



McLoughlins' Missive December 2010

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Can another year really have slipped by? Looking back, a fair amount has happened in last 12 months, but it all seems to have gone so fast!

In March, finding retirement too boring, Mike returned to banking, as Manager of Westpac Bank in Devonport. Hazel had a few days in Melbourne with him while he was on a training course, and enjoyed getting to know the city, courtesy of the free tourist tram and shuttle bus.



Fair dinkum Aussies!

At the beginning of June we became fair dinkum Aussies in a quiet little ceremony at the local Council office. A few friends came along to support us and the Mayor presented us each with a native plant for the garden.

The long warm summer produced an excellent olive crop this year. We pressed both our varieties and got a gold medal for one and a bronze for the other at the National Olive Oil Awards held in Adelaide in October. We went to the presentation dinner, along with several other growers from Tasmania who also won medals, so Tassie was well represented.

We still haven't got a buyer for the property, but we've had a bit of interest and properties seem to have started moving again so we remain hopeful. We continue to have young backpackers staying and helping us under the Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOFF) and Help Exchange schemes. We enjoy their company and get heaps done that we never have time to do ourselves.

Hazel has gone back to university, albeit at a distance, doing an on-line postgraduate qualification in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) through Wollongong University. She was very relieved to pass the first two modules before Christmas and has two more to complete - should be finished by the end of January, hoping to get a job with the Adult Migrant English Service, where she's been helping out for a while now.



Marathon Man

John is still enjoying life in the UK. (We haven't managed to tempt him to this side of the world yet.) He completed the London

Marathon in 3 hours 15 minutes 56 seconds and shortly after that his 5-a-side football team won the National competition in Birmingham. He went to South Africa for the World Cup - was disappointed in the football but enjoyed what he saw of the country.

We're off to spend Christmas and New Year with Ruth and Neil again in Auckland (so our brand new Aussie passports will get their first outing). They've just bought their first house, though they won't be in until after the New Year. Hopefully we'll get to see it, though. In October they did a 'Sky Walk' around Sky Tower in Auckland—were they brave or mad?!!



Skywalkers

So all in all quite an eventful year chez McLoughlin. We both turned 60 along the way, which was a bit of a shock to say the least. As we finish the year we're starting a new decade of our lives and looking forward to whatever the future might bring. We trust all is well with you and yours and wish you the Merriest Christmas and a fulfilling New Year.

Merry Christmas

