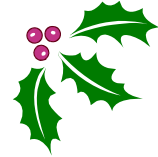




Christmas 2008 Newsletter

from Bridget, Malcolm, James & Matthew



2008

has been a year with changes made and changes promised. Matthew moved to the junior school in September, so we have one glorious year of both boys at the same school. James took his 11+ in October. See **Education** for the result...

Malcolm's career could also be changing again next year, as Telefónica centralise some of their functions.... Not sure where that's leading, but we're optimistic we're well prepared for whatever happens. See what Bridget has been doing to prepare for this change later in the newsletter.

Entertainment

Matthew stole the show in his last year at Infant school as Ned the donkey in "Ned's Christmas Discovery". After a quiet year, he is now in rehearsals for Robinson Crusoe with Prestwood Theatre Club.



Bridget and Malcolm's dominant arms have continued to make a monthly appearance at "Café Lite" as puppets Lucy and Sam, with additional

appearances at local fetes. Videos of Lucy and Sam can be seen on [YouTube](#) by searching for "Lucy Sam Café Lite". Guinea pigs Nibbles and Lily also feature in one of these videos.

James has concentrated on poetry this year, delivering amusing performances at school, and writing his own poetry about dinosaurs and his family.

Space Travel

Much of this year has been spent on space travel. In April, whilst in the USA, we visited the Kennedy Space Centre (as well as a few space simulator rides at Disney World's Magic Kingdom and Epcot).

Touching rocks from Mars (probably)



Whilst in Ireland in August we spent an afternoon at the Armagh planetarium, taking in a show and meeting this space traveller.

In search of more news from outer space we ventured as far as Leicester during the October half-term to the National Space Centre. Worth the visit, apart from the hour-long queue to get in.

Alien life spotted in Leicester



Education

Matthew graduated this year from the Infant School to join James at the Junior School, and settled in quickly, having moved up with most of his friends.

We were delighted to hear in November that James passed his 11+ so will move to grammar school next September. We won't find out which school he's been allocated until March, but we're hopeful he'll go to the same school as some of our young friends from church.



In case she needs to take over as bread-winner, Bridget has gone back to the classroom to study health and safety properly, unfortunately without the enlightened methods of teaching used at the boys' school. Exams were at the start of December, but the results of the oddly-named "NEBOSH general certificate" won't be out until March 2009.

Community

Matthew has joined the cubs this year, having skipped the Beavers, and is enjoying the activities which the small group undertake. He's made a catapult, tied lots of knots, and even been seen playing football (something he's always tried to convince James he doesn't enjoy). He now wants to get the animal husbandry badge, and is looking to adopt an extra pet for which he can be totally responsible for three months. Let's hope it's small.

Sport

Having learnt to cycle only last summer, this year saw James and Matthew take part in the Historic Churches cycle ride, clocking up three churches and a pub, with mum and dad riding as support.



Having campaigned for cycle storage at the junior school (well, Bridget carried out the risk assessment) they now get extra training sessions cycling to and from school. Both boys made it to level 6 at swimming this year, but have decided to drop lessons for a while to pursue other interests. Bridget continues to teach two regular yoga classes, whilst Malcolm manages to keep fit without really trying.

Family matters

We were happy to catch up with Bridget's cousin Seamus, his wife Trisha and lovely (and growing) family in Long Island (New York) in April. They have since had a baby boy (also named Seamus) to go along with daughters Maura, Sinead and Kiera.



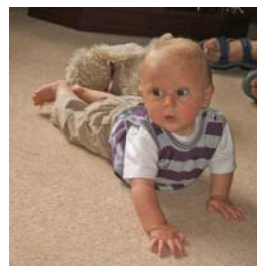
James and Kiera, Sinead and Matthew

Seamus' sister Mary lives in Armagh (Northern Ireland), and we spent part of James' birthday with her, Sean and daughters Alannah, Aiden and Aoife.

Alannah, Aiden, James and Matthew celebrate Alannah and James' birthdays



Whilst in Ireland we also had the chance to catch up with aunts and uncles – Gerry, Anna, Eileen and Maurice. Lovely to see them all.



Malcolm's niece Caroline has had a second son, Ben to join brother Sam. This brings to a total of 7 great nieces and nephews for Malcolm. We haven't met Ben yet, but hope to do so at an important birthday celebration.

Malcolm's mum has a special birthday just before Christmas, and a big party is planned between Christmas and New Year.

Happy Christmas

We hope this finds you well and happy, and send you all our very best wishes for a safe and healthy 2009.

