

Kia Ora from New Zealand
By Jennie Rogers

Two months ago my husband and I packed up 4 suitcases and moved to New Zealand. We had always talked about doing this for a few years after he retired but circumstances changed and we accelerated our move. New Zealand is in dire need of physicians so my husband got a job as a Family Physician in Wanganui on the North Island. One of our priorities was a town that had an aquatic center.



Boy, does Wanganui ever have an aquatic center! I joined the Splash Center the first week we got here and the Wanganui Masters a few days later. The Splash Center has two 25 meter lane pools, a giant water slide, a learning pool, a hydrotherapy pool (a big hot tub!), sauna, steam room and a fitness center. On the same campus there are basketball/netball facilities, gymnastics facilities, a roller skating rink and a multitude of other sports available.

It's been a little different swimming with this Masters team as compared to the Asheville Masters whom I swam with for 12 years. First of all we swim 3 days a week (as opposed to the 5 days I did in Asheville). The fittest swimmers do about 2500-2700 meters per practice (I used to do about 3200- 3400 yards). Here's the scary part- I went from swimming in one of the slower lanes to swimming in the fastest lane now! Not really because I'm all that fast but because I am probably the most fit (Thank you Asheville Masters!)

Like all Masters swimmers I have been lucky enough to meet, the Wanganui Masters are wonderful, fun people and they welcomed me right away. After our Sunday morning practices we meet and have a “cuppa” and a “biscuit”. (Coffee or tea and a cookie) Our Open Water swimming starts next month. We swim in the Wanganui River. I asked one of the swimmers if I have to worry about any “critters” in the water and she said “nah, the only thing I've ever seen is a dead sheep”.

We are gearing up for the New Zealand Masters Games in February. Every other year they are held on the North Island in Wanganui (the off years are on the South Island in Dunedin). This is for the whole country and not only is there swimming but about 30 other events including lawn bowling, darts, dog handling, euchre, petanque and woodchopping. (I had to “Google” a few of the events.)

I have been keeping a blog and posting a lot of pictures of our adventures and if anyone is interested in following it you are more than welcome to. Here is the link:
<http://dropeverythingandmovetonewzealand.blogspot.co.nz/>

If anybody is coming this way here is my Email: nattydoc@yahoo.com

HAPPY SWIMMING!
from JENNIE ROGERS