

The Notley Review 2012

The duty for creating this year's annual roundup has fallen to me so, I'm afraid it's going to be rather brief! To be fair, there are only four days (or two Chelsea managers) left until Christmas, so I don't have long. I guess, there's a fair chance you're actually reading this after the event – sorry. And without Laura's creative influence it won't be very ... well, creative either.

So, here we go...

Adam finished his second year at Nottingham and is now well into his third. He's on a four year Master's course, so we don't need to worry about him moving back home quite yet.

Mark is now in his final year of college, and in the midst of auditions for drama schools. With places for about one in a hundred, there is a chance he will still be at home next year. Fingers crossed!



Laura is now running Hays (with a little help from her boss, the MD).



Meanwhile, I still 'work' from home for Dell – in my pyjamas until midday and Jeremy Kyle to look forward to in the afternoon. It's a tough life. Actually, Laura's Mum has been with us since the end of last year, so I do have to pretend to work!

After our trip to the Maldives last December, our travels have been a little more modest this year, but we've still had a couple of great holidays.

In May, Laura and I walked the Hadrian's Wall Path with Peter and Rachel – about 100 miles in all. Laura did 90 of them with a blister the size of Wales on her heel. The weather could have been better, but it could have been a lot worse too. We took the easy option and let a baggage company shift our gear from one B&B to the next, starting in Bowness-on-Solway and finishing in Newcastle six days later. Hopefully, we'll be able to do something similar next year - the Great Wall of China maybe?

In the summer, the four of us spent a week and a half with Liz and family on the Côte d'Azur, probably for the last time – they'll be moving on next year. Hope it's somewhere nice! Rumours that rosé wine stocks were depleted after our stay were greatly exaggerated. Rumours that Paul nearly sunk the Air France yacht had slightly more truth to them. ;-)



The Olympics were certainly a highlight of the year. After so many gloomy forecasts, I just can't believe how exciting and uplifting those few weeks were. We completely failed to get tickets for the main events, but did get to a couple of freebies. Adam and I watched the Men's Road Race as it sped through Ripley, and we all went up to London and watched the marathon runners on the Embankment. Adam and I also went up to the Olympic Park for a day at the Paralympics. Really glad to have been a part of it.



We did get tickets for Blur's final (right!) concert in Hyde Park on the closing day of the Olympics. Great fun, with New Order and The Specials rolling back the years. It's actually been a good year for concerts. We also saw Keane (photo) and Elbow both at the O2, within 3 days of each other a few weeks ago. The

highlight, of course, has to have been Cold Chisel, in the UK for the first time in 30 years, at the Shepherd's Bush Empire in July, with Adrian and Jeremy.

A big year coming up for us: degrees, A levels and a few milestone birthdays. Mark will be 18 in April, Adam 21 in June, and Laura ... 39? in October.



So finally – unless you skipped straight to the end anyway – we hope that 2012 has been kind to you and that you are looking forward to (or more probably, had) a great Christmas. And I hope we see more of you, or even some of you, next year.

Happy Christmas
and lots of love,
Richard, Laura, Adam and Mark

More photos, if you can face them, at:
<http://www.icecoldinalex.co.uk/>