

PEACE ON EARTH

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

GOODWILL TO MEN

From the Halliday family

*Hastings 4201
New Zealand*

Greetings,

It is hard to believe that another year is nearly over and that its time to write our Christmas letter for another year. 1998 has been rather a strange year for our family.

1997 ended on a rather pessimistic note when one week before Christmas Ian was told that he would no longer have a job with McCarthy's due to financial difficulties that the firm was experiencing. Luckily, a few days before Christmas, Ian managed to secure a four month contract for Countrywide Bank based in Auckland. So we made the difficult decision that Ian should base himself in Auckland while the rest of us remained in Hastings and that Ian would join us there for weekends. Thus late January saw Ian embark on a strange nomadic existence commuting weekly between Hastings and Auckland while looking for a more permanent and satisfactory arrangement. We thought we had achieved this midyear when Ian accepted a permanent position with Countrywide Bank, but not long after this, Countrywide was taken over by the National Bank. Ian is still currently working for the bank, though he is now based in Wellington rather than Auckland. This position is secure until the end of March after which we do not know what the situation will be. So we are just taking one day at a time and not worrying about what the future will bring!

The year has actually been quite a good one despite all of the above. Ian joined a newly formed Toastmasters club in Auckland called Hallmark which he has really enjoyed. He won both his club and area humorous speech competitions and has also attended both national Toastmasters conferences this year in Dunedin and more recently in New Plymouth. He has thoroughly enjoyed both of these events and we both fully intend to be at the next conference which will be in Napier. Ian is continuing his interest in Toastmasters in Wellington attending a breakfast club. (That should prove a challenge for a "morning person" like Ian!)

During the year, both of us have received the Competent Toastmaster qualification (CTM); Viv has continued in the Twin Cities Club throughout the year, winning the Area Oral Reading competition.

Another interest which Ian developed while in Auckland was attending the Comedy Club not far from the hotel where he was based. This has seen Ian get involved to the extent that he has done several stand-up comedy routines at the club during the year. He has also found a Comedy Club in Wellington so his performing days may not be over yet.

We started the year with a holiday to Auckland, Tauranga, Te Puke, Rotorua and Taupo. Highlights of this included visits to Rainbow's End (a theme park), Kiwifruit Country (a family favourite of old) and some beautiful hot, sunny days in Rotorua.

We have also made various weekend excursions to Auckland, Taupo and Palmerston North. I spent several days over on the West coast in Taranaki staying with my friend Sue whose family live in the Hawera area. Chris came with me on this trip which we thoroughly enjoyed, especially seeing and feeling snow on Mount Egmont (Mount Taranaki). While I was there David and Matthew flew to Auckland as unaccompanied minors to spend some time with Ian including climbing up Rangitoto, a volcanic island just off the coast near Auckland, an experience, they are both keen to repeat.

My life continues to be as busy as ever. I am still on the board of the Heretaunga Free Kindergarten Association which received a very positive review from ERO (Education Review Office) at the start of the year. I am also very actively involved at Camberley Kindergarten where Christopher attends 5 mornings a week, I am employed there as an Education Support Worker for a little girl called Adina and work there for 1½ hours every day. I really enjoy this work and would like to pursue it further next year when Chris starts school.

I am still involved in Cornwall Park Playcentre where Chris attends the two afternoon sessions. This year I have taken on the role of president which will be particularly interesting as the centre is currently having its ERO review.

We still attend St. James' Anglican Church in Mahora, where Ian is still a licensed lay reader, although with his absence during the week, he was unable to continue as Church Warden.

The family of animals continues to grow, We now have three adult cats and two kittens, born in October, who are now reaching the "playful kittens" age. The two kittens are the third litter that Willow has had, but the only ones to have survived. As a challenge to the imagination, we also have a mouse and three goldfish. Keeping mice and goldfish in the same household as cats is a challenging task, as the cats do not seem to have grasped the concept that the smaller animals are not there as snacks.

We wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and look forward to hearing all your news.

All our love,

Ian, Viv, David, Matthew and Christopher



David

Hello, David here, I am nine years old now, I like reading, science and adventures. I have been on an aeroplane all by myself with Matthew. I loved it. I have also been to the Fun Run to raise money for the school. I ran nine laps. I go to speech and drama. Matthew goes as well, We go to piano lessons as well, My class are performing in a school production. I'm going to be performing a Church production and I'm the star. I've climbed Rangitoto, a volcanic island in Auckland harbour.

Christopher

Hello, I'm 4 years, old. I go to Camberlcy Kindy every day and some, days I go to Cornwall Park Playcentre. My friends are Zoe, Jakc and Oliver. This year I have been learning to swim at swimming lessons. I like to play with Lego, play on the computer and draw pictures, My favourite video is Fantasia because I like the dinosaurs. This year I went to Rainbows End, a theme park in Auckland. Mummy and I went to Taranaki with Zoe and her Mum.

Matthew

I am 7 years old. I go to Mahora school. My dad works in Auckland the biggest city in New Zealand. It has places like Kelly Tarltons. My best friend is Alex Funnell. I went to the school police blue light disco it went from 6pm till 7:15pm. I also had the Fun Run at Nelson Park. I did 10 laps of it. My hobbies are, playing chess, maths and writing. I have been on a plane with my 9 year old brother David. We arrived there in evening on Friday and left in the afternoon on Monday. I went to the A and P show, we went on all sons of rides.