

At Home with the Harlands

Christmas 2012

2012 was a time of settling in for us, after all the upheaval of the renovations in the previous year. Of course, these always take longer than expected, and never finish neatly, with the last piece of the puzzle taking until about June to get completely finished off (in this case, the tiles on the roof). Now that we have been living in it for a while, it all seems settled, and hard to remember how it was before all the building works began. It is also hard to imagine ever doing this again – twice in a lifetime is more than enough ...



Beau is a supposedly now a teenager (2 human years = 14 dog years), and so he gets on very well with those around the same developmental stage. He loves his walks, and now seems to know that people putting on shoes and picking up his lead is a signal to get excited. He loves a game of tug-of-war, and will never ever give up, which makes for an interesting contest when his opponent is someone in a stubborn mood ...



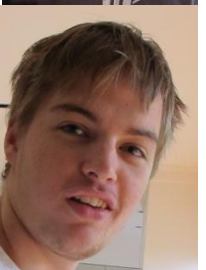
Jeremy has now completed Year 5, which was his first year in the boys-only classes of Middle School. He has thrived in this environment, and he seems to be very glad to be rid of any pesky girls in the class. This was probably helped by his constant exchange of banter with his main teacher, which has to be witnessed to be believed. He has continued his viola lessons, and seems to enjoy being involved in various musical groups at concerts and speech nights. He thoroughly enjoyed going to a screening of 'The Fellowship of the Ring' at which the musical score was played by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, partly because we were sitting in the third row and could feel the vibrations through the floor in the many loud bits! He recently returned from his first week-long adventure camp on Philip Island, which looks like being a fixture for the next couple of years.



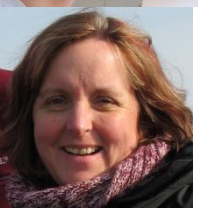
Emily has continued with her practice of trying to do everything at once, and generally succeeding. She has continued clarinet lessons, and singing in the choir, resulting in a duet in an end-of-year concert. She has also enjoyed her dancing group, including competitions, and the bi-annual School Tattoo. Somehow, despite there being a couple of hundred children on stage, she managed to end up in the front row (as ever!). She continues to teach herself the piano, including working out how to play tunes she hears on her iPod – having two pianos in the house seems to only double the chances of her playing one! Another favourite pastime is sleepovers at friends' places, at which there is unsurprisingly little sleeping done ...



Timothy has recently commenced Year 10, and so is now officially in the Senior School (and on alert for finding ways to avoid bumping into his mother around the traps!). He has done a bit of travelling this year, with School trips to the Northern Territory, Lake Eildon, and Japan, with this last trip undoubtedly being the highlight of his year. Being tall, pale and orange-haired meant that he could hardly pass as a local, but he thoroughly enjoyed it all, and began talking about the possibility of going again in two years time almost as soon as he got home. He has also been a volunteer at the local Salvation Army shop for about six months now.



Joshua has now completed two years of his studies at Monash, and has again found it handy to be able to have 'homework help' at home. He has decided to change his direction slightly and transfer to the Information Technology program, which has a slightly different emphasis than the Computer Science one. He has continued his social life, and involvement in the Computer Games Boot Camp as a volunteer helper. Now being a veteran of public transport, he also has some very strong opinions about the myki ticketing system, and has a long list of ways in which improvements could be made (which is not exactly unusual among regular myki users!).



Linda is now officially a veteran of travel to China, having just completed her fourth trip. She has also been recently promoted to Director of Reporting at Haileybury, which is perhaps more daunting than it sounds, given that there are 3,000 students whose reports need overseeing ... Attending the School speech night on the way to the airport is in danger of becoming an annual event!

James has had another busy year at work, with organising a national conference held at RMIT and new arrangements at all sorts of levels making a lot of adjustments necessary. Finding time for a further period of leave and/or sabbatical looks a long way off at present, but hope springs eternal ...

With best wishes from all of us for a refreshing Christmas and a prosperous New Year,

James, Linda, Joshua, Timothy, Emily & Jeremy Harland

