

YATES CHRISTMAS NEWS

A Happy and Healthy Holiday Season to everyone.

We seem to be living in 'interesting times' (again), both internationally and domestically. Still, Ingrid and I are blessed to have such a lovely family of world citizens. One important item of news this year was that Ingrid finally bit the bullet and became a British citizen, whilst of course remaining totally Dutch :-). Ironically this leaves Mick as almost the only member of our family with a single passport/residency. Many congratulations to Dan and Mehrnaz who are now engaged, and will marry in the UK in 2024. They are still working hard on their startup (Greener), just having come back from COP 28. And also many congratulations to Michala & Tom, who will marry in 2025 in Australia when Michala has finished her nursing studies. The photo shows them both with the fast-growing up Zoe and Kaylee. It was great to have Dave, Eugene, Hannah and Will come from New York to stay with us, though Dave's CIO job keeps him online a lot. Pete, Colleen, Vivi, Pippa and Felicity are still enjoying life in Luxembourg. Pete is Digital Production, Marketing & Social Media at the EIB, and Luxembourg always provides a great jumping-off spot for family trips. Mandy, Dave & Sophia still live just outside Bath, working hard on their IT consultancy business. Vicky and Matt were living at Havenwood for a little while, which was lovely for us. Now, though, they are in a flat in a very cool London neighbourhood, with Matt working the bonkers-hours of the hospitality industry.

Vicky's freelance design and digital strategy work is going well, including her branding for Photo|Frome (overleaf). Tech remains a family calling, it seems. Stepping back, the UK is going through an extended 'bad patch' in so many ways. Hopefully this changes and the 2024 election can start to turn things around. We fervently hope that our children and grandkids get the better world that they deserve, as things are much harder today than in the era of the spoiled boomers.



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Ingrid and Mick managed to get some fun travel in during 2023. We don't fly as much, though we did go to Iceland. Several years ago we tried to see the Aurora at the Swedish arctic circle Ice Hotel, and failed. This time, however we succeeded. We saw an absolutely spectacular display over the wonderful (gastro) city of Reykjavik. Ironically, two weeks after we came home the aurora showed up in our backyard. The Blue Lagoon is a tourist trap - but for very good reasons. It is a must-do when you visit.



In the summer we made a rather nostalgic road trip. First to Holland, seeing family (Ing's Cousin Marian), then onto our favourite city in the world, Paris - who can resist café crème et calva in Montmartre, or the foodie inventiveness of Boulevard St Germain? We then went on to Normandy and Brittany. A wonderfully relaxed trip after the craziness of Photo|Frome.



Now in its second year, the photography festival was a huge, public success - 13,000 visits, 175 photographers, many internationally known, 15 venues, over 500 photographs, workshops, symposium and more. We were pleased to get both commercial and UK Arts Council support, though the whole thing is essentially a 7 day a week job for many months. Now onto 2024 ...



Perhaps it is age, and whilst we have sadly witnessed friends pass, 2023 has also been good year for re-acquaintances. Mick was back at Oxford for a fun and rather bar-filled weekend, and we both caught up with good friends from our P&G days. Long may that continue.



So, that's it for 2023, folks. It just remains to wish everyone the very best for 2024 - peace and prosperity for all - and most of all good health.

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