

DIARY: 1999

JANUARY

1 Friday

Up later, then to Shatin. Work in the afternoon. (Comment in diary → “Leonie's guitar”)

2 Saturday

Work in the morning. Then a fast run in the afternoon - 15 minutes faster than last year.
About 21°C.

3 - 6 Sunday - Wednesday

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7 Thursday

Five EPD officers killed when their van crashes into a container lorry. Annoying breathing problems still.

8 Friday

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9 Saturday

Temperature about 18°C.

10 - 11 Sunday - Monday

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12 Tuesday

Gavin's last morning at work [?]. Last teaching of chemistry lesson for the year for the evening class.

13 Wednesday

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14 Thursday

Much cooler; less than 10°C (minimum) in parts!

15 Friday

Nadine's friend Lisa here for overnight.

16 Saturday

Last teaching of chemistry lesson for the Saturday part-time group. About 15°C. Good running conditions. Breathing good after the run, but it didn't last.

17 - 18 Sunday - Monday

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19 Tuesday

Gavin off with V to the US! I will miss him. Warmer at about 22°C.

20 Wednesday

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21 Thursday

Airport inquiry report out today.

22 Friday

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23 Saturday

Warmish at about 24°C, and very humid. Run just four minutes faster than last year!

24 - 25 Sunday - Monday

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26 Tuesday

E-mail from Gavin (at Leonie's) telling about enlisting in the US Marines.

27 Wednesday

Nadine home at lunch time with the flu. Brunei Book 1 arrives! To Sheung Shui for a short time early evening.

28 Thursday

Warm! To Shatin College in the afternoon to meet Nadine's teachers.

29 Friday

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30 Saturday

About 20°C. The last one hour of the run was difficult - "hit the wall". Nadine better now.

31 Sunday

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FEBRUARY

1 - 3 Monday - Wednesday

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4 Thursday

The Secretary of Justice comes out with pathetic reasons for not charging Sally Aw [her friend and publisher of the 'Standard'].

5 Friday

Nadine to a school disco in the afternoon [?evening]. V returns from the US.

6 Saturday

About 19°C and quite dry. Fast run! Had a packet of noodles for breakfast which seemed to help [to overcome feeling of hunger during runs].

7 Sunday

King Hussein of Jordan dies.

8 Monday

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9 Tuesday

Off to Singapore. First time to depart from the new airport.

10 - 11 Wednesday - Thursday

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12 Friday

Back from Singapore. Nadine off to Switzerland; finally left here just 20 minutes before her reporting time!

13 Saturday

Temperatures 19-20°C. Good hike/run around Plover Cove; 11 minutes faster than last year and 28 minutes from the year before.

14 - 19 Sunday - Friday

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20 Saturday

About 15°C. Good run.

21 - 23 Sunday - Tuesday

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24 Wednesday

Court of final appeal “clarifies” its ruling on the right-of-abode issue [for children of HK residents born in China] after being requested to do so by the government (and probably Beijing!). Nadine's friend here for overnight; they spent a lot of time on the new notebook computer with ICQ.

25 - 26 Thursday - Friday

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27 Saturday

Temperatures 27-28°C with high humidity! Too hot for running; 15 minutes slower than last year but equal to that of the year before.

28 Sunday

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MARCH

1 - 2 Monday - Tuesday

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3 Wednesday

26°C. Budget day. A 10% tax rebate, but a pay freeze to come.

4 - 5 Thursday - Friday

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6 Saturday

About 25°C and humid. Last quarter of the run was difficult.

7 - 10 Sunday - Wednesday

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11 Thursday

Much cooler at 17°C. Meeting in the morning with a gifted children expert from NSW. The Secretary of Justice survives a no-confidence vote. The legislative council sits for 24 hours, its longest continuous session. Nadine home very late after a hockey game. Gavin's third letter arrives.

12 Friday

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13 Saturday

About 19°C; very humid and cloudy. Good for running but the last hour was tough. To KT [?] in the evening but back earlier than expected. Nadine to a netball tournament; played for both Year 10 and 11 teams.

14 - 18 Sunday - Thursday

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19 Friday

Meeting with Pan Pacific [a Singapore publisher] people from Singapore most of the day. In the evening to Shatin College to listen to Nadine playing in a flute ensemble.

20 Saturday

About 26°C but nearly 100% humidity. Difficult conditions for running; 17 minutes slower than last year.

21 Sunday

The Breitling-Orbiter hot-air/helium balloon succeeds in circumnavigating the Earth. A female apprentice jockey killed during a race at Shatin after falling off her horse.

22 Monday

Temperature down to 16°C!

23 Tuesday

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24 Wednesday

Nadine off to San Francisco in the morning.

25 Thursday

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26 Friday

Birthday dinner at Tai Mei Tuk. HK Rugby 7s begins.

27 Saturday

Temperature up to about 33⁰C! (29.5⁰C at the Observatory). Run too tough. Ended up going for a dip in Tolo Harbour near the end of the run [at Kei Ling Ha] [and a little earlier getting a road construction worker to hose me down with water]. A Marine policeman killed at Sai Kung when a crane falls on him.

28 Sunday

About 18⁰C! Just my luck! [not having today for my run]. Fiji beat NZ 21 - 12 in the final of the Cup competition.

29 Monday

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30 Tuesday

Took forms in for the [university's] home financing scheme.

31 Wednesday

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APRIL

1 Thursday

Spent half a day preparing a work progress statement for the Personnel department.

2 Friday

At the office all day looking up Internet sites for CHEM2000.

3 Saturday

About 22°C. Good, fast run. Faster than expected; Stage 3 [of the MacLehose trail] was very fast at 1 hour 44 minutes. To Shatin in the evening for Japanese food but very tired.

4 Sunday

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5 Monday

[?Holiday - Ching Ming] At the office all day. Cloudy. About 230 fires.

6 Tuesday

Last day of the public holidays. About 170 more hill fires. A big fire in the Cloudy Hill area.

7 - 8 Wednesday - Thursday

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9 Friday

M Phil seminar in the evening.

10 Saturday

27+°C and humid. Cut the run short because (a) too hot, (b) tired and (c) thought Nadine didn't have a key to get in. Nadine arrived back early on Cathay Pacific; called me from the airport at about 7 am.

11 Sunday

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12 Monday

Warm. The elevated railway at Wuppertal crashes into the river below killing four and injuring at least 50; the first fatalities since it opened in 1901.

13 Tuesday

A bomb explodes in the restaurant of a Tuen Mun department store (Jusco).

14 - 15 Wednesday - Thursday

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16 Friday

Nadine to the cinema and a birthday party in the evening.

17 Saturday

Presentation at the Holiday Inn in the morning of the Chem2000 textbook. Hot and humid.
No run. Tired.

18 - 19 Sunday - Monday

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20 Tuesday

Many killed during a shooting spree at a Colorado school. The government auditor's report critical of government waste and over-spending. The government refuses to allow overseas Chinese dissidents to enter HK.

21 Wednesday

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22 Thursday

YF returns.

23 Friday

Nadine has another movie and birthday party in the evening.

24 Saturday

To HK park in the afternoon.

25 Sunday

ANZAC day. Australian ships and services [?] in Ho Chi Min city. The end of NATO's 50th year celebrations in Washington DC.

26 - 30 Monday - Friday

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MAY

1 Saturday

First “May day” - Labour day - holiday [with HK as part of China]. Typhoon Leo downgraded to a severe tropical storm. The number 3 signal raised yesterday, the first time ever in April. Leaded petrol has now been banned for one month.

2 - 7 Sunday - Friday

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8 Saturday

NATO bombs [accidentally] hit the Chinese embassy in Belgrade; three killed. Protests begin in China.

9 Sunday

Wet again. About 20°C. In the Spanish 250 cc motorcycle GP, the winner - 'clown' Rossi - gets off his bike and runs to a portable toilet.

10 - 12 Monday - Wednesday

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13 Thursday

Home early in the evening to bed with the flu (?) / fever.

14 Friday

Gavin's birthday and marine graduation day. Macau's first CE selected.

15 - 20 Saturday - Thursday

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21 Friday

Cruise ship sinks in the Malacca Straits; all 1000 passengers rescued. NATO bombs this time damage the Swiss ambassador's house [in Belgrade]. China bans US warships from visiting HK.

22 - 25 Saturday - Tuesday

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26 Wednesday

The second runway [at Chek Lap Kok] opens; more residents under the flight path will be affected by noise. HK companies accused by the US of transferring secrets to China.

27 Thursday

Manchester United win the European Cup 2 - 1 last night against Bayern Munich; both goals came in the last two minutes of stoppage time! India continues air strikes against 'intruders' in Kashmir.

28 - 31 Friday - Monday

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JUNE

1 - 2 Tuesday - Wednesday

—

3 Thursday

Off to the Airport hotel for a Faculty retreat. Lots of eating! While there, had my first swim for the season. Announcement of a settlement of the conflict in Yugoslavia.

4 Friday

Another swim in the morning; excluded myself from the second half of the morning discussion. The annual June 4th candlelight vigil in Victoria park; about 70 000 there for the 10th anniversary of the massacre.

5 Saturday

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6 Sunday

Fine but deteriorated as a typhoon approaches.

7 Monday

The typhoon has a direct hit over Sai Kung and Ma On Shan though not a severe typhoon; signals only go to #9. Everything closed in the morning. Missed the opening swim [at university pool] because of the typhoon. Executions of smugglers in China.

8 Tuesday

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9 - 10 Wednesday - Thursday

Home early to help Nadine with her Science test for Friday.

11 - 12 Friday - Saturday

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13 Sunday

Fire in a Taiwan electronics factory in Shenzhen kills 16.

14 Monday

More gang fighting at Pillar Point refugee camp between North and South Vietnamese following last-night's battle.

15 - 19 Tuesday - Saturday

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20 Sunday

Australia beat Pakistan to win the World Cup one-day cricket competition.

21 Monday

Workmen here in the morning to fix various things. Then for a swim.

22 - 25 Tuesday - Friday

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26 Saturday

Phone call from Gavin early Sunday morning, mainly to wish Nadine a happy birthday. Chinese NPC overturns the Court of Final Appeal ruling on right-of-abode [for children born in China of HK parents in HK].

27 - 30 Sunday - Wednesday

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JULY

1 Thursday

Holiday - handover day. Ceremonies, but lots of protests as well. The PLA has an open day.

2 - 3 Friday - Saturday

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4 Sunday

Second body of kidnap victims found today on Fei Ngo Shan - a 13 year-old boy. Yesterday, that of a 5 year-old boy was found. Finals of the international dragon boat races at Shatin. Water pollution was the big winner!

5 - 7 Monday - Wednesday

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8 Thursday

Nadine leaves in the evening for San Francisco.

9 Friday

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10 Saturday

Watched the replay of a Rugby match - NZ beat SA 24 - 0!

11 Sunday

Michael Schumacher in a bad high-speed crash during the British F1 GP; got away with just a broken leg.

12 - 16 Monday - Friday

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17 Saturday

JFK Jr's plane with him, his wife and sister-in-law crashes; all killed.

18 - 23 Sunday - Friday

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24 Saturday

ABs beat Australis 35 - ?18.

25 - 31 Sunday - Saturday

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AUGUST

1 - 2 Sunday - Monday

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Holiday in Japan August 3 - 16

3 Tuesday

Up at 5.30 am then to the airport via Shatin for the 9.15 am flight to Tokyo on United Airlines flight 800. Very little leg room on the plane. Arrived at about 2.15 pm Tokyo time (+ 1 hour from Hong Kong time). Immigration very slow; five officials for about 500 'foreigners' (compared with four officials for locals - about 10 all told!).

Changed a (pre-paid) voucher for a rail pass. Made inquiries about Tokyo and some other places. The Information desk was very good.

Off to Shinjuku on an express at about 4.15 pm; took about 1 ½ hours. At Shinjuku station, tried to find the Information Office to get to the hotel (included in package) but in the wrong place! Eventually found it. The hotel was OK but pokey little room and noisy air-conditioners on the roof above. No swimming pool.

After a shower, off to find a restaurant. Found some small ones then went into one; no-one else there. Two dishes (¥900 and ¥700). Then back to the hotel for another shower and bed.

4 Wednesday

[Leonie's birthday today!]

Slept in. Hotel buffet breakfast - simple - at 9 am.

Off about 10 am. To the station and Chuo Line (platform 8) for 'rapid' to Tokyo station; took about 15 minutes. Station - colonial, European appearance from the outside. Walked to the Imperial Palace. Quite hot, though not as bad as Hong Kong. Got scolded by a policeman for sitting on the grass by a moat. (To show my 'displeasure', as there were no seats, I 'asked' if I could sit on the road. I think he nodded that it would be OK!) Further across, sat on benches this time and watched what could have been about four boys learning martial arts from a 'Si fu'. Also many joggers out in the heat! and nearly all running in the same direction.

Along for a look at the Japanese Diet building. Listened to a young man who had been to Scotland for three years and was practising his bagpipes in a small park (as it was illegal to practise a musical instrument in private homes, he said).

Continued to walk towards the Tokyo Tower. Passed through parts that suggested what Tokyo might have been like many years ago. Went up to the 150 m first observation deck by lift. There, as in other places in Japan, there is a small area assigned for smoking! (Things have certainly changed about where people can smoke; now banned in all train station platforms except for designated areas.) View interesting (though not as interesting as from the Eiffel Tower). Noticed about six swimming pools nearby.

Then walked across to the Hama Rikyu Garden, first used by a shogun in about 1770.

Interesting, with bridges across a large pond with a tea house in the middle and a 300-year-

old pine tree.

Along to a station and back to the hotel without difficulty. Enquired about a trip to Kamakura tomorrow. Shower at the hotel then dinner in another small restaurant. Had to put coins in a machine to get appropriate tickets for the desired dishes. Had an attack of diarrhoea soon after so came back to the hotel.

Expenses:

- Tower ¥820
- Ice-cream at tower ¥110
- Garden ¥300
- Dinner ¥610 + ¥350
- Ice-cream ¥84

5 Thursday

Not exactly the best of days! I think the diarrhoea last night weakened me a bit. Tired during the heat of the day. At Japan Rail (JR) reservations, couldn't get a seat on the train to Hiroshima at a convenient time. Took a Kamakura on a local train: Shinjuku → Shinagawa → Kamakura, taking about 70 minutes.

On arriving, looked for the way to the 'Daibatsu' (Great Buddha); asked (i.e. showed a picture) to a chap who offered a ride in his Volvo. The ride made me feel better. From the Great Buddha statue, walked back to town in the midday heat. Then along the long straight path in the middle of the road to the Hachimangu shrine. Sat by a lotus pond and watched kids feeding the pigeons. Walked up the 61 steps to the shrine. Paid ¥100, thinking I could walk through but the fee was only to have a look at art, etc.; the fees were only written in Japanese.

Back to the station and to Shinjuku. Reserved a seat - only 'smokers' left - for the train to Hiroshima in a couple of days, to leave about 2 pm.

Then for a walk through a park to the Meiji shrine. Train back to Shinjuku - from just one stop away. Got hopelessly lost in the 'My City' shopping mall under the station. Didn't arrive back at the hotel until 7 pm! Telephoned a little ryokan in Hiroshima to book for Saturday and Sunday (they must have understood English), then out for dinner.

6 Friday

A more enjoyable day. After breakfast, was able to change to a non-smoker for the train to Hiroshima and at an earlier time by going to Osaka and changing trains. Then down to the Olympic stadiums - looked at the swimming pool (mainly the outside), small training/warm-up track and the main stadium. Able to get in by walking through a workers' door!

Then off to the Ueno station and park, with its temples, boat pond, zoo and museums.

['Sweat' drink ¥120.]

Walked eastwards through the delightful Asakusa district to the large Buddhist temple (Asakusa Kannon) complex. Then down to the river. Heavy shower of rain for about 10 minutes. Subway to Sobu Line (¥190) and JR train back to Shinjuku, arriving back at the hotel around 6 pm. Fire at a nearby office (or at least there were fire engines; didn't actually see a fire!).

Expenses:

- Sweat drink 2 x ¥120
- Fried seafood and egg ¥350
- Subway ¥190
- Dinner ¥330 + ¥410
- Sweat drink 3 x ¥105

7 Saturday

Up earlier, at about 7 am. After breakfast (couldn't really keep having more of these hotel breakfasts!) and check out, walked to the station. I had to go to a toilet due to more diarrhoea trouble. Train to Tokyo station and transfer to the Shinkansen line for the 9.28 am train to Osaka. Transferred to the Hiroshima bullet train (an older one with 2+2 seats across instead of 2+3). Many vacant seats. Arrived in Hiroshima around 2.30 pm. Collected some tourist information at the station then visited another toilet - without the need for it! Looked for the small hotel, which was near the station, which I had telephoned from Tokyo.

After checking in and getting a *reduced* price (due to lack of clarity when speaking on the phone), went for a walk to the Hiroshima Castle (reconstructed after being destroyed by the atomic bomb) and the non-reconstructed site of an 1894 Sino-Japanese war military HQ. Also nearby, a bunker where students helping the military sent out the first messages of the A-bomb explosion (in spite of almost no telecommunications).

Light rain settled in. Bought some Japanese 'fast food' dishes and ate them in the ryokan.

Then a Japanese wash and brief soak in the hot bath.

Expenses:

- Ryokan - 2 nights at ¥3375
- 'Cho beng' ¥100
- Garlic bread ¥150 + tax
- French bread ¥210
- Dishes ¥560 + 360 + tax = ¥970

8 Sunday

Up later - no alarm! No breakfast provided, so bought milk and had some of the French bread and jam from the Tokyo hotel.

Walked down to Peace Park - the clock tower, monuments (many draped in paper birds from the August 6th memorial services) including a recent one to the 2000 Koreans killed during the blast (10% of total), A-Dome and museum. The museum contains a 'shadow' of a blast from the Sumitomo Bank building (the one I saw, in situ, on my visit in 1967, I think). Spent a lot of time there.

Walked along to the JR station (further than expected!) for the train to Mijajima station and JR ferry for the 10-minute crossing to the island. Walked around. A deer grabbed and ate my lovely tourist brochure with a chop from the ferry (got another on returning to Hiroshima, though minus the chop!). Low tide so was able to get close to the O-Tori just as swimmers were completing the crossing from the mainland - something to do with linking Poland and Japan. Then went for a hike along a nature trail and back to the ferry and Hiroshima.

Walked to Hijayama park - not interesting. Bought food to eat in the hotel. Tea and bananas in the room on arrival, courtesy of the hotel.

Expenses:

- Milk ¥200
- Peace museum ¥50
- Ice-cream (Mijajima) ¥102
- Drinks (from machine) ¥120
- Dinner ¥1008

9 Monday

Up a little earlier. Before going to the station, bought milk and garlic bread at 'Betty's'. Then carrots, jam and bread at a station shop.

Shinkanzen at 10.19 am to Kyoto, which took about 2 ¼ hours. Found a ryokan about four minutes south of the station though it didn't have the atmosphere of the older ryokan in Hiroshima. Also, this one was more expensive! Very hot again!

After a shower and rest, off for a walk, heading north to Noji Castle - closes at 4.30 pm. Then by JR train (?I think - a luxury double-decker train anyway) back to Kyoto. Bought food - and paid excessively - at Isetan department store, only to find a smaller and better shop opposite the hotel!

Expenses:

- Milk (1 litre) ¥207
- Garlic bread ¥150
- French bread ¥210+
- Jam ¥100+
- Carrots ¥146
- Sports drink ¥120
- Milk and tomatoes (+tax) ¥405

- Hot dish (¥1395) and cold dish ¥472)
- Ryokan (3 nights) ¥4500 x 2 nights; ¥4000 x 1 night tax - ¥13650
- Another French bread (Kyoto) ¥210+

10 Tuesday

Heavy rain during the night, but sun out in the morning to evaporate it all (to make a very humid day)!. Took a subway train to the Imperial Palace (¥230). To the palace office for a free permission slip for a palace tour which began at 10 am and lasted an hour. Interesting, but difficult to understand the guide. Also, very hot and humid.

Walked towards Nijo Castle. Cashed travellers' cheques (American Express / Yen - no commission) but took a long time. To the castle (entrance fee ¥600) - again interesting - especially the squeaky / nightingale floorboards (to detect intruders). Again, took about an hour.

Then to Nijo JR station. Caught in a heavy shower on the way and had to wait for it to pass. Train to the next station and a walk (~40 minutes!) to Ryoanji Temple with its Zen rock garden. Following that, along to the Golden Temple (~15 minutes), then a longer walk to Dailo ki jie Temple(s) - a collection of many small temples.

Walk to a subway station and train to Kyoto station (¥230) and made reservations of train seats for the remainder of the trip (all OK, except one leg had to be smoking as non-smoking cars all full!).

Back to the hotel and pre-cooked meal from the supermarket opposite.

Expenses:

- Imperial Palace - free
- Nijo Castle ¥600
- Ryoanji Temple ¥400
- Golden Temple ¥400
- Subway ¥230 x 2
- Sports drink ¥120 x 2
- French bread ¥220
- Milk ¥198, sports drink (2 litre) ¥298 + tax = ¥520
- Dinner ¥1007

11 Wednesday

Slept in a bit. Heavy rain during the night. Off to Nara for the day. Just managed to get the 9.38 am slow train after finding that the 9.51 am rapid train, though on the timetable, did not exist! Took about 80 minutes (compared with 45 minutes by a rapid). On arrival, got times for return trains. Then off towards Nara Park and temples.

First one - Kofukuji Temple with a large pagoda. Very tame deer everywhere. Started to rain

a little but not heavy. (Met a number of people who had been at the Imperial Palace yesterday.) Past the museum and over to the Todaji Temple with its large Buddha in the longest wooden building in the world. Sat outside by a pond and finished off the French bread. The sun was out by this time, evaporating all the water, though it was not as hot and humid and unpleasant as yesterday.

Walked across the park to the small Shin-Takushi ji Temple (waste of time) then to the nearby Kasuga Taisha Shrine (Shinto) - a living temple - baby taken in to be 'blessed' (or whatever).

Back towards the JR station. Past a pond with lanterns in it, through part of a shopping mall. Bought a small picture of deer and a pagoda in Nara, which I still have in my bedroom (¥600). Took the rapid train at 3.53 pm back to Kyoto.

Looked through the station shopping centre then back to the hotel. A different room - smaller and a little cheaper (¥4000 for one).

Expenses:

- Cake ice-cream ¥60+ x 2
- Todaji Temple ¥400
- Framed picture ¥600
- French bread ¥220
- Milk ~¥198+
- Bananas ¥240+
- Meat cakes 2 x ¥80+
- Two dishes 2 x ¥380+
- Total at food mart ¥1358

12 Thursday

Awake early because of light through the paper windows. Then back to sleep for two hours and up again at 7 am. (When awake the first time, I ate half of my breakfast.)

Took the 8.14 am Shinkansen train to Nagoya, then 13 minutes later a local express to Toba (about two hours in total). Took a while to find an information office at Toba - up and down stairs! Couldn't book any hotel or Youth Hostel, so the office telephoned to the nearby town of Iseshi to book a room.

Then a short walk and over a bridge to Mikimoto Pearl Island (¥1500!). Spent about 2 ½ hours there. Watched a diving demonstration (twice - the second time in the overseas guests' lounge!). Also walked around the museum (very interesting), shop and part of the Mikimoto Memorial Hall.

Decided to go then to Iseshi - 15 minutes by train. Walked to the booked ryokan but didn't take it as there was no air-conditioner and no private bathroom (less serious), so not worth the asking price. The lady tried to help, but instead went to the information office, arriving at

about 4.45 pm and was able to get another cheaper hotel - the lady in the information office was very helpful. Then had a look at the nearby Ise shrine before going to the hotel.

Dinner again from a 24-hour store. Also had Japanese 'dim sums' from a roadside shop.

Expenses:

- Pearl Island ¥1500
- Ice-cream ¥100+
- Bananas ¥281
- Dinner - 2 dishes, 1 yoghurt
 - 2 meat on stick ¥1129
 - Japanese dim sums x 2 ¥200
- Hotel ¥4200
- Locker (Toba station) ¥300

13 Friday

Slept-in at the Iseishi hotel for a while. After checking out, went to a K-store and bought bread, sports drink (2 litre) and jam. Then to the railway station, buying bananas on the way. Caught the train (though the reservation actually began at Toba) but was soon in trouble as the JR train had to go over a non-JR track requiring a surcharge not covered by the JR pass. Didn't pay, so had to take a detour on JR lines by getting off at Tsu and taking a small train to link with the main train to Nagoya. Arrived at Nagoya at 12.53 pm instead of 11.20 am, just seven minutes before the train to Matsumoto departed. Had reserved seats but in a smoking carriage, but not too bad though as only a few people smoked. Some rain on the way but not in Matsumoto. Arrived about 3 pm.

Got information and booked a ryokan at the tourist information office, then walked to the ryokan, which took about seven minutes. No air-conditioner, but a fan; the lady provided a welcome ice-cream! Had a rest, then walked to the castle but didn't go in. From there to the 'Kaichi Gakko', one of the first primary schools in Japan, established in 1873. An old parsonage nearby (must have been a missionary school).

Walked back to town. Saw a street procession of a 'band' and two dancing girls. Then watched an ice sculpting competition on a bridge - got free pineapple chunks, a balloon and drinks for voting for the best sculpture! Had a chat with a group (family?) from New York. Then to the centre of town, buying fast food and back to the hotel. Had a Japanese bath - the water was very hot!

Expenses:

- Sports drink (2 l), bread, jam ¥699+- Carrots ¥100
- Entrance fee (primary school) ¥310
- Japanese dim sums x 8 ¥400
- Dinner: 3 dishes + vegetable cakes ¥1176

- Hotel: ¥3600 pp per night x 2 nights

14 Saturday

Rained heavily during the night. And it rained all day as well but no wind so not too bad. The temperature reading in town said only 22°C.

To Matsumoto Castle first (¥520 for castle and museum). Many people there. Able to go to the top floor. Then to the museum; very interesting - skeleton of a large deer, model of an old town, model samurai.

Then down to the town centre, buying dim sums (¥200) on the way - and avoiding the showers! Tourist centre closed for lunch so looked through the food section of a department store. Then down to a lovely park, back to a temple, doll shop, a row of old houses (converted into shops), along the river shop-stalls and back to the hotel for a rest.

Later, visited the castle again to see it lit up, looked for a restaurant but ended up at the department store again. As it was then nearly 8 pm and closing time, many foods were reduced to 50% of original prices. Then back to the ryokan and dinner in the room. Still raining.

Expenses:

- Castle and museum ¥520
- Dim Sums ¥200
- French bread ¥241
- Bananas (7) ¥180
- Baby carrots ¥100
- Dinner dishes (4) ¥939

15 Sunday

Not raining in the morning! Left about 8.45 am to catch the 9.11 am express to Nagano which took less than one hour. Passed many rivers with lots of dirty water, probably due to the heavy rains.

After putting the backpack in a locker (¥300) and asking for information, walked for about 30 minutes to the large Buddhist temple. Ate an early lunch there. Hot when the sun was shining, otherwise conditions OK.

Returned to the station and enquired about staying the night in Nagano but no low price accommodation available. So, set off for Tokyo - sat in a non-reserved car as it was non-smoking. Took about two hours. Got off at Ueno station and walked to a small ryokan on the other side of the park (¥8400 + tax). I remember the owner had an autographed photo of Pete Seegar on the wall.

Had a shower and walked back to the Ueno station area and had dinner in a restaurant.

Expenses:

- Ice-cream ¥100
- Second sports drink (2 l) - Ueno ¥210
- Bread ¥189
- First sports drink (2 l) - Nagano ¥312!!
- Bananas ¥300
- Dinner ¥1500
- Hotel (pp) ¥4410

16 Monday

Air-conditioner on all night but got cold; kept getting up to turn it down. Slept in a little, getting up at about 9.30 am! Walked to Ueno station at about 10 am and took a local train to Tokyo station. Put the backpack in a locker (¥300) then took a train one station further and walked around the Ginza area.

Back to Tokyo station and found a basement shopping mall. Had lunch there (¥750+). Sat next to an elderly Japanese couple and had a friendly 'chat'.

Then caught the 3.33 pm Narita Airport express, taking just under one hour. Checked in immediately - window seat. Did some shopping then boarded the plane which departed almost on schedule.

Expenses:

- Lunch ¥787
- Gifts for Nadine (pencil ¥300+, key ring ¥350+)

Landed in Hong Kong about 9:15 pm; home at 11:15 pm having managed to just get the last bus [?airport or university].

17 Tuesday

(?) Passengers take over a HK and Yaumati ferry at Peng Chau, angry over poor service.

18 - 21 Wednesday - Saturday

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21 Friday

Hottest day since 1990 at 35.1°C.

22 Sunday

Typhoon Sam scores a direct hit over Sai Kung; not very powerful but strong winds and heavy rain here driving rain through the air-conditioner into the [master] bedroom. In the evening, a China Airlines MD-11 bursts into flames on landing at Chek Lap Kok.

23 Monday

Heavy rain most of the day. Everything closed down in the morning. Many roads on campus also closed; like a maze finding the way around. Had to get more petrol. Had a dental appointment in the morning but cancelled because of the storm. New gas cooker set up in the afternoon. Not feeling well - first a fever (I think) then felt hot.

24 Tuesday

More rain. Black rain warning up early in the morning but down later so managed to get a swim - water nice and cool. Many angry, frustrated passengers at the airport; the police had to be called in. In Taiwan, an MD-90 of an internal airline bursts into flames on landing.

25 - 26 Wednesday - Thursday

-

27 Friday

Again wet. Nadine and V back in the evening. Watched a TV programme on which country place is first to greet the new millennium.

28 Saturday

Heavy rain in the evening. Walked to work! Watched live on TV the ABs lose to the Wallabies 28 - 7!

29 - 30 Sunday - Monday

-

31 Tuesday

To the dentist - changed to Dr Chan - and had three roots from an upper tooth extracted (\$240).

SEPTEMBER

1 Wednesday

Sent cheques for Leonie's autumn fees to UCSD.

2 - 6 Thursday - Sunday

-

6 Monday

Dinner at the Mirimar hotel in the evening with Pan Pacific manager Siew (?) from Singapore.

7 Tuesday

To the dentist at lunchtime for cleaning and de-scaling. Meeting in the afternoon. Got slightly wet coming home in the evening; may have been the cause of a slight cold that developed.

8 Wednesday

Felt miserable most of the day, but still went for a swim. Government departments on standby all night for possible 9.9.99 computer malfunctions.

9 Thursday

No reports of computer failures.

10 - 11 Friday - Saturday

—

12 Sunday

Temperature up to 36°C in parts today. Two male hikers died of suspected heatstroke.

13 - 15 Monday - Wednesday

—

16 Thursday

Typhoon York hits HK. No 10 signal raised at 6:45 am, the first time since 1983. I was up from 3 am trying to contain water / flooding. The eye of the typhoon crossed south of HK then moved towards Macau. To the office about 4 pm to check if the office was OK. It was!

17 - 19 Friday - Sunday

—

20 Monday

Nadine to dentist again after school to get fillings replaced. Australian troops arrive in East Timor.

21 Tuesday

A massive 7.6 earthquake hit Taiwan last night. Many buildings collapsed including high-rises.

22 - 24 Wednesday - Friday

—

25 Saturday

Public holiday for the mid-autumn festival. Nadine overnight at a friend's in Kowloon.

26 Sunday

Tropical Storm Cain scores a direct hit on HK. The #8 signal up but the storm not as strong as the previous typhoon.

27 Monday

Nadine has swimming sports finals. She comes second in the 50 m breaststroke. My swim good; water cool after the storm.

28 - 30 Tuesday - Thursday

—

OCTOBER

1 Friday

Public holiday for National Day; also the 50th anniversary of the PRC. At work all day. The Rugby World Cup begins in Wales; live on TV.

2 Saturday

Watched NZ vs Tonga at 10 pm; NZ won.

3 - 5 Sunday - Tuesday

—

6 Wednesday

C H Tung gives his annual policy address, with an emphasis on the environment.

7 Thursday

—

8 Friday

Claims that C H Tung told the democrats to drop June 4th commemorations!

9 Saturday

—

10 Sunday

Watched a replay of NZ Rugby world cup win against England 30 - 16.

11 - 15 Monday - Friday

—

16 Saturday

Watched France beat Fiji.

17 Sunday

Remembrance day. Also Chung Yuen festival; about 100 hill fires as the weather was very dry. Another Thai elephant's leg injured from a land mine. A Chinese airliner hits severe turbulence approaching HK.

18 Monday

Public holiday. All day at the office working on Integrated Science Book 3.

19 Tuesday

Cooler. Very good swim; did one mile, the first for the year. Nadine on a mid-term break.

20 Wednesday

To the dentist to get a filling smoothed out to enable dental floss to be used.

21 - 22 Thursday - Friday

—

23 Saturday

Australia beat SA in extra time to reach the Rugby world cup finals. At work all day.

24 - 30 Sunday - Saturday

—

31 Sunday

In the evening, Nadine out for Halloween.

NOVEMBER

1 Monday

NZ beaten by France!! (?) An Egypt Air 767 crashes into the sea off Nantucket.

2 Tuesday

The government announces agreement with Disney for a theme park in HK.

3 Wednesday

—

4 Thursday

NZ loses to SA in the play-off for third place!

5 Friday

First teaching practice visits. Watched “A midsummer night's dream” at Shatin College.

6 Saturday

In a referendum, Australia rejects becoming a republic. Australia wins the Rugby world cup, defeating France 35 - 12.

7 Sunday

—

8 - 11 Monday - Thursday

Teaching practice visits.

12 Friday

Rain today.

13 Saturday

Overcast. Shatin College fair.

14 Sunday

—

15 - 17 Monday - Wednesday

Teaching practice visits. Monday and Wednesday: US and China agree on terms for China's entry to the WTO. All week re-writing two Brunei Book 3 units. Arrests of people selling illegal fuel.

18 - 19 Thursday - Friday

–

20 Saturday

24°C. Last part-time day educational psychology class. First run of the season - 10% faster than the previous best time. Chinese University open day.

21 Sunday

The Macau F3 Grand Prix race today.

22 Monday

–

23 Tuesday

“Broken tooth” triad leader in Macau jailed for 15 years.

24 - 26 Wednesday - Friday

–

27 Saturday

24°C. Harder run - track through the first part of the run overgrown and covered with broken or uprooted trees. Got lost a little in this part - both ways.

28 - 29 Sunday - Monday

–

30 Tuesday

Cooler at about 18°C. Last day for swimming; OK, did 32 lengths. Riots in Seattle during a WTO meeting there.

DECEMBER

1 Wednesday

23°C. US troops and PLA in a joint rescue training exercise in HK.

2 Thursday

—

3 Friday

A little rain. The CFA overturns its previous pre-NPC decision on right-of-abode and says illegals must be returned to China. Those affected riot and attack police. Nadine to school for a Millennium ball.

4 Saturday

20°C. Run quite fast but second half tough. (Subtracted 3 minutes off my time for giving directions to people and to have a poo!)

5 - 10 Sunday - Friday

Felt miserable all week - sore throat, cold (?) and asthma.

9 Thursday

To Shatin College Christmas concert. Nadine in a flute group.

11 Saturday

23°C. Run not too bad, but off off 5 minutes - 3 for a 'toilet stop' and 2 for a forest path.

12 Sunday

—

13 Monday

Feeling a bit 'crook' again. To Shatin College in the evening to see Nadine's teachers.

14 - 15 Tuesday - Wednesday

—

16 Thursday

Went to the clinic to get more prednisilone tablets to deal with troublesome asthma. Cooler. Shatin College sports day.

17 Friday

Leonie arrives in the afternoon; Nadine to the airport to meet her. Drizzle all day.

18 Saturday

16°C. Drizzle most of the day. Very good run; four minutes faster than last year.

19 - 20 Sunday - Monday

–

21 Tuesday

V, Leonie and Nadine off to somewhere for a holiday without telling me! Much colder.

22 - 24 Wednesday - Friday

–

25 Saturday

[Christmas day] About 16°C. Run a bit tough; forgot to take my watch so used the station clock to time the run. V, Leonie and Nadine back in the evening.

26 Sunday

–

27 Monday

Holiday. At the office all day. Gavin arrives late evening.

28 - 29 Tuesday - Wednesday

–

30 Thursday

Air pollution reaches record levels in some places (e.g. Tung Chung 160+). Gisborne and the Chatham Island in the news re “millennium” celebrations.

31 Friday

–

Hikes: 1999 - 2000

1999

1	20/11	Station → (4) (54') → shortcut (1.22) → Ma On Shan roundabout (1.40) → station	2:06
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2	27/11	CC entrance → [lead mine pass] (1.04) → loop to Grassy Hill and road → 5B	2:37
3	4/12	Station → (4) (50') → Kowloon peak (1.54) → Shatin/river → station	2:59
4	11/12	CC entrance → [lead mine pass] (1.03) → top of reservoir (1.18) → road (??) (2.12) → 5B	(3:01)
5	18/12	Tai Wo → Cloudy Hill (42) → first reservoir → family walk → Hok Tau reservoir → Cloudy Hill (2.24) → Tai Wo park	2:52
6	25/12	Station → (4 ridge) → Pyramid Peak → Ma On Shan → station	3:13

2000

7	1/1	5B → (7) (1.03) → Tai Mo Shan (2.06) → lead mine pass (2.40) → 5B	3:48
8	8/1	Tai Mei Tuk → Nam Chung → Peak (1.50) → Hok Tau res (2.30) → Cloudy Hill (3.20) → Tai Wo park	4:15!!
9	15/1	Tai Mei Tuk → Brides pool (47) → village (1.02) → Sam A Chung → Tai Chi Wo (1.49) → fire lookout (2.25) → Brides pool (2.42) -->Tai Mei Tuk	3:33
-	22/1	– (back injury)	
10	29/1	Plover cove → grave (56) → ridge (1.35) → stream (2.21) → Brides pool (2.54) → Tai Mei Tuk	4:00
11	5/2	Sai Kung → Tai Mong Tsai Rd (end) → (3) peak (1.00) → KLH (1.18) → Ma On Shan (turnoff) (2.22) → (4) → station	3:45
12	12/2	CC entrance → (7) (1.01) → top of reservoir (1.18) → road to base of Needle Hill → Needle Hill (2.15) → (7) via Grassy Hill? (3.03) → Faculty	4:01
13	19/2	Station → (4) (57) → Kowloon Peak (~2.40) → Shatin	(3:50)
14	26/2	Station → (4) (50) → Kowloon Peak (1.55) → Beacon Hill → Tai Po Road (3.18) → road to Tai Wo	4:02
15	4/3	KLH → Sham Chrng → Hoi Ha (1.30) → Tai Tan (2.18) → TV tower (3.55?) → Village	(4:34)
16	11/3	CC entrance → (7) (1.00) → waterfall turnoff (1.43) → Kadoorie farm (2.25) → Fanling	4:16

17	18/3	Sai Kung → Pak Tam Chung (31) → end of res road (1.13) → (2) hill (2.08) → Pak Tam Au road (2.45) → Stage 3 → KLH	4:59
18	25/3	Station → (4) → (Buffalo pass) → Sai Kung	–
19	01/4	KLH → road → village (21.5) → loop around hill (1.14!) → Hoi Ha Rd (1.42) → Tai Tan → corner (2.22) → track to Cheung Sheung → Jacob's ladder → KLH	3:56
20	8/4	CC entrance → (7) (1.01) → loop to pass ? (2.01) → (7) (2.06) → Faculty	2:54