

Friday, January 30, 2004

Dear

It's the second of January 2004 and I have still to write to you wishing you seasons greetings and a happy new year. The last bit I can do but I'm too late for Christmas wishes, sorry about that, no excuse.

We all had a good Christmas, Rebecca, Maureen and I stayed with Maureen's Daughter and family over Christmas, Scaletrix and Monopoly good traditional stuff!

Mum is in hospital at present she went in just before Christmas and I would hope she will be back in a week or so. They can't get her medicine levels right. She is either too sleepy or can't settle and has everyone up at night. When she is with it she is fine but it has to be said that is not that often.

Dad is still suffering from arthritis, he is in a lot of pain but still lives at Waltham Avenue under the care of a live in carer who does a great job.

Our year started with a big secret, at Easter 2002 I had decided to retire in 2003 we had had the office party and I said nothing about it so I was a bit uneasy. In February I handed in my notice. Shock, horror many thought. Some even said, "the end of an era".

Twenty six years teaching twenty one at Bracknell. But with 200 14 year olds coming next year, It's time to go.

Then came the real work, an Ofsted inspection at college in May. Management over reacted we dug in and I had a mention in the final report as a good user of IT.

For the last eight years we have had a second home in Bridgwater, Somerset. A two bedroom flat we thought it would be easy to sell, it sold in June after eight months on the market. Was this the beginning of the end? Looking back I think it was. It all got a bit hectic from then till September. No fanfare at the Building Society when we paid off the mortgage.

With lots of lasts, June = last class, July = last day, August = last pay packet, September brought a few firsts, First hotel holiday in a long time, first pension cheque, first Ebay sale.

We hope to move to the Isle of Wight sometime this year, so in September we had a short stay there, nice time had by all including the dog.

My first walk out at home as a pensioner, in fact my first walk in term time for 26 years was interesting in two ways

- 1) I felt free
- 2) I felt OLD everybody out there and at the shops were OLD

What to do? Other than sort out the garden and garage which is always there? The junk in the garage was the answer, so I tried Ebay and to cut a long story short I have now sold many of my old pop programmes and newspapers for amounts that I would never pay. £123 for a Beatles programme £70 for the Rolling Stones. My first sale was a football programme, England v Wales in 1937. I did the research and found that it was Stanley Matthews fifth game for England. Well £303 for a 4 page programme that cost Dad 1d in 1937 is silly money.

Rebecca is enjoying her teaching in Wandsworth and had a super holiday in Egypt. Her head teacher is off work after falling off a ladder at home so Rebecca had all the load of the Christmas play. Lots of work and in the end lots of praise. She also did very well with her LEA inspection.

It's now the 29 January where has the time gone? Well I'm sorry to say that Mum & Dad are now both in hospital and it looks as though it may be a long stay.

In the early days of this month their care became too much for one carer so it looks like that system is over.

So that's it please keep in touch and a VERY belated happy new year.

Love

Terry and Maureen