

53 Brock Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 1 DH
16th December 2005

Dear

Christmas Greetings once again. It is two years since we have written one of these letters and a lot seems to have happened. To take the big events first – back at the end of 2004 Robert was promoted and then 4 weeks later made redundant, Beth completed her OU course and then this year an Italian A level and is now working near Jodrell Bank, Clare did well in her A levels and is now well into her second year reading Biological Sciences at Manchester, Chris has just completed his GCSE mocks and is gearing up for the real thing and we have a new cat - Hecate.



Us

Way back in early 2004 St Michael's had a parish weekend at Scargill so we went along and it was good to revisit even some members of the community were still there.

Hecate was acquired shortly after that from a local refuge, someone had dumped her out of a car on the local ring road and we've now taken to each other and she has sorted out the neighbourhood but we hope she will also disposes the local (grey!) squirrels.

This year we had meant to have a celebration that we'd been in this house for 20 years and the house was now 150 years old but maybe as the mortgage was paid off this Spring that was enough!

This autumn we had a week at a friends house in Llandudno which was a good break for all of us but I (Robert) didn't get to the top of Tryfan!



Beth

I completed my Open University French Diploma in October 2005 and passed A level Italian this summer. As the OU don't yet offer an Italian diploma course, that doesn't leave much study to keep me out of mischief so I reckoned it was time to find some work with a pay cheque attached and signed up with a temping agency. My first assignment was a three week stint at a market research company, ringing Italian hospitals to interrogate their radiology consultants about their diagnostic imaging software; very good practice for my Italian speaking skills, but enough to assure me market research wasn't the career I was looking for. Next they sent me as an admin/accounts assistant to a small company

between Holmes Chapel and Jodrell Bank, which suited much better – they offered me a permanent job and now I'm trying to sort out the sales ledger.

I had a short holiday in Brugge with my Mum at the start of October, which was very pleasant – lots of lace to look at, as well as the picture-postcard pretty town.

I've carried on as secretary to the “OpenDoor” committee for the renovation work at St Michael's – very busy while the building work was going on, but since the church reopened in July 2004 things have got a lot quieter. I've been asked to consider taking over the church treasurer's hat next year, but I'm not sure yet whether I can cope with that as well as my job.

Chris

Chris is still doing his paper round and enjoying the money – and especially a recent payrise. This Spring we had a student to stay from Tytherington's exchange partner in Douai and in the Autumn Chris had a visit in return which included a day in Paris -

Clare

Clare is enjoying student life in Manchester where she is very involved in the university Role Playing Game club.



Robert

I've continued and involvement with the All Saints' BATS (Books and Things) reading group which has been a welcome monthly evening out as well as the incentive to maintain a linked weblog.

My mother is still in a wheelchair following her stroke – she seems to be getting about pretty well but events have meant we haven't been down as often as w'd hoped.

The year has been dominated by the aftermath of my job loss – I eventually found work doing some contract software development with some ex-Bechtel colleagues – working from home which was rather a new experience – Clare's room was taken over with an additional computer and there still seem to be wires everywhere. That work dried up in July and eventually, in November, I took up work at our local Sainsbury's on a checkout which has proved to be rather a novel experience and far from as boring as I feared it might be – someone even asked if I was a student! I'm awaiting the week before Christmas with interest!! I'm still looking around for further computing work.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year,