, and on the earth be peace. Good-will henceforth from heaven to men, begin and never cease".

Merry Christmas and lots of love from Ross and Kathy Callaghan

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See our cruise videos on YouTube [calros3](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCalros3)