

DECEMBER 2006

GREGOR FAMILY NEWS LETTER 2006

Dear Friends & Family,

This year for the first time we as a family are right up there with modern technology and my annual letter is coming to you via a website. (However that works? not all of us our techno geeks)

Theo and I have spent this year enjoying each others company and the freedom to go away at weekends without the thought of children and their activities. For the first time in 24 years we are children-free, most of the time. They come back for the uni holidays and within hours the house is a tip, the fridge empty and the washing machine is having a nervous breakdown from over work.

In May we went to Rarotonga in the Cook Islands for 10 days. This was to celebrate our 26th wedding anniversary. What a paradise, with the friendliest locals and wonderful seafood and fish. We hired scooters and spent the days buzzing around the island, stopping off for a swim or a delicious lunch at one of the many beach restaurants.

Theo and I continue to be busy at our respective hospitals but have made sure that we have time off and are not too consumed by work. Taken a long time to get to this. Theo went to Chicago for a meeting, which was followed by a meeting with Tom Robbins (friend from Toronto days) in Springfield. Several local meetings and a lovely invitation to Brisbane (which also included me). I continue to go to my theatre mangers bi-annual meetings, which I enjoy because they are held in different parts of New Zealand.

Kelly has successfully completed her journalism course and is back from Wellington. She did a 2-week internship at the Waikato Times and then was offered a job until we go to Italy in January. We are hoping that this will lead to a full time job. She has had 25 stories published in the paper including 6 front-page stories. It is such fun reading the evening paper and seeing her name. She is a natural writer. It is absolutely wonderful having someone in the family who is not medically inclined, opens up a whole new world to us.

Fiona has to go back to Wellington for another 4 months to do her final hospital placement and then write state nursing finals in July. For the past year she has worked as a casual at the Body Shop and has now been promoted to the Sunday manager. This will give her valuable people-experience for when she is a nurse. She and Kelly shared a flat and I am happy to say that they are the best of friends and were a great support to each other.

Reinie completed his first year of Health Science. He loved Knox College in Dunedin so much so he successfully campaigned to be the Social Rep. This means that he organises the 2007 orientation week; the balls, garden party and several other outings. This came as a big surprise to us because he has never shown any interest in this type of activity before. He is back for the summer. He is working at my hospital in theatre as the theatre attendant, part of his job is to clean the theatres and mop the floors. I must say it does my heart good to see him with a mop in his hand.

In January the five of us are going to Italy for 3 weeks. We will be spending 2 weeks in Campitello a ski resort where we will be celebrating a special birthday of Theo's. We are very privileged that many friends will be joining us, making this a very special party. All of this and photos will be in next years newsletter. On the 1st January we will be having a birthday party at our house for Theo, for all our Hamilton friends that cannot make it to Italy. Theo has lots of fun to look forward to and we are not allowed to name the birthday but suffice to say the theme is 60's music and dress, a dead give-away.

We have been in New Zealand 6 years. We still miss the call of the wild, the smell of the African earth after a thunderstorm and our special friends and family. This has been replaced by different kind of scenery and wonderful supportive friends. Everyone we have met wherever we have lived have brought something special to our lives, we would not have missed any one of you.

Every year when I am writing this letter I am reminded how important family and friendship is and how fragile the string is that binds us. We wish you and your loved ones a special festive season. The quote for this year is:

*"you cannot go back and unscramble eggs,
there is no way to undo what has been done,
let's move out of our past failures
and starting with scrambled eggs
learn to make soufflés"*