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December 2016



Feliz Natal, Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year to One and All!

FAMILY HULME

Angela has managed to fit her flexible marking job with Cambridge UCLES, between more engaging activities such as gardening, more gardening ... and welcoming visitors.

Mike reluctantly accepted HoD at Kings College, curtailing his international speaking events and requiring him to find a more suitable accommodation for his longer week in London.

The annual Hulme gathering this year was at Mike and Gill's home in Norwich. Daughter Emma is now teaching in Saffron Walden and has got through her first hurdle, surviving the autumn term!

David had a bit of health scare in June, but with an improved lifestyle he is looking much leaner and healthier. Or it could be the entertaining of Natalie and James' three girls. David and Pat's other daughter Amy was one of our first visitors this year. Amy was intent on trying windsurfing. Sadly, she had to substitute paddleboarding for surfing due to lack of wind and waves.

Force feeding Amy local cuisine.



Glenn looking cool.

FAMILY RYAN

2016 has been an eventful year for Alan's daughter Sam, partner Tony and son Garak. The year didn't start so well, when Garak was diagnosed with Kawasaki Disease, an obscure auto immune disease, which can cause long term heart problems if not diagnosed quickly. Fortunately, a visiting specialist spotted the range of symptoms and was able to give suitable treatment. On leaving hospital, Garak was unable to rejoin Grandma Liz's creche, so Grandma Angela flew over to offer childcare for a few weeks.

Not content with one major trauma in their year, Sam & Tony moved house to Queensbury, Bradford, overlooking the Black Dyke Mills, home to the famous Brass Band. Days before they were due to move Garak was taken into hospital, so it was panic stations for Tony. Fortunately, Alan's son Glenn, Tony's sister and their friends Roy & Anna came to the rescue to help out with the move, on the day Garak came out of hospital. A truly traumatic experience. Glad to say they've recovered.

Happier experiences for Sam & Co. (and us!) were their two visits to Portugal this year. Firstly with Glenn in May, but it rained most days. The second time with friends Roy & Anna in September was much better weather. Lovely memories!

HOME & GARDEN (mainly garden!)

We've done lots of work in the garden, including pruning trees to open up the view to the coast. We're now attempting to 'tame' the wilder parts of the garden and have also dug up a lot of Agaves.

Retaining walls are springing up around the garden to flatten off the sloping landscape. Angela continues to develop knowledge and gardening skills and has joined a local gardening club. Membership has opened up a whole new avenue to acquiring some lovely plants, plus lovely lunches out.

Alan thinks the best development in the garden has been the construction of the Petanque Piste. It has certainly gone down well with visitors and was 'officially' opened by the crazy Berod Family. Petanque also went down well with friends Sue & Bev Edwards. Amazing how competitive Sue became!



Our latest project is to dig up the lawned area to build a firepit/seating area below the terrace and also develop the other half of that area for fruit trees. Oh, and to build a shed cum greenhouse for Angela! Busy times!

Angela is fast becoming a domestic Goddess, producing home made jams, lemon curd and baking her own bread.

At the end of the summer visit to the UK, Angela left Burwash garden looking restored and, to the dismay of Alan, much fuller...with paving stones she'd acquired for a future project!

PORTUGUESE LIFE

Living in Portugal requires a different mindset regarding the pace of life here - we decided to build a bathroom extension way back in March, hoping to start building in September. We are still waiting to get permission!

We continue to attend our Portuguese language classes with different levels of commitment. Angela has also found a 'study buddy' Maria, who we have visited on two occasions up in Sines in the Alentejo. Alan makes do with his 'Bar Buddies' at the Bang Bang Bar.

This year we managed to get to the New Year's Eve celebrations in Tavira, a bike rally in Faro (an amazing outing with around 30000 bikes), the Potato Festival in Aljezur, a religious procession in Loule and the local community centre xmas dinner.

Lovely Portuguese neighbours Maria & Cruz have kept us supplied with fresh veg from their vegetable garden!

TRAVELS & ADVENTURES

Not a lot of travelling for us this year as we settled into living in Portugal. We did have a trip back to UK in July/August, partly to avoid the scorching Portuguese heat, partly for a hospital appointment which was cancelled, but also to visit family and friends.

In early August Ange stayed in Cambridge to tend the garden in Burwash Cottage as Alan headed to Bradford for a week to help Sam & Tony with some hard landscaping.

A second trip later in the month to Yorkshire saw more hard landscaping for Alan as Angela headed off for a birthday trip to the Dales and N. Yorkshire with Aussie friend Rhonda. The rain and mist couldn't dampen the childlike fun this afforded them.

The journey back to Portugal in September was quite eventful. We lost our passports, had a trip to the Passport Office for replacements, got the motorhome stuck under a bar in Sainsbury's and then a dash home to Boliqueime to greet friends Bev & Sue.

Oh, and Alan retired! Again! Except that he/we have now embarked on a hobby job; a garden cum Portuguese lifestyle blog. The results can be found at www.quintassential.net.

Rhonda, Rain & Ange



Gorgeous Garak Grins



Sam's Sunrise Summit



Tony Teaches Swimming



Alan's Cool Company

