

2013



for Rhys, Allison and Owen

At Cockatrice Farm

Hello and season's greetings to everybody. We missed last year's message so here's a couple of years of notes.

The blog at www.cockatricefarm.com.au has just about ceased, we're sorry.

Generally

We're all OK, and doing the same things we always did, just a bit more intensely.

Allison

At Christmas 2011, Allison was working as a trainer teaching people (professors to rural women) to train other people over the internet.

That continued until June 2012, when the company she worked for, and the software company which produced the training tool, both got taken over. When the dust settled, the job had disappeared and Allison was keen for a break.

By Christmas 2013, Allison is now ready for a new job, but has been putting it off because we always seem to have some new big event we're running. So she's really going to find one in the new year - at least once we're over the national medieval event in January...

Ally has been enjoying improving her skills in medieval costuming. Here's a recent effort.



Rhys

Rhys is still doing contract work for the government, but there was a period with a budget crisis where they

ceased employing contractors for about a year - work was very patchy at that time.

Since June 2013, Rhys has been the Project Manager for several projects acquiring simulators for the Navy. This looks like it might go on for a while, and is keeping him really busy.



Owen

Owen is now 14 years old. He's doing very well at school, but this term he decided to change from his small Steiner school in Canberra to a government school - and it seems to be working out well for him.



Grandchildren

Dea is now five, and Alex two.

Dea's going to start school soon. He can spell "Transformer" and "Portal", but we don't think he can spell "door". He's extremely articulate, and always keen to play with "the Woofies"

His brother Alex is more placid and not so communicative. Mostly he just signals and D converts it all to English. Alex loves helping his grandmother with cooking. He is also keen on the animals and loves to help 'feed up'.



Medieval Things

Our local medieval club has continued to grow. We've run a variety of events. Our big effort is the Rowany Festival over Easter each year, where we live and cook mediievally for the whole of Easter.

The SCA has four "kingdom" events which rotate around Australia and New Zealand. Nobody bid for the event in January 2014, so the Seneschal of the Kingdom twisted our arms behind our backs and we agreed to run it.

This is exactly the same story as in 2010. The difference this time is that instead of using the glorious Cathedral, we're running the event in a disused mental asylum. Just for the change.

We've spent months preparing gorgeous tapestries, and now six weeks out the incoming King has asked us to change the theme to Ancient Greece.

And we're doing it. So we certainly haven't got any saner in the intervening years.

Goulburn Club

Our 2011 newsletter mentioned that Rhys had become a volunteer barman at the Goulburn Club, which was once the gentlemen's club for the town but which had become a rather funky (in many senses) community club.

Soon after that newsletter, the Club's committee resigned en masse and left a huge mess. One of the past Presidents prevailed on Rhys to step up, initially as Vice-President and then twice elected as President.

The building dates from 1840, and in places looked every bit of that. We've been repairing holes in ceilings, casting our own cornice, repairing ornate plasterwork and paint. When we say "we", that includes Rhys, Allison and Owen, and heaps of wwoofers.

The place is now looking the best it has for many years, and the Club has had two record years of profits. We're replacing furniture, building new loos, and replacing a lot of electrics (turns out there is no earth!)

Recently we had a "Summer of Love" hippie event there, and a Jazz Festival kicks off straight after Christmas. Then a Blues Festival in February, a Gatsby event in March, and the Goblin King's Ball maybe in May.

Animals

We still have Cara the dog, and after a nasty fox attack we got Ginger the part-dingo. No problems since.

We still have Twurtle and Brulee the cats. They are enormous from eating bunnies.

We have a number of peacocks, including Arthur the white peacock who is now magnificent. We have a couple of peachicks this year, and some more eggs yet to hatch.

We haven't had a lot of luck with ducks this year, but we have plenty of new geese. Not a lot of chickens this year, but Allison's been getting good prices for them at the poultry club auctions.

We did some medieval training with the horses last year, but nothing so far this year - just too busy. Gawaine the mostly-clydesdale is still adorable, his mum Domino is still anti-social (but a bit less so), and Paulie is a bit aloof but will come for a pat. Little Jasmine now lives at Jan's farm (she got too fat at ours).

We still have a couple of Jan's horses that visitors may remember - smootchy Chad, and pesky Doc.