

Our Times in Leicestershire

Shepshed Edition
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December 05
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Enhanced Web Version

For those of you who have internet access, you can see an enhanced version of this newsletter, with links to photo reviews for 2005, Blaxhall, and the DeeXTour of Danmark tour on our website: www.team-triplet.com.

The Naked Chef

One Sunday morning in February, we woke up to find that the bread maker had made dough, but not baked it. This meant some quick action was required, no time to get dressed, (see picture above) to knock back the dough and to put it into baking tins for cooking in the oven.

Birthday Ride on a Tram

For Ceri-Siân's birthday it was the treat every 15 year old wants – a ride on a tram. Ceri went with 3 friends to the Nottingham Ice Arena to go skating. That meant a ride in from Phoenix Park on the tram. Ceri-Siân was not impressed when I told the tram staff it was her birthday. Whilst she went skating I went gricing.

Ceri-Siân Gets Type Cast

This year Ceri took a chorus role in the school production of Dracula Spectacular. She played "Booze" as one of the "Mental Outpatients", AKA "Idiots". The role also included a few solo parts whereby she could act the fool. She has also taken to method acting throughout the autumn term, in developing an allergy to the morning sun (I'm told its normal teenage behaviour) and in the week of the production being so worn out when she got up, she was like a zombie. It is good that Ceri has been involved with singing as that is one aspect of the music grades she gets bad marks. She has taken singing seriously enough to go on a one day Kodály singing workshop in Cambridge.

Three New Countries

I managed to clock up three new countries this year, Switzerland and Italy via work and both Ceri-Siân and I chalked up Danmark. In addition to the above, I also managed to spend mid summer's day in France – which was an interesting experience as it seems to be a national day of music festivals.

A Loo With a View!

This year the Tandem Club International Rally was in Danmark, so I managed to get 3 weeks off work, and Ceri-Siân and I cycled, on our half bikes, to it from Felixstowe, via the Harwich - Esbjerg ferry and numerous others. We spent a week cycling there and a week cycling back, making use of simple nature sites. These sites were forest, farms or peoples gardens. One site had a true "outside" toilet, at the back of someone's garden, behind the shed and overlooked by the railway line was an earth closet for the use of campers, no need to close the door, there weren't one or walls and roof!

Ceri-Siân Rides Tandem

During the Tandem Rally in Danmark, we went for many rides with the Davies family. They had arrived on two tandems, with Megan and her brother Carwyn riding one together. Midway through the week Ceri-Siân swapped bikes with Carwyn and rode tandem with Megan stoking. So after pushing me for over 11000Km, Ceri got to be pushed by somebody else.

Knitting Factory

Easter we had our friends the Jeffery's stay. Rather than have a picnic out we decided to have an indoor picnic. So we got out the camp table and set that up with the camp chairs as well. Over the weekend Ceri-Siân did some knitting which inspired Stephanie to learn to knit. She started a scarf using oddments of wool.....however Ann spent a lot of the weekend undoing Stephanie's mistakes. With Ceri-Siân doing some knitting inspired me to knit a baby cardigan for a girl who was going on maternity leave – it took so long for me to knit it, she had to collect it after the baby was born – it was a good job I knitted a size 3 cardigan. I also started a pair of shrunk wool mittens as I have to knit them 50% bigger they might be ready in time for spring! The gamble is will they be the right size after shrinking!

Sweet and Sour – But No Source

We had the patter of little feet again in January. This time two little guinea pigs. Ann and Ceri-Siân had one each, named Honey and Marmyte respectively due to the colour of their fur. However I soon christened them Sweet and Sour.

Ceri's Shoe Bargains

On one of Ceri-Siân's many shopping trips she was well pleased with the bargains she got and came home with 3 pairs of shoes (so, £8.50 for the lot!!!!!!!!!!!!). At this rate she will become a candidate for the Presidency of the Philippines.

Barrow Bike Ride

As part of National Bike Week, we took part in the Barrow Upon Soar village bike ride. Ann and I rode tandem and did the 10 mile ride, so as not to cramp Ceri-Siân's whilst she rode the 7 mile bike ride with a friend.

Ceri Opens an Oyster and Finds a Stone

As part of the plan to go to grade 8 in flute, Ceri-Siân got her new flute in October. This involved a trip down to London with her cousin Rachel to All Flutes Plus. After trying 4 new flutes and a second hand one she opted for a new Pearl. Her flute playing improved overnight and she used it for her grade 5 flute exam which she passed. Although the trip to London was a musical success, it was a girlie shopping failure. After buying her flute, I went gricing and left the girls to go around the shops. However Ceri-Siân left her money behind so they resorted to the free museums.

Mayday

Our first camp of the year was as tradition has it at Blaxhall Mayday weekend. Ann relaxed whilst Ceri-Siân and I went out and about on tandems and half bikes. The Saturday and Sunday we went out on half bikes and tried a few new routes that involved ferries, whilst Monday as per tradition we went to Framlingham Castle on the tandem. I posted a review of the weekend on the team-triplet website, and the Blaxhall Village Hall committee has used some of the photos to promote the village hall.

Censored

Dumb Women's Lane

We had two camping trips in Kent. The first one was mid May for niece Heather's wedding which was held on the edge of Romney Marsh. During the day we went for a drive and came across the above named road just outside Winchelsea. Ann was kind enough to pose by the sign!

Kent Tandem

A week after Heathers Wedding we went back to Kent for Spring Bank holiday week. We had planned to go in the opposite direction but at the last minute changed our minds. We camped near Sandwich and popped in to see friends at the Tandem Club Rally and other days were spent out and about. It was the first time Ann had ridden tandem for any period of time.

New Camera

After wearing out my second digital camera, I splashed out and got a digital SLR. The problem is I take more photos now and ended up being the "Unofficial" photographer for Ceri's skool production. They were so impressed with the photos they want me to photograph other productions! The downside is my hard disk is rapidly filling up. I brought a new 120Gb disk drive in June, in September it broke down so I took it back and exchanged it for a 160GB and still got £15 back in change as the prices of them had dropped!

Clarinet

Ceri-Siân's quests for bargains led her to a second-hand clarinet. Her friend who has been playing clarinet for years was well impressed. Caroline our friend from Oxford has also taken up the clarinet and they both encourage each other and have played duets together.

Zurich Photo

My trip to Switzerland was on route to Germany and I managed to get a free afternoon in Zurich which coincided with a tour of the city's tramway system on a historic museum tram. I took loads of photos and managed to get one published in the June issue of Tramways and Urban Transit. I was pleasantly surprised as to how relatively flat it was around the Zurich /Lake Constance area that I am hoping to organise a Tandem International there in 5 years time.

Daddy Doghouse

The closest Ann has got to exotic destinations this year was - Heathrow airport departure lounge - to drop Nikka off from next door who decided to go travelling for a year. It is also at Heathrow that I noticed that Ann had coloured her hair. The only problem was that it had been coloured for 3 weeks before I noticed it. No wonder she was a bit offish with me!

Camping at Quorn

We only got to camp once at Quorn this year such is our busy life! This we managed to squeeze in with the Sherwood's at the start of September when we had a glorious weekend and a good opportunity to try out my new camera.

Practice Camp

Not that we need much practice, but before going of to Danmark, Ceri-Siân and I went for a practice cycle camp to St Noets. When we got there we realised we had left behind some important items such as, towel, pyjamas, Ann, toothbrush, and other useful items. We had glorious sunshine all weekend which was not repeated in Danmark.. Apparently Danmark, like much of Europe had it wettest summer for years.

Ceri Has an Early Bath

Whilst staying with our friends in Oxford Ceri-Siân tried canoeing in a Canadian canoe and a kayak along part of the River Thames. Ceri-Siân set off with Stephanie from the boathouse in the Canadian canoe and started to compete with the big strapping lads and lasses taking part in the summer Regatta. After navigating part of the regatta course, the girls then paddled into a side channel which used to be an outdoor swimming pool where Ceri was taught some basic skills and also tried the kayak. Trying the Kayak also meant she had to get wet and have a Shepshed bath.

Thunderbirds Are Go

Whilst doing some late-night shopping in Leicester we had a call for help and ended up rescuing niece Charlotte and two of her friends from university who had pranged their car on the M1 near us. We put them up for the night and Ann was ever so impressed as I behaved myself, although I could not resist telling Charlotte's friends I was her genetic father!

Grade 5 Theory/Bassoon

Having only just taken music practical exams until now, Ceri-Siân took her first music theory exam and jumped in at grade 5 and passed with distinction. She also took her first bassoon grade at level 3 and a got a merit.

No Carpet

Our house looked like the TV licence advert for a while – bare floorboards with the TV in corner whilst we prepared for new carpets. This is a job we had been putting off years and as we had more holes than pile, we had to bit the bullet.

Ann Goes for the Granny Look

In an attempt to follow the latest fashion Ann donned curlers to show Ceri-Siân how they are worn and what they do to one's hair. I don't know why but the Granny look did not stay in fashion for long. Unfortunately I was not quick enough with the camera to record the event for posterity.

Wedding Anniversaries

This year Ann and I celebrated our 20th wedding anniversary. As always we celebrated in our usual quite style. In addition brother Philip and Ludabell celebrated their 25th Wedding Anniversary in September and I annoyed everybody by acting as "official photographer" for the big party and entertainment they had starring Elvis Presley and Tom Jones. There were three attempts at getting the Dee Family together this year. Heather's wedding, Philip's wedding anniversary party and a family get together at sister Liz's. At that event we managed to get all the brothers and sisters together, but Ann and Ceri-Siân could not make it due to final practices for Ceri's flute exam. The guest of honour at Liz's party was brother Len who came over from Austria with wife Helga.

A Wet Night in Northampton

Our last camping weekend this year was at the Tandem Clubs Family Camping weekend held at Moulton just outside Northampton. Due to music commitments we arrived after lunch on the Saturday and managed a short ride with friends who had the same predicament. Saturday night was very wet and gave an ideal opportunity to try out the new tarp we had brought. It also attracted many friends! Fortunately during the day the weather was dry.

