

Summary of Rayner Turner 2008

Well another year has almost flown past, and Christmas is upon us with the end of the work and school year. 2008 has been 'quiet' for us compared to 2007, even though we have enjoyed visitors from overseas and Gary had a short work visit to the USA. We have upgraded vehicles and I changed jobs at Statistics, to work on the 2011 Census based in Christchurch. I don't travel much anymore which is a double edged sword. Oli and Gary are happy for me to be home but I don't get to see my Wellington based family and friends as often.

Much of our life revolves around Oli's cello playing. He has been in 3 orchestras, including the elite Christchurch School's music festival which played for 6 nights at the Christchurch Town Hall in October. He has been at his weekly lessons and group lessons for Suzuki as well as the summer camp in Oamaru and Spring workshop in Tauranga. It was a great chance to catch up with John and Milly and their extensive house renovations. Oli and I then enjoyed a whirlwind 5 days in Auckland showing cousin Chris the sights. We especially loved catching up with family, Suzuki friends, and old work mates. My ex work colleague, Egyptian Alaa and family were very welcoming having us to dinner along with a huge extended Samoan family, and Sally-Ann gave us the grand tour of Waiheke Island and wow what a fabulous place it is to live. Only a half hour boat ride to down town Auckland. The boys really enjoyed the big city train ride to town etc etc but we were well over the traffic jams after about 10 minutes.

Rohin and Kirsty visited for a weekend at the end of last summer and we all spent a beautiful day on Banks Peninsula, as well as geo-caching. They're still to set a wedding date, and are saving hard to travel to Europe for a year at the end of 2009.

Bex and Chris are enjoying married life, and working hard at their jobs. Bex appeared in 2 plays by Theatre Militia both of which were a very high standard. Those guys have such great imaginations in how they represent modern concepts such as searching using google.

My siblings and I had a weekend together in Wellington, Wairarapa and Titahi Bay, where Mum and Dad lived. It was a great weekend to bond as a family and retrace the steps taken by our forefathers. We visited the Rayner family homestead built in the early 1900s. We enjoyed the Featherstone Fell engine museum which used to go over the Rimutaka Incline to the Wairarapa from Wellington. Mum and Dad travelled on the final journey in 1954?? We spent the 2nd day at Titahi Bay which I remember as a young child, and saw both houses where Mum and Dad lived. One is the Cable cottage right on the beach, and we had a beautiful day to enjoy the area.

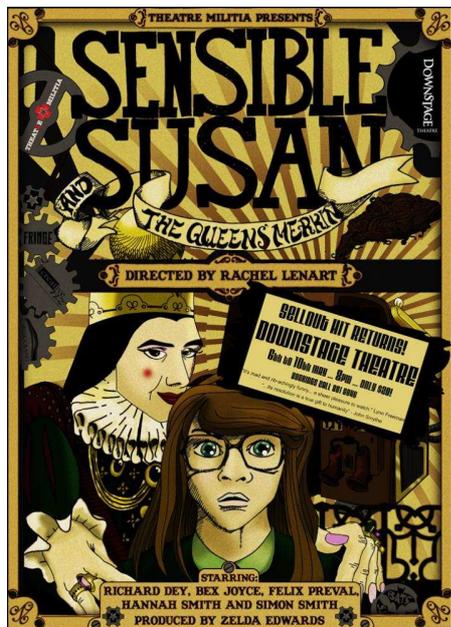
Oli has matured and is now a 'teenager'. He has learned many new things this year, like how much he loves speaking Japanese, and dislikes French and Maori. Japanese will be pursued, at Chch Boys' High school next year. He loves cooking and is even getting useful at it. He has even invented recipes i.e. nachos pies. He is looking forward to high school, although it was a mission to figure out which one to send him to. I applied to 6 schools and put him in the ballot for 5 of them. We actually got into the 3 bottom choice straight away, and 1 top school. He got into Boys' High (2nd top school) on the list which we accepted as it is more practical for getting him to school on time. This does mean, of course, that Gary has to get up in the morning as school is on the way to the University.

We are planning to holiday in Omarama and its environs. So if anyone is in the vicinity, please drop in between Dec 27 and Jan 13th.

Goodbye for now, Eliz, Gary, Oli and Mercury.

Pictures are: Rayner family at 1900s homestead. Oli's original nachos pies





Pictures: Kirsty & Rohin at Akaroa harbour; Bex's play in Feb 2008; Ship wrecks seen on sea-kayaking trip to Quail island - Dec; Hanmer Springs hot pools with Frances, & Chris for Oli's birthday - July; Oli on new cello at orchestra; Gordon, Louise, Liz, Frances, Geof at our street in Titahi Bay - June; yellow eyed penguin at Oamaru - Jan

