

2012: A Year Like No Other

Thank you...

to everyone who has already sent us Christmas cards: we're sending out a few to close family but otherwise we're making another donation to WaterAid *in lieu* of cards; please accept this news roundup instead.

Phil's Ankle

The beginning of the year seemed to slip by quietly and uneventfully until a dramatic turn of events landed Phil off work for three months with his left ankle strapped up in a "Beckham Boot". You can read all about it on his blog at wp.me/pgrvb-ti: *The car didn't get me, but the cardboard did...* — to cut a longer story short, he skidded on a piece of cardboard at work and broke his ankle. The three months weren't wasted, however, as Phil used the time to carry out some long overdue updates to UKCBD, the UK Christian Bookshops Directory: christianbookshops.org.uk



Sue's Sabbatical

Not to be outdone by Phil taking three months off work, Sue did likewise in the autumn: from September to November she was on sabbatical. Unlike Phil's time out, though, Sue's was planned and we take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in making it possible, from those in the diocese who took on DDO responsibilities to those in the parishes who kept the respective shows on the road. She spent most of the time in Durham, working on her DThM thesis on the language of formation in ordination training. Staying with religious communities and worshipping at the Cathedral provided her with wonderful spiritual refreshment.



Silver Wedding

At the end of October — two thirds of the way through Sue's sabbatical — we celebrated our Silver Wedding Anniversary by booking into a hotel in Durham, from where we proceeded to sample the city's cuisine with visits to different restaurants

each evening, interspersed during the day by various outings. Another vote of thanks, this time to everyone who sent us cards, gifts and greetings on the day as well as for your friendship and support down the years.

GroomNews Christmas 2012

Repaint for Almost

And how better to celebrate that anniversary than to commission a repaint for *Almost*? If you've seen us out & about on the waterways in recent years, you'll have noticed that her paintwork leaves much to be desired. It was easy to keep on top of it when we lived afloat:

whenever the sun was shining, one of us would be out there with a paintbrush; but since she's been a holiday home rather than our main residence, it's been more of a challenge, so we've at last called in the professionals: as we write, she's with Colin & Kevin at Spiderworx (www.spiderworx.co.uk) undergoing a complete repaint and getting new signwriting.



Family News

Last year we reported the birth of our great-nephew, Oliver. This year it was wedding bells as niece Ruth married Ashley; and more wedding bells are planned for 2013: niece Claire to marry Simon, and nephew DJ to marry Nat: congratulations to one and all; only another 10 to go ... not sure how we'll ever keep up with them all! That's all on Phil's side of the family: over on Sue's side, Alison, her sister, has left her job as a chaplaincy assistant in Plymouth to set up on her own as a counsellor, Cuthbert Counselling — if you're in the south west and looking for counselling (or know someone else who is), do give her a shout: www.cuthbertcounselling.co.uk

Health & Fitness

Sue has added Aquafit and Pilates to her regular exercise routine alongside all the swimming, and the routines are paying off, keeping her supple and, on the whole, free from aches & pains in her joints: doing very well, in fact, for someone who hits the big 50 in 2013! Phil has resumed cycling to and from work, and since his work itself is a matter of constant physical activity, he too is pretty much as fit as ever.

Taking Time...

Christmas: it's all about God taking time out from eternity to be God with us. This year we've realised how important that is, and in the year ahead we're determined to take more time out to reconnect with our friends. We look forward to seeing you! For now, however, as always, this comes with our love, best wishes for Christmas and prayers for peace in 2013,

Phil & Sue