

Happy Birthday Sis.

Well it has been a while again since there was a newsletter as I am getting told. Some of you would have heard some of my news but not all so am doing an update for all.

We have been back from Atherton since February. When I got back I found that I had been away for too long and so was off the casual list at Toowoomba Base. I had to reapply for a casual job there. However when I mentioned that I was interested in rural contracts I was promptly offered a position at Taroom for 6 weeks. (Taroom was 4hrs NW of Toowoomba) After the 6 weeks there I went to Oakey for 4 weeks ( which is only 20 min from Toowoomba) and then to Inglewood for two weeks. (Inglewood was 1.5 hrs W of Toowoomba). Then I was back to ED at Toowoomba. Am still there on a rollover contract. Each month have to wait to see if still on the roster. Have started doing some casual shifts in other wards again which I have enjoyed. (Have already got sick of the politics and crap in ED at Toowoomba. Is also difficult to go back to working under the restrictions there after working in smaller areas and having a much greater scope of work.)

In April I popped back to NZ for 10 days for a flying visit. TJ is doing well and was pulling herself up and taking a few steps then but is walking now. She has still got the red hair and chubby cheeks. Quite a placid little girl unlike her mother. ha ha. Jess has got the house looking great and while I was there we put winnie the poo curtains in TJ's bedroom. Jess has lost a lot of weight and looks amazing.

Will is now working at a Butcher shop in NP rather than the meatworks. He is working round the back involved with preparation of small goods. He is learning lots of new skills. He is still living in the caravan at Dad's and working on his cars. He is busy.

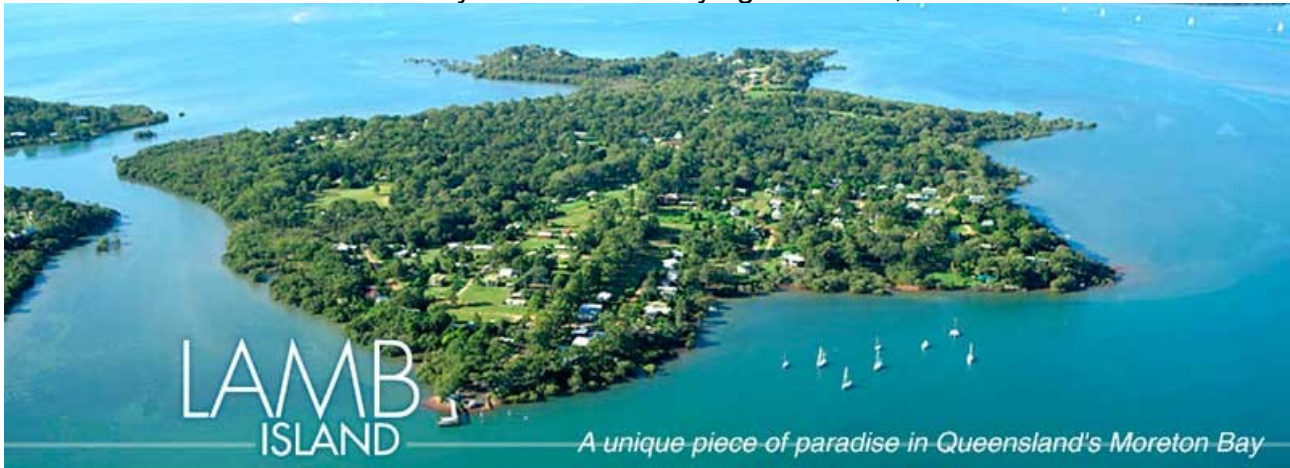
Tom is doing well. He went to see specialist in Brisbane in Feb for check up. They were pleased with his progress and all going well. He goes back in September for a final check up. He is back working regularly and specialising in the wallpapering as there are only two wallpappers in Toowoomba. It has being a bit quieter here with the price of petrol and general price increases meaning people spending less. (Petrol still cheaper than NZ though). Tom still has work to do out at Gowrie Mountain Winery. Was working there before we went to Atherton. Next job there is wallpapering the ceilings in the bedrooms. Using anaglypta paper, which is a paper that is painted over.

(While I am writing this CP [the handreared conure] is sitting on Tom's coffee cup sipping coffee.....LMAO. Tom will be getting another coffee. Now have a manic bird!!!! )

The finished ceilings look like a featured plastered ceiling /pressed metal ceilings. Very effective.

Yes we still have our birds. Have the two green cheeked conures. CP and Chewy. CP was hand reared and so quite ineteractive. Loves removing earrings and picking off freckles off skin....The others are 3 Scaly Breasted Lorikeets. They are a native bird. We found the original one on the side of the road and since then have brought another pair. We can't tell them apart so they are just called the scalies. We have them in two cages to avoid territorial disputes. They get flying time most mornings before Tom goes to work, in the back porch. To get them back into their cages we feed them. Actually works well.

We have mentioned to some of you about our buying an Island, Well here it is..



We have been looking at sections on Lamb Island for about 2-3 months and put an offer on a couple but not being able to reach agreement yet. Lamb Island is one of three Islands off Brisbane in Moreton Bay. The Islands are between Brisbane and Stadbrooke Island. The others are Russell and Macleay Islands. We have visited all three but like Lamb the most so are wanting to buy there. It is a 20 min ferry ride or 30 min barge ride to take car over. There are sections available for 65,000 on the Island up to 250,000.00 for a sea frontage. (Obviously not in our price range.) The Island is mainly surrounded by mud flats with areas where you can get boat access to go swimming or kayaking. We have been out to stay three times now and met a few of the locals. There is a shop and a bowls social club on Lamb. They also have an Ambulance and a helipad for emergencies. No cops are based on the Island. Permanent population there is about 200. (The Bowls club is the local hotel with meals provided)

We have met some really nice people there. Quite a range of characters and backgrounds. The couple we spend their most time with are an Aussie girl and her Scottish/ Canadian banjo playing partner. He went to Vancouver when he was 8 and lived there for years. They met in a pub in Vancouver. He was playing in the band there. Now have a home on Lamb. Susie works in Brisbane for the Australian Tax Dept. Brian is a Tiler/ come fisherman. Most of the other couples we have met earn salary's significantly higher than ours but live on Lamb for the lifestyle. They are also into teeshirts and tracksuits thank goodness. The bowls club is the hub of the Island Community. (Tom fits right in.) Also met a young Kiwi guy who was born in Aussie but family in NZ from Ruatoria. He has a house on the island as well.

Tom's house at Wyreema has been rented out, and the tenants were due to renew their rental agreement this month. We had contacted a mortgage broker to refinance the Wyreema house to buy our section on Lamb, so when the tenants found out they expressed an interest in buying the house. Tom now has a contract on the Wyreema house and are waiting to see if that goes through. If the house sells then we will buy another cheap house in Toowoomba as a rental and buy a superior section on Lamb

Our other news is that we have finally made a decision about travelling. Tom was debating about whether to stay in Toowoomba and employ some staff or to go roving with me. He has finally made a decision and we will go wandering. We are going to take the bus from the backyard to the Island to use as a base until we can afford to build there, I will rent out my house.

So the plan now is to have my house painted and rented by Nov and I will get a nursing contract and away we go. At this stage am planning to go to NSW for first contract. We will take two vehicles and use accomdation provided through the agency. We will use Lamb Island as our base bewteen jobs or whenever. Tom will look for painting work or else do some driving jobs. I hope to stay in NSW area for about 6mths and then head to north Qld again for the winter. The first trip to NSW will be only about 1,000 km's but to go north will be 3 to 4,000 km's.

As for now we are starting to pack up the house and have made a list of things to work through before we go. The change over date for the house sale and section purchase won't be till early Sept to avoid penalty fees with Tom's mortgage. We still have Tim's (Tom's son) stuff with us although he is pretty much living with his girlfriend so need to get his things removed, he also has a boat in the backyard.

I was hoping to go and see Dawn in the USA in November this year but that obviously won't be happening again... Sorry Dawn.

Well that brings you up to date with us.

Know that winter in NZ has being nasty but hope everyone is keeping warm and well. Thanks for your jokes and emails.

Jenni and Tom