The English Letter

Oct 2026

Hello once more,

We have had a busy few weeks since I last wrote up this diary of our lives.



Courtney is settling in whilst seeking a medium to long term future. She had a birthday which we caught on camera. It started with a breakfast and then Mel,Alex,Mac and Sam can down for a family lunch.

All very pleasant and jovial.

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Our lives at Sandhurst Grange continue with the usual social events which one can join or not. I am organising our Xmas Dinner at Le Patio with 25 residents signed up so far. More news and pics about this after Christmas.



I am pleased to be able to maintain some kind of fitness by way of 3 sessions per week of table tennis. We get better the more we play. That does not make us good, just better. At the table in the picture we have some 300 years on display.

Scrabble also helps the mental side of things.

Bev goes down to Bingo and each Tues is our coffee morning. Add to this the odd other event to shows, restaurants etc. For those over 55 I recommend this life style of independent living with a built in small village around one.

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Back to Courtney and our trip to Lincoln and Gainsborough for her to attend a stop over assessment of suitability to join the RAF. The day/night was at RAF

Cranwell for her and we stayed in Gainsborough. Cranwell is an impressive base and when we were there to collect her I was emotionally taken in by the mighty roar and sight of Vulcans taking off and the thought of the people in them that protect us.







She passed her evaluation day there and another semi interview a few days ago. Many steps towards joining our proud RAF. Health and fitness and police clearance from Australia will follow and then if all well another full day of interviews back at Cranwell.

I will talk about Courtney again later.

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I am back now to SG and a big midday gathering was set up with Macmillan to raise funds for their wonderful work. Lots of snacks to nibble on gave us lunch and money was raised by way of donations towards this and the big draw was the raffle that was organised. Over £600 was collected in all.



I bought quite a few tickets and was lucky enough to win the first prize but also another. I went up and selected a bottle of red for Bev to add to her cash first prize (part given to Courtney) and then a third ticket came up which I put back into the draw. Here I am collecting the red wine.

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I return to Courtney now. We enjoy a meal at Tiggis, being one of St Anne`s best Italian restaurants. Here is a picture of this event which in some ways was “welcome home” to Courtney (an Inferno pizza for me). On paying I mentioned



to a staff member as to where he would go if he needed work in this sector (short term work for Courtney). A brief conversation had him (turned out to be the manager) running after Courtney. A job resulted at Tiiggis.



The shift offerings were not enough however and whilst there Courtney applied for and was employed by Macdonalds, being a 30 minute bus ride away.This has only just happened but good 8 hour shifts and a professional induction followed. She has lots of experience with MacDonalds.

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We went to north Wales in Sept to join up with Andrea and whilst there Courtney had a run to do in Suffolk.



She went down to complete an ultra marathon that was made longer due to road diversions and totalled some 52 kms. Whilst in Australia she had an injury and she knew that the ultra was going to be very challenging, just to finish.



She wrote on her arm “if he can fight cancer, I can do this”. She was , of course, referring to me which was very touching.

The race photographer took this pic as she came in with a sprint to the finish line.

A lot of this letter deals with Courtney as she is with us at the moment and very much part of each day`s diary activities. Normally they would be her stories to tell.

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Wales.



Andrea had researched deeply with our base an 18thC farm house/ Air B and B in a remote country spot close to all the spots we were due to visit.

The inevitable spread sheet detailed the many places and activities we would try and include.





First up was Conwy Castle which saw me scrambling up some turrets whilst Andrea made it to the tops. After the drive there I was in reasonable condition to undertake this although I learnt the next day that I was not.



The little red house was much more gentle being the smallets house in the UK according to the GUiness Boook of Records. It did have a ladder to the first floor that I was still able to climb.



The next day was to Snowdon! Goodness gracious. Not too long ago the climb up to the top would not have been a big deal but today it was impossible. We went by train as far as that would go but I still had to handle the last 58 steps to the top. It was dodgy with no hand holds and a drop to one side near the summit.



People helped, as did Andrea. Andrea and Courtney had climbed there a year or three ago.

The sun had gone, replaced by low clouds, wind and rain.



I made it and then had the precarious business of getting down.



It is not a tall mountain being only some 1000 metres that is quite small compared to our 3000 metre climb to Cathedral Peak in the Drakensberg Mountains when we pitched our tents at the top. But that was then and Snowdon was now.



Then came the tea and canal boat ride with the aptly named Thomas Telford who was instrumental in constructing the Pontcysyllte Aquaduct that spans the river Dee for 126 feet and was built between 1795 and 1808.



Anglesey amd Snowdonia then followed with views of Carnarfon Castle.



BetsyCoed,Bedgellert, Llandudno and the Great Orme were part of the trip.



I could say so much more about this great stay and a short video is there to remind us all as the years unfold.

So it is good bye from me and cheers from Bev.