

gently on. I live each day as it comes, thankful for every blessing (of which there are many) and happy memories of my beloved Michael.

### ***Kathy and Nick write:***

In February Jeremy was in the chorus for his school's production of Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat and April saw him attending scout camp where it rained all week! Along with Tim he also learnt to scull in Bristol Docks the following month. In June Jeremy took part in a sponsored bicycle ride of 15 miles and went to France on a school trip: two activity days staying in a chateau, a trip to Euro-Disney and then home via the Channel Tunnel. Meanwhile Nick and Tim went on a "hilly" hike with the youth club (Kathy was doing choir practice at the time which is a great excuse not to keep fit!)

During a stay with Nick's sister in August, Kathy, Jeremy and Tim spent a day in London visiting The British Museum, Covent Garden and Trafalgar Square. We stayed for two weeks with Mum in Christchurch spending days out in the New Forest and surrounding area. In September Tim started at the same secondary school which Jeremy attends. Also that month we all got hopelessly lost during a scout "night-hike". At church in October a local television documentary crew caught us on camera while filming *The Vicar*. Tim was confirmed that same month, and away from church started trumpet lessons. At the time of writing his instrument is in danger of being buried in the front garden!

### ***Fiona and Colin write:***

This has been a year of change for us regarding our church. The week before dad died we decided to leave Richmond Park Fellowship, where we had been for 11 years. We now go to a little church in the village of Bransgore, about 3 miles away from home. It's lovely driving through the New Forest to get there; and the folk have been very friendly making us feel very settled.

We had a relaxing holiday in Cornwall in September visiting lots of places of interest. As we are members of the National Trust (a charity involved in maintaining English heritage looking after historic buildings, castles, coast line etc.) we spent quite a bit of time wandering around old houses, walking in beautiful park land and even gazing down 200ft cliff faces! During our stay we celebrated our 12th wedding anniversary. We also visited a seal sanctuary (Fi says that she hasn't been on holiday if she hasn't seen animals or wildlife of some sort; apart from Colin that is!) We also spent a very interesting day at Goonhilly Earth Satellite Station where we learnt all about Global Communications: we "surfed the web" and talked to one another via a video phone (we were able to practice some of the sign language we learnt a few years ago).

Colin still works as a buyer for the firm he has been with for the past 15 years and Fiona continues to enjoy her part-time work with the hearing impaired. Our cat Tallulah gives us a great deal of pleasure even though she is now too old to "rugby tackle" our ankles as she used to in her younger days!

### ***Andy and Melanie write:***

This has been a year of mixed blessings. At the time of writing we are just putting the finishing touches to our wedding video using the computer to produce titles and effects. Far from being painful to watch, the film brings to mind memories of a very happy occasion in which dad played a central role; we are very thankful that he was so well on our special day.

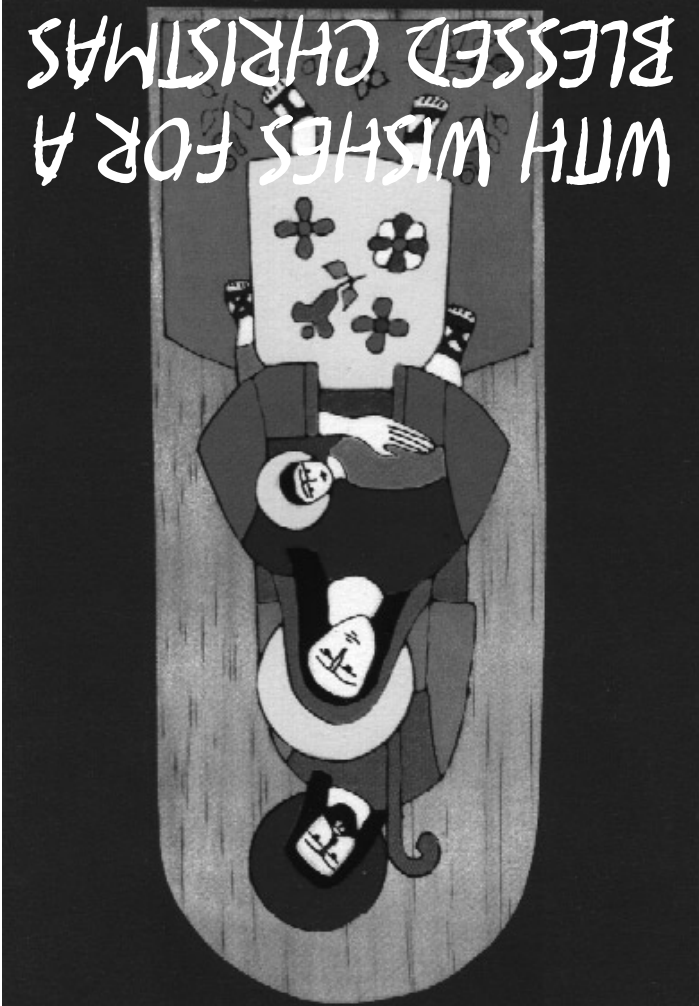
Andy remains very busy at work and in April beat off stiff opposition to become one of only 10 people accepted on his company's Group Management Development Programme (GMDP). This two year course started with a residential induction week and continues with various training and continual self analysis of his work. The GMDP is equivalent to a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Business Studies and Andy's employers are confident of attaining official NVQ status thereby making the course the same as a formal certificate. In July we spent 12 days touring round Southern Ireland. We took the car across on the ferry so that we were able to travel at our leisure. Amongst the many places we visited were Killarney National Park (which was very picturesque) and Dublin City (where we looked around The Guinness Brewery and Christ Church Cathedral). We also kissed The Blarney Stone and watched the various processes used in creating Waterford Crystal at their factory.

On the morning of our 1st anniversary we awoke to the news of Princess Diana's death. Later the following week we travelled to London to look at the sea of flowers laid in tribute. We also spent a very interesting couple of hours inside Buckingham Palace. This year we have decorated both the kitchen and bathroom which are looking much better as a result! We have also enjoyed taking Sally for walks in The New Forest and along the local beach.

*We bring our letter to a close by wishing you all the blessings of a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year*  
***Joy, Kathy, Nick, Fiona, Colin, Melanie, Andy, Jeremy and Tim***

Summer 1997

## Melanie and Sally in the New Forest, Hampshire



Dear

The annual newsletter has become a welcome family tradition enabling us to pass on our news of events from the year gone by. This year's letter, however, is sent with much sadness in our hearts following Michael's untimely death in March. The time since then has gone by so quickly and Christmas will be hard for all of us without his cheerful company. The newsletter gives all of us the opportunity to thank you for the overwhelming number of cards and letters of support and condolence. Although we may not have contacted you directly to offer our thanks, the many loving messages received were all read and very much appreciated; they will all be kept and treasured. The gap left in our lives cannot be filled, but we all have our own individual happy memories not least of which will be Michael conducting Andy and Melanie's wedding in August 1996.

### **Joy writes:**

I know that those of you who were unaware of Michael's death will have received a shock on reading the first paragraph of this letter. I am sorry that I could not let you know at the time. The church was full to capacity for both the Requiem Mass and the funeral. Michael had helped so many people during his ministry and meant a great deal to them. We, his family, were most moved by the grief which his passing engendered. Michael's ashes are buried in the priest's corner in "The Garden of Rest" at Christchurch Priory, a beautiful spot, very peaceful and quiet except for birdsong. We give thanks for his life and remember him as a loving husband, father, grandfather and priest. Adjusting to life on my own has not been easy but faith in God, a very loving family and good friends and neighbours have all helped make the hill less difficult to climb. The family in particular have been a tremendous source of comfort and support, always there when I need them, helping in various ways, and taking me out to meals, tea, places of interest and the cinema.

Recently I have been joined by a companion in the form of a "rescue" dog. Sally is an 18-month-old English Springer Spaniel and being of an energetic disposition needs plenty of exercise (good for us both!). She is most affectionate and loves being fussed over and cuddled. Apart from Sally to keep me occupied, I still belong to the Bible study group which meets once a month and am on the leaders rota. I have been invited to join two or three organisations, one being "The Mothers Union", but have declined as at present I am as content as I can possibly be under the circumstances and do not wish to commit myself and then find that it is not my "cup of tea". Fiona and I have regular "Scrabble" dates and Andy, Mel, Colin, Fiona and I get together for an evening of board games twice-monthly. Friends visit and I go to them...so life flows