

Bridge House
Red Shute Hill
Hermitage
RG18 9QW
December 2005

Merry Christmas to everyone...

Our annual gazette:

Last Christmas, Tim and Jo announced their engagement to be married, and the arrangements for the happy event are well in place for next July.

Tim dominated the family headlines this year when we discovered that he needed a heart valve replacement in May. A very worrying time, but he has made a remarkable recovery and is now well on his way to regaining his full health again. It seems that the illness he had nine years ago, just before he sat his "A" Levels, was very probably Rheumatic Fever. His illness was then a mystery, and was never properly diagnosed, (but Rheumatic Fever has been eradicated in Europe for the last 50 years!). One of the classic symptoms with Rheumatic Fever is that it usually results in damage to the heart valves which show up 9 years later (in Tim's case almost to the day). I can't praise the Heart Clinic in Leeds General Infirmary too much. The National Health Service comes in for a lot of criticism from the UK press, but the professionalism of the staff and the dedicated resources that swung into action for Tim were unbelievable.

Eve continues to enjoy her work for the West Midlands Police, doing intervention work (trying to reduce criminal behaviour!) with young people. She has a lovely apartment in Malvern with her partner, Richard, and their two cats: "Guinness" and "The Black Cat" (how imaginative!).

Jon is doing well working in the Oxford University Press and is doing some impressive web design for his mother's school and his father's business. Kerry and Jon have made their home in Bicester extremely comfortable for themselves and their two young ginger cats "Lenny" and "Lara".

Talking of cats - while Tim was in hospital we had Tim's terrible two: "Molly" and "Daisy". They loved the freedom of our garden for three months, but just a couple of days before Tim came to retrieve them, Molly decided she was going to explore the surrounding countryside and managed to lose herself. We were distraught - having successfully looked after his cats for 3 months, and just as Tim came to collect them, we lost one. We hastily produced a "Lost Cat" bill-poster and did a letter drop in the entire neighbourhood.

Amazingly, we started to receive calls from the neighbours, and a trail of sightings was reported. Then after a long search rattling cat biscuits and shouting for Molly in the woods behind the houses up the hill - we heard that distinctive meeeow! She was reunited to the great relief of us all! But the following day she decided that living the life of a feral was for her and disappeared again. After her next recapture, she wasn't trusted outdoors again until she was returned home to Wakefield.



Kerry, Jon, Eve and Richard at Bridge House in May 2005...

Mike's last year's Christmas present (a days experience driving tanks) ...



We pray for the continued recovery after chemotherapy of Mike's brother's wife Stella. Janice's mother continues to enjoy good health and will be joining us in Hermitage this Christmas. We hope that you all have a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Love to you all,
Janice & Mike