

At Home with the Harlands

Christmas 2013

2013 seems to have gone very fast – it seems a lot less than a year ago that we were writing last year’s letter! In many ways, not a lot has changed, which sounds pretty boring, but is probably something that we should be very grateful for. It does seem strange not to be reporting on house renovations! About the closest we got to that was removing the now-derelect cubby house in the backyard, and made some rearrangements in the back garden, although if Beau has his way, there will be lots more of those ...



Speaking of **Beau**, he is now three years old, and supposedly a (dog) adult, but if so, he is keeping it very well hidden! He is gaining lots of digging experience, and has had the odd escape, as well as still being as determined as ever with tugs of war. He seems to think that every time a door opens it is an opportunity for a walk, which is always at a brisker pace than the accompanying human seems to consider appropriate, and no matter how hard he tries, he still can’t catch the birds that land in the back yard. One day he might figure it out ...



Jeremy has just completed Year 6, and is on the verge of teenage-hood (only a couple of months left!). He year would be a big jump (from primary to secondary), but at Haileybury he moves pretty smoothly into Year 7. He still loves ‘The Lord of the Rings’, having been to a performance of ‘The Two Towers’ by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and wanted to book tickets for the next one as we were leaving the hall. He is also very much into all things to do with ‘The Hobbit’ and is very keen on Yugioh tournaments (ask him!). We should probably enjoy as best we can the last couple of months as pre-teenage parents, although that era does seem to be a long time ago already ...



Emily has just completed Year 8 (and technically started Year 9). She has once again tried to do just involving 1920s costumes, including winning the Victorian and then the National Championships in their class. She was also Music Captain, which she loved, even though it involved being a member of just about every musical group in the school, including choir, orchestra, concert band and of course being Kelsi in the Middle School production of ‘High School Musical’. She is going on a music tour to the USA early next year (assuming she gets around to organising her passport!) and also to China on another trip, which means she will be keeping busy.



Timothy has recently commenced Year 11, having already spent one year in the Senior School. This means that he has long since worked out how to avoid casually bumping into his mother around the campus! He also has a habit of playing a game of ‘how long can I leave it between haircuts’ and seems to enjoy peering out through a veil of thick orange hair. He is also the family expert on getting Beau to come home after one of his escapes. He has become very adept at public transport, especially on the way home from school, and navigating around on buses. He will be starting to learn to drive soon too, which may mean that he gets a licence before his older brother.



Joshua has completed another year at Monash, having transferred to the Information Technology program at the Caulfield campus (which is even easier to get to from home). He is going to have a break from studying next year, and hopes to be finding employment soon. He has continued his social life, and involvement in the Computer Games Boot Camp as a volunteer helper. He has also become very keen on trying to train Beau to attack people, including his father, but somehow the training doesn’t seem to be working very well. It doesn’t help that the two of them generally try to get the best of each other, with Beau usually being the one who lasts longest ...



Linda has just returned from her fifth trip to China, as part of Haileybury’s China VCE program. She has also survived report season as the Director of Reporting, and also exam season as a VCAA marker for Further Maths. Throw in a few speech nights and the like, and it becomes pretty clear why teachers feel that the summer holiday is a well-earned break.



James has had a somewhat unremarkable year at work, although it always seemed to be busy. Perhaps the highlight was 15 seconds of fame as part of a story about overly steep driveways on ‘A Current Affair’, which was a good source of ridicule for colleagues and friends alike. This theme was continued with a talk at the Laborastory, a series of popular talks on science, with less impact but more satisfaction.

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

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