

NOVEMBER 2007

GREGOR FAMILY NEWS LETTER 2007

Dear Friends & Family,

Another year and another letter. Every year I think why do I write a Christmas letter? Then I am reminded how much I enjoy reading all the letters sent to me with everyone's news. So for those of you who hate these letters I will not be offended if you throw it away unread. (You may well receive the digital version on the website)

2007 started with major celebrations for Theo's special birthday. A 60's theme party was held at home. Theo looked like a sober Ozzy Osborne. The celebration was continued in Italy with a great bash held in Campitello. It's interesting organizing a party from thousands of miles away with people whose English is limited. It was wonderful being able to be with close friends and family and for those who travelled who joined us in Campitello – a huge thank you. For someone who is not a party person Theo having two parties is not half bad.

It was great being in Rome as a family and spending 2 weeks skiing. This year I decided with the aid of an Italian ski instructor to take up skiing again. The last time I skied was 25 years ago. This activity was continued in NZ over the winter.

All I can really say about it is that I am the best dressed senior beginner skier on the slopes who looks like I should be in a geriatric Olympic team but spends most of my time seriously praying that I will get to the bottom of the mountain in one piece.

In March Kelly moved home to save money so she could move to London in October and hopefully continue her career as a reporter. Since Kelly has gone the Waikato Times does not hold the same interest for me. It was great to see her articles in the paper. So Kelly is a Londoner now, flatting in Fulham road with two blokes and working as a waitress in "The Kiwi Kitchen" while looking for her dream job. Kelly has more friends in London than NZ so she is having a very social time.

Fiona completed her nursing degree and is working in the cardiac ward on the new graduate programme at Waikato hospital. It took her awhile to get used to working full time and having a full patient load. She is flatting within walking distance of the hospital with another new grad nurse and a graphic artist. She and I have started doing Latin dancing exercise classes which entails all sorts of rotating hip movements. It is wonderful having her back in Hamilton. So one daughter leaves and other returns.

Reinie is back for the summer and working as a waiter at one of the restaurants frequented by the young set. He has completed 2 years at university and this year was the social rep for his college and organized all the balls and social events. He was not the person I thought would take over the mantle of party organizer in the family. Next year he will be flatting for the first time so that should be interesting. He is not a lover of tinned spaghetti and baked beans so perhaps he will learn to cook.

In April we went to Gold Coast, Australia for the wedding of Suzie Drabble. It was held at a wonderful resort hotel. In September we went to Holland to the wedding of Maartjie Hilgers which was a grand affair. We also spent time in England and then went onto Berlin which is a fascinating city and the highlight being going to a concert by the Berlin Philharmonic. Their reputation as one of the world's leading orchestra is not unfounded. I love travelling but my goodness New Zealand is far away from everywhere.

To say the last four months have been the busiest I have ever been at work would be an understatement. We started Cardiac surgery at my hospital and I was given 3 months to set up the theatre side of things. Nothing is here in NZ

and had to be sourced from England or Europe. Long hours and sleepless nights resulted in us successfully completing our first case and we are now well on our way. We stop work in 2 weeks for the Christmas break and I am looking forward to relaxing and doing as little as possible.

Theo has been very busy. He is the only one that does all the Head and Neck surgery but thankfully next year help is on the way with a young surgeon who has been away on fellowship years. Next year we have decided to take every 2nd Friday off and start to take control of our lives and the hours that we work and take more time off.

Thank goodness we are all in good health and that is a true blessing. Every year I find a quote appropriate to what has happened in our year. As this was a big birthday year for Theo, this year's quote is dedicated to him.

"Youth is the time for the adventures of the body, but age for the triumphs of the mind"

To you and your loved ones may you have a blessed time this Christmas and may 2008 bring you health and happiness.

Chris, Theo, Kelly, Fiona & Reinie Gregor