



Happy Christmas and we hope you have a great 2020!

A **HUGE** year – mainly because it is 50 years since the first landing on the moon. Apart from the big week in July, the celebrations **still continue** with talks to local groups (including one to a remote school in South Australia via Skype), Oral histories and film showing etc. We started planning in 2017 and

held regular committee meetings till August 2019. We soon realised that there was a lot of public interest and goodwill and it was going to be too big for the committee to handle on our own. So in the end we managed to persuade 3 or 4 major organisations including the National Museum, the Australian National University, ACT Heritage department and Questacon



Science centre to Organise events for us. Once we did that we lost any sort of control but they did a better job of organising things than we ever could. We mainly arranged the final event, 'on the day on the hour' lunch. Around 450 attended the lunch and most had a good time! But there were 12 major events over 6 days that week and I was rather pleased when they all finished without major hitches.



Many events took place at the Australian National University where we mixed with the great and the good including the Nobel prize winner Vice Chancellor. Our special invitee was Dr. Andrew (Andy) Thomas the Australian born astronaut who attended many of the events except the lunch when he was whisked away by the U.S.Embassy who paid for his

trip. Andy flew 4 space missions totalling 177days in space. We had a great event at Questacon who opened the whole science centre an hour early – just for us. And the National Museum kindly lent us

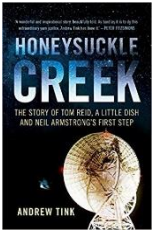


the entire building in the evening for a panel show featuring ex-Trackers. Perhaps one of the best highlights was the full day event at the



Honeysuckle and Tidbinbilla sites. At Honeysuckle we helped unveil a large artwork of 'One small step – One giant leap', the whole day superbly organised by ACT Parks and Conservation. We were incredibly lucky with the perfect weather. Two days later we visited the site and it was blowing an unpleasant gale, and 2 weeks later the site was under a meter or so of snow.

I really should use this message to thank many of our major helpers and sponsors, but one of my outstanding jobs is to update the 50<sup>th</sup> web pages at [www.apollo50thaustralia.org](http://www.apollo50thaustralia.org) so I'll do it then. But in the meantime, I do want to mention our two MCs.



Patrick Helean from Questacon who did an outstanding job at the lunch – no fun in a spacesuit! And Andrew Tink the author of the book 'Honeysuckle Creek – The story of Tom Reid, a Little Dish and Neil Armstrong's First step'. See <https://tinyurl.com/wte39eh>.



Andrew MC'd two events for us. But mostly I should thank the committee members, mostly ex-trackers – many worked literally hundreds of hours for no pay! Thank you so much.

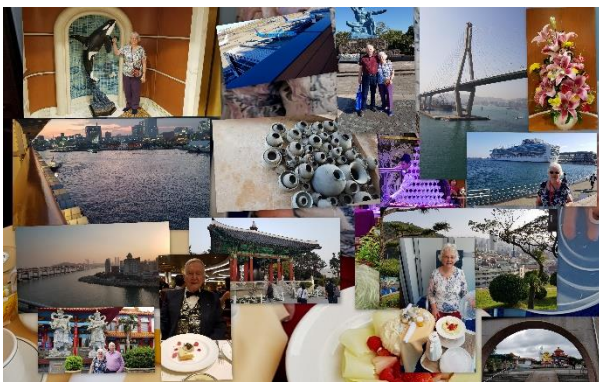
Sorry to have gone on so long about the 50<sup>th</sup> – but it took up so much of our lives for several years.

So, I won't waste your time with health whinges. We are AWACBE (Google is your friend)!

BDM section:

Oscar was born to Jessica and Adam Hicks – our 6<sup>th</sup> Great Grand Child!

Travel:



In November we took a Cruise from Tokyo (Yokohama) – first to S. Korea and back via Nagasaki, then to Taiwan via Okinawa and another Japanese island. We didn't stay in Japan and just flew there and back direct from Sydney. The return flight was not uneventful as Betty was not too well and as a result went through Immigration and Customs in Sydney wearing a nightgown which she had changed into on the plane. Luckily it was not transparent, and no one noticed!

So that's it for another year. Much love to all and have a great year in 2020!

