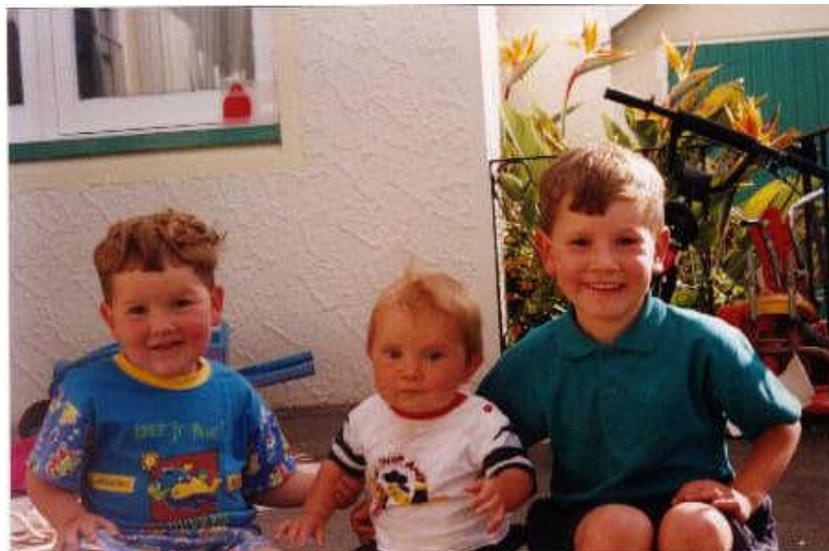


Hastings 4201  
New Zealand  
November 17, 1994

As we reach the end of the year, the Christmas letter from Ian and Viv plops through the letterbox. One of our correspondents says that it has become as much a part of Christmas as the Queen's message...

On March 8th, Christopher James was born in Hastings Memorial Hospital, weighing 4.18kg, which he had exactly doubled by mid-October, so he is certainly growing into a big boy. He already has three teeth, and the fourth is well on its way. He shuffles about lots and can almost crawl. He is a very cheerful child, with a sense of humour that may get him into lots of exciting situations when he is older.



David was at Mahora Kindergarten at the start of the year, but started at Mahora School straight after his fifth birthday in July. He is a very able reader for his age, and enjoys going to school. In October he was promoted from the new entrants class to J1.

Mahora School has a lot of events, both for fund-raising and otherwise. Earlier this month saw the School carnival, a surprisingly large event featuring clowns, a ferris wheel, steam train rides and donkey rides. David and Matthew took all the rides, but Christopher settled for just the donkey cart. Christopher also enjoyed the donkey ride at the kindergarten gala earlier in the year.

The waiting list for kindergarten is considerable, so Matthew has not yet been able to start there. Viv, Christopher and he go to a play-centre two mornings a week, but to give him an opportunity to learn things by himself, Matthew now also goes to a pre-school run by a local church two other mornings a week.

Viv and Ian are now adjusting to a calmer and more settled lifestyle than the hectic life in Vanuatu with its annual trips. This makes for a calmer life but does mean that we

are not going to nearly as many places. Indeed, 1994 looks to be the first year without us taking an international journey since 1984. England is a long way away, though most of you reading this are probably actually thinking that New Zealand is a long way away. Nevertheless, Viv's parents will be coming out to visit us for Christmas and we all look forward to seeing them both.

We are by now quite involved in St. James' Anglican Church in Mahora. Ian leads services quite regularly and has preached several times this year, while Viv is more involved in leading Music and worship and will help form a preschool music group there in the New Year.

Ian is also working on the Projects Committee at church. This has organised several successful sausage sizzles and will arrange a silent auction before Christmas and a big gala in March.

We have yet to visit the South Island, which many of our friends tell us is much more beautiful than the North Island. This year, we have visited Rotorua, one of our favourite places, as well as Taupo, Palmerston North and Wellington. Shows are few, but we saw *Chess* in Palmerston North and *Les Misérables* in Wellington.

Ian is still working for the same software house in Hastings, which has had a year of mixed fortunes but looks well placed for 1995. After almost exactly a year on the market our maisonette in Birmingham has finally been sold.

As well as Christopher, we have another new addition to our family, in the shape of Quince, Quince is a beautiful cat whom we have had since kittenhood. We have never known quite such a playful kitten or one with such a poor sense of direction. I have spent several happy evenings walking the neighbourhood looking for Quince who likes to go on walks with the family but doesn't always take the whole journey and gets lost. We have solved this problem by buying a name tag. All the children adore playing with Quince, but it does mean that Christopher has taken to something of a feline posture when he tries to crawl.

Thank you to all who have written to us, especially those of you who sent birth congratulations. We love to hear your news, and hope to write more in 1995! If you are passing, please call.

With all our love for Christmas and the New Year,

Ian, Viv, David, Matthew and Christopher