

The Cuttings · Christmas 2009

Tilly writes: This year has been as interesting as ever. I seem to have eaten too much and walked too little. This is of course due to the fact my wonderful owners have been rushing around and time to take me to my favourite woods and fields seems thin on the ground. I however think I have been ageing quite well and am looking forward to turning six this March. Despite the everyday life and endless evenings, I still find the need to bring every towel and blanket of mine into the living room and cause as much havoc as possible.



I was left behind for holidays with Gran and Pop while the rest of my family swanned off to Australia AND New Zealand. Laura tells me she had a fantastic time and that visiting friends is much better than boring A-levels. In case you were interested, she got 3 B's and an unexpected E in her AS and is continuing all four subjects on to A2. Although she has been busy, she managed to pass her driving test within 3 months of turning 17. For me, this means when I am good I get taken in the car to pick up my best friend Alfie and his owner and we drive to interesting places and have nice walks and the occasional swim if there is a lake! This is not to say by any means that I am always on my best behaviour. But these cold winter evenings mean less walks that I get off the lead... something about me not being able to be seen in the dark because of the colour of my fur. Hmpf. This means I am forced to wear this dorky flashing thing round my neck and I get embarrassed and feel the need to express this rather loudly when other dogs laugh at me in the street. Thankfully I have Laura who occasionally takes pity and gives me a mid-walk cuddle. I also like it when she sits on the floor with me and we watch TV, although we often both end up falling asleep.

I am looking forward to Christmas this year and hope to get some tasty treats and spend some quality time with Laura.... I intend to make a New Years resolution of catching up with all my buddies,

especially Carrie and Helen my God-owner. Then continue with my life: sleeping eating walking and cuddles. I hope to see you soon, and apologise in advance for my enthusiastic greeting, it just means I am excited to say hello.

Hannab writes: Hi all, so for me this year was the famous 'gap year'. It consisted mostly of continuing the part-time job in a clothes shop I'd had during school, taking on more hours and saving my pennies. This came in handy when I spent a week in Belfast and twelve days in Japan. Both were really great experiences, as I'd never been away on my own before and both were places I'd always wanted to visit. The Japan trip in particular was fantastic - mostly spent in Tokyo, taking in the sights and attempting to navigate around a country where I couldn't read the script, let alone speak the language! All much fun and can't wait to go back. I also performed in my last (for now) play with my Theatre, which was really enjoyable. Then in the summer of course we all jaunted back down to the southern hemisphere where we visited lots of friends, which was lovely as always. It does seem a bit like a second home! After that, I started university in Southampton, studying Film and English. I feel



relatively settled in now, although going back to writing essays after a year's hiatus was obviously a shock to the system! However, it feels good to be getting back into a bit of a pattern. Hope you're all well, and might see you in 2010!

Kay & Alastair write: They say the years go more quickly as you get older - if this year is anything to go by, this seems to be true. The time has flown past and it's hard to believe Christmas is almost upon us again. We look forward so much to receiving news of friends from all over the world. It is sad that we spend so little time together, but many of you are also busy with hectic schedules and we seem to keep in touch electronically rather than in person - which is a great shame. However we are very thankful for cheap overseas phone-calls and 'Facebook' contacts both locally and across the globe.

It has been a year of big numbers! In February Kay's dad celebrated his 80th birthday with a family lunch here in Copthorne and a few days later brother John celebrated his 50th with a party in Huntingdon at which Kay met up with friends she hadn't seen since teenage years! In August Alastair's mother celebrated her 80th on a holiday in India with Alastair's brother Ken and family. M&D C had a new great-grand-daughter this year too! Holidays for us seem to be either feast or famine!! After so little holiday or family time in the past 2 years, we were thrilled to spend Kay & Alastair's Silver Wedding Anniversary, as a family, in New Zealand during August. We rented a small house in Auckland and very much enjoyed catching up with friends there before travelling via Auntie Janet in Wellington, down to Queenstown on the South Island for the actual 25th anniversary itself. We then flew from Christchurch to Sydney, Australia, and stayed with several friends, some of whom we hadn't seen for a considerable time! Needless to say we all had a great time!

During the Autumn, we have been back to the usual frenetic lifestyle here in Copthorne - always rushing from one commitment to the next. At church Alastair has been mainly on his own this year as the assistant priest took 6 months off before sort of retiring; we still hosted a great confirmation service by the end of the year though. Alastair won the election as Chair of the House of Clergy in Chichester Diocese, a significant & unexpected accolade. A few weeks ago, we were very sad to say farewell to Kay's beloved Uncle Harold, who had however timed things in such a way that Kay completely missed an unexpected OFSTED at school - though her RE co-ordinator work managed to pass inspection in her absence!

We do value your prayers for us as a family - in recent weeks we have been first on the scene of a fatal accident (air-ambulance on The Green and all that), had an arson attack at church, and had a family bereavement, in addition to the usual pressures of church, family and work. And next year, more big numbers - we reach 100! (Or a Gross 144, if we count all 12 legs...)



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