

DIARY: 1996

JANUARY

[Took Leonie to Christchurch to set her up to settle in at Rangi Ruru for Form 6.]

29 Monday

Returned to HK from NZ, arriving about 5 pm. Felt relatively cool.

30 Tuesday

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31 Wednesday

Last lesson for Teaching of Chemistry (evening class). Then dinner with class at Shatin.

FEBRUARY

1 Thursday

G's Rugby team loses to a KGV team.

2 Friday

18°C. Departmental meeting. Teacher calls me to ask about the action of chlorine on germs. Big explosion in Hunan kills 100+; due to 10 tonnes of dynamite stored in a house!

3 Saturday

About 17°C. First half of the hike fast - Stage 3 1 hr 44 mins - but second half much slower.

4 Sunday

Spent a lot of time cleaning and tidying the flat following the trip [to NZ].

5 Monday

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6 Tuesday

Printed N's "Isaac Newton" project. Workshop with Edwin Bridges [?from Stanford] in the afternoon on problem-based learning. Dinner at Chung Chi staff club for a scheme to help students speak English. Final episode of "Bodyline" on TV. G scores three tries in his school team's win against Island School.

7 - 9 Wednesday - Friday

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10 Saturday

Cooler, dry day, about 17.5°C. Good for hiking. Fast start, slow finish! Lots of burnt hillsides in the Tai Long Wan area. In a fire at Pat Sin Leng, three secondary school students and a teacher killed. [Now a shelter and memorial built at start of trail.] N to ballet practice in the afternoon by herself.

11 Sunday

Took N to ballet practice at Taikoo for the Year of the Rat parade. One student found alive on the hillside at Par Sin Leng.

12 - 14 Monday - Wednesday

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15 Thursday

Chinese rocket explodes a few seconds after lift off with [Rupert] Murdoch's satellite.

16 Friday

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17 Saturday

Big earthquake in the sea off Indonesia. Drizzle on Friday but held off for my hike. Temperatures about 18-19°C and damp.

18 Sunday

Chinese New Year's eve. Coldest day of the winter so far; maximum about 18°C. N off to Shatin in the afternoon with a friend for 'shopping'.

19 Monday

New Year's day for the Year of the Rat. Very cold; about 5 - 8°C here. Coldest New Year's day for 40 (?) years. N in a New Year parade. Me at office all day.

20 Tuesday

Very cold; less than 8°C. Some rain. At the office again. Fireworks display over the harbour in the evening. A female student, injured in the recent fire, dies.

21 Wednesday

Still very cold; about 7.5°C. Used a heater in the office!

22 Thursday

Several elderly people, including street sleepers, die, probably due to the cold weather. The office computer wouldn't work; taken away.

23 Friday

Another six or seven elderly people die, probably due to the cold. Total deaths during the cold snap is about 21. Got the repaired computer back. N at Pauline's overnight.

24 Saturday

Still cold. Hike to Sek Kong - actually, clear and warm on Tai Mo Shan [above cloud], but cold down below again in the cloud/mist. Not so exhausted on finishing, probably due to the cooler conditions. Watched a "Carrott's Commercial" programme on TV.

25 - 28 Sunday - Wednesday

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29 Thursday

Leap year day! Finished the last chapter of book [?which book].

MARCH

1 Friday

Temperatures above 20°C again. Also, saw the Sun! N took a book to school to get the visiting author to sign it. John Major [British PM] and [Chinese premier] Li Peng meet in Bangkok.

2 Saturday

Warm; about 20°C but cool breeze on the hike. The British PM arrives in HK.

3 Sunday

About 21°C. Had to clean out G's room again - took a lot of time! N not well; in bed most of the time.

4 Monday

John Major announces that the [future] SAR [Special Administrative Region] passport holders will be able to enter the UK visa free.

5 Tuesday

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6 Wednesday

Warm; about 24°C. Budget day - petrol prices and airport tax up, some income taxes down. Another letter from the school re G.

7 Thursday

Another incident at UST involving people being overcome by gas fumes - HNO₃ off a hot plate (?NO₂).

8 Friday

Very warm; about 24°C. Seminar about switching to the new superannuation scheme - a poor translation from the Chinese. A 7-month-old girl mauled to death by the family dog.

9 Saturday

Cooler again and foggy and damp. Conditions good for the hike. Same time as last year [for same route]. ? I don't believe it! I must have recorded the time wrongly.

10 Sunday

G to trials for the HK Rugby 7s; sadly, he wasn't picked. N spends all afternoon on homework.

11 Monday

G off to Shenzhen for overnight school trip. N back to school - at last! Me to Shatin College to talk with G's teachers. Cool; about 15°C.

12 Tuesday

Latter and cartographic material arrived from Wendy (Heyworth). No netball again for N - this time because of drizzle. G back from China late; after school meal at Shatin MacDonald's.

13 Wednesday

G gets new uniform trousers. 16 children and a teacher shot at a school in Scotland.

14 Thursday

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15 Friday

Meeting in the morning. Felt rather ill in the evening.

16 Saturday

Hot; about 27°C. Felt awful. To work in the morning. Later, started a hike but had to give up and return home - vomited on walking in. Possible food poisoning - from G (?) who missed school on Thursday for the same reason, along with many of the others who went to China. A single-engined helicopter crashes in Tai Lan Chung - NZ pilot! [?hit power lines] The third crash of this type in the past nine months.

17 Sunday

About 29°C. Still feeling weak but had to work. N vomits during the night.

18 Monday

Feeling rather weak but still went to the gym. A large lot of reclaimed land sold for about \$5 billion!

19 Tuesday

Drizzly, so N missed out on netball, for the fourth week! I attend a second student English-speaking dinner at Chung Chi.

20 Wednesday

A HK girl killed in China after a helium balloon she was attached to broke free of its mooring, drifted, exploded and crashed.

21 Thursday

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22 Friday

Fog brings very low visibility [especially in the harbour]. About 22°C. Went for a hike; very damp because of the fog, but OK for running.

23 Saturday

Got the third and final tetanus injection. Interviews in the afternoon for chemistry Dip Ed applicants.

24 Sunday

Watched "The Piano" on TV in the evening. Helped N with her "Buddhism" project.

25 Monday

China ends military exercises. China to set up a provisional legislature - without any democrats; all pro-China people. G gets Jonah Lomu's autograph while at Rugby practice.

26 Tuesday

G to town after school to see the All Blacks in a sports shop; gets Lomu's autograph again!

27 Wednesday

In the evening, I went to SJS to see "Yanamamo" put on by P5 and P6. G forgot his key so had to wait for us to return.

28 Thursday

N's second night at SJS for the concert. N gets vaccinations at school.

29 Friday

Got caught in a heavy downpour on the way [walking] to work. Most of the day needed to dry out my clothes! HK Rugby 7s begins. N didn't go - not feeling well because of injection on Thursday.

30 Saturday

About 27°C (in town). Ran up Tai Mo Shan; cloud and heavy rain at times but not too hot. After a bath, watched the Rugby 7s on TV. N to 7s but not for the whole day. G got in without a ticket but went out and couldn't get in again. [?How did N but not G get a ticket]

31 Sunday

NZ wins the 7s again; beat Fiji 19 - 17 in the final. G and I watched on TV.

APRIL

1 Monday

Becoming cooler again. To CDI in the morning for a talk about the Chemistry book revision. Then lunch at the 'fish-and-chip' restaurant.

2 Tuesday

Big drop in temperatures; down to about 16°C then to 10°C. Watched the first episode of 'Pride and Prejudice' on TV in the evening.

3 Wednesday

N couldn't get to the clinic to see a doctor - all appointments full! Had an evening class today instead of next Thursday.

4 - 5 Thursday - Friday

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6 Saturday

Very humid for the hike. Did a 'new' route back from lead mine pass through Fo Tan.

7 Sunday

N off Outward Bound for a week.

8 - 10 Monday - Wednesday

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11 Thursday

About 18°C. Still a lot of cloud and light drizzle. Lu Ping [director of HK and Macau Affairs Office - who I met and talked with during 1983 faculty visit to China] arrives for an 8-day visit; met by lots of protesters at the airport.

12 Friday

Two HK men in Manila jail released today. A 7-year-old girl trying to be the youngest to fly across the US crashes, killing herself, her father and instructor.

13 Saturday

Probably the last run of the season. Possible today because of cooler weather; 20°C. Ran longer than expected. N returns from Outwards Bound.

14 Sunday

More protests associated with second [?] Preparatory Committee meetings.

15 Monday

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16 Tuesday

Last episode of 'Pride and Prejudice' - now to read the book! [though didn't get around to this for many years!]

17 Wednesday

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18 Thursday

Warm. Pool opens; first swim \$5.50 (morning session). Last lesson for the term in the evening.

19 Friday

Some heavy rain today. Worked at home all day. Lu Ping leaves quietly by road. Cooler. N to ballet practice; selected for a TV advertisement.

20 Saturday

Still relatively cool. Sent e-mail to Leonie and one of her old files. Interviews in the morning for MEd programme. G to last of the Rugby 7s games.

21 Sunday

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22 Monday

About 22°C. Two teaching practice visits then lunch with a student's supervisor who was my former student. N to a special ballet lesson.

23 - 25 Tuesday - Thursday

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26 Friday

About 28°C - summer! Lunch with Au Chung Park then last teaching practice visit. Had to collect the car with G at the station - \$500 for a lock!

27 Saturday

N to birthday party and movie.

28 Sunday

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29 Monday

Computer server crashes! Got a laser printer installed in the office. Got David Gilkes [Bursar] to sign Australian mortgage documents.

30 Tuesday

Heavy rain. Had to go to SJS in the afternoon to meet N's teacher - largely a waste of time!

MAY

1 Wednesday

Some more heavy rain. New blinds installed in offices. Phone call from Shatin College to say that G's friend had run away from home and was staying here!

2 - 4 Thursday - Saturday

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5 Sunday

Thunderstorms early in the morning. N's visit to Ocean Park cancelled (no, wrong - she still went).

6 - 9 Monday - Thursday

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10 Friday

Riot and mass break-out at the Whitehead Vietnamese detention centre [located in Ma Pn Shan]. Huts and vehicles burnt. Saw smoke from the kitchen window. Traffic chaos in the area. Air pollution index reaches 110 - highest ever (I think). Conference on special education commences. A small plane makes an emergency landing on the Plover Cove dam.

11 Saturday

Turned out wet and cooler. Second day of conference; chaired the first session. Lunch. Got a little of the IS book revision done. More rioting at Whitehead.

12 Sunday

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13 Monday

Fine day - finally! Early swim then lunch with Mulcahy, etc. Meeting in the afternoon.

14 Tuesday

G's 15th birthday. Had a little party for him at dinner time - cake, candles and present. Fine, quite today; about 27°C.

15 Wednesday

USA imposes sanctions on China for violation of intellectual property rights. Publisher of new magazine - arm severed.

16 - 19 Thursday - Sunday

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20 Monday

Temperatures over 30°C - just! G floods the bathroom! Letter from L arrives!

21 - 25 Tuesday - Saturday

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26 Sunday

N to ballet again. Some heavy rain. To work in the afternoon to be chairman of a panel discussion for the second day of an assessment conference. Engine on a United Airlines 747 catches fire while taxiing for take-off.

27 - 28 Monday - Tuesday

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29 Wednesday

Heavy rain in the morning. Swan 32 lengths (about 1 mile). Report on the England soccer team damaging a Cathay Pacific plane while on a flight to the UK.

30 Thursday

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31 Friday

A signing agreement with China on the second runway at Chek Lap Kok. G to a play at Shouson theatre.

JUNE

1 Saturday

With N in the morning to the dentist, then both to the doctor where I got re-fills

2 - 3 Sunday - Monday

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4 Tuesday

Hot and humid. Anniversary of the massacre in Peking. Candlelight commemoration in Victoria park.

5 Wednesday

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6 Thursday

Pool closed in the morning because installing water heating (not needed in this weather - about 31°C!). Bridge scaffolding at Tsing Yi S[outh] bridge collapses; 6 workers killed .Pol Pot dies of malaria!

7 - 8 Friday - Saturday

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9 Sunday

N to ballet then to Ocean Park again. Lots of washing, including two sleeping bags and a blanket.

10 Monday

N to KGV after music for a dress rehearsal of "jungle Book".

11 Tuesday

To a lecture in the afternoon by Prof Marsh on students evaluation of teaching.

[No further entries until the end of August. I was in Christchurch for the summer with Nadine. While there, managed to get G a place at Christ's College; St Andrews was first choice, but there were no boarding spaces available; and got the last space at Christ's College.]

AUGUST

26 Monday

Back at 6.30 pm on Qantas via Brisbane. Good view of the new airport and bridges [construction] [on flight path over Kowloon]. N had a good time on the plane as did lots of other children. (Today is a holiday in HK for Liberation day.)

27 Tuesday

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28 Wednesday

Swim; did 24 lengths. Difficult - felt like trying to swim through golden syrup! Handed in forms for G's attendance at boarding school.

29 Thursday

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30 Friday

Another tough swim though did 32 lengths. N's first full day at school (half day yesterday).

31 Saturday

Worked all day cleaning the lounge. Very hot and humid!

SEPTEMBER

1 Sunday

A lot of the day cleaning the master bedroom and both bathrooms. N to ice skating.

2 Monday

Dip Ed term begins. Swam a bit further (32 lengths).

3 Tuesday

N to ballet. Meeting with Sarah Rigby and new editor in the afternoon. US cruise missiles launched against Iraq. Sarah/editor to visit me in the morning . [?]

4 Wednesday

First class in the evening. Another 32-length swim, but still not easy.

5 Thursday

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6 Friday

Another hot swim (32 lengths). Chief Justice resigns so that he can be nominated as the first Chief Executive for the post-1997 HK government.

7 Saturday

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8 Sunday

All day cleaning G and L's rooms. G and L arrive late evening [End of second term holidays in NZ].

9 Monday

Typhoon Sally passes HK early in the morning. Flooding at the back entrance to the flat. No School for N. Chairman Mao dies 20 years ago today.

10 - 14 Tuesday - Saturday

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15 Sunday

Heavy rain in the morning; several landslides. RAF has last ceremonial parade at Sek Kong.

16 Monday

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17 Tuesday

HK man won the recent World Monopoly championships.

18 - 20 Wednesday - Friday

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21 Saturday

Heavy rain. Westerners arrested for drug trafficking. Had pains and diarrhoea in the evening.

22 Sunday

Boat leaves for the Diaoyu Islands [claimed by both China and Japan] with HK protesters on board.

23 Monday

Farewell to the Gilkes at the SCR.

24 - 25 Tuesday - Wednesday

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26 Thursday

Re-recorded the “presidents' tape for L. Leader of the HK protest ship to Diao Yu Islands drowned when several of them jumped into the water.

27 - 28 Friday - Saturday

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29 Sunday

L and G return to NZ in the evening.

30 Monday

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OCTOBER

1 Tuesday

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2 Wednesday

No swim; pool being used for CU college swimming meets. Governor gives his last annual policy speech.

3 Thursday

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4 Friday

Governor has last Question Time forum in the evening.

5 - 6 Saturday - Sunday

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7 Monday

Some protesters manage to land on the islands and plant Taiwan and China flags. Swimming again; OK at the start but then not so easy. N gets home at 8.15 pm!! N has a “House Day” picnic at Big Wave bay.

8 - 9 Tuesday - Wednesday

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10 Thursday

“Double tenth”; perhaps the last public celebrations by KMT supporters.

11 Friday

N back from camp.

12 Saturday

NZ elections. Two hours cleaning the flat in the afternoon. Diarrhoea in the evening.

13 Sunday

Fasting all day! Not too bad. Damon Hill wins the F1 race in Japan and the world championship; watched a report on TV in the evening. N to Emma's for a while in the afternoon.

14 - 16 Monday - Wednesday

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17 Thursday

Ph.D. Defence by Lee F. L. Passed, subject to improvements. T.S. Lo pulls out of the 'race' to be the first SAR CE.

18 - 19 Friday - Saturday

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20 Sunday

Cooler. N goes to hospital; needs a [minor] operation to get an earring out of her ear.

21 Monday

Public holiday for Chung Yuen. All day at home organising teaching practice visits and revising Integrated Science 8 [?].

22 Tuesday

“Trafalgar day” - last celebration of this in HK.

23 - 25 Wednesday - Friday

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26 Saturday

Drier; 26°C. After classes, went on my first hike. Quite good. Also, the first time off campus since returning from holiday [exactly two months ago!].

27 - 29 Sunday - Tuesday

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30 Wednesday

First teaching practice visit - to Kei Heep. N away for overnight.

31 Thursday

N out in the evening for Halloween. Also to the dentist during the day.

NOVEMBER

1 Friday

Three teaching practice visits to Kwai Chung and Tsing Yi. Forgot to take my lunch but had it with a student at Tsing Yi school. Got a 'voucher' plate - cup set from Park 'n Shop. N overnight at school for sponsored activities for children in Vietnam.

2 Saturday

About 29°C! Second hike; faster, probably because of no stopping. China Light and Power putting up more electricity pylons across a country park.

3 Sunday

Read through and checked Lee F L's thesis for the final time. N out all day.

4 Monday

Four teaching practice visits. Felt tired and hot, though only 27°C.

5 Tuesday

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6 Wednesday

Boris Yeltsin having a heart operation. US presidential elections under way. [Clinton returned.]

7 Thursday

More teaching practice visits. New Vice Chancellor [Arthur Li] installed; student protests about the system of selection.

8 Friday

Had to rush to a teaching practice visit in Tai Po as I had misread the timetable. Sweating all over on arrival, then found the students hadn't been informed! An hour-long wait till the next visit.

9 Saturday

Too warm for the run; 29°C in the New Territories, but five minutes faster than last year. N home late; with Emma for an overnight.

10 Sunday

Last Remembrance Sunday under British rule! N working all day to try to catch up with her school work.

11 - 12 Monday - Tuesday

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13 Wednesday

Mid-air collision involving a Saudi Airlines 747 and a Kazakhstan [?freighter] near New Delhi. N has a cold. Cooler today, but a good swim.

14 Thursday

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15 Friday

About 24°C. Good swim. Ph.D. seminar in the evening. Preparatory Committee elects candidates for the new CE - three the more than the 50 votes needed. Simon Li [former Chief Justice] misses out.

16 Saturday

Cooler at 22°C but humid. Hike OK. N to school fair. Watched some of the SA v Pumas match on TV in the evening.

17 Sunday

Macau F3 Grand Prix. Watched a little on TV.

18 Monday

N has a fever in the evening; about 38°C. Teaching practice visit in Fanling.

19 Tuesday

Another teaching practice visit in Fanling. N to dentist again in the afternoon. Lecture by Henry Kevin [from Stanford] on accelerated schools.

20 Wednesday

Big fire - 5th alarm - in a building in Nathan Road; one fireman killed.

21 Thursday

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22 Friday

Death toll [from fire] 37. Another high-rise fire, this time in Causeway Bay - no injuries.

23 Saturday

N has another cold. Hike: about 24°C but felt hot; 11 minutes faster.

24 Sunday

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25 Monday

Both TV stations have reports on last week's fire.

26 - 28 Tuesday - Thursday

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29 Friday

Warm, about 27°C. Last swim for the season, and not a good one. The last [?] “Trailwalker” begins. Cathay Pacific and HSBC decide not to continue sponsoring the HK Rugby 7s.

30 Saturday

About 21°C but felt warmer during the first half of the run, which was 27 minutes faster than last year!

DECEMBER

1 Sunday

19.7°C. Electric meter (10 pm): 55966.

2 Monday

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3 Tuesday

All day on teaching practice visits at Tuen Mun. Cooler today; wore a pullover.

4 Wednesday

L and G arrive back for the end on the NZ school year.

5 - 6 Thursday - Friday

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7 Saturday

About 18°C. Another fast run/hike. Took 29 minutes off last year's time. Quite dry. Hill fire on the side of Tai Mo Shan.

8 - 10 Sunday - Tuesday

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11 Wednesday

C H Tung elected as the new Chief Executive [after the handover].

12 - 13 Thursday - Friday

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14 Saturday

Last class before Christmas. Hike quite fast, especially the first half.

15 - 20 Sunday - Friday

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21 Saturday

No class. Quite a good hike - 17 minutes faster than last year. Today, in Shenzhen, a selection committee selects a 60-member provisional legislature.

22 Sunday

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23 Monday

Governor and C H Tung meet officially. N's holiday begins.

24 - 27 Tuesday - Friday

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28 Saturday

Hot - 25°C! But dry. Ran around Plover Cove and back to TMT but too warm for running.

Hikes: 1996 - 1997

1996

1	26/10	Station → (4) → Ma On Shan village → station	2:30
2	2/11	Office → lead mine pass → loop to Grassy Hill → 5B	2:55
3	9/11	Station → (4) → (5) → Shatin river → station	3:15
4	16/11	Office → lead mine pass → top of reservoir → Grassy Hill → 5B	3:32
5	23/11	Station → (4)(54'') → Pyramid Peak → Ma On Shan (2:22?) → (4)(2:35) → station	3:19
6	30/11	Tai Wo → Cloudy Hill → reservoir 1 → family walk → Hok Tau reservoir → Cloudy Hill → Tai Wo park	3:13
7	7/12	Office → Tai Mo Shan → 5B	3:46
8	14/12	TMT → Nam Chung → Hok Tau → Cloudy Hill → Tai Wo	3:53
9	21/12	TMT → Bride's pool → Sam A Chung → Lai Chi Wo → fire lookout → Brides pool → TMT (over hill)	3:40
10	28/12	TMT → Plover Cove → Brides pool → TMT (over hill)	4:12

1997

11	4/1	Sai Kung → (3) → Lok Wu plateau → Pak Tam Au → 3 → KLH	4:23
12	10/1	Office → lead mine pass → road to base of Needle Hill → Needle Hill → Grassy Hill → 5B	3:54

13	18/1	Station → (4) → 5 (not zig-zag rd) → track past Amah rock → Tai Wai station	4:15
14	25/1	Office → lead mine pass → (Tai Mo Shan) → Ng Tai Chung → Kadoorie farm → Fanling	4:03
15	1/2	Shatin → (5) → 6, 7 → lead mine pass → 5B	4:42
16	8/2	KLH → Jacob's ladder → TV tower → Tai Tan → Wong Shek → 3 → KLH	4:36
17	15/2	KLH → Shum Cheng → Hoi Ha → Tai Tan → TV tower (lost in cloud) → Jacob's ladder → KLH	5:00!
18	22/2	Office → lead mine pass → loop to reservoir → pass (55') → 5B	2:58
19	1/3	Sai Kung → Pak Tam Chung → (3) → (4) → station	5:09!
20	8/3	5B → Tai Mo Shan → Route Twisk (2:30) → Tai Lam Chung (3:30) → Sek Kong	4:43 (? 46)

21	28/3	1, 2, 3	5:33
22	5/4	5B → lead mine pass → tracks to watercourse → Shing Mun reservoir → pass → 5B	5:08
23	12/4	5B → lead mine pass → tracks on left of TMS to YH → pass → 5B	5:37

*Office = entrance from Tai Po Rd to Chung Chi College