

Christmas Newsletter 2008

Here we are again – another year passes and more tidings from Rochester.

We saw the New Year in with Stephen, Nicola and Ewan at Chester. A lovely time was had by all.

February heralded our, now, usual sojourn to Bruges for 4 days/3 nights. OK so it is a little chilly at that time of the year but we still managed to get to see a few other sites around Bruges.



Bruges Market Square by night.

February also saw the 68th wedding anniversary of my adoptive parents. There was a family gathering in a restaurant in Greenwich. My parents were of the opinion that only Caroline and I, and my sister and brother-in-law were going to be there. My eldest nephew, Paul, and his partner Nik were there along with Stephen, Nicola and Ewan. Needless to say Mum was thrilled.



Easter saw us yet again visiting the Chester area. By now Ewan was about 4 months old and beginning to get into almost everything. We visited Chester itself on one day for a meal and a good walk along the banks of the Dee. There are very few photos of Ewan and I, but here is one!



Summer was a little quieter than normal for my work. It did allow me on a couple of occasions (when the weather permitted!) to get out with my cameras and take a few pictures. Probably the most rewarding was the day I spent in and around Rochester High Street – taking pictures of the High Street, the river, the castle and the cathedral.



August saw Stephen, Nicola and Ewan visit Strood. This is the height of the BBQ season and so we invited around mostly family and a couple of friends of ours and Stephen. Ewan was very much on his best behaviour, although he did find all of the electric cables around my Hi-Fi kit exceptionally tasty!

Examination results season was then upon me. As usual I take a profound interest in the achievements of my students and the results obtained this year were yet again good. After my birthday barbecue and another for my students it was off on our annual holiday to Germany. This year, however, we had made up our minds to visit the Rheinfalls at Schaffhausen in Switzerland. A truly amazing site. 150 metres wide but only 23 metres high. Nevertheless it was still an awesome site.



Rheinfall at Schaffhausen

This particular day we splashed out quite a bit on a meal at one of the restaurants overlooking the falls. I had managed to reserve a table about 3 weeks before we left Britain, and we were not disappointed. Having said all of this, the cost of the meal has made the eyes of some of our friends water – remember we were in Switzerland!

Later the same afternoon we ventured along the Rhein to a little town called Stein am Rhein. This place was really chocolate box pretty, and the day we visited it was really hot.



Rathaus, Stein am Rhein

We did, of course venture to a few old haunts which included trying to get some decent photos of the Alps from the mountains nearby to our hotel. Weather conditions were not particularly good, but we did manage to get a few shots.

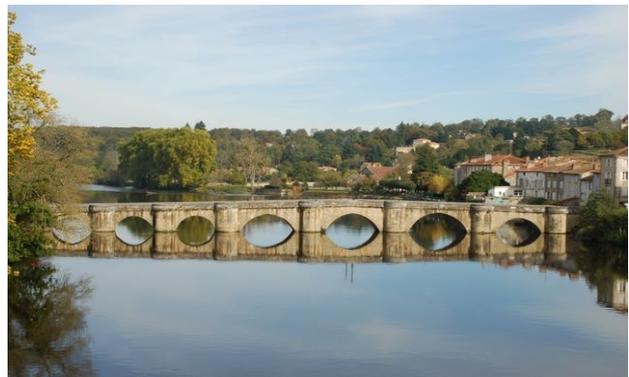
Our return from Germany and Switzerland was immediately followed by the 40th Wedding Anniversary of Margaret (my sister) and Brian. I keep trying to tell Brian he would have got less time for murder! This was a really nice family occasion.



Margaret & Brian

October saw us off to France. This time we stayed in the Cognac area for 12 days. We did manage to get to see our good friends Pete and Ann who now live more or less permanently in France.

Unlike previous years when we have visited France at the end of October, the weather this year was really quite awful. Hardly a day went by when it wasn't cold and/or raining. Maybe we have been spoilt in previous years. We did however manage to visit Bergerac, St Leon sur Vézère, the Troglodyte City (La Roque Saint Christophe) near St Leon, Confolens, Bordeaux and La Rochelle.



View of Confolens

We had decided during the summer that we would very much like to visit La Rochelle in the late afternoon/early evening. Last year when we visited La Rochelle Caroline noticed an oil painting of the two towers at the entrance to the old port which was painted at sunset. This oil is now to be found in our dining room.

This particular day we spent quite some time photographing various parts of La Rochelle from La Cloche, to the restaurants on the quayside to the Atlantic Ocean, finally turning our attention to the

towers.



**La Rochelle – La Tour St Nicolas (left)
and La Tour de la Lanterne (right)**

The end of November is now quite hectic. Sunday 23 November saw the birth of Robert Stephen Hunt – Nicola and Jonathan's son. After a somewhat difficult birth we hope that all will be well with the young man.



Clive and Robert (7 days old)



Caroline and Robert (7 days old)

The same weekend that we met Robert it was Ewan's first birthday. How time flies! This little man is certainly into everything, but he is definitely a credit to his parents.



Stephen, Ewan and Clive

Well it seems as though I have just about exhausted 2008! Christmas Eve and Day are being spent with Stephen, Nicola and Ewan. On Boxing Day we travel to Northampton to visit with Nicola, Jonathan and Robert, staying overnight.

Drudgery will be calling to both Caroline and myself in that we will both be back at work on 29th December. My father will be 93 on 28th December, so we will be spending some time with him and Mum on that day.

New Years Eve is very much up in the clouds at the moment. New Years Day will be spent with Caroline's brother's family as well as her Mum plus husband.

I suppose I am looking forward to Christmas if only because it does not involve Caroline and/or myself from doing too much!

Anyway, Caroline and I would very much like to wish you and your families a peaceful Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year (if that is at all possible).

You can view more of our pictures for 2008 at

www.medsan.org/2008

We can be contacted by email...

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We would very much like to hear of your exploits during 2008, so please keep in touch.

Clive & Caroline