

Scott Family Xmas Letter 2018

If we could use cyclic cosmology theory as a metaphor for our relationship, 2017 was the culmination of several years over which it shrank away to nothing, and the start of 2018 was the point from which it exploded into life again with a big bang (well, more than one, actually). Relationship woes were not the only reason 2017 was a bad year; Kay's father Denis passed away in late October of that year, 4 months after several falls, hospitalisation, decreasing mobility and increasing poor health; several close friends lost homes in the Santa Rosa fires, including West Hill Manor which belonged to our dear friends Marion & Kent, and was of great historic as well as sentimental significance; we spent a year owning 2 houses, one of which was empty and in need of expensive repairs, giving us a big fat mortgage for much longer than anticipated, and both Jonathan and Kay were ill for a lot of the time. It was not a year we could write about in a cheery fashion, which is why there was no 2017 Xmas letter.

2018, however, while not without some sad times, has been a year worth reporting on. Aside from our health & happiness turnaround, we have travelled a fair bit, achieved good things, and enjoyed our lovely new home properly together. We installed a heat pump into Edwin's room, and a collapsible acrylic fume hood for the kitchen stove for those moments when the side fan cannot cope (i.e. flambés and serious stir-frys). We had the huge invasive beech tree from the front of the house removed, and we cleaned out and beautified the front and back fish ponds. We located the architect who originally designed the additions to this house, and asked him to design a garage and store room to replace the current carport in 2019, while we renovate the old freestanding garage to be a studio/workshop. During the last trip to Sydney we spent a night glamping at Taronga Zoo... the night it dumped 120mm of rain onto the city. Not very glam. On the plus side we got to hand-feed a hungry giraffe. We discovered 2 new favourite gins, Botanist and Citadelle - oh, the martinis and G&Ts!



Our address continues to be 17 Hillcrest Rd, Hamilton 3216 (through the gap in the hedge, cross the moat) and in case you hadn't heard, Kay's email address is now kay@scottpages.net.

We hope you, our friends and family, have a very happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2019!

Jonathan & Kay

Jonathan (62)

Jonathan's 2018 seemed sedentary and infrastructural in retrospect. After the nasty health and emotions of 2017, January started with a bang, finishing St Lesitz (<http://scottpages.net/StLesitz.html>), and two days in hospital with sepsis after the final biopsy. He attended 3 conferences, all in NZ (two in Hamilton), went to Wellington for Marsden twice, spent the night in Auckland for the Kiwinet Entrepreneurship Awards (sadly he didn't win), and visited Sydney 3 times. In Sydney Jonathan reconnected with John, an old friend from high school days who contacted him out of the blue, and who turned out to still have a Digital Frequency Meter (remember those?) Jonathan built using TTL circa 1970. In February, Jonathan became a grandfather, of Annabelle Claire Reid Reynolds (0), courtesy of his daughter Amelia (31) and her partner Hugo, now living in Wagga Wagga (<http://scottpages.net/tih240718.html>) This year, Jonathan occupied the large and sumptuous office formerly inhabited by his retired colleague Howell. We added a jazzy couch, which Kay found 2nd hand for \$40, as Jonathan feels all offices should have a couch for serious thinking or power napping. At work, managerialism continues to desecrate the hallowed halls while staff evaporate like red T-shirts in a phaser fight, but we are learning not to care; Jonathan's research has been fruitful, several of his graduate students finished, and the university's commercial arm is scrambling to file a potentially-lucrative new patent. We think Cowboy U's motto should be "Concerned about the outcome, passionate about the income".

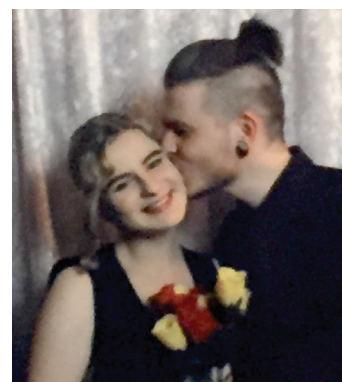


Kay (52)

Kay has spent much of 2018 trying to restore order to the garden, which went rather wild while she was working and away a lot last year, and sick with 2 bouts of flu. She has created a Zen garden in the front courtyard, a vegetable patch in the back garden, pulled out many weeds, pruned hedges and cut down annoying deciduous trees. According to Air NZ, she has flown 8 times this year, a total of 17,272km or 10 lengths of NZ, and also at least once with Jetstar, so the total is actually higher. In November Kay attended a 40-year primary school reunion. She began research for the creative non-fiction novel she wants to write, but was sorry to finish proofreading for Lifestyle Block magazine after 9 years. She joined the gym, began running again, and has lost 12kg over the year. Her 1996 Toyota Ipsum passed 222,222km and was supplanted as main workhorse by a Peugeot 3008. In the sad news, the Cronulla home Kay grew up in was sold in October to finalise her father's estate, and will be knocked down to become townhouses. Kay's godmother, Margaret (81), the last remaining sibling of either of her parents, passed away this year, and Kay was very upset by the sudden death of her brother David, in late October at the age of 61.

Merinda (20)

Merinda has completed the second year of her Pharmacy degree at Otago University and is loving it. She aims for an A-, because an A+ means she wasn't having enough fun! But she got A+ on both papers anyway. Since April, Merinda has been living with her boyfriend Alex (21) and they are very happy. Recently they moved into a 2 bedroom house and acquired 2 baby indoor bunnies, Sophie (grey) and Kiki (black).



Edwin (18)

Edwin finally finished high school this year, much to his relief. He did well in Digital Technologies, Statistics and English, and showed some grit getting through Advanced PE's duathlon. He is considering a gap year working in 2019, but wants to ultimately enrol for a degree in Psychology with the aim of being a counsellor. He still shares his room with Jacket, his cockatiel.