



A warm welcome to our 2016 newsletter. The years seem to speed past ever quicker and busier.



The year has centred around Chris's continuing role as President of the Society

of Old Framlinghamians, his 60th birthday at the end of August and some exciting news in connection with our younger daughter Samantha, but more of that later.

Chris's role with his old school has meant many trips to Suffolk, plus attended dinners in London, Essex, Newmarket, Norfolk, Sussex, and Chris's own dinner he hosts in Shaftesbury, Wiltshire. One of the most enjoyable occasions was organising at the school in June 2016 a reunion for all those who attended in the 1970s. Many had not met up for over

40 years with some travelling from abroad to attend. On our travels we also met up with former pupils in Florida and Toronto.

The long trips to and from Framlingham throughout the year have allowed us to regularly see Wendy in Essex. These trips had also allowed visits to see Beryl, Chris's step aunt, in Surrey but after some months of illness she died in January 2016 and Chris has acted as the sole executor of her estate for her children.

Chris has continued to spend many hours every day supporting the local charity, Saltford Community Association, for which he is Treasurer and chair of fundraising – he's continued cooking beef curry for 160 or 300 rashers of bacon for a cafe! He's started computer cafes and a community cinema for the village and also provides lifts for the elderly to a Day Centre.

As for his 60th birthday, this was initially celebrated in August with the whole family going to Florida for a few days either side of a 2 week Caribbean cruise out of Miami. Chris and Eryl continued the holiday for a few extra days in Ontario Canada on the way back, staying with Chris's oldest friend David and his family. The children and their partners had to return home to work! A party was also held in September and presents continue to be enjoyed, including a wonderful trip for dinner and fireworks on the Northern Belle, from the family.

Mentioning work, after 41 years, Chris's link with his old company finally came to an end in September 2016, so no longer has any paid employment! He does, however, continue to organise reunions of former employees.

Eryl continues her busy and enjoyable role as an Avon lady as well as doing a wonderful job of running the home. As well as all the trips mentioned above, we also went down to Wales in July to stay with Eryl's dad and Janice. We also really enjoyed a meet up in

Whitney, Oxfordshire in the same month with 6 friends we met on a cruise in 2012. We have all just booked to cruise together again in October 2017.

Stephanie (32) is now in her 11th year of teaching and is head of Reception at Summerhill Infant School in Bristol. She continues to thoroughly enjoy it and still gets a huge buzz from seeing the children develop significantly during their year with “Miss Essex”. She has recently successfully past a course to become an assistant head. She’s now been with Tux for over 14 years and we continue to see a lot of them as they have owned a house in the same road as us since 2009.

Samantha (30) continues to enjoy her job in Bath whilst continuing to work at least one night a week at Saltford Golf Club. She and Neil are now coming up to the 3rd anniversary of being in their house in Midsomer Norton, but as I mentioned earlier there is more exciting news from them. Whilst visiting the British Virgin Islands during our cruise, Samantha and Neil got off the boat early and headed for a secluded beach. There Neil dropped down on one knee and popped the question! Eryl and I are delighted to say that Samantha gave the correct answer and we have just booked their wedding for 17 March 2018. They will be married in our local church with a reception at Coombe Lodge.



Michael (27) has also had a significant year. He and Sophie spend the first half of the year completely refurbishing their new home in Marshfield between Cardiff and Newport, plus they had the garage converted into a connected office for their business. So in May 2016 we finally became “empty nesters”. Michael and Sophie’s upmarket online business called Lullabuy (www.lullabuy.co.uk) continues to grow quite rapidly with sales in November 2016 matching those for the whole of 2014. Fingers crossed this continues in future years.

That’s about it for the last year. Chris did sneak off to Berlin in May 2016 for a boys only long weekend and the beginning of July saw Chris organise a reunion of all his first cousins and their partners near Windsor, with the promise to make these reunions more regular.

That’s about it except to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy & Peaceful New Year. We are delighted to once again be spending Christmas this year with Wendy and her girls and we have rented the Coach House at Thrupp in Oxfordshire.

Chris, Eryl, Stephanie, Samantha and Michael Essex
3 Kingston Avenue, Saltford, Bristol, BS31 3LF essexes@aol.com