

Bridge House  
Red Shute Hill  
Hermitage  
RG18 9QW


Happy Christmas, everyone,

We hope that you, your family, and your friends are all safe and well during these strange times.

December 2020

After last Christmas, we started the year as normal in France taking our grandchildren to their skiing lessons ... which was before the virus had started to wreak its havoc and limit our activities.

Since then we have mostly been isolating ourselves at home, but as it happens, it hasn't been so hard to keep ourselves amused and active. Both Mike and Janice have continued to do their home-office work (paid and unpaid respectively) and we have been doing things which we would not have been doing otherwise ... we bought an apple press and for the first time made cider, we bottled gallons of plum jam and apple sauce following a bumper harvest of apples and plums in the garden,



Olivia, aged 3,  
on her first ever  
outing on skis



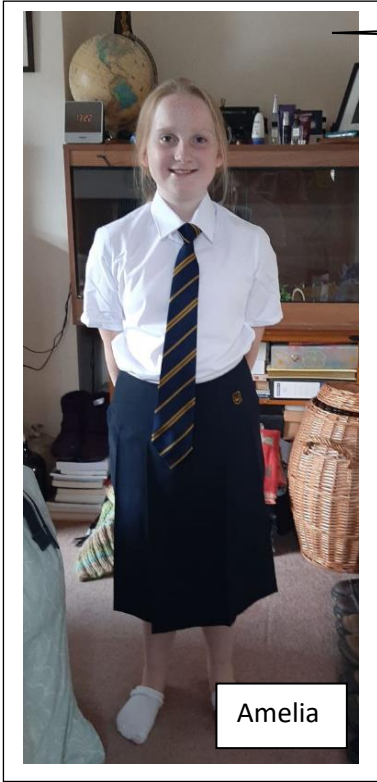
... we have done lots of projects in the garden such as laying (by hand!) tons of new slate chippings and gravel, we have laid the foundations for a new greenhouse (which seems to be taking an age to be delivered), prepared an area for a new heating-oil tank, constructed a new flight of concrete steps to gain access to the oil-tank, as well as all the other regular weeding, pruning and tending that is needed in the garden.

Sadly, we sold Janice's cherished MG sports car and replaced it with a much more practical and eco-friendly all-electric Renault Zoe. The Zoe will be the workhorse for use around Hermitage leaving our Land Rover for trips to France. Unfortunately, as things have happened, both have hardly moved out of the garage this year.

Keeping in touch with the family, for the most part this year, has been with the use of on-line meeting tools and we have been having regular 'Challenges' and 'Family Quizzes', which have brought a new dimension to the way we interact and has given the grandchildren new challenges to compose presentations of questions and answers.

We can hardly believe that the older grandchildren have now started secondary school, and even the youngest have also started school...

Showing off new uniforms



Amelia



Isobelle

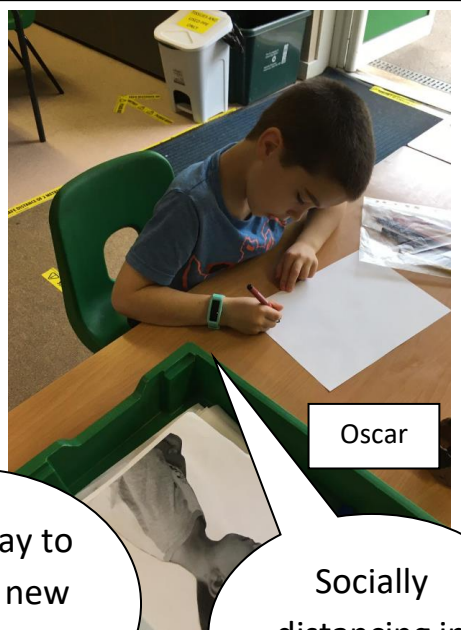


Wilfred



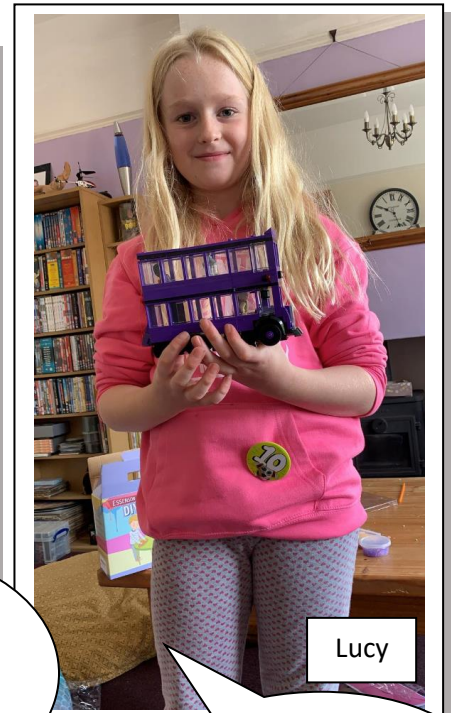
Olivia

On the way to school, a new experience



Oscar

Socially distancing in Year 4



Lucy

Another year older

Until next year, we wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy, safe 2021.

Mike & Janice