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Dear All,

We are both in good health (for our advancing years!), and thoroughly enjoying retirement. As Covid eased this year, we have been catching up with postponed travels.

We spent February in Spain in 'our' little rented apartment by the sea in Calahonda. It was not as tranquil as usual, as the boardwalk, which had been swept away in a winter storm, was being noisily rebuilt. However, we enjoyed good weather and seaside and mountain walking.

We stopped in Cordoba on the way home and marvelled at the magnificent Mosque/Cathedral, and later also the striking Roman aqueduct at Segovia.

In April we did our first river cruise, and visited the wonderful tulip gardens at Keukenhof in the Netherlands, as well as Antwerp, Ghent and Bruges. May found us in Karystos on the Greek island of Evia walking and sightseeing.

Back in England, we welcomed a visit in May from our twin village of Le Vaudreuil near Rouen. We plan to go there next Spring.

We have kept busy playing bridge and music, doing classes with U3A, volunteering for the National Trust at Wimpole and doing exercise appropriate to our age (table tennis for Paul, Badminton for Margaret) as well as walking when the weather allows.

In June we spent a week small-boat cruising between islands in northern Croatia - after a 10-hour flight delay at Gatwick (for which we were compensated fully and speedily by Tui).

In July, we walked in the delightful Dolomites, taking advantage of cable cars, gondolas and chairlifts to go up the mountains. BA cancelled three flights and lost our luggage on our return. Five weeks later, while on a similar excellent walking holiday in Wengen in the Swiss Alps, our lost cases came home, presumably having been found languishing in Munich airport. Four months later BA paid 50% compensation for one cancellation!

In September we celebrated our 45th wedding anniversary in Burnham Market, Norfolk. Later in the month we went to Hampshire to see some of Margaret's cousins, staying in a thatched cottage, walking by the sea and in the New Forest, and visiting Salisbury.

Paul went off in October to be a tutor at a concertina-playing weekend in Somerset. After two years of Covid-forced online sessions, it's good to be back to live events - his Greenshoots local slow sessions have resumed outdoors at a pub during the summer and a village hall this winter. One benefit of the lockdown is that he has recorded nearly 700 tunes for others to learn. He has more recently been playing Christmas music for the Christmas opening at Wimpole.

We did 'a flying visit' to Calahonda in late autumn, when it was warm enough for Paul to go snorkelling in the sea. We were able to have lunch with M's cousins who live nearby. Back home, we've also met up (separately) with Paul's brother, nephew, great-niece and goddaughter.

We look forward to more British and European travels over the next year, but have no current plans for worldwide travel, which still seems harder than in pre-covid days.

Enjoy your Christmas and have a happy and successful year to come.

Paul and Margaret