

# The Ekeren Files

Volume 23 – December 2010

## 'The big trip'

Anita and her dad went down under for two months. Read about their adventures further in this File.

Press Ctrl+leftmouseclick on: ['New Zealand revisited'](#)



## 'The getting in shape'

Anita: 10<sup>th</sup> year revalidation training but only during winter months. As soon as we change to summer time, then we start with biking twice a week about 33km

18<sup>th</sup> August: horse-riding. Some muscles we didn't know we had, hurt like hell!

Wouter: Nothing at all this year apart from the biking with Anita, which is hard work for her and relaxing for me. (must be my racing bike against her 10kg heavier city bike that makes the difference) As a result of doing not too much sport, the shape is not as good as it should be; not dramatically bad though.

## 'The Snow'

No sun in Ischgl this time. Very cold and bad visibility, so we keep to the prepared slopes and search the flanks with the least wind and the best snow. But a bad day skiing is still better than a good day at work and the quality of the snow was extremely good this year. Lew brought his 2 sons over for a week from the other side of the world. His lungs weren't so happy with the temperature change from +40°C in Papua to -20°C in Austria.

## 'The Diving'

Papua New Guinea : Blue lagoons, white beaches, palm trees, abundance of fish, untouched wrecks from the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war, a splendid diving guide : Jan Messerschmidt, aka 'Mad Dog'. Very nice and adventurous. Jan also takes us bushwalking and exploring the inland of PNG. Photos on <http://www.ontroerend-goed.be/austr-png-nz/index.html>

May and June are good months to go wreck hunting on the North Sea. We located the HMS Amphion,

the first warship of the Royal Navy that was sunk during WWI. There is a story to it as well: in the first days of WW1, a report came through to the Royal Navy that there was a big ship from where things were dropped in sea. HMS Amphion was sent to investigate and located the German minelayer 'Königin Louise', a converted liner. Amphion opened fire, sunk the 'Louise' and took the 16 survivors on board. On her way back to Dover, HMS Amphion ran through the minefield laid by the Louise, hit two mines and sunk...Diving the wreck, I found 2 ventilation gratings; just what I needed to cover a hole in the backdoor in the Ardennes.



### 'The working'

#### Part 1: the working in the Ardennes

The solar panels on the roof are catching too much shade from the pine trees in the garden. These are not the most beautiful trees and they throw a lot of shade in the garden as well. Our friend Christian, a professional tree-whisperer came and the trees were gone.

Victor, Leo, Wim, Maarten, Ria & Gilbert also came to give a big hand to clear all the branches and cut the stems.

Nice photos on facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=13151&id=100000543768912&l=c62791c644>

30-04: Another visit to the kitchen department of IKEA. We did a thorough make-over of the old kitchen; new doors, new cooker, new hood + more work than expected, but the result is very rewarding.

Another extreme make-over: the old bathroom which we already demolished last year. One wall is now covered with big slate tiles (45cmx90cmx2cm), the carpenter fitted an oak tablet for the washing basins and we made an appointment with a tile layer to place mosaic tiles in the shower, but he never showed up. So the finishing will be next year.

In 2010 Anita has spent 109 days in the Ardennes = an average of 9 days each month.

#### Part 2: the working at work

Anita: the business is seriously affected by the depression and so is Anita. But we will get through it.

Wouter: is still a happy fireman at BASF. They bought a nice toy to keep me happy: they took the biggest 6X6 Volvo truck they could find, fitted two massive jet engines on the back with 8000l/min

spray nozzles on top of them. It sounds like the take-off of a Boeing 747 (140dB) and throws a huge amount of water to a distance of 200m. We have to be able to manoeuvre through all sorts of terrain; I already bogged this 1.2 million euro monster down to its axles in the mud...twice...big fun!



#### Part 3: the working in the other houses

In the last 4 years, no big work was done in our rental apartments. Most of the plumbing was still old school with a lot of lead pipes. After 50 years they were totally worn so we had them replaced. During these works, we also replaced one of the disintegrating kitchenettes by an up to standards IKEA kitchen. As with a lot of things: It's always a lot more work than you expected. Hm, sounds like a déjà-vu...

One of the units was fitted with a sound insulating ceiling; expensive but very efficient.

### 'In Memoriam'

Eunice Messerschmidt and Frans, father of An, granddad of Roos.

### 'The Friends & the Family'



Staying in touch with fiends we do best by spending times in the Ardennes & eat together:

An, Roos, Maarten & Wim.  
Ria & Gilbert, Hanne & Eva

Very little visitors this year:

19<sup>th</sup> June: Jutti & Geert

30<sup>th</sup> June until 4<sup>th</sup> July: Pat & Margaret, Jos & Mariette in the Ardennes, with a visit to the Brewery in Achouffe.

4<sup>th</sup> July: the 'Tour de France' passing through Ekeren: nearly everybody took a drink and a chair to the side of the road, everybody chitchatting with each other and we even noticed the passing of the bikers (well if you were quick, because it only took a few seconds for the pack to pass)

7<sup>th</sup> August: An, Roos, Ankie & Els

18<sup>th</sup> September: Mia, Jill, Kai & Izzy camp in the

Ardennes

31<sup>st</sup> October: Chris, Luc, Hanne, Eva, Hazel & Pauline.

### 'The Cat'

Gaston is still on a diet but found other supplies of food in the neighbourhood; we nearly have to squeeze him in his transporting cage now because he is still expanding...

### 'The Team'

We will try to do more nice things together in 2011.

That's it for now!

Hugs & kisses from,

Anita, Wouter & Gaston

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# NEW ZEALAND REVISITED

(or the journey of a girl, her father  
and the husband)

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24<sup>th</sup> December, in the evening we set off for the big 8 weeks travels.

On X-mas day, we fly past the Himalaya ranges and can see Mt. Everest from the plane.

1<sup>st</sup> Destination: Australia, where we spend one day in Sydney, after we fly to Perth, Western Australia.



Australia: 2009 - Western Australia (WA):

<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=7113&id=100000306076304&l=f0ad39faf2>



Here we meet Karen, with whom Anita travelled around in Western Australia, way back in 1987. Now more than 20 year later, Karen is living in Perth, with Tarun and 4 great children. We were welcomed in their home and set of for one week holidaying 100 km North of Perth, in the hidden away secret, called Moore River. There we walk, swim, fish, canoe, eat ice creams and relax. Great to get over a jet-lag. We go on a one day trip to the beautiful Pinnacles.

Papua New Guinea: 2010:

- A first impression of a wild place:  
<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=7332&id=100000306076304&l=c23810b389>  
We continue our travels and fly to Papua New Guinea or more often called 'PNG'. We are welcomed by Lew & Leanne

Kenah, daughter of Glenyss & Glynn Evans, in the Port Moresby airport. We drive to their home, where we repack our bags for our one week's stay at Lissenung Island Resort. Our hosts for the week are Dietmar & Ange, the proud owners of the resort. Lovely diving, nice food and relaxation were the theme of the week. On our last day we visited Eruk Island.

A visit to Eruk Island:

<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=7794&id=100000306076304&l=29a2e226d9>

Time to fly back to Port Moresby, where we pick up Wouter from the airport and are on a new flight. This time to Madang.



Jan and Eunice Messerschmidt are sharing their home with us for 10 days. Jan and Eunice are missionaries for the Pioneer Bible Translations.

Diving: see 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph in The Ekeren Files.

PNG is very tropical. So when there is a lot of rain, we take the opportunity to go sightseeing, dirt road direction LAE, visit Jais Aben Resort.

- A look around PNG:  
<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=8890&id=100000306076304&l=d5882d0088>



Bushwalking with TagTap until it starts raining again.

- TagTap in his village Guntabag:

<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=10611&id=100000306076304&l=231633c1be>

On our way from PNG we make a stopover in Brisbane where we catch up with Una & Cole Maynard and with Lindey and Drew's family before we head for New Zealand.

We are picked up by our diving friend Pete Mesley and meet his family. The next day we have a lunch meeting with James and Nicole Dobbie, before we head for Matamata to meet again with the Jordan's family. Nice to meet up again with Dudley and Joy.

The 1<sup>st</sup> of 7 great walks:

1. Lake Waikaremoana Track;
2. Nydia Track (Marlborough Sounds);

3. Rob Roy Valley Track (Wanaka - Mt. Aspiring National Park);
4. Hollyford Track (Fiordland National Park);
5. Lake Ohau, South Temple Valley, walk to South Temple Hut (Ruataniwha Conservation Park);
6. Mt. Somers: walk to Woolshed Creek Hut and Rhyolite Ridge Track (Mt. Somers Conservation Area);
7. From Christchurch to Gebbis Pass and walk to the Packhorse Hut (Banks Peninsula Reserves)



Taradale, Napier is our next destination for a couple of days.

Then we head for Wellington where we meet with Brian Cooke, Leon and Ruth. Leon was my hospital pall in Lower Hutt hospital back in 1988. In the afternoon we catch up with Christine & Maria Michael and Graeme and Louise Gibbons.

The next day we say goodbye. Wouter is heading back home, while dad and I continue our trip in the South Island. Picton to Seddon where I catch up with Jane (my physio therapist in 1988) & Guy's family. Guided walk on their 180 ha farm and vineyard.

We head off for our 2 days walk: Nydia Track (Marlborough Sounds).



Drive along the Westcoast through the Buller Gorge with a stop at Westport, the pancake rocks, overnight at

Hokitika, past Frans Josef to Lake Matheson where we go for a walk. On to Haast, Thunder Creek & Fantail Falls, with a swim in the freezing Blue Pools with final destination for the day Wanaka (11hours on the road). Happy reunion with Katherine and Pat Dobbie.



1<sup>st</sup> Day at Wanaka we explore the neighborhood, drive to Glendhu Bay, with a stop at Mt. Aspiring viewpoint and a pic-nic at Lake Wanaka Outlet which we finish with a walk to Albert Town. This same evening we plan our walk for the next day: Rob Roy Valley Track (Wanaka - Mt. Aspiring National Park);

Dad still talks about the greatest walk he has done in his live. So yes, it was lovely.



Queenstown and Tracie Campbell's family.

Again a great welcome. A day with Tracie, Jared, Reuben, Lucy and Emily at Arrowtown before we head off to Te Anau for our next walk Hollyford Track (Fiordland National Park);

We bus to Milford Sound, where dad gets his 1<sup>st</sup> helicopter ride out the the beginning of our walk at Martin's Bay. The sky has cleared and apart of a few patches of cloud we have a great flight. We start walking and the 1<sup>st</sup> night we spend at Martin's Bay Hut. The next day we are picked up by the jet boat to Hollyford/Pyke confluence. The plan was to walk to Alabaster Hut and stay there for the night. We miss a turn-off and before we know we arrive at Hidden Falls Hut where we also had planned to stay a night. But the time is only 11h30 and because dad wants to get away from the sand-flies we decide to push on to road end where we arrive at 15h15 and strike lucky. We get a ride out, back to Te Anau. Dad has



We cannot leave Wanaka without a swim in the lake. The next day with pain in the hearts we drive Gidge and Pat to the airport and we are on our way to

walked today 18 kilometres!!! Instead of 5 days walking we finish in 1 and a half. By 19h45 we are back in Queenstown. This gives us another 2 full days to spend with Tracie and her family.

We are ahead of schedule and decide to fill up our remaining 5 days walking. We drive to Lake Ohau, South Temple Valley, walk to South Temple Hut (Ruataniwha Conservation Park);



On to view Mt. Cook in its full glory, then to Te Kahui Kaupeka Conservation Park, on to Mt. Somers: walk to Woolshed Creek Hut and Rhyolite Ridge Track (Mt. Somers Conservation Area);



From Christchurch to Gebbis Pass and walk to the Packhorse Hut (Banks Peninsula Reserve). The morning of the day we fly

out of Christchurch we walk out from the Hut out of the Reserve.

[Back to the 'Files'](#)