

## 2009 – Another Year Older, Another Year Wiser?

As the festive season looms ever closer, a few words about our year.

Main events – in no particular order – have been three weddings (none of our children yet, although Susie was bridesmaid at one); our 30th wedding anniversary; Peter leaving for university; two very pleasant weeks away; and the diagnosis of a heart condition for Ian.

We had a lovely week in Madeira at the beginning of January. The weather was warm and sunny, which made the superb Christmas lights seem rather strange. On our return Ian had a 'funny do' in Manchester airport; which prompted a visit to the doctor, resulting in some tests and a diagnosis of angina. The good news is that he is now symptom-free since adopting a low fat diet, increasing exercise and losing some weight. So, although scary, this has prompted a healthier lifestyle.

Susie started her accountancy job in Sheffield in late January. She is kept busy with batches of exams and audits, but did manage to get on an audit for a company in Southport in April. She was to-ing and fro-ing with bridesmaid duties for a local friend until the wedding in August which was the last of the three we have enjoyed celebrating this year. Her weekends are divided between Sheffield and Birmingham, where boyfriend Liam lives now.



Ben continues to live in Southport and work for Autism Initiatives. He has recently started to do night work which he finds fits better with his social life and trips to London to see his girlfriend Heather, who is studying Music Therapy there. Sadly, though, his irregular shift patterns did not suit his dog, who really needed more routine and less time alone. So he reluctantly decided to re-home her and she is now happily settled with a recently bereaved (in the canine sense) milkman who takes her everywhere, and loves her.

We had a few days in the Lakes to celebrate our wedding anniversary in July and were able to meet up with various members of the family who were holidaying up there at the time.

Peter got his grades to do Music Technology at Huddersfield (his first choice) and is now settled in the student village at Storthes Hall, and already looking for accommodation for next year. He is enjoying student life and has managed to get a job in the student bar to help fund it. He even seems to be enjoying the course.



In October we had another sunny, warm week, this time in Tenerife with some friends, which was extremely welcome after the "Barbecue Summer" that we had endured.

Work goes on for us both much the same although Ian is working more often in Southport in order to cut down on travel. Lynne's' parents are both increasingly frail; Mum is settled in a care home and will be 90 next year.

In between all that, we have enjoyed gardening, walks in the Ribble valley and catching up with friends. We look forward to hearing your news too.



And so, as the sports car of destiny skids round the icy corner of time, straight into the oncoming gritting lorry of fate, it only remains to wish you all a very happy Christmas, and a prosperous New year (bankers permitting).

With much love,

Ian, Lynne, Ben, Susie & Peter

(Web version available with a few more pictures at [www.duckdown.me.uk/xmas09](http://www.duckdown.me.uk/xmas09))