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THE INGWELL SAGA : CHAPTER 28

Another exciting year has just flown by and at the start of spring the stork arrived to bring our first grandchild. Baby Sam arrived, a few weeks early, in March and spent his first few days thinking that camera flash light was normal with periods of relative darkness in-between! He is a happy and handsome little chap and developing into a real character. We have been entrusted with him now for the occasional weekend when Dan & Jo were away and we have loved every minute of it. Jo and Dan are of course hugely proud parents and it is lovely having them live so close to us.

Charlotte is gradually getting used to her title of Auntie and she pops over from Wimbledon every now and then to check on little nephew and claim a cuddle. Charlie is working for Carphone Warehouse and enjoying the company of the other under 25's on the staff. Her selling technique is impressive and she has even managed to persuade we oldies that a mobile phone is an indispensable part of life. She is hoping to spend some time in the USA next summer and only then will she consider 'settling down' (our term no hers).

Bridget is working a 4 day week at the same local school and is now a senior member of staff - this year she celebrated the big 'Five-0'. Her class find it amusing that their teacher has reached the half century mark - perhaps they will start to treat her with some veneration from now on but somehow I doubt it! Bridget keeps up with the tennis - at least with the veterans team, which has a rule that every hour spent on court must be matched with two in the club bar. We marked the 50th birthday with a trip to Paris and had a lovely weekend. We travelled by Eurostar train and it felt strange to be speaking English in the morning and French at lunch without having a notable journey in-between. We did the usual sights but failed to fit everything in so we may have to go again soon to complete the itinerary!

Stuart has settled to his change of employer - British Aerospace as opposed to GEC - and works on Harrier II projects. In his spare time runs our church's accounts and we cannot decide which causes the more aggro' the day job or the evening work. They must both be taking their toll judging by the grey hairs which are beginning to show in a big way. We keep trying to persuade ourselves that we can still cope with a 'work-hard, play-hard' ethic but nowadays the batteries soon start to run low and we have lost the fast re-charge facility. As a break from the hard work we both decided to try our hand at golf but our efforts so far have been quite pathetic. We've bought a few irons and a golf bag but never find the time to play.

Grandad Sam is rubbing along but is now quite frail. He needs professional carers and bath nurses to help his life to run smoothly. He manages to go to his citizens club twice a week but even this is becoming an effort. However he is very proud of his first great-grand child (named after him) and always livens up when young Sam is demonstrating his crawling skills.

Visiting our little house in France is still a great joy for us. We love taking family and friends to stay but the day when we can retire there for 4 months of the year is still far off. Why did we not believe those financial advisers who told us about pension provision in the 60's? - alternatively anyone know a good set of numbers for the national lottery? I guess that must be the end of the news if the letter deteriorates into wishful thinking so..

Our love and best wishes to you and yours in this festive season.
We hope you have time to enjoy your family/friends at Christmas
and we wish you peace and happiness for the coming year.

Stuart and Bridget