

Family News



John Bullwer and Digby Dog

They have gifted us some chairs. We do odd jobs for them.

Lis and Dave have visited John several times this year, and Andrew has visited them at home.

John, Andrew's dad is still at home. He needs a little more help each year. He was in hospital again this summer. Andrew still hasn't finished repairing John's fences. Jackie and John, Lez's parents continue to enjoy active retirement.



Jackie and John Orlebar and (the late) Benny Cat

Home

We have been gifted many mature euonymus bushes for the garden (thanks, Lyn), and cut logs (thanks, Lucy, thanks, Judy). The front garden leaning fence of Pisa has failed and a fencer is awaited. We had a (small) chimney fire, but were unaware until the sweep visited.

Cats

Olie Cat (Olivia) (6) is no longer in hiding, and enjoys the garden. She doesn't like Ben Cat (11). They are both now accepting another cat in their territory and rarely fight any more. Other cats regularly beat up Ben Cat, he has had a jaw abscess sewn up and a full dental polish. They both now know this is their home. We are regularly brought shrew presents. When we go away we have a peripatetic cat visitor (thanks, Myra), and Ben's previous carer regularly visits him here (hi, Anne).



Ben Cat and Olie Cat

Technology

We now have a TV licence, but still don't have – nor want – a television. This facilitates watching "TV on demand". Contention and narrow band width make streaming difficult. Andrew's camera has failed. We have a second dehumidifier. 2016 gadget of the year: moisture meter for sampling drying wood.



Lez

Still managing at Leicester City Council. Enjoys playing oboe with Rutland Concert Band. Andrew was finally able to hear her at a concert. Went to Comicon in Leicester. Spent a few days at Gladstone's Library, later joined by Andrew.

Andrew

Has left Rutland County Council (RCC). Is now kept by Lez, trying to pick up odd bits of work where he can. It is a change of lifestyle, no claiming of

Tea at Gladstone's Library

Jobseekers Allowance. He saw Superstar in Uppingham, had defibrillator training for the village box, helped with the annual village litter pick and whilst at RCC went on several “social” bike rides. He had a senior moment and lost credit cards twice in two months.

Cars and Bikes

The Suzuki was “written off” over the summer. Now repaired, it carries on. 91,000 miles. Andrew had a senior moment and needed Halfords to replace both headlight bulbs. The Smart has entered the steering/suspension phase, and failed the MOT accordingly. 121,000 miles. One tyre replaced on each car this year. “Andrew’s” electric bike is still leased from RCC. 2000 miles.

Away from Home – Holidays, Days out and Fun Stuff



Sunrise at Eastbourne Pier

We’ve visited Aberglasny Garden, National Botanic Garden of Wales, Herstmonceux Castle and Garden, Pashley Manor Gardens and Bishop’s Palace and Gardens, Wells. Andrew saw the flying Scotsman pass through Oakham, and saw snowdrops at Hodsock Priory and visited Stoneywell, Charnwood.

We’ve had short breaks at Shepton Mallet and Gladstone’s Library, with longer breaks at Abergorlech and Eastbourne. We enjoyed meals at the Barn, Oakham and went to Melton PieFest (nom nom). And saw Steve Hackett (Guitar player) at Leicester’s Cultural Exchange Festival, also Peter Knight (Violin player) and Gigspanner at Leicester’s Guildhall.



Biome at National Botanic Garden of Wales

Health

Lez twisted her ankle over the summer. Andrew has had a ganglion scanned, lives with a hernia (in three places), had several panic attacks, completed a course of talking therapy (thanks, Liz), has seen the dentist several times (teeth problems continue) - (and Lez is finally at the same dental practice).



Andrew and Lez

Getting organised, Resolutions and Plans

Andrew is working through 57 years of arrears of jobs at home, and is learning some new skills, plans to learn to cook, to cycle more and spend more quality time with Lez.

Lez Andrew

With our love and best wishes

Available online (in colour) at: www.bullwer.co.uk/xmas/xmas.html