

## Chris and Rebecca Shaw host John and Ruth Gates in Cairns – 14 April 2018

As per arrangements made at least three months prior, **Chris (K50-56)** and Rebecca Shaw met **John (S44-48)** and Ruth Gates off the Sea Princess cruise liner in Cairns among a myriad of maritime travellers. We had no idea what they wanted to see since they had made a previous visit to Cairns several decades ago.



They were in fine form and said they would like to see where we lived, since we had recently moved into a retirement village. We had a cup of coffee and a fine chat, and then showed them where my son lived with his near-vertical driveway from hell. Thence to Clifton Beach where I had first settled on our arrival in Australia in 1973; the duplex we had first stayed in, and the land where we built the house.

John had very generously offered to pay for a lunch in some hotel we frequented rarely. To get the best seafood in town, we went to Barnacle Bill's on the Esplanade; a restaurant that has been producing the best for decades. The seafood, the Sauvignon Blanc from the Marlborough,

NZ, and the conversation, were excellent. There was a bit of background noise from the music going on as Cairns joined in the Gold Coast's Commonwealth Games celebrations.

A walk across the road to see the updated facilities and the muddy shoreline, which had so disappointed my first wife, who had assumed the Great Barrier Reef came up to our doorstep. The obligatory photo for John and Ruth to remember their current trip, and back to the Sea Princess for a siesta for the over-40's!

John said that they would not have bothered getting off the ship had it not been for our offer, which had made their day memorable and the conversation so enjoyable. Their visit also continued and confirmed the camaraderie of Old Framlinghamians throughout the world.

Thank you John and Ruth for your company and a very fine lunch.

