

Crawley Christmas Newsletter 2016

Plus ça change...

Well it's been quite a year of surprises hasn't it? However, here in the Crawley household much has remained the same. We are both in the same jobs, living in the same house etc, but for us the big change has been Joseph and Daniel moving back home. Oh how we missed them when they first left home, but then we kind of got used to it. The stuff they took away with them seemed to have multiplied when they moved back. Dan in particular, left with a guitar and came back with a whole orchestra of stringed instruments and a drum kit. It became abundantly clear, that the two of them would need the extra space of the big bedroom, so the two of us squeezed ourselves into the smallest bedroom, which, as it turns out, has been a blessing as it is much cosier and quieter.

Quelle horreur!

The biggest shock of having everyone home has been the gargantuan and inexhaustible amount of washing. The best bits ... Joseph cooking for us at least once a week (he's a fantastic cook and there is nothing quite like coming home late from work to find that someone has already prepared the evening meal)... lively and funny conversations at meal times, even if sometimes they get a bit heated.



Voyage, Voyage

Joseph has been quite a festival goer this year. He spent a few weeks at the Nowhere Festival in Spain in June and then helped run the catering at another festival in Wales later in the year. At the moment he is working in a pub and also taking driving lessons while he takes a year out of uni. He has also bought a push bike on Ebay and is planning on launching himself onto an unsuspecting North London, once he has done some training.

Fait Accompli

Daniel graduated in July and happily started working as a runner for a TV facility in October. It's looking like



he may be getting a promotion sooner rather than later, so watch this space. In addition, he is still the drummer in comedy rock band "Metal Castle", which necessitates frequent trips back down to Hastings and environs for band practice and gigs. His hair is looking quite "metal" too, with him sporting long and flowing locks. It's been great having him back in the New Life Church band too, playing drums and banjo (not at the same time).

Joie de Vivre

Our James is such a people person. Now in his second year of 6th Form, he has joined up with a group of friends to form a band. They have played several venues locally, including a vegan sausage festival (don't ask - only in North London!). He has also started to build up his D.J. business quite a bit, something he really enjoys. After Sixth Form, he is hoping to find work in sound engineering and maybe do some travelling.

Allons Y

All five of us, plus James' girlfriend Ella, had a wonderful holiday in Tuscany in August. We were staying near Lucca, about 20 miles east of Pisa in the most beautiful holiday home, which had been the family chapel of a big, country house. How amazing to breakfast on the terrace, looking at a view of olive groves and cypress trees, eating freshly laid eggs brought by the landlord. We loved the area, the mountains, the coast, the little picturesque towns and villages and our trips to Florence and Pisa. Pisa - hilariously around the famous torre



pendente there were dozens of people shouting “up a bit, right a bit” in multiple languages, hoping to get that perfect shot of their loved one holding up the leaning tower. Florence – packed with tourists, yet still so breathtakingly beautiful. We had a whole day of renaissance art, visiting the Academia (Michelangelo’s statue of David etc.) and the Uffizi (Botticelli, Titian, Caravaggio). Felt a little overcome at all the culture, a bit like a romantic poet doing the grand tour. We will definitely have to go back.

C’est la Vie

Sarah – School has been busy. For the last two years we have been on heightened tension, expecting the Ofsted phone call. It finally came in the second week of December, at the end of a very difficult term, during which several members of staff had been bereaved. We are not yet allowed to publish the result, but we can say that we were very pleased and are thrilled that it is all over.

In March, I reached a major milestone birthday and Phil bought me a bicycle. Having done the very helpful Islington Council 1-1 cycle training (for free!) I have felt confident enough to cycle in London. It’s been the best present ever and it has revolutionised Phil and I spending time together, as from time to time we cycle into Central London together on a Saturday (lots to do). My actual birthday was very special with a visit to the Monet gardens exhibition at the Royal Academy, afternoon tea, and meals out with family and friends.

I have also got involved in a new venture at church called ECOS – English Conversation on Sundays – a free conversation class for those wanting to improve their English (of which there are many in London) by speaking with real native speakers. It’s very interesting. One week I could be speaking to a computer programmer from the Ukraine and the next a Japanese Kabuki actor interested in finding out about Shakespeare. Apart from ECOS and the cycling, it’s the usual stuff, church, French conversation etc. and Phil and I having the opportunity to go on more dates together – theatre, gigs, exhibitions etc.

Zut Alors! (running out of French phrases!)

Phil – I’ve just finished my fourteenth year at Root6; London’s leading supplier of technical equipment and services to the Film & TV industry. It’s been a busy year but no jobs abroad (unless you count a couple of trips to our Glasgow office?). The TV world is going through a step-change in technologies with ultra-high definition and high dynamic range becoming more than just buzz words in 2016. I’m still designing and installing things, running training courses and done a bit more presenting this year. Music recommendation! Liz Vice’s CD “There’s a Light”, Radiohead’s “Moon Shaped Pool” & Billy Bragg’s “Shine a Light” – top stuff!

Les Parents

Sarah’s parents are managing quite well still, despite Brenda having had a fall earlier in the year, which kept her at home for quite a few weeks. Having given up caravanning now, they still managed a week away in a holiday cottage in North Devon which they enjoyed immensely, meeting up with old friends. We are looking forward to spending Christmas with them in Somerset.

Phil’s Mum, Rosemary, enjoys walking with her sweet natured dog Bonnie, although the length of the walks is shortening as Bonnie is getting old now. A local primary school also benefits from Rosemary’s support as she helps a couple of Year 6 pupils with their reading and writing.



Au Revoir

Well it just remains for us to wish you all a very merry Christmas and all the very best for 2017.

With much love,

Phil, Sarah, Joseph, Daniel and James.