



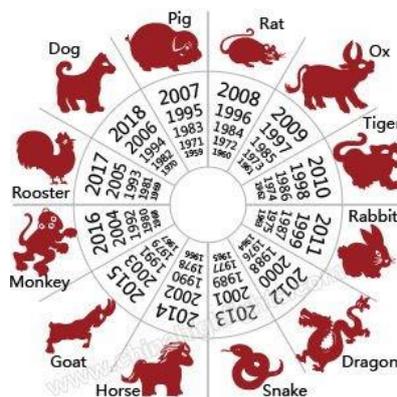
## Contact Email for December 2017

So it's almost New Year and we will all have become a year older. There will be fireworks in Sydney harbour, and other illegal fireworks all over the place. Thousands will gather either by the harbour or in their home and around the world to see the show. Auld Lang Syne will be sung. People will shake hands and hug each other. Emotions will swell, memories will flood in, and tears may fall.

What is it really all about? The New Year has always been celebrated as a symbolic time of the renewal of life and human relationships but not always on the 1st of January. The Romans were the first to celebrate it on the 1st of January, which they started in 153 BC. Before that, the New Year had been celebrated on the 25th of March, because that date coincided with the vernal equinox, when day and night are of the same length. The new date no longer had any connection with the cycle of nature, like everything else politics took over the day to celebrate the newly elected consuls as they took their new office. Other European countries began to see significance in the 1st of January from 1582, but England and Wales and the British American colonies didn't join the celebrations until 1757. European Australia would have celebrated it from the start.

That is all very well but even today, the 1st of January will not be the first of the year for many people. For Orthodox Christians New Year will begin on Sunday January 14th.

For the Chinese their New Year falls on Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup> 2018, and will be known as the beginning of the year of the Dog.



The current Islamic year is 1439 AH. (*Anno Hegirae*, "in the year of the Hijra"), 1439 AH runs from approximately 21 September 2017 to 10 September 2018. The Islamic New Year 1440 will begin in the evening of Tuesday, 11 September 2018.

Then, of course, there is the Financial Year which began on the 1st July 2017 and will run till 30th June 2018.

Whatever New Year you acknowledge, I hope it will be Joyful, Harmonious, and Productive, for you, your family and those you work with.

*Alan Scott*, Continuing Education Officer