

Goss

November 7, 2003

Farah's Picnic

By Estelle

On Saturday, Scarlett was lying on Farrah like she was a pickle sandwich. 'She was like "eee" and I was like "ouch",' said Farrah.

Then Farrah decided we should go on a picnic for Family Fun Day. It was a beautiful day, with the temperature set to hit 25°.

Farah got busy organising. She found plastic plates and cups, paper napkins and refresher towelettes; but what she really wanted to use was the picnic bag that Auntie Tania had given us for Christmas one year.

She dressed in nice summery picnic clothes, and put on her sunscreen and a hat.

Next she made an 'F.D.O.F.F.D.' - also known as *Farah's Diary of Family Fun Day*; stapled in the middle with 14 pages, and a pencil attached for convenience.

Suddenly:

'I found the picnic bag in the old Eskimo!'

she squealed delightedly.

Then she agonised over which sized ice bricks to pack; because she thought the refresher towels would be much nicer cold, but she didn't want them frozen.

Later, Greg took her to buy some snacks for the picnic. They bought corn chips, potato crisps and cheese rings. They bought bananas and mangoes and strawberries and watermelon and pineapple. They even bought some iced tea. What a feast!

When they had packed everything into the esky; they set off for John Knight Memorial Park.

It was a perfect park day. The sun glittered on the lake, and sparkled through the trees; lighting the fresh, young leaves like green paper lanterns.

Farah couldn't wait to go fishing with her homemade fishing rod; made from an old stick, a paintbrush and curling ribbon. For some reason the fish just didn't seem to be biting – not even a nibble!

Estelle and Greg basked in the sweet tranquility of the singing birds and the falling water.

In the playground, Farrah and Scarlett rocked and slid and whirled and twirled. 'Don't fall up into the sky,' shouted Greg helpfully. 'Don't fall over the fence.'

Farah liked the pineapple best of all. 'Mmmmm. Sulpernative!' she exclaimed.





The Family This Week

Estelle:

On Wednesday, the family went to dinner at Chris and Deborah Horscroft's home. Chris and Deb have recently added little Charlotte Annabelle to their family, and will be heading to America for a few months at the end of November with Chris' work.

They have kindly and bravely decided to loan Greg their car in their absence. Fortunately, his driving record is pretty good. Even more fortunately, the car is insured.

Deborah made a delicious shepherd's pie; one of Estelle's favourite meals in the whole world! There was a basket of bread rolls on the table, which were wonderful dipped in olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Greg enjoyed a beer with Chris, and the rest drank wine or apple cider. Carrot cake and ice-cream were served for dessert; with a nice, hot pot of tea.

Best of all, we got to meet baby Charlotte; who was just delightful! She was obviously enjoying the cadences of the adult conversation and laughter. We took her a new pink dress (*more* pink!) and a little toy for her big brother Tim. Mum and Dad got flowers and chocolates. Estelle got a very nice 40th birthday present.

It was a lovely, warm, mellow evening.

Greg:

On Friday, Greg sat for the PRINCE2 Foundation Exam. It was a fabulous day in a lovely setting: the beautifully restored 1920's Brassey Hotel in Barton near Parliament House.

Tanner James, the company conducting the examination, had also been running a four-and-a-half-day intensive course. This provided preparation for the exam, and included a study of possible exam questions.

Greg turned up mid afternoon, greeted the instructor and joined the course in time for the exam.

It was a one hour, closed book exam with a pass mark of 50%. Greg completed the exam in half an hour and went into the back garden for coffee; along with one other student, who later turned out to be doing her Masters in Project Management. Some of the remaining students seemed concerned about their progress, and the instructor had to reassure the course that there was still plenty of time left.

Whilst the others continued, the instructor marked the completed papers and announced that they had both passed. He added that Greg's score was a "very solid" result.

Greg scored 68/75 (91%). The dux of a previous course had managed to score 53/75 (71%).

Judging from a later conversation with the bristling Tanner James office staff; it seems likely that the dux of this course wasn't even on the course!

Farrah:



On Saturday, Farrah picked Estelle a beautiful yellow rose from the garden because *'roses are the flower of love'* and put it in a little crystal vase with some jasmine. Everyone knows how Estelle *loves* flowers!

Then she took Jessie for a walk with her grown-up friend Gan (pronounced *Jen*) from 27 Maynard St, and her dog Sooky.

On Friday, Burgmann Anglican School celebrated Foundation Day; which is held each year to celebrate the laying of the school's Foundation Stone in 1998. The theme of this year's performance was *'a celebration of the amazing and diverse world that our God has created.'*

The event was held on the school 'Common'. Parents were invited to bring rugs, folding chairs and a picnic dinner to eat during the performances. They were also requested to bring a plate of supper to share afterwards. Tea, coffee and cordial were provided by the school.

At 5:30pm, Greg rang up and ordered pizzas and lemonade for us to take along. The other end said, 'Sydney-Smith, right?' and told Greg they'd be ready in 15 minutes.

Greg rocked up to collect his two pizzas, and got handed two free extras. We have a good relationship with the local Dominoes pizza shop. We have supported them since they opened and throughout *Pizza Wars* with the unscrupulous newly-arrived multinational Pizza Hut next door.

Pizza Hut are deliberately and systematically trying to drive this locally owned and operated franchise out of business by undercutting the cost of pizzas until the competition is removed; at which point they will have a monopoly, and can hike up the prices as much they like.

Greg often pays full price or rounds the money upwards to show his support for this Little Aussie Battler, so he is quite well-known at Dominoes.



Estelle and Greg were really impressed with the calibre of the performance this year. One year early on; they had been forced to sit through a most excruciatingly boring evening that they still shudder to recall.

This presentation was colourful and vibrant; as guests were taken by *Tardis* to various times and places around this beautiful, diverse world. Greg especially liked the 'Ttardis' and the Doctor Who music. Estelle loved the atmosphere, and the sense of really being transported to other cultures.

Year 2 were performing the *Banana Boat Song* and *Lazy Coconut Tree*. Farrah's costume was a grass skirt and bikini. 'Day-o, day-ay-ay-o' sang the boys. 'Daylight come and me wanna go home,' sang the girls. 'Work all night till the morning come,' (sic) sang Jay. 'Stack bananas till the morning come,' sang Farrah, in a perfect rendition of her solo. Greg and Estelle were so proud!



Scarlett:

On Monday, Scarlett did some work on the class computer. The computer has been switch-adapted; enabling Scarlett to activate the most annoying computer program in software history. 'Mares-eat-oats-and-does-eat-oats-and-little-lambs-eat-ivy,' squawked the computer whilst flashing orange and puce.

Unfortunately, the librarians who had been successfully tortured last Wednesday had managed to escape this week's session.

On Tuesday, Kelly from Wildcare came to visit Scarlett's school with Jaffa the blue-tongued lizard and Minty the Bearded Dragon. Kelly made them look positively cuddly! Scarlett was so excited she fell off her bike. She just loved those lizards. They were very stroked and patted.

Jaffa had been attacked by a dog when Wildcare found her. Now they keep her for school visits, and Jaffa is living the good life. When Jaffa wants to go really fast she can lift her legs off the ground and slither like a snake. Estelle kept well away from Jaffa and Minty. They are very nice lizards; but they *are* reptiles, after all.

On Thursday, Estelle took Scarlett into school for the physio appointment to get her fitted for a Kaye Walker. Scarlett was doing really well, once she got the hang of it. The sales reps also tried her in an Aveda model, which looked like a little car. Although it looked very funky; we have learned that if Scarlett is given anything that can possibly be sat on, she will simply relax and take the load off. So much for the 'brmmm car'.

Jill Krieg, the physiotherapist is also going to try to arrange an appointment with the Gator Walker representatives. The Gator Walker would be cheaper at \$915, and comes in powdered metal colours of electric blue or fluorescent yellow. The Kaye Walker is \$1318, and would possibly allow for more growth. To be continued....

Estelle's Editorial

The pace of life really seems to pick up at this time of year. It's almost like finding yourself whitewater rafting and wondering how you could possibly have gotten yourself into such a situation. The best you can do is hold on for dear life and ride with it.

On Thursday night, we found ourselves in a position where Farrah hadn't done *any* of her homework for the week. We managed to do the maths worksheet, write out and learn the spelling words, fill out the reading log, and put our words into sentences. But there was still *news*.

Every second week Farrah has to present a set news topic to the class. This time the topic was *Healthy Party Food*. We had to find a recipe and present it to the class. Fortunately we had already found a recipe for *Fruit Buttons*; containing fruit, nuts, coconut and condensed milk, with a cherry on top. It was easily typed up and printed out for school.

Unfortunately, Farrah had promised Mrs Heyward we would bring in some samples of the real thing, so I found myself frantically baking Fruit Buttons before school next morning.

At least the kids loved them, and Farrah felt special.



Upcoming Events

- Sat 15 Nov 4:00pm – 6:00pm – Farrah to attend Taylor Eggleton's Disco Party
- Mon 17 Nov – F.A.R.M. visit at Scarlett's school
- Fri 21 Nov 7:30pm – 9:00pm – Farrah to attend the School Disco
- Sat 22 Nov 1:00pm – Farrah to attend Callum Jones' Bowling Birthday Party
- Sun 23 Nov 1:00pm – Ronald McDonald's Magic Show at McDonalds Charnwood
- Sat 29 Nov 7:30pm – Jenny Shaw's 40th birthday party
- Tue 2 Dec 4:40 pm – 6:00pm – Farrah to attend Amy Paterson's Kidzone Disco Party
- Wed 3 Dec 10:30am – 12:30pm – Scarlett to perform with Cranleigh Lunchtime Music Group at the National Museum of Australia art launch
- Sat 6 Dec 10:30am – 2:00pm – Scarlett to attend Special Children's Christmas Party
- Mon 8 Dec 1:00pm – 4:30pm – Greg to sit PRINCE2 Practitioners Exam
- Wed 11 Dec – Carols Night at Farrah's school
- Fri 12 Dec 4:00pm – 7:00pm – Farewell for Mike Sainsbery in the Sensory Garden
- Mon 15 Dec – Christmas Carol evening at Cranleigh School
- Wed 17 Dec – Santa to arrive at Cranleigh
- Wed 17 Dec – Graduation Ceremony at Cranleigh
- Fri 19 Dec 2:30pm – 4:00pm – Governor General's Christmas Party at Government House
- Tue 23 Dec – Kristin's 21st birthday
- Tue 23 Dec – Estelle and Greg to rendezvous with former dance teacher Jason and partner Zoë from Brisbane
- Wed 24 Dec – Christmas Eve
- Thu 25 Dec – Christmas Day

The Last Word

By Greg

It was a real buzz to have done so well on the PRINCE2 exam. It was nice to know that I still had my ability to study something deeply and excel in an exam. I really enjoyed that feeling in my RMIT days, and it has been a long time. I'm really pleased to be certified in the PRINCE2 project management methodology, as this adds credibility to my resume. It's been a difficult week studying for this, and will be even more so with the next exam early in December.

The family was invited to dinner on Wednesday night at Chris and Deborah's place, and this proved to be a very pleasant and relaxing evening. There is nothing nicer than taking some time out with good people.

Despite all the chaos of modern life; it really is the people that matter.



Favourite websites:

- www.creativememories.com.au
- wildcare.webone.com.au
- www.users.bigpond.com/scarlet.biro/
- www.kayeproducts.com
- www.snugseat.com
- www.guitartrek.net