

23 December 2017

Dear Friends

As usual the end of the school year and my disorganisation coincide to ensure I give a New Year's card rather than a Christmas card. My thanks to all who sent me cards already. Getting the place ready for the onslaught of summer is also time consuming and I still have way too much detritus around. Watering the garden is always interesting and when filling the pump with fuel the other day I had another close encounter with a red bellied black snake which wriggled into the dam (rather than towards me - phew!) and swam away. I keep telling myself I should not wear thongs and shorts when checking or starting the pump.

The year has been filled up with all the usual things, teaching, giving a few concerts, renovating house and garden (will that ever finish?) and trying to keep up my swimming, walking and yoga. I am very tempted to buy a new bicycle as the old one does not inspire me to go out on it; it's the most uncomfortable bike I've ever had.

Over an extended Easter break I had a car camping trip along the south east coast starting at Wilson's Promontory and eventually getting to Ben Boyd national park. By the end of the trip I'd coaxed my unfit body into easily doing 20km walks and even wishing for more. As the days were short and I like minimalist camping without every type of light apart from my head torch, I had long nights in my sleeping bag and caught up with a lot of sleep; very rejuvenating! A highlight was the lighthouse walk during which I saw the rare eastern ground parrot. During the evenings the Eastern Bandicoots would play around the campsite as well.



Plans for next year are not really well developed yet, but I have told myself very sternly that I must complete all those little (!) unfinished jobs around the place as well as declutter. It doesn't stop me planning to build two more arbours in the garden, plan for a new laundry extension under the deck and lots of other "little projects". My new granitic sand path which divides the upper and lower lawn is the most recent addition being finished in stage one yesterday

I have been teaching at Puckapunyal Primary School which is one of the few schools in Australia on an army base. I have a pass issued to me and need to go through security and have the little boom gate go up etc. It's a wonderful school due mostly, I think, to the very positive principal.

I have joined the VMTA council (Victorian Music Teachers' Association) and hope I can have a good input into this organisation. I went on a really lovely trip on a steam train with one of the councillors, from Castlemaine to a concert in Maldon and was entertained on the way by a very competent duo with guitar and violin playing an eclectic mix of music.

Well, it was a good year and here's to 2018. I hope to catch up with you during the year.

My very best wishes to you for the New Year and the ensuing challenges for all of us.

Peter Hagen

