

3 Holly Spring Cottages
Gough's Lane
Warfield
Bracknell
Berks RG12 2JS

THE INGWELL SAGA - CHAPTER X CHRISTMAS 1992

We have received many lovely letters already this year; it is lovely to hear news from friends in all corners of the world so now it is our turn to contribute.

1992 has been a busy and eventful year. Bridget started the "annus not-so-horibilis" (sorry UK only) with a hysterectomy; it went(!) very smoothly and she is feeling fit as a fiddle with lots of extra energy - pity that Stuart is feeling fit as a f***t with the energy of a 125 year old or life could be more than a little exciting!

Charlotte is as busy as ever and passed her driving test in the autumn (USA = fall) so we are advising friends with third party insurance to change to comprehensive. Because she is an all-rounder we sweated blood to chose a specialist subject for her further education until we realised that Combined Studies was not a 'cop out' but a course designed for people with her kind of general ability. The ACCA/PCAS forms have gone in and we all hope to see her begin a degree course next October (all offers of financial help from sympathetic friends will be acknowledged).

Dan has just arrived home from LMU (The students are pushing this as the abbreviation for Leeds Metropolitan University since it has overtones of the LSE - London School of Economics and all the freedom of expression it represents). He will spend most of the vacation as a waiter in a local restaurant and so we shall be lucky to see him even for the Christmas dinner. Next February he goes to Caen in N France for 9 months as part of his course and we are all a bit apprehensive. He will miss the extraordinarily good social scene in Leeds, but may be compensated by having gorgeous French girls and cheap wine, all on tap.

We are happy and content with our life in Gough's Lane and qualify as fully fledged members of the community since we are now into our third home extension. The latest addition is a sitting room for Sam (Stuart's dad) who has just moved in with us on a permanent basis. He is 85 and quite active but unable to cope on his own when his arthritis is bad. Fortunately we were able to convert the downstairs-study into a bedroom and create a den (UK = small sitting room) from the workshop area at the back of the garage and so he is self contained and independent most of the time.

Work is hard for both of us at present. The National Curriculum guarantees a minimum 60 hr week for all teachers and the state of the Defence market means that Stuart has to work twice as hard just to stand still. He is hoping to win a new contract in the near future with a proposal for a military Collision Warning System; it is a particularly interesting project so please keep your fingers crossed that the bid succeeds.

We are still making regular trips to France. We rent our holiday home in peak season to help defray costs but usually visit ourselves 2 or 3 times each year. Our french is not improving in spite of these trips but using the odd noun plucked from a phrase book and gallic gestures we get by most of the time.