

Groningen, October 14, 2004

Dear friends,

Although it has been a long time since we last wrote, we have not been kidnapped or disappeared in some far off land unbeknownst to anyone... unless of course wandering off into the beautiful beech forests of The Netherlands counts..!

The odometer on our English car showed that the last four months have been rather nomadic ones for us: 5000 miles (yes, miles, not kilometers, but equal to 8000 km) since the end of May! and the car couldn't count the distances travelled by boat, train and plane!!

In the last week of June we finished our time at All Nations Christian College in a blaze of triumph and a flood of tears - so pleased to have persevered in our studies to each earn a Bachelors of Arts (Honours) in Biblical and Intercultural studies but sad to be leaving the special community and good friends that were the core of our lives for the last two years (for Peter) and three years (for Kelly).

July we spent tying up loose ends in the UK: road trips to visit friends to say goodbye and a frenzy of cleaning our apartment and packing the majority of our belongings to ship to Canada. We, however, took our heavily-laden car on a boat across the North Sea to The Netherlands with the prospect of catching up with Peter's friends and family.

August was a month of delightful family holidays. To start with, we had two weeks in Sweden with Peter's father and his wife at their holiday house, also with Peter's two sisters and their families. Our travelling highlights were sailing up the Oslo fjord, enjoying the statues in Vigeland Park in Oslo depicting people in different stages of life, camping in the 'wild' in our new tent (except for the half-hour long battle to remove the many dozens of tiny ticks we found crawling up our legs and arms!) Our days in Sweden were both restful and active; they included swimming in and rowing on the local lake, eating wild blueberries as we hiked through the forests, cosy dinners on the

veranda and various games with the children, like playing house under the table! Following this holiday time, we stayed for a week in a renovated barn in Drenthe, a rural Dutch province, with Peter's mother and her partner along with Peter's brother and sister and their families. Peter was a big hit with his eight-year-old nephew... it had something to do with computers and games! Kelly was a favourite with the nieces and was in demand to sit beside at the table and to play with - barbies, playmobile and friendship bracelets. Apart from playing, we also picked blackberries, cycled through the fields and along the canals, visited an open-air museum and an old-fashioned village, and ate real Dutch pancakes at a local cafe. It was great to catch up with the family and Kelly's great excitement was that she could speak enough Dutch to play with the children and understand basic group conversation.

August newsflash: we celebrated our first wedding anniversary and are more in love than ever! And we are getting to know each other better and are learning how to live together. It is both an art and a science... but fun!!

September was a month of eclectic holidays: two weeks house-sitting in Amsterdam, a quick visit to England for a wedding and to sell our car, a week in Switzerland to see some college friends (we managed to fit in a mountain hike too!) and a week of retreat in a cottage in the Gelderland (NL) forests. Given all the weeks of hellos and goodbyes in rapid succession, we really appreciated the week of time being neither guests nor hosts, to sit still and set aside the daily pressures, to think and pray about who we are and how we want to express that among the wider community in the things we do in the future. On the practical side, we booked plane tickets to Vancouver for November 3!

With this leave-taking looming, October is for us a more settled month, based in Groningen (Peter's hometown in the North of The Netherlands) at Peter's mum's house. We are focussing on connecting with friends here and preparing for our move. Kelly continues to be enchanted by the mix of old and new coexisting side by side in Europe - the horse drawn carriage beside the tractor, the 14th century cloister now made into tasteful apartments, the small boy walking along in his father's wooden clogs carrying the latest

fad-game, the jeans-clad workmen thatching a cottage in traditional style. Although modern and up to date, life in the 'old world' definitely has a different flavour from life in the 'new world.' Peter will have his turn for experiencing the difference in the coming months!

As we currently see the coming months, they will include staying with Kelly's parents upon our arrival in Vancouver while we find our feet. We are looking forward to this time spent under the same roof with them and with Kelly's brother Pete before his wedding in December. Eventually we hope to settle on our own for a while as we continue with the process of obtaining permanent residence for Peter in Canada, which requires that we stay in Canada for two years out of the next five. But lest you think that we have abandoned our overseas plans, we need to say that we are continuing to investigate and follow-up options for going to live and work in South-East Asia. Vancouver seems to be a good base from which to do this and to be involved in Asian communities before we get to Asia. We are aiming to find jobs to sustain us, which may seem like ordinary common sense to you, but which seems like a bit of a novelty to us who have not worked for two and half years (Peter) and three and a half years (Kelly)!! We are looking forward to reconnecting with Kelly's friends and becoming involved in her church, Granville Chapel, and in the community at large. It has been six years since Kelly has lived in Vancouver (!) and that was still in the single, student phase so she is aware that there will be some adjustments to make upon returning to the familiar, which has moved on, even as she has herself moved on in her own direction and now returns as a married, non-student. For Peter, this is a new country that he had not ever dreamed of living in before a year ago, so there will be some adjustments for him too. However, we are looking forward to ordinary, every day life in this new chapter in our lives. We don't quite know how it will look, but it seems to look interesting and challenging and fun too. We are hoping that with some constancy in our routine we will be better at corresponding but we daren't promise anything! We would love to hear from you too, when you find a moment. Our email address stays the same: peterkelly@passchier.net and if you want to check out some photos and other info concerning us, we are hoping to update our website this month: peterkelly.passchier.net

For those who want to pray for us:

we are thankful...

- ♦ *for a good ending to our time at All Nations and finishing our degrees*
- ♦ *for this time in The Netherlands to catch up and reconnect with church, friends and family*
- ♦ *for exciting prospects for the immediate future.*

we ask...

- ♦ *that we can arrange all that needs to be arranged for Peter to move to Canada*
- ♦ *that we can find appropriate jobs in Vancouver*
- ♦ *that we can adjust well to the new life situation*
- ♦ *that we would integrate well into the community in Vancouver.*

All best wishes, Peter & Kelly

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