

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM NICK

CHRISTMAS 2010 Contact e-mail address: happynick@blueyonder.co.uk



Karen with Sophie – the last in a long line of cats

A busy and eventful year....

One way or another, 2010 has certainly been an eventful year for me, with a combination of both happy and sad times.

As I write this in early December, there is deep snow on the ground and it's getting dark and it's not even four o'clock.

This year has seen a major 're-vamp' of my website. I decided to re-build the whole thing from scratch. I am quite pleased with the result.

I now write a monthly 'blog' which, judging by the many responses that I've had (quite a lot from complete strangers and mostly very positive), seems to have been well received.

My website is expanding in other areas too, often as a direct response to specific requests from my regular visitors. Many of you will have downloaded this very Newsletter from the site.

One aspect that didn't fly was the

'Family Forum' which was originally set up as a means for family members to keep in active touch.

That section has been replaced by the Photo Albums section which has proved to be one of the most popular parts of the website. The photos can be viewed as slideshows directly from the web.



The printed version of this Newsletter is only being sent out to family members who I know do not have access to the Internet. In response to specific requests, I am

2010 highlights...

- a wonderful holiday...
- quality time with friends...

2010 sad times...

- the loss of a dear friend...
- the death of my last cat...

planning to develop further new areas for the website.

This is very much a 'work in progress' and will always be so.

I very much hope that you'll want to take a peek. The web address is overleaf, at the foot of the page.

My involvement with voluntary charity work continues with my setting up websites and hosting fundraising Quiz Nights at the Gemini Centre in Chelmsford.

With that and my Bridge clubs on two days each week, I count myself very fortunate to have such a wonderful circle of friends.

Thanks to an excellent health and fitness programme, sadly cut short by the recession, along with an excellent GP, I enjoy a pretty good level of health and fitness.



Loch View from the Highland Hotel...

Another 'Lochs and Glens' Holiday....

Earlier this year, in May, I spent a wonderful holiday with the 'Lochs and Glens' firm that I have travelled with many times before. They didn't disappoint...

I stayed (for the first time) at the Highland Hotel in Fort William. The hotel was superb – great food and entertainment in true Scottish style!

A great itinerary was enjoyed by all, which included an excursion every day. Places visited included: Inverness and the Great Glen including Loch Ness (no sightings of the monster!), Neptune's Staircase – a long series of locks at the southern end of the Caledonian Canal.

Incidentally, all my photos from this trip, along with many others are all on my website. My website address is at the foot of this page.

Earlier in the year I did a three-day Landscape Photography course at the local college and learned how to 'stitch' several pictures together to achieve a panoramic effect. I enjoyed the course immensely and managed to put the skills that I learned to good use on this holiday. You can see the results for yourself on my website. Just go to the site and click on the 'Photo Albums' tab. Then double-click on 'Highlands and Islands of Scotland'

We also enjoyed a boat trip, as well as trips to Ben Nevis and the Commando's Memorial, Glenfinnan and Mallaig. Travelling to Skye, via the new bridge, we enjoyed spectacular views all the way. We enjoyed a couple of hours exploring Portree, the island capital.

All in all a wonderful holiday.

The loss of a dear friend....

It is with great sadness that I have to report the loss of one of my closest and dear friends Brent Sowerby. We had known each other since college days and I shall miss our regular get-togethers

I spent quite a lot of time with him, as was his wish, during his final weeks and days.

We did an awful lot of reminiscing and shared many laughs as we looked back over the many photos I had taken over the years. I would like to think that my being there did help to ease his suffering, even if only by a modest amount.

I would like to pay tribute to all the wonderful staff and the many volunteers at the John Eastwood Hospice who went so far above and beyond in everything they did to ease Brent's suffering, especially in those last few days. They were all just amazing people!

I was also privileged to be able to give help and support to his family over that period – in particular by helping to organize the logistics for his funeral at the local church.

Ann (his wife) and Arthur (his father) and I are still in regular contact and I regard them as part and parcel of that wonderful friendship I had with Brent.



My good friend Brent Sowerby.
R. I. P.