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THE INGWELL SAGA - CHAPTER 36

Hi folks and a Happy Christmas to one and all. We are once again established as one whole family all together in England. After three years of the family being divided between Northern and Southern hemispheres, Dan, Jo and the children arrived back in England at the beginning of December - following a three year stay in Sydney. It was lovely to see them arrive home and Lorna was really excited to see frost by the roadside for the first time! She and Sam have already settled into a local school and apart from the Oz-accent it's hard to imagine they have ever been away. However, there was one other arrival this year which was even more special, and that was a baby girl born to Charlotte and Shaun in August. Roisin (Rosie for short) is a delightful bouncy girl with a winning smile.

Charlie has fully recovered from the delivery (by emergency Caesar) and is enjoying motherhood, and Shaun now has two daughters to spoil this Christmas. He is already so proud of Rosie that he has bought a new, bigger family car to celebrate. Meanwhile, Josie (No 1 daughter) is firmly established as a teenager and needs a new outfit every week with matching bling to impress the boys. Charlie now ranks baby massage as one of her skills, and Shaun has taken-up shooting to escape a house full of women!

Dan and Jo have rented a property in Maidenhead for a few months and after that, they hope to be back in their own house in Earley not far from us. Dan has taken-on a Sales job within his Company (Gartner) and I expect Jo will re-establish herself on the career path now that they are all back in England.

As for us, Bridget is still doing a bit of work as a supply teacher and as a home tutor and continues to work on the governing body of one of the local schools. Stuart has taken on the treasurership of a charity preferring the simple pleasures of making the numbers add-up. Stuart retired soon after his 60th (or to be more precise he lasted 15 days after his birthday) and is now very busy at home instead of being very busy at work. However, we are both enjoying the additional freedom and time – playing golf together and improving our level of fitness (if not our handicap) and just enjoying a more leisurely pace of life.

You may remember that last year we told you we had Planning permission to extend the two bedroom bungalow we bought for retirement and turn it into something more like a family size home - to accommodate grandchildren! It has taken us a year to get started but we are now underway and having found a good builder we now expect to finish in February. We quite literally have a roof over our heads again so, if you are visiting our 'neck of the woods' do drop in to see us, you may have to help to construct flat-pack beds and wardrobes but we will have the floorspace to offer you.

Can we thank you again for all your letters and cards with their annual greetings and news items; we love to keep in touch with you. We will have four generations around the table on Christmas day since mum will be joining us from Yorkshire for the holiday. We shall lift our glasses to you and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.