



Christmas Letter 2001



December 5th already, which means that Christmas is just around the corner. I mentioned this to one of the students on my "Build Your Own Computer" course the other night and he responded by saying "huh, tell me about it!"... This was not what I was expecting him to say as he is the vicar of the local church. Although Christmas is an enjoyable time for most of us, we ought not to forget that it is also a very busy time for some.

Alison is busy with work at the moment, helping with all the Advent activities that take place in a First school at Christmas. It would seem that the role of the Classroom Assistant is becoming more important. With the ever-increasing demands of the national curriculum, children are expected to know so much these days at such an early age (at least it would appear that way to me, from what I remember of my school days).

It has been a big year for celebrations with Mum and Dad's Golden Wedding Anniversary, my sister Elaine's 25th Wedding Anniversary plus our nephew Alexander's 21st and niece Natasha's 18th Birthdays. Elaine's 25th was a grand occasion with a champagne reception held in a marquee on the back lawn. Richard captured the event on video, so I will attempt to edit some of the highlights on to another tape and perhaps publish a few photos on the web page www.hannafore.btinternet.co.uk over Christmas... all being well.

No big holidays this year, having "pushed the boat out" on holidays last year as they say. We did however, spend a couple of weeks in August at a friend's caravan at Filey (Thank-you David). The weather was not too bad overall, so we were able to spend a couple of days on the beach, rock pooling on Filey Brigg, walking and visiting local attractions (including the Blue Peter Roadshow!). Richard in particular was most impressed with the local theme park - Flamingo Land. Not many Flamingos in evidence, but plenty of "white-knuckle" rides. I suppose I am getting a bit old for that sort of thing myself (being the wrong side of 40 and all that), but I do enjoy a good roller coaster!

Edward went on Cub camp at Barnswood near Leek. He said that he enjoyed the experience, but is not particularly keen to go again. He has joined Scouts now and still goes to the local Swimming Club on Saturday mornings. Although not as keen as Richard, Edward at least swims well enough to get out of trouble if ever the need should arise. Christmas music has been heard coming from Edward's bedroom since mid-November and much thought has been given the Christmas list this year, with several re-drafts... lets just hope that Santa comes up with the goods!

Richard has settled in well at Alleynes High School. Now in year 10, he has started his GCSE courses. He was selected to represent his school in a "Media Challenge" event at RAF Stafford, with his team of intrepid reporters winning the Radio Report section. Richard is now the tallest member of the household at around 6'2" and showing no signs of slowing down. He also wins the prize for having largest, smelliest trainers in the house (a mere size 13)!

Business as usual for me at work at the moment, although I did get a trip up to Edinburgh in November - which made a bit of a change. Alison is involved with an NWR (National Women's Register) group based in Trentham. This year, they hosted a conference with a potteries theme entitled "Women Going to Pot". I was able to assist with establishing a web-site where you may find a picture of Alison if you look carefully trentham.nwr.users.btopenworld.com.

Sadly, in the last year, we have lost my Uncle Frank, Uncle Mansell, Aunt Jess and Alison's Aunt Mary. With Christmas being a family time, our thoughts are with their families at this time of year.

Our best wishes to everyone this Christmas and may you have a happy and prosperous New Year, from Nigel, Alison, Richard & Edward (Holmes).

P.S. We are always happy to hear from old friends and family, so why not get in touch?

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