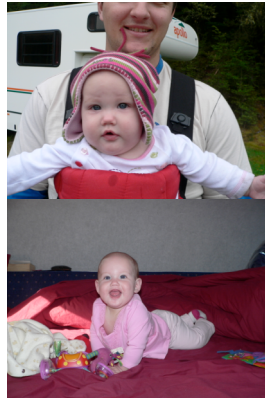


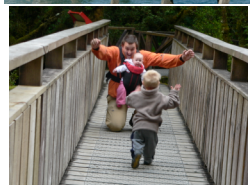
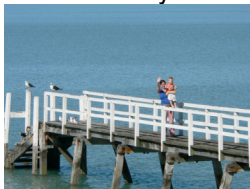
~Campbell Family News/Travel Updates 2007~

A busy year this year, with both the kids growing up quickly! I was asking myself what could go into the Xmas News this year and then looked at our photos and laughed, since we have been extremely busy with the house, garden and travelling. I guess our year started with getting over Christmas 2006, which we spent in Albany and are going again this year. It was an awesome trip and the kids did really well (being Thea's first big trip away from home).

Then after recovering from our Christmas trip, we needed to have another break, so we went to New Zealand for a couple of weeks. The flights went really well with Thomas and Thea, and after flying into Christchurch, we hired a six-berth mobile home/camper monstrous metal machine! It was huge!!! We did a loop from Christchurch through Lewis Pass to the coast and back across the island through Arthur's Pass. We spent Thomas' 2nd birthday walking in the foothills of alpine country! It was beautiful, which is a given with New Zealand, of course.



We then flew down to Queenstown and stayed at St Mortiz Grand Mecure, which was lovely. We spent the days lounging around, messing around in the Remarkables, going to Lord of the Rings sights, Arrowtown and having fun on the Luge. The highlight was a mad 13-hour day trip to Milford Sound. It was incredibly beautiful and the pictures certainly did NOT do it justice.



Home again to the grind with work, playgroup, general bits and pieces. I was working at a café doing a couple of night shifts a week for most of the year, but had some differences of opinion regarding safety of workers in the kitchen (as in, I thought it was a good idea, and the boss did not) so I resigned in September-ish.

Easter rolled round and we had a nice family gathering and then scooted up to Lake Inoon (near Eneabba) for a bit of 4-wheel-driving and caving and fun stuff like that. I even drove while we were 4WDing, and Tristan didn't have a heart attack, so I couldn't have been that bad!



Easter was followed by camping trips with our trailer, lots of work on our garden and house – well some painting mostly and yes, Tristan is still working his fingers to the bone at Geoforce. We've re-planted most of the garden with natives, installed a (very dodgy!) home-made greywater system and are getting regular swarms of native bees in the garden, as well as heaps of lizards and our second generation family of magpies.



August proved a busy month with a trip to Victoria; a few days in Melbourne, some time in Neerim Junction with Rob and Tracel and then a flying visit to the Dandenong Ranges on the way home again. Thanks for the hospitality Victorian Gibsons! It was great to have a nice relaxing holiday, rather than our crazy ones. We introduced the kids to the snow at Mt Baw Baw and they loved it! Especially eating it.

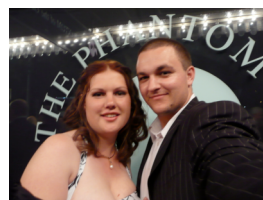


Then we got home and I got stuck in high gear organizing Thea's 1st birthday party. We figured a big bash every second year for the kids, so next year it is Thomas' turn. Means only one crazy party a year! It was a great success, everyone had fun (I hope) and Thea looked like an angel – not in pink! *gasp*



More trailer trips and then our wedding anniversary, number 4, rocked round. Tristan whisked me off to Melbourne for the weekend, without the kids (thanks Wendy, Jeanette and Rob!) and we had a lovely time. We shopped, walked, ate, browsed at our own leisure. Then in the evening, after having my hair and makeup done, we went and saw *The Phantom of the Opera*. Anthony Warlow played The Phantom and he was amazing. He almost blew the theatre away – literally. Tristan loved it – thank goodness, since I have been talking it up for almost 6 years! And said he would see it again the next day if we could have got tickets anywhere!

And all of this was a surprise!



November has proven to be a long month with Tristan being away on a longer field trip. Thomas did NOT enjoy having Daddy away. When Tristan got back he had to go straight into a conference for work, where he actually presented! ASEG is a national geophysical conference and Tristan's presentation was very well received, by a number of people in the field who Tristan had never met, so we are REALLY proud of him.

We had a lovely trip to Gracetown for a week at the beginning of December, doing some 4WD driving, Whale Watching – we saw Blue Whales! Caving, and lots of fun times!



After we got back from that trip, the next morning, Tristan called me and said, let's go to Kalgoorlie for the week on Sunday. He had an unscheduled field trip that was going to be based in Kal and so we ended up going along and bumming around Kalgoorlie for the week as well. It was good fun, the kids travelled supa-well, the kids LOVED seeing all the trucks and chilling out at the pool and park was great fun. We also saw Rob's (Tris' dad) old home that he used to live in when he was a kid!



Now the work Christmas function, family Christmas, then Albany here we come! We are going to be only spending a week and a half at home in December. Crazy! Crazy!

We are currently in the process of buying a small property just outside of Tammin. It's about 37 acres with some revegetation, some salinity/waterlogging off Great Eastern Highway about a km. A great little getaway close to Perth to camp and revegetate. We are both really keen to do some reveg work in the wheatbelt, especially since Tristan has done so much work out that way. Plus the kids love running riot without fences and cars and other worries.



Hope this finds you well and happy. Have a great Christmas and a riotous New Year!

Love to all

Tristan, Blaine, Thomas and Alythea.

PS: More photos at www.flickr.com/photos/sillydaddy, which you can view without a password or login, etc.