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McLoughlins' Missive 2005

Dear

As another year comes to an end, we are coming to the end of one phase of our lives and looking



Gazebo with olives in the background

forward to an exciting new future. We're in the process of buying a small olive farm in Tasmania, and will be moving out there in the new year.

If this comes as a bolt out of the blue, we can only apologise for not keeping in better touch. Things have been pretty hectic as you can imagine, but everything seems to be coming together amazingly well. We had always hoped to do something like this when we reached this stage of our lives. Tasmania



A view to wash-up to!



The Homestead

seems a long way to go to do it, but we fell in love with the island when we were visiting friends there last year, and realised that with property prices so much lower there, our dream might be within reach.

When we looked into the feasibility of the idea, we found that we could apply for a visa that would allow us to run a business of our own out there, but the visa was only available to the age of 55. Since we were both due to reach that milestone this year, we had to get our application in right away. It took 9 months, but we finally got it and went out to Tassie again in August to validate the visa. While we were there we took the opportunity to look at a few properties and both fell for Blackwood Heights, an olive farm on 50+ acres of beautiful land in the



The drive

north of the island, not far from the coast, its nearest town of any size being Sheffield! (Hazel's home town in the UK of course)

Our visa is valid for 4 years, then, providing our business meets a required turnover, we can apply for permanent residence. We're also taking on a very nice restaurant about 10 minutes away from the farm, which will help us make sure of the turnover.

We're taking the Morgan and Honey's coming too—in fact she's going ahead of us as she has to do 30

days' quarantine in Melbourne. By the time we get there, she'll be about ready for release. She turned 13 in September, so we're just hoping she can manage one last trip to the other side of the world. Once she gets there she'll have all the space she could want—and wallabies to play with!

The hardest part in all this is leaving family and friends, but you'll be very welcome to visit us – the property has a 3-bed bungalow with a separate 2-bed unit alongside, so plenty of space. John and Ruth don't seem to mind us going. Ruth is keen to follow us to Australia, though probably somewhere a bit more 'lively' like Sydney or Melbourne. John is enjoying his life in Leeds at the moment. He's just got his accountancy qualifications so the world is his oyster now. It's harder for our parents of course, but they've both said we must do what we feel is right for us, and wish us well. We'll be back to visit as often as we can.

The Bank has given Mike early retirement from the end of the year, so we'll spend Christmas and New Year with the family, then we leave for Tasmania on January 7th. We sold the house in Halifax back in August so in the meantime we're staying in the little flat in London that we've been renting while Mike's been working here. If you need a postal address for us, our mail will be redirected from both the London flat and the Halifax address. Our e-mail address won't change. We'll let you have our Tassie address once we've completed the property purchase.

Above all, please stay in touch. Apologies for messing up your address book once again – you must be used to us by now!



A row of olives

We hope all is well with you and yours and wish you a very Happy Christmas and a rewarding New Year.

Much love from us all,



The 'dam' (complete with duck-billed platypus, we're told)