

Hastings
New Zealand
November 29, 1993

Greetings from New Zealand! It's the time of year for the letter from Ian, Viv, David and Matthew, A fair bit has happened since we last sent a letter to you all. Again, we apologise for the lack of personal letter, but hope that you will prefer to hear the news like this, rather than not at all.

Ian's contract in Vanuatu expired earlier in the year, but before that we had been considering a permanent move to New Zealand. In the middle of August, Ian travelled to New Zealand for some job interviews, mostly in Auckland. However, it was a company in Hastings which offered Ian a job, which they wanted him to start in the middle of October.

Hastings is situated on Hawkes Bay on the east coast of the North Island close to Napier, The area is a fruit and wine producing area. with a population of something over 60,000 people. The company develops software for the meat processing trade throughout New Zealand, using computer systems similar to the ones Ian used in Birmingham and Port Vila,

Hawkes Bay is supposed to have the best climate in New Zealand, but we are all finding it very cold after Vanuatu. This is apparently one of the coldest springs for some years in the area, however.

We must retrace our steps a little, however. At the end of July, Viv returned briefly to England for the wedding of a friend, while Ian looked after the boys in Port Vila, assisted by our housegirl Anna and some of our other friends. Vanuatu's thirteenth anniversary celebrations took place while she was away. Not much more than a week after this, Ian had his interviews in New Zealand. This meant that, after a long application process, we were granted permanent residence in New Zealand.

After Ian finished his job in Vanuatu, we had a large number of farewell parties from the groups we had got to know there. The largest was an open evening at the Hotel Rossi, one of the older hotels in Port Vila, where we hosted a buffet for over a hundred of our friends. A good time was had by all.

We left Port Vila a few days later, travelling first to Auckland, where we stayed for just a couple of days, before flying on to Los Angeles, where we visited Disneyland again. After that, we flew straight back to the UK, where we were able to rent a house in Bebington for two and a half weeks. During that time, we had to arrange the retrieval of our goods from storage at various points in England, co-ordinate the freight of most of these to New Zealand and the disposal of the rest, including our house in Sheldon. Some people think that home leave is a time of rest. They are not correct. It was a time of hard work, and we appreciate the help given to us by many friends and relatives.

Unfortunately, our short time in England meant that we were unable to see many others of you.

The constraints of time were not entirely to our taste, but we were not prepared to give up a promising job offer for the sake of a couple of weeks. We travelled back to New Zealand with only one stopover, in Orlando. After that, it was an enormously long journey from Orlando to Chicago, Los Angeles, Auckland and Hastings.



For the first couple of weeks, we stayed in a motel just over a mile from Ian's new offices. This was small and restrictive, so we lost no time in tracking down a suitable house to buy. This house, with the above address, is a three-bedroomed, single-storey house in the district of Mahora in Hastings.

So here we are, again welcoming any visitors who happen to be passing (though surely New Zealand is not quite such an out-of-the-way place) while making this house more like a home. Two weeks ago, our freight from Vanuatu arrived. We have now taken all the things out of their boxes, which is something of urgency, because the boxes need to be discarded to make room for the freight from England which will arrive in Auckland around the beginning of December.

We are starting to get involved in the local community. David has started at Mahora Kindergarten, while Viv and Matthew go to a play centre two days each week. We have started attending St. James' Church, the local Anglican establishment and been made very welcome there, especially by the vicar and his wife, who also have two young children. Ian is starting to become involved in leading services while Viv has become a member of the music group. Meanwhile, most of our spare time is taken up with purchasing, arranging and making work various items of necessary furniture and household equipment.

One other piece of news which some of you will not have heard yet is that Viv is pregnant. Our third child will be born early in March. The pregnancy seems to be going well, Viv has spent some time getting to know her doctor. She has had scans and blood tests and all the other dreariness of pregnancy, and all is well.

May we take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Ian, Viv, David and Matthew