

## 2013 At Last – A Summer

Yes, even this far north we enjoyed a proper summer for a change, although it seemed as if winter would never end as we drifted into April with nightly frosts.

It's been an enjoyable year, for the most part, so let's dive straight in...

**Ian & Lynne** are taking great pleasure watching their granddaughter Adia grow & develop. She's toddling around the house spouting gibberish most of the time, but the number of recognisable words is increasing daily. Lynne looks after her twice a week and I get to see her if I manage to work at home on the right days.

Ian's work situation is unchanged, as is Lynne's, with the main difference that Lynne is set to retire on her birthday next October. So now I have to put up with her saying things like "this is the last November I'll be at work", or "I don't have anymore appraisals to do now". I'm just jealous!

We had a fortnight in Madeira back in April, which was marred only by Lynne deciding to take a dive into a (thankfully dry) levada\* and headbut the mountain during one of our walks. Fortunately she was more shaken than hurt, but developed a lovely black eye 24hrs later. I kept having to resist the urge to tell people it was nothing to do with me for the rest of the holiday!

We also had a late break in September to visit Peter at a Eurocamp site near Paris, of which more anon.



*Ian & Lynne chill out*

Lynne's Mum is still settled in her rest home, but getting a bit less sure about who is visiting her unless it's Lynne or me. Her Dad is increasingly forgetful and very reliant on his partner, Joan, who is currently in hospital recovering from an operation to repair an aneurysm. She's doing well but Lynne is having to shoulder the responsibility for her Dad until Joan gets home.



*Ben & Adia*

**Ben & Heather** are juggling childcare with their work. Heather does music therapy two or three sessions a week and Ben is now half way through his PhD. This means he has passed the point where my limited knowledge of metallurgy ends, and the only useful assistance I can offer is spelling and grammar checking of his reports.

The main event, however, is that Heather is expecting baby #2 next March. All is well so far and the scan has revealed that it's a little boy. As before, they have decided on a name (they claim) but are keeping us all in suspense. As a result the bump is known as 'Bob' in our house.

\* A channel to collect and distribute rainwater (think of it as guttering built around the mountain)

**Susie & Liam** are well settled in Sheffield and Susie is now on a secondment to the forensic accountancy section of her company. This seems to entail finding out where the money went – perhaps I should ask her to do a job for me and find out where mine goes.

Incredibly they have been to 9 weddings this year, and have started being recognised by the photographers. But still no sign of their own, unless Liam has a cunning plan that we don't know about.

**Peter** came back from his wanderings in January, but didn't stay at home for too long. He was off to Eurocamp at the end of March to work at one of their sites in France as a 'courier' (ie. cleaner, labourer, customer service, etc.). The job is classed as an apprentice, which means they can get away with paying below minimum wage. Although his French hasn't improved he has now got a girlfriend, Emily, who was working at the same site. She's from Newcastle, and is very amiable (and seldom lost for words).



*Peter*

After France he's been to Hong Kong with his travelling friends from last year, and is now in Iceland with Emily where they are going to spend a month working on a dairy farm. It leaves me breathless just listing his movements!

So that completes our roundup of the news, except to say we've just been blessed with a



*Adia*

free bottle of champagne (Bollinger!) courtesy of Ocado. It found its way into our online delivery, but not onto the bill, and when we told them of the error they said we could keep it! Now we just need something to celebrate.... (shouldn't be difficult 😊)

And so, as the robin of opportunity pecks the suet of destiny from the bird feeder of hope, and next door's cat of fate pounces out of the bushes of eternity... I notice that we've come to the end of another newsletter.

It only remains to wish you all a joyful Christmas, and a happy and healthy New Year.

With love from,

Ian & Lynne & the family