

Greeting, annual news from Joy and Eric in Nottingham for Christmas 2023 and New Year 2024.

Let's try to be on time this year, sorry about the lateness/absence of our Christmas greetings last year. Blame Eric.

First, the important person, Joy. She broke her hip joint in April falling out of our 1 metre high bed (made by Eric, high so that we had useful storage underneath). After clog dancing in increasing pain for several weeks, she ended up in A&E and immediate surgery to join things together again with three titanium bolts. It looks impressive on the X-ray. She restarted clog practice in late September, taking it very gently. It was impressive how quickly Nottingham City came up with a physio, who came and checked the house for trip hazards (lots) and provided various walking frames and exercise suggestions. Her walking tricycle is in more demand by Eric than by her! But she has ended up with one leg shorter than the other, a problem for clogging. And she's had a new right eye lens to cure a cataract. And new dentures. Keep the NHS busy!

The family: Angus is now "putting up tents" in Poland, the tents are a kilometre square (think of the temporary Nightingale Hospitals during Covid) and he enjoys bossing teams of workers around. All the Foxley tribe plus others gathered in Germany to celebrate the wedding of one of the granddaughters Heli to Tobias. This was a super party, the legal bits of the wedding were last year. It was our first nights away from home since pre-Covid. Karen & Angus have a swimming pool in their garden, Joy was in every morning before breakfast. Not much chance to speak German, they all speak English so well!

Rory looks forward to possible retirement next year, his (American owned) company call him a "future shaper". Jean is still pastry chef at a local (garden centre) cafe.

Hamish's company went bust, he's delighted to be able to spend more time on music with the many groups he's in. Anita helps at their local cattery. Jenna will design a shop for you, Sean will maintain a car for you.

Last and least, Eric. Well, doing OK, just fading away very slowly. Still terminal, still on regular chemo, a nurse comes round every 4 weeks (it used to be every week) to jab and drip me. Apparently since the jab (daratumumab) was approved by NICE it has got cheaper, now only £4200 per jab. I'm sure I'm worth it! I can't walk straight yet, and injured my shin a while ago. Being butch, I didn't bother about it. Being on chemo (reduced immune system) it went septic, hence more on-going hospital visits to the "wounds" department. My most amazing diarrhoea has got the gastro department completely confused. I am keeping three departments of the local hospital busy, as well as our lovely GP!

In spite of everything, we are still both busy, Eric finds both accordion and pottery wonderful therapies when the chemo drugs try to get me down. Stay cheerful! The band plays few gigs, we rely on Hamish, Rory and others to do all the hard work of setting up the gear. Joy still acts as MC, and Hamish remembers the correct tunes for each dance.

The garden flourishes. We've eaten our own raspberries, blackberries, grapes, courgettes, peas, runner beans, and tomatoes by the ton. Other folks are called in to pick our huge supply of grapes, bear in mind that Eric ended up in a hospital bed last time he had some grape juice, I keep well clear.

From Joy and Eric

Stay safe!

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