

*Peace on  
Earth*



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### THE INGWELL SAGA - CHAPTER 33

Hello for the first time from our new address – we bought this house last November but didn't move-in until January so this is our very first Christmas letter written from here. We are getting used to bungalow life – Bridget's mum warned us that we would develop "bungalow legs" but she is wrong - we're developing bungalow bums and bungalow tums. No stairs to keep us fit!

We moved nearer to Dan, Jo, Sam, and Lorna, but would you believe it, no sooner were we established here than they decided to move - to Sydney, Australia! Do you think they were trying to tell us something? Perhaps our babysitting rates were too high!!!! They only left a month ago and already we miss them terribly. Charlotte, Shaun and Josie are still in London (in Sutton) and we have threatened them with all sorts of woes (a plague of scorpions) if they too should ever think of leaving the country. But, thankfully they seem very settled and happy where they are.

Life has actually changed a lot for us this year. Bridget is now retired from teaching (couldn't take the pace any longer) and Stuart has decided to work a three day week. This gives us plenty of time for golf, tennis, gardening and lots of other activities. Strangely enough we have suffered no withdrawal symptoms whatsoever from a gradual opt-out from the rat race. However given the way the FT Index has plummeted recently we will maintain our stress levels by calculating the decline in our pensions; at the current rate of loss our savings will soon be worth peanuts and we'll be applying for a job together at Sainsburys on the nightshift.

Our new home is beautifully situated and has a lovely garden, but it is much smaller than Holly Spring Cottages and after much deliberation we have decided to do some alterations to the building. Our planning application was approved in October and we are going to start by extending the main bedroom. We have booked a builder to begin work early in the New Year so that's another stress-raiser organised for January! Even Stuart learned some new swear words the last time we had builders, so watch out for blue air rising over Berkshire.

Our house in France is still very much part of our lives. We visit regularly - Summer and Winter - and in fact we shall be over there for the New Year – relaxing before the building onslaught. We will have a few days walking on the beach at Labenne, and then we will be staying with friends in a little village in the Pyrennees called Bareges. We expect to do some downhill ski-ing although our friends are keen on cross-country (ski de fond) and walking on snow with tennis racquets strapped to their shoes. That's too much like hard work for us – we prefer to be taken up the slope on a chair lift and then point our feet in a downwards direction until we run out of slope.

Anyway we shall drink to your health and happiness during our New Year festivities as we wish you all the best for 2003.

Lots of Love