

# *The Cutting's Christmas Letter 2011*

Henfield Vicarage, Church Lane, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9NY, United Kingdom · 0044 (0)1273 492017  
[acutting@mac.com](mailto:acutting@mac.com) · [kaycutting@mac.com](mailto:kaycutting@mac.com) · [hannabcutting@mac.com](mailto:hannabcutting@mac.com) · [lauracutting@mac.com](mailto:lauracutting@mac.com)



**Kay & Alastair write:** Family highlights of 2011 included 2 weddings & 2 significant birthdays. Firstly in January Alastair's sister's son Tim married Kate in Oxford. It is fun to see the next generation growing up & establishing families of their own – it seems like 5 minutes since they were toddlers! Then in May, Kay's brother John married Anne in Huntingdon – a long anticipated & very joyful day!

At the end of July Hannah celebrated her 21st – but there was no time for a party, as she was on a bus to Edinburgh to perform with her University theatre group at the Festival. We did manage to see her for a few hours for a celebration lunch and a glass of champagne. A few days later Kay's family all travelled to Edinburgh to celebrate her mum's 80th birthday – which was a great day, including watching Hannah's play and high tea at the Caledonian Hotel.

Life in parish, diocese, school & family seems to get ever busier, but we love it nonetheless! God is good. We are grateful in the current climate to have relatively stable employment – although after 15 years at the same school Kay has just had to reapply for her job. Due to reorganisation, Court Meadow will close in July 2012, and merge with another school forming a new generic all age special school. It's probably best not to count the number of hours Alastair works each week – and Kay has spent most of her school holidays trying to keep up to date with work for her Hearing Impairment course. There have sadly been very few days this year entirely dedicated to none work activities!

Holidays are eagerly anticipated as opportunities to sleep and recharge the batteries! We had a peaceful few days in Cricket St Thomas in February – during which time we received the shocking news of the Christchurch earthquake in New Zealand. It took a few days to establish that all our Kiwi friends were safe, and we have been thinking of them and praying for them as they seek to come to terms with the devastation caused.

In August we had a week in Edinburgh for the birthday celebrations and a week in Bristol staying in Laura's student house! It was good to see something of where she lives and to witness the spectacular balloon festival. In October we managed a few days in Bruges at half term – we had been in 1997 for Kay's parents Ruby wedding and had promised ourselves we would return. We had a great time wandering round the cobbled streets, and the sun came out which also helped!

**Hannah writes:** Hi everyone, I hope you've had a good year! My 2011 was busy but enjoyable. As always, my main extra-curricular passion lay in theatre. The year kicked off with my winning a *Curtain Call Award* (local 'Oscars' equivalent for amateur theatre in Hampshire, run by the Daily Echo paper) for *Best Supporting Actress in a Drama* for my role in *Rhinoceros* the year before, which was nice! I've appeared in several shows with *Southampton University Theatre Society* this year: I firstly participated in our *Showcase* in a 2-person short play based on 9/11, which was a very rewarding experience. Next was *The Spectacular Tales of Grimburrell*, an original family-friendly storytelling piece that we took up to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August. Having been to the Fringe many times as a spectator it was a huge joy and privilege to be



able to perform there, as well as an enormous challenge; we performed 17 days straight which was certainly an exercise in stamina (we're used to 4 night runs...). Furthermore, since my 21<sup>st</sup> and my grandmother's 80<sup>th</sup> birthdays fell during all this, 12 family members conceded to migrate up to Edinburgh for a week. It was lovely to have them all there, though terrifying when they ALL decided to come and see the play.



Back at Uni in October, I kicked off my Third Year theatrics with Chekhov's *The Seagull* playing *Arkadina*, which was the most challenging role I've ever played but an incredible experience; our small cast really became a family over those 6 weeks. Next I will be performing in Edward Bond's *Lear* in March at the *Nuffield Theatre* - I'll tell you how that went in next year's letter!

Acting aside, my final year at Uni is experiencing the anticipated step-up in work level and general stress; my dissertation is under way and I'm spending much more time in the library and visiting tutors. Questions about what I'm "going to do next" are increasingly frequent, and though I usually manage to evade answering, I know come June bills will need to be paid! I'm as intrigued as you to discover what I'll be writing about next Christmas... 2012 looks set to be an exciting year for me and the country as a whole, so here's hoping it delivers. I send you warm festive wishes and hope for a fantastic year!

**Laura writes:** Hi everyone and Happy Christmas! It seems like only a few months ago that I was writing last year's letter! Time flies when you are having fun I guess. This has been really true of this year, especially this term at university. Everyone warns you that second year is a big step up from first year but it still seems to come as a shock when it happens. It seems that busyness is something grounded in the Cutting family genes, and my life is no exception to that!

On top of my degree, I am continuing with my ballroom dancing - as promised in last year's letter, here are some photos of me in funny dresses, orange and dancing! I have gone up a level and found myself a wonderful ex-Cambridge student dance partner (Cambridge has one of the best teams in the country) and we have been dancing most days this term. It has really been paying off and showing in our results at competitions. I am also on the dancing committee and organise the end of term balls (in proper ballrooms with proper old fashioned dancing!) and am very involved with that. Furthermore, I am on a committee working for international students volunteering once a week making lunches and organising evening events for the students. I am starting to feel like I fit my degree around my extra curricular activities and not the other way around! I still spend a lot of time working and am hoping that my exams go well.

Even though I do so much, I am continually joyful about it and can't believe how many opportunities uni throws at me. I am living in a flat for the first time with 4 friends (like real grown-ups!) and loving it, despite hardly ever seeing my housemates as I am rarely in! I am still very lucky to be surrounded by so many amazing people. Looking forward to 2012 is fairly daunting, but I am really excited about what opportunities may come my way. I hope everyone has a good year and look forward to writing next years Christmas letter with even more exciting news!

*May God's grace sustain you through the coming year. With love, Alastair, Kay, Hannah & Laura.*

