

February 13 to 16

Paraparaumu and Wellington

February 13 Paraparaumu

There was light rain for much of the night and it was still falling at breakfast time. A little blue sky appeared and Valerie set off for a trip to Wanganui and I was able to do a load of washing and hang it on the line.

At about 11, I left the house, dodged the road works which were just starting outside, and set off into the sunshine.



Alongside the airport

I walked up the main road alongside the airport until I reached Bin Inn, where I stopped to buy ingredients for a batch of muesli. They have an amazing range of ingredients and it would be good to have something similar in the UK.



Bins full of everything

Suitably weighed down, I continued as far as Coastlands, one of the first big shopping malls in New Zealand but now a bit run down. It needs major investment in the near future. I completed a number of tasks at the bank, the Post Office, the Vodafone shop and so on, then caught the bus back to the beach.



The attractive part of Coastlands

I abandoned my shopping at the house and walked the short distance to the beachfront cafes. There I found a rather good lunch of fish, freekeh and Chardonnay. Research suggests that the benefits of the first two more than outweigh the evils of the third.



My introduction to freekeh

I made a brief foray onto the beach to take some photos, then returned to the house for a rest.



A crowded beach

Valerie returned in the late afternoon with Judith, the friend with whom she had been to Wanganui, and we decamped to the local Chinese restaurant. This had recently changed hands but the food was good, possible better than before. We returned home again and did little.

February 14 Paraparaumu

Overnight there was a loud cat fight. It appeared in the morning, however, that this had not involved Gen, the resident pussy cat, so I needn't have worried.



Garden centre café

A reasonably early start to take the car to the garage for a WOF (Warrant of Fitness). While this was being done, we crossed the road to the DIY warehouse café and had very decent coffees.



Not a bad coffee

We collected the car, bought some spices in a wonderful, Indian-owned, dairy, and returned home. The chicken for dinner was left to marinate in the spices.



We set off along the beach ...

We then set off along the beach and then along the road as the tide was too high, to Raumati. Two thirds of the way there, Meriam texted to arrange a meeting for a coffee. We met her, and I drank coffee whilst the ladies fussed over the baby.



... until the beach vanished under water



The road had some pretty colours



Gen wasn't amused

We hitched a lift home, had lunch and took Gen to the vet to be micro chipped. This proved to be a remarkably simple and apparently pain-free process, so we were home again very quickly. Valerie had a lie down while I re-packed and wrote my diary.

We had a quiet evening at home. I cooked dinner and did my chores.

February 15 Paraparaumu

An early morning occasioned by the arrival of the glass recycling truck. Very noisy! It was, however, warm and sunny so a good day was in the offing.

After breakfast, Valerie departed to work in the charity shop for the morning, leaving me to supervise the washing machine.



Also some natural ones



The path along the edge of the beach



The baby provided the entertainment

Around 10 o'clock, after hanging out the washing, I set off along the path which winds its way between the road and the beach and then transferred onto the road to Raumati, taking arty photos as I as I went. There are always lots of flowers along here even if the beach, itself, isn't that exciting.



Interesting flowers

Raumati Bowls Club was a hive of activity, with lots of games in progress on a bright and sunny but breezy day.



Busy day at the bowling green

I posted some cards to the UK in the box marked "Standard post. Don't post airmail in here!" Unfortunately, I only read the message after launching the cards into the box. Who knows if they will arrive!

Another kilometre up the road is the Arts & Crafts Centre, surrounded by some excellent trees. I looked at some very good paintings and continued on my way.



The Arts Centre has a lovely tree

The new path follows the Expressway for a while before following the river under the main road and pointing towards the Coastlands Mall.



The new footpath

I reached it after a walk of nearly seven kilometres, did some shopping and had a coffee and a glass of water, not to mention a smoked salmon roll. After all my exertions, I deserved one.

The supermarket supplied a couple of bottles of wine and, just before 13.00, I turned up at the charity shop to join Valerie for a ride home. I'd walked over eight kilometres so was feeling reasonably virtuous.

We had lunch, took Barbara & Terry to the airport - a five minute drive - and returned home for an afternoon's rest.



A good Thai

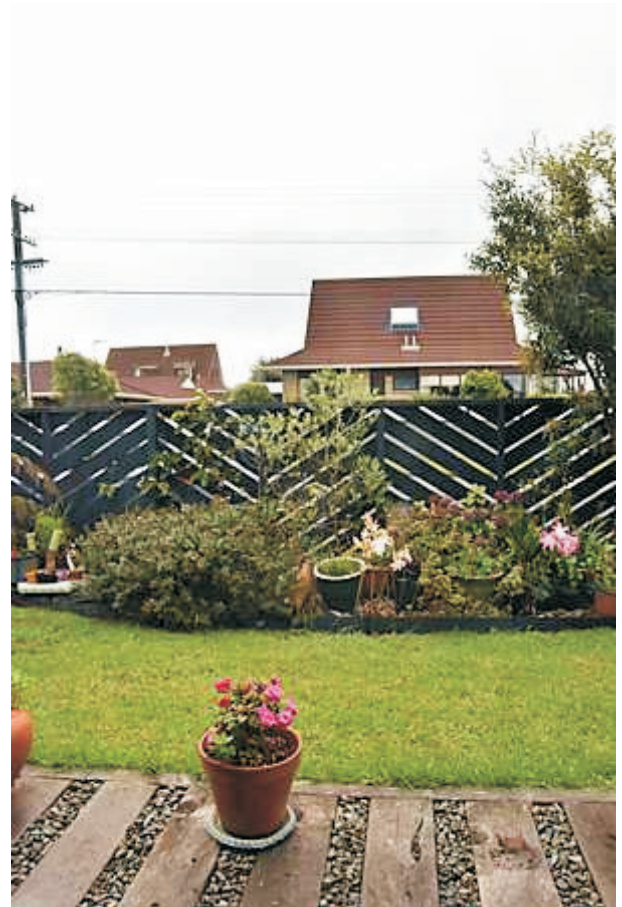
In the evening, we went to the local Thai restaurant for an excellent dinner. The food there is very good.



Interesting sky at night

February 16 Paraparaumu and Wellington

A quiet day. The plan had been for an early morning walk through the nikau palms to the viewing point. Overnight rain continuing into the morning put paid to that.



A dull and damp start

The second plan of the day was to catch the train into Porirua for some shopping. This we managed without problems, discovering that the rain in Kapiti hadn't reached Porirua. Once we had finished, we caught the train back again, collected some food from the supermarket and had lunch at home.



The train emerged from the gloom



Gen was comfortable

One of the reasons for visiting Porirua was to buy some material to cover the cushions on the new, Chinese, chairs that Valerie had bought. Unfortunately, it seemed that Gen considered the new covers to be superfluous and was perfectly happy with the bare foam.

I spent the afternoon organising my bag - for the umpteenth time. Valerie then ran me to the station, where I awaited the Wellington train. This arrived on time.

There was a short wait for the bus in Wellington but I arrived at Jane & Robert's less than two hours after leaving Valerie's.



A good Indian vege meal

We had a quiet evening, going to a local Indian for dinner and chatting. The rain which had been in evidence up the coast was not in evidence in the city.



Sunnier in Wellington than in Kapiti