



## *It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas - apart from those jobs still uncompleted!!*

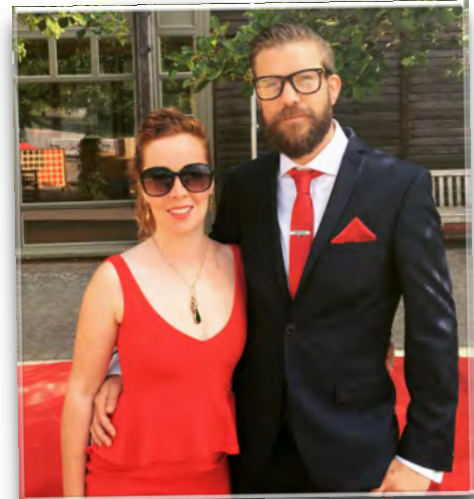
*We seem to be watching life whizz past in a blur - surely we have only just finished last year's newsletter? But uh oh, this one is now late and at any moment it will be 2017. How's this possible? Anyway, here we go again - what a year!*

Welcome friends. The executive summary for this year is:

a lot like 2015. And, there is a shiny new granddaughter (hello little Elodie), a new old car, the older oyster smack is faster & taller, all the other grandchildren are faster and taller too. Juliette and the girls have moved, everyone else is busy, houses remain unfinished everywhere, and life seems pretty jolly, all things considered. Lawks a mercy.

In 2016, we begin in **Brighton**, where **Toby** is still a (rather good, his dad thinks) journalist and **Cali** continues doing cool stuff in graphic design, so have penned their own (subedited!) review for you:

"Toby and Cali remain much the same this year and, as their house renovating progresses, 2016 has seen a move from wallpaper stripping to a combination of more wallpaper stripping but with some (exciting) decorating too. The final few weeks of the year have seen them finally fit a log burning stove which the two cats (Huck and Gnarla) are yet to trust entirely (setting fire to bits of trees in the living room... what could possibly go wrong?). Toby confirms that he remains determined to have the work finished by Christmas, but (once again) there is a way to go yet - he still insists he never specified which Christmas. Not this one anyway.



The early part of the year saw them fly out to Hong Kong on a (long delayed) visit to their friends who have been living there for some six years. This seemed to involve the drinking and curious foodstuffs on sticks - however, they did seem to enjoy it. Toby and Cali also managed to hear the Brexit referendum results in a field in Glastonbury during the festival; they say the sense of disappointment there was particularly palpable.

(substantial) eating of

Away from the house, Toby continues to commute daily from their home in Brighton up to Chelsea in London where he has spend the year dealing with a new challenge as Editor of Yachts and Yachting magazine - a one-year maternity cover. It has been a year of hard work and learning but he thinks he has enjoyed the experience. Cali is still working as a graphic designer, putting together spreads for national newspapers and magazines for her work near Hastings - to which she drives silently in their all-electric Nissan Leaf car. They really have embraced the Brightonian green-living ethos it seems. Cali has also been hired by another sailing magazine producing monthly illustrations, adding to her workload significantly - but ultimately funding much of the house work.

Toby was, of course, working in Rio covering the Olympic sailing and he reflects on how safe he felt - there was inevitably a huge security presence, but people were friendly, welcoming and warm. That may not have been the situation once the tents were folded and the athletes were off to their homes around the globe, but, for the summer of 2016, it was an enjoyable experience, walking to work and living in the bubble of the all the other sports journalists, in an amazing city.

A big gain from having Toby and Cali having their own (quite good sized) house by the way, is that Toby has picked up his trombone again and their house echoes with live brass music once again. Lovely.

Squeezed in between the DIY, work, circular breathing, Olympic reports and cat spoiling, Toby and Cali are still members of Shoreham Sailing Club and continue to enjoy racing their RS200 there. As a somewhat counterintuitive consequence of Toby's brief promotion and Cali's additional work in sailing mags, actual weekends out sailing have been a bit thin on the ground. Hopefully 2017 will be better (in every respect)!

**Christmas Newsletter 2015 from the ever growing Heppell family in Brightlingsea, Portland, Brighton, Hampton**

The Anchorage, George Avenue, Brightlingsea, Essex. CO7 ONE [www.heppell.net/christmas](http://www.heppell.net/christmas) page 1 of 3

## Heppell family Christmas newsletter 2016 - Merry Christmas everyone

Back onto the **Isle of Portland** next where **Simon** and **Melissa** continue the battle to keep up with their **Amelie** (9) and **Louis** (6). Amelie is now 4-seasons Optimist sailor with a faster, newer boat - best result this year a proud 2nd, but she is learning so much, so quickly. She also swims at Squad level 2 to 3 times a week and in competitions and with a Standup Paddle board for birthday, she is pretty much a full-on waterbaby.— luckily, school progress seems pretty good as well, currently a full year ahead with her SATs. With her Mum helming Amelie was 2nd in the Mirror Nationals by a whisker (they'd led all week till the last race!) & they dominated their class in Brightlingsea's Pyefleet Week.



Amelie amazed the oyster smack fleet after a race by climbing (in a harness) Alice's 72 foot mast and staying up there all the way home, casually waving to the others. Fearless, or possibly crazy! Louis raced fearlessly with Dad Simon in both those Mirror events too - Simon arriving back from Rio to jump straight into the tiny boat with Louis - they also did pretty well. Boys vs Girls is hotting up for the Hiscocks! As

well as Olympic Rio, and Mirroring, Simon has been racing his foiling Moth all over the place again this year - including a fab event in Bermuda.

Louis is sailing his Oppie on his own too now, and is also a rugby regular on Sundays, filling his Saturdays with Adventure Club on the water (well, Portland is the National Sailing Centre), and filling his head with Lego and maths the rest of the time. Mum Melissa was promoted at her school and, like so many teachers nationwide at the moment, has been working unbelievable hours in her new school building. This year, teachers all over England were arriving at the Christmas break completely exhausted. It can't go on like this can it?



This newsletter is being typed from the slopes of the 3 Valleys in France and seeing Amelie and Louis hurtling around on precipitate runs is a bit daunting. Starting early certainly payed off and now even tiny Josie is off to ski school!

So finally **Brightlingsea** and we now find **Stephen** and **Carole** joined by **Juliette** with her two adorable bundles **Josephine** (3) and **Elodie** (0). The big story of 2016 of course was baby Elodie being born and she is a captivating little blighter, of course. A long planned move away from their corner of West London, ready for Josie to start school somewhere a little calmer, got accelerated a bit, but The Anchorage is now no empty nest but is filled with toys and laughter (and nappies) and a



remarkable number of baths Even more bedrooms are being added as this is typed! The Littlies are in a new Brightlingsea cycle of ballet and pre school and Sing n Sign and Forest School and crabbing and general mayhem. Juliette has, as planned, moved on from her London school teaching and is a home mum again whilst Elodie grows a little more (she is already very tall for a baby!). They've brought the family launch Crusader back to the sea too, which is nice.



Stephen and Carole remain pretty busy. Stephen is still a professor at Universidad Camilo José Cela, in Madrid, as well as Bournemouth

Uni in England and thus is right at the centre of the unthinking confusion of Brexit, like millions of others. Worst case, we will all have to become Spanish which, given their tasty food, fab football, huge coastline, amazing culture and brilliant booze would be no



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bad thing. Maybe common sense will prevail, but in 2016 it has been is short supply hasn't it?

Projects for Stephen range from Australia to Scandinavia (with some remarkable new university & school buildings and courses) to new learning initiatives including for Syrian refugee children in Jordan. With Carole and Juliette a very exciting Virtual Free School is being developed... and a host of rather exciting projects seem to be taking up ever more time - the world has apparently gone learning mad, which is rather reaffirming.

Stephen and Carole have had a fab season racing on their old 1907 oyster smack (see [ck348.com](http://ck348.com)) with holidays in Whistler and the Caribbean. However, a lot of rot, some big splits and a rather lively set of twists and curves in the old mast required a replacement -

much fun was had in the process and the new mast is a bit longer too. The cross section shows how complex these things are beneath the varnish!



You might recall we sold our lovely Porsche 911 (Polly) a while back and the planned replacement was to be a very old Austin 7 (reprising Stephen and Carole's student days) which Stephen was to assemble from bits and pieces via eBay and other sources. You might imagine the project developed a projected life of around 125 years given the inevitable very slow rate of progress. Thus a rather exciting Plan B emerged (i.e. buy old and already restored one). The new 1931 Austin RM box saloon is pretty much nut and bolt perfect.

So, a year of looking back and of looking forwards - and 2017 is set to be even more interesting and unexpected. This year (once again!) Lys, back in Essex, is posting and printing these rather-late-again newsletters. Lys and Stephen have worked together for 25 years this year - quite a Workaversary!

A peaceful new year looks a bit elusive globally, but hopefully we will all do our best to get there. Meantime, have a great Christmas at least. See you all here again in a year's time...

