

53 Brock St  
Macclesfield  
SK10 1DH  
December 2013

Dear All,

Christmas Greetings for 2013!

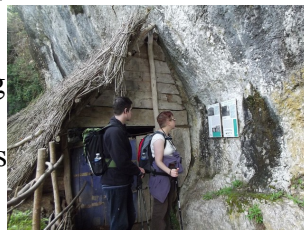
Robert's contracting work at GE came to an end in June not before a couple of stays down in Cambridge to pass on my knowledge, since then I've had a short contract up in Edinburgh writing a device driver for an Android (a low level challenge!) but am now looking around again with a couple of possibilities for next year. I also hope some more of the kitchen decoration will be finished before Christmas (see last year!)

Beth is still working full-time at NCC and still loves her job (even if it does get a bit too hectic at times); work & commuting don't leave as much time for gardening as I'd like, but I do enjoy being out there when I can. Now it's too cold and dark to do much in the garden until spring I'm trying to get back into the habit of reading; I now have a tablet I can download ebooks onto so at last I can read all the big books my arthritic thumb can no longer cope with in physical form (although having installed a jigsaw puzzle app on it I find it all too easy to waste time on that and not open the books!). Churchwise, I'm helping out (making drinks & so on) fairly regularly at the 9.30 "storytelling service" for families, and going less & less often to the more traditional 11am service.

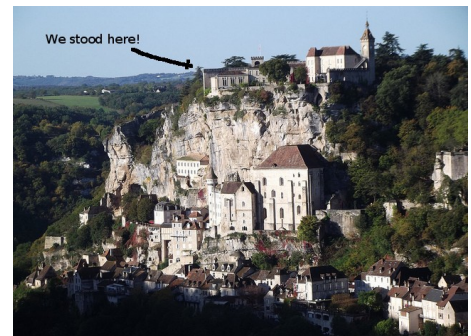
Chris continues with his training place at the community garden centre (1½ days a week) and now does 3 days volunteering in the stock room at the Sue Ryder shop; his confidence & social skills have increased tremendously since he started at the garden centre.

Robert & Beth spent a few days at Scargill in early June for a garden visiting holiday week – we were lucky with the weather and Beth certainly enjoyed the gardens (especially the RHS Harlow Carr, which I'd been wanting to visit and is just too far for a day trip from Macc) as well as the beautiful dales countryside.

The 3 of us went on a walking tour of the Dordogne in October – ending up in Rocamadour, lots of gentle walking through beautiful (and sometimes spectacular) scenery, and lovely meals in comfortable hotels afterwards. The weather was warm for the time of year and mainly dry, very pleasant for walking. Rocamadour itself is breathtaking, the town clinging vertiginously to the hillside.



*Examining the accommodation?*



Beth's Dad celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in November and her brother (now living in New Zealand) flew over as a birthday surprise – no surprise for Beth, though, as she'd been acting as decoy for the surprise on Dad's actual birthday. Dad actually got 2 birthday celebration meals out – lunch with David, Beth & Mum on his birthday and a bigger dinner with more of us on the Saturday.

With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year!