

The Hallas Gazette

What Sam & Sheila got up to in 2023



at Aldenham School and Lizzie is a full time Mum.

In May, the minister of our church conducted a service of Dedication, (similar to a Christening) for both Evie and Lily. Many family members and friends came and it was great to see the church full of young families.

Zoe is in Year 1 at school, which she loves. She can read just about anything and lets her imagination run wild with lots of drawing and colouring. Zoe has started ballet classes this term which she enjoys. She has already shown us her part in a show which doesn't take place until next March.

Introduction

I'm sure you were all devastated last year at the absence of the customary newsletter from Hallas Palace. I believe some of you have been pining for a year but, fear not, it's back! Reading this may even be the highlight of your Christmas.

'What has been happening?' I hear you ask.

Special event



The most special event of the year occurred early, on January 16th to be precise. Liliana Robyn Faith arrived – a second daughter for Matthew and Lizzie, a sister for Evie and a third beautiful granddaughter for us. At almost 11 months now, she is crawling and desperate to be able to walk. Like all the Hallases Lily loves her food but insists on feeding herself. As you can imagine, more food goes over her than in her or ends up on the floor but, fortunately, Gilbert the cockerpoo is always on hand to help with the cleaning. Matthew is Head of Music



We all enjoyed lunch together in the church hall after the service and the children made good use of a bouncy castle.

Evie is now four and attends nursery school in Radlett four days a week. She is a real live wire, full of energy and I think she will be sporty. She can run fast and kick and catch a ball – a skill I've never mastered.

The Letchworth family

Tim, Harriet and Zoe are still living in Letchworth. Tim teaches music technology at Hills Road Sixth Form College in Cambridge and is also studying for a Phd. Harriet is now working at St Mary's Hospital in London, finding funding for research projects.

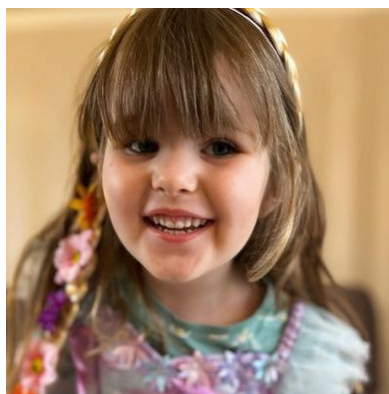
Their household has recently increased by one in the form of Rosie, a very pretty pure white kitten.

Turmoil in Hitchin

For Sam and me, life has continued much as usual. Various jobs and activities at church take up a great deal of time.

The small estate where we live consists of four cul-de-sacs all with narrow roads. Developers, Cala Homes, want to open up the end of one of these roads to build nearly 50 houses on a field to which there is no other access. The estate residents have all fought this proposal tooth and nail but had no chance of winning against Cala Homes' money and the North Herts Council Planning Department. So any time now, we are expecting the builders and their construction vehicles to arrive, spoiling our peaceful little estate and decreasing our property values. No doubt, there will be more on this subject in next year's newsletter.

As a foretaste of what may be to come, I recently had my Nissan Micra, which was parked outside the house, written off by a dustcart reversing into it.



Happy holidays

On a happier note, we have had two holidays this year. For a week in July we based ourselves in that well known holiday resort of Ipswich and explored Suffolk. The weather could have been better but we enjoyed visits to Constable Country, Sutton Hoo, Orford Ness and Ed Sheeran Town. Oh sorry, I think I mean Framlingham.

[Picture: Sheila views the historical costume demonstratioin at Sutton Hoo]



In early September, we travelled by train to Basel, transferred to a boat called the Amadeus Queen and cruised the length of the River Rhine to Amsterdam. It was wonderful, pure luxury throughout. The



weather was hot, the scenery stunning, the excursions interesting and life on board was idyllic. The food was divine and the crew couldn't do enough for the passengers. We weren't allowed to pour our own

water. One breakfast time, I even had a lesson from one of the chefs on how to cook a perfect poached egg. He insisted that one had to consistently stir the simmering water in a clockwise direction. I can't decide whether he was pulling my leg or not.



The holiday was organised by Great Rail Journeys, so there were several rail related visits. The Hoorn Steam Tramway near Amsterdam was a delight.

More events

Those of you who follow us on Facebook will know of other things that we did during the year.

We've been frequent visitors to the Cambridge Arts Theatre this year. First trip was a production of Agatha Christie's *The mirror crack'd* as a birthday treat for Sam.

Later we were seduced by the appearance of two raconteurs regularly gracing our TV screens,



Susie Dent from Countdown and Gyles Brandreth from almost everything. We finished the year with *I'm Sorry Prime Minister I Can't Quite Remember*, a sequel to the TV series, *Yes, Prime Minister*.



In June Sam attended a reunion of his class from college that coincided with the Great Exhibition Road Festival in South Kensington.

By coincidence Harriet was assisting on site and she, Tim and Zoe joined Sam for the afternoon.



July saw a big gathering of the clans at Tunbridge Wells. Sheila's two sisters were celebrating different events. Older sister, Diana, together with husband Jon cut golden wedding anniversary cake and younger sister, Rachel turned 50.



As always, we send our greetings and best wishes to you all, especially those of you whom we haven't seen.

We wish you all a happy and blessed Christmas and a healthy and a peaceful New Year.

With love from Sam and Sheila

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