

Christmas Newsletter 1994

Address as from 1 June 1995:

It is possible that, because of a deterioration in Michael's health, our move could take place March/April.

Dear

1994 has been a year for decision-making. After prayerful thought Michael announced his retirement, on the grounds of ill health, his last Sunday at All Saints' being 28 May, 1995 and in October Andy and Mel became engaged. Michael and Joy will leave the All Saints' family with very mixed emotions - everyone is so much a part of their lives and held very deep in their affections. It is a rule of the Church of England, as some of you know, that a retired priest may not live in the parish in which he has been working. The Bishop of Winchester agreed that Michael may purchase a house in the next parish to Christchurch which is Highcliffe, although still in the designated Christchurch area as you can see from the above address (of which we hope you will now make a note!) The house is a Georgian-style semi and admirably suits their requirements, one of which is that it is close to the bowling club (for Michael) and Nea Meadows, a huge open space surrounded by trees and vegetation, with a large lake, a stream spanned by one or two bridges, and hordes of ducks, ideal for "walkies" (for Kim and Joy), on a bus route should the use of local transport become necessary, and near to the local parish church. Whilst on the subject of home buying, Andy and Mel purchased a lovely flat earlier in the year, about 3 miles from Mundeford and close to Highcliffe, with a spacious garden which pleases Mel. To our surprise Andy has actually been wielding a lawnmower and helping to plant things (although he doesn't guarantee that they will grow into anything!)

Andy was interviewed for another (higher) position in his firm as *Link House* set up a new in-house production department. He was successful and is now head of one of two shifts working days and nights alternating weeks. The technology is new, originally designed in South Africa, and will make *Link House* the first publisher in the world to go directly to film electronically. Andy has been involved with the design team and has been working long hours and will continue to do so up to the "live" date in January.

Michael, Joy, Fiona and Andy have attended art classes given by a member of the All Saints' congregation, and Colin and Fiona have been going to "Sign Language" classes and also lectures at a local Bible College on different styles of music in church worship.

Kathy, Nick and the boys have spent a number of holidays in Mundeford this year. Kath successfully completed her teacher training, having plenty of experience "practice" teaching. She has been job hunting but without success so far. Jeremy

and Tim went up to Scouts and Cubs respectively, and both have been camping. Jem also enjoying the excitement of canoeing. He has read the lesson in church twice, is a Server, and has been chosen to take the part of a clergyman in an Advent play. Tim is in the church choir and sang a solo on Advent Sunday.

For their holiday this year, Michael, Joy, Colin, Fiona and Kim stayed in a 16 century converted farmhouse cottage on the Northamptonshire/Oxfordshire border. They spent a good part of the holiday walking (very good for everyone's health) and spent a memorable half hour sheltering under a bridge during a thunderstorm. On one very hot day they all tramped for 3½ miles along the Oxford Canal towpath to Claydon Lock (Michael and Fiona had earlier driven their separate cars to Claydon, parked Michael's car returning in Fiona's, so we didn't have to walk the 3½ miles back again!) Poor old Kim (10½) had to keep resting and having drinks of water, but she made it without any ill effects (as did the rest of us).

We have been overjoyed to see South Africa back on the world scene although we realise there are still serious problems to overcome. Also, at the time of "going to press" imminent talks on a definite peace in Northern Ireland are on the agenda. So many good things have happened this year, praise God. May there soon be a cessation of hostilities in old Yugoslavia and peace throughout the world.

We send you our love and may God bless you at Christmas and throughout 1995

Michael, Joy, Fiona, Colin, Andy, Mel, Kathy, Nick, Jeremy and Tim.

*And there were in the same country shepherds
abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock
by night.
Luke 2:8*

