



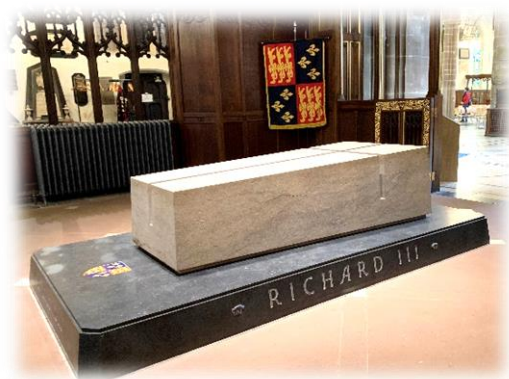
Christmas Letter 2024



Well, it's 8am on 9th December, as I begin to write this Christmas letter, which is far later than usual, but we just seem to have been busy doing other things. Still, 'better late than never', as they say, so here goes...

Richard came over on boxing day last year, but within minutes of sitting down for lunch, he announced that he felt faint, and promptly collapsed, unconscious, shaking and struggling to breathe, on the kitchen floor, with what turned out to be anaphylactic shock! Thanks to the swift action of the paramedics and the resuscitation team at Stoke A&E, he pulled through, and now he seems to have made a full recovery, but as you can imagine it was a very worrying time for all concerned. We think he may have suddenly developed an allergy to salmon, but he's still awaiting allergy tests, to prove it conclusively.

2024 has been a good year so far, with all the usual social activities and increasing involvement with the local [NT supporters' group](#), who raise funds for [Shugborough](#). I'm now the editor of their twice-yearly newsletter, and in August, I delivered another talk for them, entitled 'The History of Telecommunications in the UK', which you can read about in the [Newsletter](#), if you'd like to. In September, I joined them on a trip to Leicester Cathedral and the [Richard III Visitor Centre](#), which was most interesting.



In May, we visited Diana (Alison's college friend), Bill and family in Lincoln, travelling via Nottingham, where we called in to see Alison's cousin Geraldine. And the next day, Richard came with us to the NEC in Birmingham, to attend [Makers Central](#) and meet [Colin Furze](#) (a crazy ex-plumber on YouTube).

Edward is still very much involved with origami. This year, we attended two conventions; Colchester in April, and Edinburgh in August. Both were well attended, with many international guests.

I supported Edward with the admin, and manning 'Supplies' (a convention shop, selling origami paper, books, etc.). He's currently organising the next convention, which will be held at [Milton Keynes](#) in April, having introduced a new online ticketing system, to handle bookings etc. Sadly, the lady that used to look after the bookings (and welcomed Edward, when he first joined the [BOS](#)), passed away this year... It's only when these people are no longer around, that you realise just how much work they did.

I managed to get quite a few local cycle rides in this year, and also walked the Staffordshire part of the [Two Saints Way](#) (in nine sections), with my 'cycling buddies'. We started at Barthomley in Shropshire, and finished in Lichfield. We're all meeting up for Christmas Lunch this week, and we'll no doubt be planning our activities for next year.



The highlight of the year, has to be attending Jess and Adam's wedding in August. Jess was a close friend of Alison's, when she first came to Christchurch First School, where Alison worked as a Teaching Assistant and Supply Teacher. So, to represent Alison, Jess kindly invited Edward and I to spend the weekend with them at [Thicket Priory](#), near York, which is a beautiful wedding venue. Everything was organised to perfection (even the weather) and we both enjoyed every part of the weekend, including, of course, the wedding ceremony itself, where the bride looked beautiful, and married Mr Wright (who didn't look too bad either!). 😊



We've been on several entertainment outings recently, the first notable one, being to Nottingham, at the end of October, to see Tony Blackburn's Sounds of the 60s show, on the 50th anniversary of the launch of Radio 1.

The band were very good, with an excellent male and female vocalist, covering all the hits from my childhood. I only hope I'll still be leaping around like Tony, when I'm 80! In November we saw a production of Shakespeare in Love, at the newly opened [Crown Wharf Theatre](#) in Stone, where we sponsored a seat in memory of Alison. It was a really good production and most enjoyable... Alison would have loved it.



The following week, we went down to London, to see The Dualers at the O2 (Indigo), which was good, but there was much queuing, the sound quality wasn't as good as it should have been, and the staff were rude, so we might go and see them somewhere else next time!

We've also been quite busy with Disco's this year, starting with my sister, Elaine's [birthday party](#) at Chester, in February, followed by several other local bookings and fundraising events, on behalf of our local [residents' association](#), including a very successful

[Christmas quiz](#) at the local cricket club. We finally got around to putting a website together for [Phase III Disco](#) and created a brand identity, which is now featured on our home-made business cards and T-shirts, etc. Our next gig is New Year's Eve at the cricket club, where Elaine is due to join us, to see in 2025.

Following his recovery, Richard is back up and running at work, he and Victoria now have a reliable Ford car (avoid Audi turbo diesels at all cost), and, they both had a nice holiday in St. Ives this year. He's agreed to help out with a couple of shifts at The Swan, over the Christmas/New Year period, and as usual, we'll have an early Christmas dinner with them both. We'll also look forward to seeing Richard again on Boxing Day, but hopefully without a trip to A&E this time!



At the moment, Edward is busy finishing making/adapting some shelves, with box jointed book ends, to fit in the corner of his bedroom, to accommodate his ever-increasing collection of origami books! There's a faint smell of varnish pervading the whole of the house at the moment, but when they've had their final coat, we can hopefully start getting ready for Christmas.

So, all that remains, is for me to wish you and your family a Happy Christmas and all the best for 2025.

Nigel, Edward & Family

P.S. For a PDF version of this letter, go to: holmelee.co.uk/xmasletters.