

At Home with the Harlands

Christmas 2015

2015 is nearly over, but where did it go? We have passed some more milestones (school, more learner drivers, ...) but there have been few if any big changes, which is always something to be grateful for.



Beau continues to redecorate parts of the garden in his own style, usually by digging shallow holes to shelter in, which he finds to be a good way to hide from monsters like the lawn mower, broom and garden hose. He will still try to charge ahead when he goes on a walk, but if the walk goes for too long, this can change. He seems to have given up on chasing birds, but will occasionally bark at a neighbour's satellite dish for some reason ...



Jeremy has just finished Year 8 (and technically just started Year 9). He had a very enjoyable year as the Drama Captain, highlighted by a number of short plays in which he delivered some memorable ad hoc lines, as well as playing Mr Pinky in the school production of 'Hairspray'. He was also very pleased to be one of a small but significant group of baritones in the choir. He has continued playing the viola and recently added the bass as well (the electric kind). He still has a habit of saying things in different accents which we have somehow got used to, even if it still takes us by surprise some of the time. He recently had his final Adventure Camp, which he was looking forward to for quite some time. The house certainly becomes a lot quieter when both he and his sister are away for any length of time ...



Emily has enjoyed being in Year 10, and having just started Year 11. She has ended up studying a combination of maths (2 subjects, no surprise there), physics, drama and history, which seems to suit her quite well. She also plays in all sorts of music groups, which involved playing the clarinet and singing for a number of VCE assessments for other students, and some dexterity at events like Speech Night, where she had to keep track of where she was supposed to be at any one time. She is not long back from two weeks of hiking and sea-kayaking in Fiji, which was quite a lot of fun, despite blistered feet, disappearing shoes and cows giving wake-up calls around 3am. She has taken enthusiastically to learning to drive, and at this rate is on track to overtake her older brothers as the first to get a driving licence.



Timothy has just finished Year 12, and is very much looking forward to the post-school phase. He returned from Japan a few days before the start of the school year, having had a great time in his two months in Tokyo. While the weather wasn't particularly warm, it was more than made up for by ready access to various aspects of Japanese culture (especially Pokemon!). Unsurprisingly, his best Year 12 result was in Japanese, and he is hoping to continue the study of this in combination with mechatronics (a combination of electrical and mechanical engineering). He also got his learner's permit, and has had some driving practice, but seems to share his older brother's reluctance to get behind the wheel. A lack of sibling rivalry is usually a good thing, but sometimes ...



Joshua has been combining some studies of Japanese with working in a café. This has been quite regular, and whilst the hours have been a little variable, the work itself has been pretty steady. He has been accepted into a Diploma of Languages at RMIT next year, which will continue his study of Japanese. He has applied for some other courses as well, as the Diploma is designed to be studied in conjunction with something else. He has had some driving lessons, but seems to be very used to buses and trains and hence rather reluctant to take the next step. He certainly has a thorough knowledge of how to get around Melbourne at any hour, and how long it is likely to take.



Linda has enjoyed flat out but for only 80% of the time this year, and has got very used to having Tuesdays to herself. She has taken some long overdue long service leave, which meant she finished up in the classroom in mid-November, and isn't due back there until after Easter. Despite this, she went once again on the Haileybury staff visit to China in early December. She has already re-discovered several walking paths near our place, and ventured out for a few bike rides. It looks like there will be a lot more of this to come in the New Year.



James has continued on at RMIT, with some extra teaching and marketing activities (including a second trip to India) keeping him busy. It never seems to get any easier, although he is getting better at delivering off-the-cuff radio interviews on little notice. He was very pleased to complete the 210km version of the Around the Bay in a Day event in October (again with a group consisting mainly of Haileybury "staff"). He hopes to repeat the feat informally over the summer, as well as some other 'adventure' rides.

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

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