

Halliday Family News for Christmas 2015

Peace on earth, goodwill to men

This year has been quieter than last year, but only a little. Following his adventure in Zimbabwe at the end of 2014, Ian went to Johannesburg at the beginning of February to teach another course. Leaving on Monday evening, there were four long flights and three solid days in the classroom during the week. Unfortunately, he didn't get to see much outside the hotel except for a couple of hours at Nelson Mandela Square.

Ian and Viv have continued attend England matches, but the only overseas football trip this year was to Turin: a surprisingly beautiful and interesting city. As well as the stadium, we were able to visit Museo Nazionale del Cinema housed in the distinctive Mole Antonelliana, the magnificent Piazza Castello, the fascinating Borgo Medievale and enjoy a walk along the River Po through Valentino Park.

Our family holiday was to Barcelona, where the five of us joined the Gibsons for a week in the capital of Catalonia. We had been there in 2007, and it's still a great city. Much work has been done on the Sagrada Familia since we were there before, while the theme park at Tibidabo is still lots of fun. A high spot of the trip was a day on a big boat, called *Leigh* – you can see pictures of Viv in the spa on board and of Matthew on a jetski that day.

As for the boys, David is still working at Smyth's Toys, but has now moved from the outdoor section to software. During the year, he went to Toronto for a friend's wedding. He also took to the air in a separate adventure at Liverpool Airport in a flying lesson.

Matthew finished the training course and is now working for Barclays in Knutsford, testing software. He will be moving to his own place near Chester before Christmas, giving Viv and Ian a bit more space at home.

Christopher graduated from the University of Manchester this year, as you can see from the photo, as well as celebrating his 21st birthday, but he continues as a student in Manchester studying for a Master of Arts there. Any questions about the Middle East in general or Syria in particular should be directed to him.

Viv has had a busy year of travel. As well as the trips already mentioned, she has been on two Mediterranean cruises one with her friend Lis and one with her mother. Highlights included visiting the ruins of Pompeii, a boat trip round the lovely island of Capri and entering the Venetian lagoon by boat. She has had time away in London, Edinburgh and Anglesey. In addition, she is now half-way through the last year of her Bachelor of Divinity degree, a contrast with her original Mathematics degree.

Ian and Viv are still very active at St Andrew's Church and this year Ian was re-elected to Diocesan Synod. He was also elected to the Vacancy-in-See Committee, which chooses the new Bishop of Chester when the time comes: that time has not yet come. David, following in his father's footsteps, has also been elected to Deanery Synod. Viv continues to be part of music group, and to help with Little Fishes and Messy Church.

Just before the end of November, Viv and Ian were at the England v France game at Wembley Stadium, obviously an emotional night after the events of the previous week, but indeed not the only event of great human significance this year: Ian spoke in public several times about Vanuatu as the republic worked to rebuild after Cyclone Pam at the start of the year.

We hope that we haven't missed anything too vital, and of course we want to take this opportunity to wish our friends, whether around the corner or around the world, a blessed Christmas season and a Happy New Year.

With love from

Ian, Viv, David, Matthew and Christopher

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