



McDonald Newsletter

McDonald Family

Volume 1, Issue 1
15 December

Christmas Greetings

It's that time of year when we get in touch with friends and family. The year has gone pretty quickly. Anna is sad that she has had to say goodbye to her classmates. She has really enjoyed the class she has been in this year. It was her first year at high school (yr 9). Jonathan went into year 10 at Long Bay College after a year's correspondence school. He goes to a different school to Anna. He was at a coed. She was at an all girls school.

Jonathan has done well at Maths however he still does not understand the need to do homework or set school tasks and has coasted on his ability to do exams well. He has had the help of a writer for the exams as his ability to write down his own thoughts is limited.

Anna has enjoyed using her



trumpet this year as the school has had various bands and orchestras that she could get involved in. She has not done any exams but at least she has been involved in some extra-curricular activity. Emily and Christina have had swimming lessons this year and have both progressed to higher levels. Christina had a go at playing Flipperball for the first time in Term 4 and although she enjoyed it was not able to shoot any goals as she was put on the defence end of the pool. For those of you who are not

familiar with Flipperball it is a bit like waterpolo except that you can have your feet on the ground.

When the two youngest girls are ready for school in time, they walk to school. It was very convenient when it was decided to put a 'walking school bus' on that route. It only lasted a fortnight however as they decided it was too dangerous to have a walking school bus passing a certain school gateway. It seems ironic as the children now have to cross by themselves instead!!

Barry has been given the diagnoses of a fatty liver and therefore has to take some weight off. About a month ago we hired a treadmill and so he takes great delight in watching his TV programmes while doing a workout on the treadmill.



Emily and Christina



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Special points of interest:

Music

Camp

Barry's Mum.

Iona still playing Music

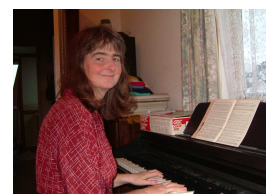
Iona has still been actively using her musical ability throughout the year.

She has continued to play the piano to accompany the Westminster School choir. One of the highlights of this has been that a song for which Barry wrote the

words and Iona wrote the music was sung by the choir. The song is called 'Just by Heaven's Door'. It was written last year as an attempt to write a patriotic New Zealand Song. It has been amusing to see a few of the boys in the choir

holding their arm across their chests when they have been singing this song.

Tuesday 13th December saw the choir singing at one of the local Rest homes.





Elections

New Zealand held their elections this year and although the Prime ministerial leadership has not changed the government setup is different.

Barry was helping to put up signs for one of the parties. It was quite a big job building the frames and then erecting the signs in the places allocated by the local council. He found that he had to repair quite a few from one week to the next as vandals would come and push them

over or slash them.

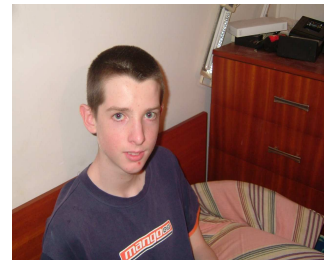
It made one realise what a lot of effort goes on in the background when politicians are campaigning.

We went along to a party fundraiser one night as a family and played Trivial Pursuit and won. The children were very excited about this. Barry is pretty good with his general knowledge and Jonathan is too.

It was good for us that sport was not one of the categories!!

ries!!

Jonathan, now 15.



We watched election results for Labour go this way

Newspapers

Anna has continued to deliver the local newspaper. At the beginning of the year she only had to deliver one newspaper the *North Harbour News* but now she has to deliver the *North Shore Times* which is distributed three times a week. Sometimes she is not able to do the delivery in time in the

afternoon because she has been late getting home from school so I have helped her out. (When she joined one of the school orchestras it had its practise after school) It only takes a bit over an hour so it has been a good way to get a bit of exercise. She uses the old pram that we had for her when she

was a baby so she doesn't have to carry the heavy load.

The council have kindly installed traffic lights opposite the subdivision where she delivers the papers. It means she doesn't have to try to make a mad dash across the busy road to get to the houses there.



Flag

There has been much debate in New Zealand about the flag and whether it should be changed.

Barry decided to try designing one, with a bit of a story attached. The Pataka Museum in Porirua chose to make up a version of it.

Barry's is the green white and blue one that we are standing below. It has its own website, which you can find by googling "New Zealand heritage flag"



Music continued

Iona has also enjoyed playing in a couple of different orchestras this year. Most of the time she plays in the Auckland Symphony Orchestra but another amateur orchestra was short of viola players for one of their concerts so she helped out and enjoyed it very much apart from getting very tired with the rehearsals which were on every day for a week except Wednesday night. The music was pretty exciting though. It was a major workout playing

a symphony, which was scored for a large orchestra including piano and organ by a composer, Saint-Saens. Some of you may know the music from the symphony which is used as the theme music for *Babe*, the movie of the sheep pig.

Another highlight was when Iona had the opportunity to play viola for the musical production *Les Miserables*. The private school half a mile down the road was putting it on and their usual vi-

ola player was overseas on holiday. The school put on a very professional show with wonderful singing and costumes.

The picture you see is taken before the wedding of Iona's niece. She arranged some music for Violin Viola oboe and clarinet so that she could provide music along with her sister and her sister's daughters

The wedding took place outside in a garden before it rained!



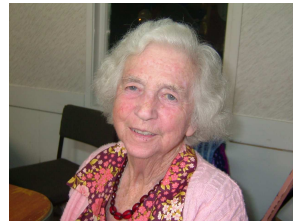
Unfortunately a fly was to be her downfall ...

Barry's Mum

We enjoyed at the beginning of the year having Barry's mother staying with us. One day back in March she was shooing a fly out the door near her bedroom and accidentally fell on the tiles hitting her head against the front door causing some bleeding around her brain and a hip injury. She was taken to hospital and after

some brain surgery and a hip operation was still not considered well enough to come back to live with us. She was put into a Rest Home and we go to visit her when we can.

It is sad to see her confused about her location. She often gets mixed up about which room is hers but she is always very pleased to see family when we visit.



This was taken before the fall.

Camp and church

Once again this year our family travelled to Otaki in June for a family camp for people interested in House Churches.

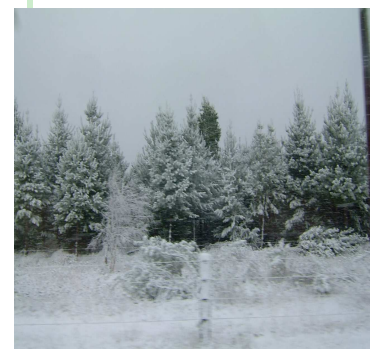
It was a pretty exciting trip down country for the family as our children were able to see and touch snow for the first time in their lives except for Anna who had seen snow

before.

This was the picture that was taken as we drove along the road. The road was closed a few hours after we got through.

We have continued to meet each Sunday in an informal gathering called a House Church. This is mostly a

case of having morning tea and a discussion, with sometimes a bit of prayer and singing. Anna and Christina have recently started going to a youth group at a nearby church.





Let's put Christ back
into Christmas

McDonald Family

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To

YOU CAN FIND BARRY'S WEB
PAGE IF YOU TYPE "JUST BY
HEAVEN'S DOOR" INTO
GOOGLE.



What we think Christmas is about!!

Shortly after Christmas we will reach a milestone—our 20th wedding anniversary. It's a time for reflection, and—ever the romantic (cough?!)—Barry has written a poem to celebrate the occasion, which Iona is now putting to music.

The great thing about our relationship is the blessings that have come out of it, including the unexpected ones like the ability to write songs together.

This reflects back on Christmas. It is amazing to think that God sent his son to earth, to begin this special relationship with you and me. Like the wedding, Christmas is important, but

the blessings that flow out of this relationship are even more precious and important, including the unexpected ones!

May the peace and joy that began at Christmas continually grow in you.

With warmest thoughts,
Barry and Iona.

PS. This was our first attempt at using Microsoft Publisher! Hope you like it!