

DECEMBER 2009

GREGOR FAMILY NEWS LETTER 2009

Dear Family & Friends,

This year has just raced by. Been a very busy year mainly because Theo and I have spent many happy days on holiday. We started off the year with our usual skiing conference in Campitello and then on to Vienna and Budapest. This year we took Reinie with us who is always good fun. He has become an opera aficionado and enjoyed the music offered in both cities. The highlight for me was the Schubert Mass sang by the Vienna Boys choir in the palace church. Schubert was a previous choir boy and wrote the mass for the choir. Budapest is a fascinating city and well worth a visit.

Our good friends Frans and Agnes spent several weeks in New Zealand and we joined them in Queenstown and took in the Milford Sounds which are spectacular. Theo and Frans gave a course in Brisbane and Agnes and I took in the sights. In June Theo attended the World conference in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The Brazilians lived up to their reputation as being party people. Every night after the exhibitions closed the party would move in with bands and portable bars everywhere. The place would rock; they have a drink called a Kiapareña which are lethal. They had a final conference dinner held in a stadium which was like the Rio Carnival, amazing. We then went on an Intrepid tour around Peru. The Peruvians are the most wonderful warm sharing nation who have taken the Spanish enforced Catholicism and made it their own. Which means many processions with Statues of our Lady but with dancing and crates of beer. Very colourful costumes. Going to Macchu Piccu was a spiritual experience which was enhanced even more by the fact that when we arrived it was covered in mist and then it slowly cleared to show this incredible sight which was recently named one of the modern 7 wonders of the world.

In June we bought a "bach", which is a Kiwi holiday house, at Lake Taupo. We chose that area because it is near the ski fields for winter and the Lake for summer. We have managed to go most weekends. We will be spending two weeks over Christmas and New Year there. We have also been up to Paihia in the Bay of Islands which has spectacular scenery and beaches. We also went to Adelaide and Noosa in Australia and in-between visiting all these places we still managed to work long hours.

In fact Theo and I work as many hours as we did when we were in our 30's. This year I have realized a wonderful thing that doing housework and working full time is a blessing not a curse because it means we are healthy and able to still maintain a high level of activity both physically and mentally. Hooray. Theo continues with all his responsibilities at Waikato hospital and private and I with running the theatres at Southern Cross.

Kelly started the year working as the editor of a small IT magazine and then moved onto being a journalist at the

National Business Review which is NZ top business paper. Very stressful times for journalists as jobs are rare so it requires long hours and many stories to keep on top of the game. On top of advertising revenue being down and not many happy business stories to write about. In spite of that she has managed to get lead stories most weeks and is certainly learning heaps.

Fiona has been in the Cardiac ward of the Starship children's hospital. They have very ill babies in her ward. We are all in awe that she can deal with all the pain and suffering. She is now orientating to the High dependency Unit and will be doing a child health post graduate course at Auckland University next year. Kelly and Fiona have been flatting together and are enjoying Auckland.

Reinie finished his 4th and final year at Otago University and will graduate in May 2010 with a Health Science degree majoring in physiology and anatomy. He got straight A's this year and has been rewarded for his hard work with a place at Flinders Medical School in Adelaide. This has come as an enormous relief to us all, as all he has wanted to be for the past 6 years is become a doctor.

Unfortunately this year has also brought another tragic loss of a family member. Gerhard (Gerry) Booysen, Theo's nephew, died from a head injury sustained from knocked down on a pedestrian crossing in Johannesburg. The only good thing that came out of it was Theo went to South Africa for 7 days and was able to have some quality time with his family.

This has been a difficult year for many people we know. The economic gloom has brought upon many hardships and they say 2010 does not look much better. But we have much to celebrate in our family we are all in good health. Reinie getting into medical school has shown us that with hard work, self belief and dedication you can achieve your dreams. So I will end on a positive note with a quote.

“Permanence, perseverance and persistence in spite of all obstacles, discouragement and impossibilities: it is this that in all things distinguishes the strong soul from the weak” Thomas Carlyle (Scottish historian)

May 2010 bring to you and your loved ones only good health, happiness and peace. May you all be blessed with love and friendship.