



Adventure With Andrew November 2013

“I've never seen sky this blue before!”

Chris Ramsbottom, on his first day in South Africa

Rest - “You don't have a real job,” someone once said to me. Initially I didn't agree with them, but returning from 2 months of leave and as I have had time to rest, reflect, and think and pray and dream I now know I don't have a real job, I have a calling. The day it just becomes a job is the day it is time for me to move on.

So I have returned to work having had a really good break and given my colleagues a break from me too (see final post). It was wonderful to return to South Africa to see family and to be reminded by Chris (see quote above) how beautiful a place Africa is.



What I do - My first week of leave I spent doing the cleaning at NZ Fashion Week (NZFW), with Gill helping to finish the job each evening. This is the ninth year that we have done the job. Although it wasn't any easier than previous years, it was great to again have a world class venue in the Auckland Viaduct Events Centre to clean and to renew contact with the usual crew that assembles each year to run the event. I was also interviewed about my work at NZFW by the Sunday Star Times and it was really good to have Scripture Union mentioned in the article too. Within a few days of Fashion Week the boys and I were on a plane to the other side the world.

Family - It was wonderful to be with my Mom and Dad, and brother and sister and their families and to catch up with friends. My parents loved spending time with their two youngest grandchildren, although I think the boys exuberant energy was at times overwhelming. The boys loved travelling around to various places including the Addo Elephant Park (pictured right), Uitenhage where I grew up and J-Bay the best surf spot in the world. Thomas wanted to see a mole after he saw the mole mounds on the lawn, and both boys wanted to see a snake, but neither happened. They did see elephants, lots of them, warthogs, zebra, ostrich, buffalo, and rhino, to name a few.



Highlight - A number of people have asked what the highlight of my trip back to South Africa was. Seeing my family was the obvious highlight, BUT climbing Table Mountain on an absolutely perfect spring day in Africa would be at the top of the list. My brother was out guide for the day, although it was the first time that he had walked up that route too. We managed the “climb” in two hours then spent a few hours enjoying the stunning vies from the top which included Robben Island in Table Bay and the Cape Mountains covered in snow.

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Thank you for being a part of my support team.
 Your prayers, encouragement and support are greatly appreciated.
Andrew

Thomas

I was so glad that we had our own TV screen for our trip back to South Africa, and I think Dad was too. I loved seeing my granny and grandpa. Granny taught me how to knit and Chris and I made a braai [South African BBQ] with Grandpa. I loved going to new places and meeting new people. It was also great to see some of the places that my dad grew up in and to meet some of his friends. I loved the tour of the VW factory, which is in the town that Dad grew up in. We also ate lots of yummy South Africa food and learned to use a catapult. Meeting my cousins was so cool.



Chris - Who do you think looks cuter, me or the monkey? We had so much fun feeding and playing with these monkeys. I loved going to beach in Port Elizabeth where my mum grew up. We also got to see penguins and snakes, but not in the wild. I loved the blue sky in South Africa and exploring so many new places. Near King Williams Town, where my aunt lives, we went to a game park where we saw hippos. The town is also the resting place of the world famous Huberta the Hippo. In Somerset West, where my uncle lives, we loved watch squirrels running about in the trees and gardens, as well as guinea fowl.

James

I have 8 Weet-Bix every morning for breakfast. This is to prepare me for my days of multiple sports. After our junior underwater hockey side won silver medals, much to our surprise and others, at the national championships, I was chosen to train with the under 18 Auckland side. I have have had to do some extra training to try and improve my fitness, but I don't think I will make the A side. Either way I will be going to the National Under Water Hockey Championships at the end of the month in Wellington. I can't wait.



Home

Gill was really glad to have her two youngest sons home again after a month of being away, although the sudden increase in energy and noise was a shock after a month of relative quiet.

We attended James' sport awards evening at his school at which he received the best Junior rugby and athletics awards. Gill, with many others, was acknowledged for her involvement as a manger of two sports sides. So life in the Ramsbottom home is back to it;s usual busyness with multiple sports being participated in by each of the boys.

Bubble Wrap - I expected to arrive back after 2 months of leave to a work space that had been redecorated by my colleagues, and I was right. They bible wrapped most of my desk and chair. What I didn't expect, and it was a very pleasant surprise, were the person notes, anecdotes and encouragement from friends and colleagues, both past and present. As I slowly unwrapped my desk to took time to read each note and look at each picture. I was humbled by what people had to say but especially as I was reminded of what God has done through my life even the weaknesses. I look forward to the future continuing in His service through the highs and lows.



Prayer Diary

Tue 12 Nov - Summer Adventure Begins prayer evening Join us as we pray for camps that will taking place in the Auckland region over the Summer holidays.

Thu 12 Dec - School Assembly on the Christmas Story at Awhitu District School. Please pray for me as I prepare for this and that God will speak through what I do on the day.

SUPAkidz Camps Prayer

Please pray as we recruit teams for our SUPAkidz camps in January 2014 in Wellington and Auckland. We already have campers registering.

Pray that churches will see this a real opportunity to allow children to explore who God is in a safe and fun place. And great place to people to share their faith with children.