

Lawrie's 2021 Year in Review

Season's Greetings. I hope this finds you well, after what has been another difficult year for so many. We have been fairly lucky in Canberra, as our "bubble" held for the first half of the year, so life was closer to "normal" for us at this time. But then delta broke through in Aug, which meant several months of lockdown, which only started slowly easing from Nov. Once again this meant time to explore the local area, and to enjoy just being at home. So here's a few highlights in pictures ...

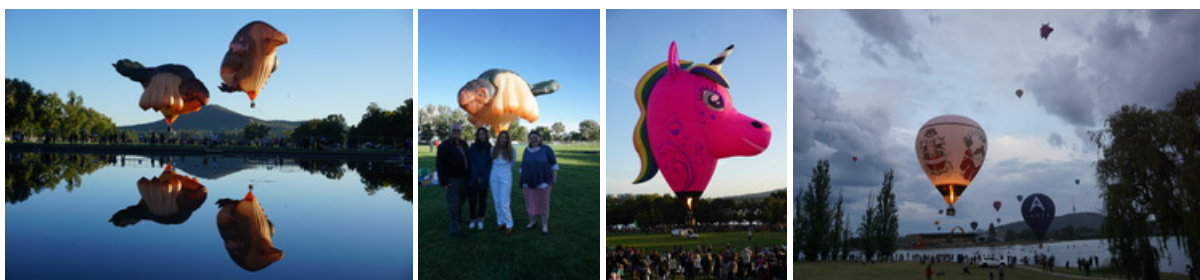
Arriving home at the start of Jan, from a much shorter than usual Christmas stay in Melbourne, it was lovely to see the apricot tree in my courtyard loaded with fruit. So I made quite a few jars of jam and a couple of apricot pies! A few months later saw some nice autumn leaves on the liquid amber tree in my backyard. And in spring, lovely gum flowers seen walking near home, and dafodils in my garden.



In Jan, I had a nice weekend camping at Numeralla, where a group of folkies had gathered, even though the usual festival wasn't running. I also managed to do quite a bit of orienteering during the year, both bush & street. Here is a photo of me finishing a course on Red Hill in Feb. During the lockdown period I was again busy publishing a number of virtual courses for people to do, a few designed by me, as well as a number by others. And I walked most of them, which was a good excuse to get out. I also went out walking and exploring our wonderful bush areas and urban green belts. Here a photo of the autumn colors at the Arboretum, which I visited a number of times.



I was lucky enough to see all three times the Skywhale balloon family inflated in Feb, Mar & Apr. You can see both the original Skywhale and the new Skywhalepapa balloons at their launch celebration in Feb. And a photo of me with their creator Patricia Piccinini (in white). The Canberra Balloon Spectacular was wonderful as always, with the Allicorn unicorn being this year's featured balloon. I saw the balloons launch & fly several times when the weather allowed.



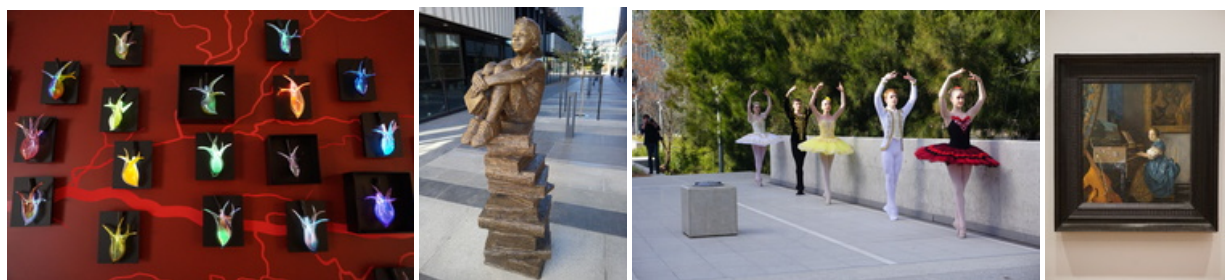
I was also very happy that the [Enlighten Festival](#) ran this year, as its one of my favorite times (along with the balloons) in Canberra. Shown here are a couple of the illuminations on the National Library, and the National Gallery. The festival included 'Symphony in the Park', this year featuring "BABBA", with a great selection of ABBA music. And yes I'm very excited ABBA have a new album out!



Although the National Folk Festival was cancelled, they did run a smaller event in Queanbeyan, where I saw "Mikelangelo and the Black Sea Gentlemen" and several other acts including "Little Quirks" & "Kim Yang". Earthly Delights also ran their postponed 19th Century Music & Dance weekend at the Woolshed in Apr, with some wonderful music and dance, and some great costumes. I enjoyed listening and dancing at a number of "Jazz at Jamison" events when they were on. I also enjoyed some English Country, and American Contra, dance classes during the months they could run, and going to a number of swing dance & music social events.



As usual, I enjoyed seeing and number of art & performance displays. Including the "Neon Hearts" at the National Portrait Gallery in Feb. In May I saw the sculpture of a little boy on pile of books, called "New Heights of Knowledge - Between Innings", by American sculptor Gary Price. This is one of several new sculptures added around town recently. I saw the "Love Dance" display, performed as part of Dance Week in May, at the National Portrait Gallery. Then in Jun, I went along to see the wonderful "Botticelli to Van Gogh Exhibition" at the National Gallery, which included this lovely painting of "A Young Woman seated at a Virginal" by Johannes Vermeer.



In May I went to a very interesting talk & tour on "Fire in the Landscape", discussing the impact of the devastating 2020/21 fires on Namadgi National Park. And it was wonderful to see the regrowth happening already. As mentioned before, I went out walking quite a bit, and really enjoyed the bush areas we have through & around Canberra. Here is a view of a mob of kangaroos on Fadden Ridge, only a few km from home, in May. And of Stranger Pond in Bonython, not far from the Murrumbidgee River, in Sep.



Floriade was cancelled again this year, however many flowers had already been planted in Commonwealth Park, and others were once again spread around the suburbs. So the spectacle was still there, and in some ways it was even better without crowds! It was wonderful to see the flowers blooming outside Canberra Baptist Church, and by the lake, in Sept-Oct. Speaking of the church, I've been one of the regular zoom hosts for their online services through the year. Its been great that I could help with that. And I again joined a number of online SF conventions, and a few dance workshops, from around the world, which I enjoyed. Lastly a photo from my 60th Birthday celebrations with a few friends at the Canberra Baptist Hall on 27 Nov.



So thats my year in brief. This letter is online at: <http://lpb.canb.auug.org.au/diary/>. Looking forward to hearing your news. Wishing you happiness and joy this festive season and beyond. Cheers [Lawrie](#) - 2 Dec 2021.

And a few more photos that I didn't get room to squeeze into the printed letter.

In Feb I enjoyed a great weekend of swing & blues dancing at the Railway Barracks in Goulburn, which is an awesome venue. Another photo of some of the men (including me far right) at the 19th Century Music & Dance weekend at the Woolshed. Around mid-year I did an online course on "Flexagons", folded paper shapes which you twist to reveal multiple faces. I'd known of them for many years, but learnt a lot more, which was fun. Here is a collection of some that I made.



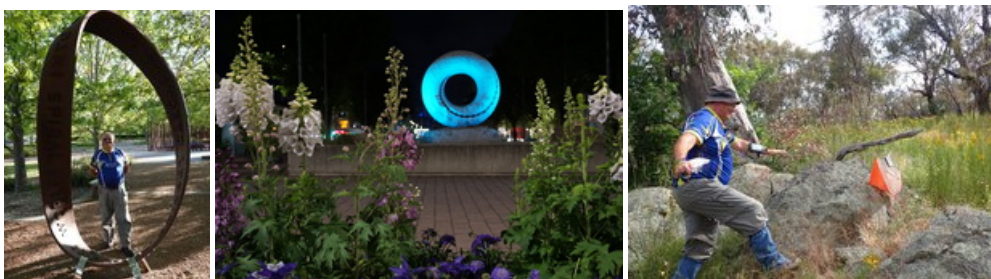
Another photo from the Balloon Spectacular in Mar, showing the Allicorn unicorn balloon in flight. Then a photo from the RAAF Centenary Flypast on 31 Mar, which had a wonderful display of more than 60 historic and modern aircraft flying past, as well as a display by the Roulettes (shown) on a glorious day, to celebrate the [RAAF centenary](#). And then a photo of the "Garden of Australian Dreams" at the National Museum of Australia, as seen through the walkway fence, in Aug.



And lastly, some more photos from walks around town. Flowers blooming by Nerang Pool in Commonwealth Park for Floriade. Seats & sculptures in the green belts in Bonner in Oct, which I walked as part of a street orienteering course. And a view of the beautiful mural on the side of the Fadden Pumping Station (which I've used for this year's card) also in Oct.



A photo of me at the Mobius Sculpture near Questacon, which as the start/finish point for the [Parkes street orienteering course](#) that I designed, and was the first organised event after lockdown on Mon 1 Nov this year! I was very happy with the turn-out and comments on the course. Then a photo of the sculpture in Civic lit up blue on 21 Nov, to celebrate reaching the 90% fully covid vaccinated milestone in Canberra. And lastly, another photo of me orienteering, this time in the bushland behind Campbell Park, for the Wed Twilight Mod2 course on 1 Dec.



Seasons Greetings 2021

Mural on Fadden Pumping Station, seen while walking on Sat 9 Oct 2021



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