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Dear

- 2011 has been another good year. Paul has done plenty of work and travels; Margaret has travelled a bit less and worked a lot less! We have also met up with many friends and family.
- We finished last year with a Ramblers trip to Cuba over Christmas - a fascinating mix of politics, history and opportunities - lost in a timewarp, and with obvious poverty in some ways, but with excellent free education and medical facilities for all.
- Paul continues to work for the US company Esri - now officially pronounced *essree*, rather than 'ee ess are eye'! His focus is still national mapping and cadastral agencies across Europe. His business trips have included Cyprus, Netherlands, USA, Poland, Estonia, France, Austria and Israel, unfortunately in bursts rather than nicely spread through the year.
- Margaret went with him to a very chilly Tallin (Estonia) in April, to Salzburg in November, and joined him for two days in Paris in July, where she was overjoyed to find a laundromat opposite the hotel, as our washing machine at home had recently malfunctioned in spectacular fashion. She spent a week at a Spanish language school in Granada, and later in the year visited Koblenz in Germany to see Heidi, who had been her room mate in India.
- We walked among spring flowers on the Greek island of Naxos at Easter, and in Norway with Canadian friends in July, where weeks of rain had left spectacular waterfalls. Fortunately the sun shone on us. Other travels included a weekend in our twin village of Le Vaudreuil in Normandy and long weekends in Madrid and Lisbon - helping prop up ailing Euro economies!
- Paul continues to play concertina and sold one for twice what he paid, only to spend the profit on a new one! He has for a while been creating some free traditional music tunebooks (<http://www.pghardy.net/concertina/tunebooks/>) which seem to be appreciated.
- Margaret enjoys the varied life of a retiree, walking, playing badminton and taking advantage of some of the hundreds of classes offered by Cambridge U3A (University of the Third Age). She does Spanish, Bridge, Botany and a wonderful course entitled 'Educating Seniorita' which involves going to the cinema, theatre and to exhibitions at museums and art galleries. It has certainly widened her horizons. She still does occasional supply teaching, and also taught English in the summer to a Catalan woman who came to stay with us.
- She has enjoyed volunteering for the education team at Wimpole Hall, but sadly the Living History programme is being discontinued as it doesn't fit with the new business plan, so if you have need of a Victorian housemaid (uniform and references provided) please let her know.
- Paul's mother is now 98 and living in a nursing home in Coalville near to Paul's brother. Our foster son, Dom, and his girlfriend Sam are living - but unfortunately not working - in Haverhill, though Dom is doing an electrician's course to increase his job prospects.
- We expect to be in the Cape Verde islands (off the bulge of Africa) for Christmas, on a Ramblers holiday. In the brochure it's marked 'P' for Pioneer, so may be exciting!

We hope that 2012 is a happy and successful year for you.

With our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year