

Greetings. Boxing day here in New Zealand and I have at last found time to do the annual Christmas letter. This has been a huge year in the Gregor household.

Theo's news: He started the year with his annual trip for the Down Under ski meeting in Campitello. This is the 10th time the meeting has been held and he has been to all of them. All year Theo dreams of skiing in the Dolomites. He was asked to be the President of the New Zealand ENT Society and was handed the gong and the chain in May. This will entail lots of trips to Australia to the college meetings. To this end Theo has become a fellow of the Australian College of Surgeons. I suppose it's never too late to add more letters behind your name. Theo still works the same long hours at the hospital so I am not sure when he will fit in this new responsibility.

Chris's news: In March I turned 60. How quickly the years have marched on by. I do feel very blessed with the life I have had and the people who have made my life so special. My birthday theme song was "Lucky Lucky you, lucky lucky me." I had a great party at Hamilton Gardens with my NZ friends. In May 17 of us went to Simbambili a lodge in the Sabi Sands area near the Kruger Park to have another birthday party in the bush. We also went to Cape Town. On the way to South Africa we stopped off in Perth to see my brother Simon and his family. We had such a wonderful day and it was a great joy to spend time with the Perth family. What a special and memorable holiday. We had the pleasure of Kath and her Mum Marie on our trip.

I am still working long hours. I am now of the opinion that long hours means I am fit and healthy so it does not annoy me so much. In fact quite the opposite I am energised that at my age I can do so many things.

Kelly's News:

Kelly has moved into Ponsonby a suburb of Auckland as Fiona so aptly put it "she is finally living in the area she was meant to live in" For those of you not from Auckland, Ponsonby is a very trendy and upmarket place. Kelly has been working for a large insurance firm doing projects. I do not understand the corporate world so well. What I do understand is that Kelly is a gifted writer and unfortunately in a modern world of computer technology the printed press is a dying occupation. On the occasion of Mandela's death she sent an article to the NZ Herald, which was printed on the front page and this perfectly shows what I mean. Enjoy reading it.

Fiona's News:

Fiona remains in the paediatric surgical ward and loves her job and her apartment. She now runs most days and has become quite the fitness bunny. Fiona has met someone special and I think it is Tony's influence on her that has made her so into exercise.

Reinie's News:

Reinie has completed his medical degree obtaining distinction for clinical and B grade for written. He and Kath are in Hawaii on their way to spend 8 weeks in Vancouver on their elective placement. Next year they do their trainee intern job at Waikato Hospital and then in November will be fully-fledged doctors.

This is our 13th Christmas in New Zealand. On our first Christmas we had a Christmas tree and a puppy called Pushkin. Pushkin became a prominent family member with many tales attached to him. He also was the only dog in New Zealand who had a Facebook page. This was created by Kelly when living in London. For the past two years Pushkin has been treated for diabetes and was injected twice a day. 6 weeks ago Pushkin had a major event, which resulted in us having to put him down. It was a very sad day for us. Pushkin made a big difference to our lives, gave us great joy and in the beginning was our only kiwi friend. He got 65 posts on his Facebook page. How awesome is that.

I would like to wish you and your loved ones a blessed 2014, may it be a year filled with good health, peace and happiness. Be kind to each other.

As always I will close with a quote. This year's quote is dedicated to Pushkin who was a devoted pet to the Gregor family. Very appropriately it is a quote by Nelson Mandela and the South African Guide dog Association chose this quote of his as they felt it represented their work.

“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead”.

To access birthday photos and Kelly's article, please go to the website:

<http://www.gregor.org.nz/family.htm>