

The Notley Review 2013

After the incredible success of last year's review, I've been tasked with creating another masterpiece for this year. (Laura is currently on mince pie duty, but has been retained in an editorial role). Once again you can be sure of a wholly inaccurate account of the events, but hopefully you will at least be entertained enough to make it to the end!

So, in a nutshell...

Adam was 21 in June. He's now in his final year at Nottingham University. His course has gone really well, and (fingers crossed) he'll finish with a very good Master's degree in the summer. Now, the fun really starts, as he considers his first steps in the real world.



Mark was 18 in April. He left Farnborough Sixth Form College in the summer, a bit disappointed with his A level results, but now thoroughly enjoying himself on a one year acting foundation course at LAMDA in London - 'living it large' with a couple of fellow drama students in a Hammersmith flat. He's now trying to win a place on a full three year acting course for next year.

And Laura was 50 in October! She's really missing the boys, and looking forward to having them both home for Christmas.

With the new Hays MD bringing his Aussie team to London earlier this year, Laura has rejoined her old colleagues in Guildford. Slightly less prestige perhaps, but a better commute and happy to be back with her old boss, Barney.

I'm still at Dell, 'working' from home, and watching Jeremy Kyle in my pyjamas. (How he ever got hold of my pyjamas, I'll never know!)

We haven't managed a family holiday this year, but Mark went with a large group of friends to Zante in July. (Maybe you caught the episode of 'Sun, Sex and Suspicious Parents'?) Adam also got away for a few days in July, to the Latitude Festival in Suffolk. And Laura and I holidayed without them!



In May, we went on another walking holiday with Peter and Rachel. After the slightly disappointing weather on Hadrian's Wall in 2012, this year we headed for the sun, and the Camino de Santiago in northwest Spain. (You know that old adage, 'the rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain'? Well, not in our experience!) We had



a couple of days in Madrid first, to stock up on tapas and sangria, before taking the train to Ferrol. We then walked the 78 mile Camino Inglés to Santiago de Compostela over the next four and a bit days. Good times and no blisters.

In October, we took some friends up on those 'you must come and see us offers'! First we spent four days with Jeremy and Gudi in Berlin; then we took the train to Prague, for four days with Hugh and Deanne. Two incredibly interesting cities

complete with our personal tour guides. Thanks to all our hosts, particularly to J&G for throwing Laura a surprise birthday party in the middle of the Müggelsee! But Jeremy, did you have to invite your brother? ;-)

To celebrate our wedding anniversary last week, we continued our tour of European capitals, spending a couple of nights in London. (No need for easyJet this time, but the rail-fare was almost as expensive). We particularly enjoyed the View from the Shard (thanks to Laura's friends at Hays) and the ice-skating at Somerset House.

We've attended quite a variety of events this year: The Strangers in Guildford, Tosca and The Rocky Horror Show in Woking (though not as a double bill), and Jeeves & Wooster in London last week. Alas the Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy Radio show was cancelled two days before it reached Woking. It may just be a film, but Gravity (in 3D) also has to be worth a mention. Not quite so many sporting highlights after last year's Olympic excitement, but we did cheer on Cav and Sir Brad as they rode through Knaphill on their way to stage and tour victories respectively, on the Tour of Britain.



On a much sadder note, we've had two body blows this year. Laura's brother Paul and one of our good friends from Exeter, David both died suddenly in May. Our thoughts are with Laura's mother Evelyne, and Sally, Rosie, Katie and Sam this Christmas.

Finally, we wish you all a peaceful Christmas, and look forward to seeing you in 2014 ... starting with Debbie and Bill in Ottawa for the New Year!

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

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