

16 Enfield Road
WAINUIOMATA

Friday 24 October 1986

Dear Chris

A thousand apologies for the terrible delay in reply to yours of 8 July. I haven't hibernated, though the weather gives a good case for doing so, and I haven't left the planet, but I have been flat out, though I can't think that that excuses me in any way.

I have been involved with the paperwork behind the local body elections - very interesting though all the wrong bods got back in, despite my not voting for them! (and issuing strict instructions to all my family to do likewise!). I am now doing part time hours to suit at the local library cataloguing their very neglected historical collection. A time consuming task but fun and the Library has been made a grant from the local Licencing Trust for my wages so thats a bonus. The money is going to run out before the work does but I shall probably continue anyway, just to see it all though. I haven't told the Head Librarian that though, or she might stop pushing for more money to see the job through! People can be taken advantage of, don't we know?

Brett has improved in his after-school behaviour - is now quite capable of lasting a full week without us all suffering. However, Ken has been away for weeks, home at weekends, for the last 10 weeks, teaching a new computer programme to different branches of the railways stores around the country. Living in motels and out of a suitcase. He comes home Friday nights (and tonight is Friday, hip hip hurray) for me to wash and iron his shshirts, then off again Monday mornings. Of course it always rains on the weekends, which is very frustrating to us all as he isn't able to catch up with the backlog of work which is accruing, despite my attempts to cope. I haven't mastered the chainsaw yet, so there is always a supply of wood waiting to be cut up for the chipheater each time he returns. Thank heavens there are only 3 weeks to go. I really got quite depressed around the halfway mark, but now working at the library and having other adults to communicate with has improved things no end.

I'm sorry to hear about your conclusions on the slowburning wood fires. I wonder whether there is something amiss with your model (no slur to your friendly builder & plumber) as they really do seem satisfactory in all the instances I have heard of.

No, I haven't got in yet with the present owners of Auntie Belle's house but no worries there. They have done so little to the place over the last few years that I can't see any dramatic renovations taking place. I do have a name for them now, which is a start and I shall feel my way in gradually once I start doing less days per week at the library. Yes, and once things simmer down there I shall trace the biography

of Dick Seddon done by a chap Wise, I think. The only Gilmours at Eastbourne are: G.N. Gilmour 39b Droua Street, and Ross & Mary 33 Hinau St. Does either of those ring a bell with you?

Yes I have also heard from Joyce Peek with her Australian research news and isn't it intriguing about the child Robert?

Of course it does seem that there were two, but it looks as though it is going to be hard to trace. I feel that Robert fits in with the family, despite Joyce's misgivings, but Hugh was in NZ before and after Feb 1843, though not well documented for a period there, so he could well have tripped back to Aust. for a short period.

My interior decorating has ground to a standstill with Ken away but the pantry is almost all finished and certainly usable. I am only waiting now for the joiner to get his act together and make my flour and sugar bins plus tablecloth and cutlery drawers. The pantry doors need one more coat of polyurethane, and have even been sanded in anticipation, but await the warmer weather for the final application. I have even managed to salvage enough of the original wallpaper to cover the alteration and disguise (I hope) the fact that it is an alteration. The carport outside is next priority and I have become quite frugal with this end in mind.

I have tried and tried to contact the Cooks of Raroa Road in Lower Hutt (re returned clipping enclosed) but no answer on the phone so shall write. Their's is now the last house left in the Street the poor things, the rest having made way for 2-storied office blocks. I haven't given up on them though, and also have a copy of the clipping to remind me.

My sister and I recently attended a "Chocolate Party". It was run along the lines of Tupperware or Avon - interesting, fiddley and time-consuming. However, as we both love chocolate I allowed myself to be conned into accepting an early birthday present from my sister and bought some of the chocolate and moulds. My first attempt can't have been too bad because Ken's next week away took him to Palmerston North, and past Tokomaru where the supplier is, and he came home with lots more chocolate, fillings and another mould. I have spent quite a bit of time filling a jar with chocs with his homecoming this week in mind. Fun fun.

Anyway, at said chocolate party were three cats and one, a half-shorn Persian, caught my eye. He was very friendly, purred constantly, didn't mind my attentions and, better still, when I asked after him I was told he was for sale. The owner had retrieved him from her brother where he was being neglected - hence his knotted fur and subsequent shaving by the vet, but she already had a dog, two cats, one toddler and another baby on the way. I paid up my \$45 - the first time I have ever paid for a cat - and haven't regretted it since. He is lovely company, will hardly let me out of his sight, and is a corker bedwarmer during the week. My other cat, Mac, a sleek black job of 8 years and endless condescension, has finally accepted this fluffy feline apology, despite the repeated attacks he (the newcomer) makes upon Mac's tail whenever Mac should absentmindedly hang it

over the edge of a chair or bed. My Mum took one look at the newcomer and said "He looks like a gargoyle, he's so ugly" so Gargoyle he is. My sister says I'm cruel to call him that but he doesn't seem to mind - he'll come to anything and he's a proper little wastemaster. Even Ken, who is not a catlover, has been seen to sneak him the odd bit of this or that, so he must be quite appealing to break ice in that quarter!

My Mum and Dad celebrated their 34th Anniversary last week though Mum had to ring me the week before to check my age and add a couple of years to get her years right! My in-laws celebrate their 34th next month and you yourself must be coming up for the 30's, mustn't you?

I haven't read about "time-slips" that I recall, but I am sure I have heard of them. To me the ultimate would be to have you to trip down to Wainui - never mind how or why - and wander around on a lovely summer day. My dream ...

How is the TV going? I found I was watching a lot more with Ken away, but now I have rediscovered 2YA and 2ZB in the evenings, and get a lot of sewing and knitting done listening to them. However, I did watch the 'Close Up' documentary on the mentally handicapped and marriage last night, and it left me undecided but wondering.

Well, it is mid-term break here and 1.30 and Brett is hovering at my elbow waiting to go to Grandma's for Lunch! The poor long-suffering kid. With school dictating our activities I'm afraid we aren't getting up to Nana's at Otaki a fraction as much as we would like, but I am keeping you in mind for the Christmas holidays. Hope you two are keeping well and that John is enjoying dreaming in front of the fire. How nice to have no chores nagging though if I weren't busy I'm sure I would be out looking for something to do - and my garden would be a jolly good place to start!

Lots of Love to you both and I will understand if I don't get a reply for months and months but please don't cross me off your Christmas card list...

Vicky

