



Christmas 2007



Greetings to all and best wishes of the season! This letter comes to you a bit earlier this year as we are heading away on the 5th December to North Queensland for a month.....returning 5 mins into 2008 when we touch back down at Tullamarine airport. The plan is for a few days in Townsville, 3 nights on Magnetic Island, a week at Mission Beach, 5 days up in the Daintree and Cape Tribulation area and then back to Clifton Beach (next door to Palm Cove) on the Northern beaches of Cairns for 10 nights celebrating Christmas there. We have holiday units booked and are really looking forward to the break. Lots of swimming, snorkelling and exploring are on the agenda!

The Year that's been..... I started reflecting on the past year or so, back in October when **Matt** asked me to put a little photo book together for him to take along to his 20 year Eltham College school reunion. I love pondering through the pics and wasn't short of suggestions for him to use. (See our family website www.matthewandrobyn.com for all the favourites). He had a good night, with 60 of the 80 students in attendance and came home hoarse having had plenty of great chats with old friends. On the work front Matt is still at the NAB. Having moved dept's and buildings once again, he is now based in Collins St. He has been dabbling with some home businesses (www.DIYWebsitesByMatt.com) and selling website stuff on Ebay. This has kept him in front of a computer screen for a large amount of his spare time so for his Birthday the girls bought him a Cross trainer exercise machine. Matt has got himself a routine 3 mornings a week working out and we have all been known to have a bit of a go at different times. Great fun and it seems to be effective!

Kathleen's school year has been fairly unsettled with changes in Principal, routine and class teachers. She has enjoyed a lot of the extra curricular activities and still loves Choir, Art and Keyboard. Swimming lessons, Jump rope for heart, a day trip to Healesville and science days are up there as some of the most memorable events she has participated in. The Aust. Girls Choir continues to be a great outlet on a Saturday morning and the music theory they are learning is quite impressive too. Their big end of year performance at the Arts Centre is coming up which we are all looking forward to. Kathleen has just turned 7. She still loves to put on shows at home, play dress ups, school or do drawings with her sister or go exploring in the garden collecting bugs. It is not unusual to find her bouncing on the trampoline singing away making up songs.

Jessica too has grown up so much this year. She is certainly no baby! Our little girl is very confident, active and has quite a sense of humour. There is no medium speed. It's all go or stop. She seems to be very astute and doesn't miss a trick – always taking everything in! She has enjoyed attending Fleet Street Neighbourhood house for two sessions per week as well as attending Gymnastics and swimming lessons. She stopped full day-care back in May when I stopped my permanent part time work at the Leprosy Mission. Jessica is looking forward to 4 yo Kinder next year and is well and truly ready for it. She participates in Kathleen's class often and is very capable of holding her own. For her 4th birthday we had a Fairy Party. We turned the family room in a fairy dell and entertained 6 little fairies for a couple of hours. Matt makes an excellent Wizzy the Wizard but I don't think he'll permanently trade in his sax for a wand! Jessica is happy pottering around at home helping with the day to day chores or socialising at one of her many activities. She adores her sister and for the most part they play well together. She loves telling everyone how grown up she is - now she is 4!

I (**Robyn**) seem to have remained busy the whole year through. I stopped work to free up my time but I still seem to always be volunteering to help out with something so there's never a dull moment. I didn't stay away from work for long. I'm now back working casual hours generally on a Monday keeping my hand in. I have also been tutoring two Indian ladies in English on a Wed. morning. I did the AMES English as a second language volunteer course early in the year and my students are Mums whose boys are from Kathleen's class at school. We have had a lot of fun learning from each other. I have learnt how to cook authentic curries and demonstrated how to cook chocolate cakes. Going on shopping expeditions for required ingredients and practicing our English along the way is also interesting.

I've got back to my patchwork quilts these last few months. I finished off a bed quilt for both K & J for their birthdays and I've also done two baby quilts for the new arrival (Jeremy and Angela are due 25/12). My latest long term project is making a "Dear Jane" quilt. The original was hand pieced in the civil war in 1868. It has 169 5 inch blocks all in different fabrics! I've really enjoyed collecting and swapping fabric and just taking the time to stop and immerse myself in this craft. I get a lot of pleasure from it just as I do from gardening. With the dry weather it has been a matter of simply maintaining what we have growing and not much new planting has occurred of late. Our water tank is on order!

Family holidays – Easter at Mt Beauty & camping up on the High plains, Jamieson playing in the rivers or enjoying a snow weekend with flakes falling from the sky, a beach holiday at Mooloolaba (Sunshine Coast, Qld) have all made for great memories across the year. Mark, Sharyn & family are about to move into their new bigger home. Glen is visiting the USA and having Thanksgiving with a friend and her extended family. Both sets of Grandparents have been busy travelling both locally and overseas and Jeremy & Angela are expecting their first bub. We wish you all a safe, happy and healthy Christmas and may the New Year bring us all many new adventures... whatever they may be.

All our love, Matthew, Robyn, Kathleen & Jessica xxxx