

Paul and Margaret Hardy,
15 Kentings, Comberton, CAMBRIDGE CB23 7DT
Email paul@paulhardy.net; margaret@paulhardy.net,
Web: <https://pghardy.net>, Tel 01223 263232.

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Dear All,

We are still enjoying life, though with odd health hiccups, and doubtless more grumbling. Paul this week had a second cataract op and can now see how bright the world is. We wonder what he has missed in the past year!

We spent February again in Spain in 'our' little rented apartment by the sea in Calahonda near Marbella. Probably for the last time, we took the ferry to Santander and drove down through Spain, stopping at interesting towns and staying in Paradors. Particularly impressive was the royal palace of El Escorial which we visited on the way home. While in Calahonda we enjoyed a weekend with Margaret's cousins, walked by the sea and in the mountains, and finally got to the Picasso Museum in Malaga.

In May we spent another weekend with generous hosts in our twin village of Le Vaudreuil. Later in the month we did a river cruise down the Douro with Riviera Travel, with good weather and lovely scenery - not a walking holiday!

In June we visited (for the first time!) the Channel Islands, where the midday temperature at the start of the week was nearly 30C, but by the end, was a rather cool 14C - British weather! Both Jersey and Guernsey have much to see despite their small size.

In August we did a walking holiday in Austria, staying in Zell am See which, we discovered, is very popular with Arabs who love the mountains, the snow, the lake and even the rain! We had some of the latter, but also a few beautiful clear days at high altitude. The walking was more vertical than we expected (angles get steeper as you get older), and Paul was a bit limited by the aftermath of his prostate op two weeks previously, but we managed some walking every day.

In September we celebrated our 46th wedding anniversary in Lyme Regis, famous for its fossils (probably an apt choice for us), then met up with branches of family over a long weekend in Derbyshire. October took us to Piedmont for another week of walking (and wine) in an area of pretty hilltop villages, vineyards and interesting towns.

We actually do spend quite a bit of time at home! We keep busy gardening, playing bridge and music, doing classes with U3A, volunteering for the National Trust at Wimpole (and occasionally Anglesey Abbey) and doing exercise appropriate to age (table tennis for Paul, Badminton for Margaret) as well as walking when the weather allows. We even went punting in Cambridge for the first time since Covid.

Paul continues to play concertina, both in live sessions and via Zoom. He went to a concertina weekend in Swaledale and two in Somerset (one as a tutor). He passes happy hours restoring and fettling concertinas in his Man Shed.

Dom and Sam have moved from MK to a village near Great Yarmouth. We spent a weekend visiting them and the delights of Norwich. Since moving there they have taken up walking!

Wishing you an enjoyable Christmas and have a happy and successful year to come.

Paul and Margaret