

Happy Christmas From John

My 2010

It does not seem so long ago that I wrote last year's note – time goes by so quickly. I always look forward to my annual reflection and so prepare for the year ahead. Travel and photography still play a big part of my non-work life, together with family, friends and work. My interest in personal productivity mythology and tools helps me squeeze in so much.

At Work

I love to learn and this year has allowed me to gain a deeper experience as a 'Marketing Technologist'. I have a stronger portfolio of skills, still mainly in product management in the online world, but now deeper into social media, publishing and online marketing.

Lesotho & South Africa

With my charity work, I took the rewarding photographic opportunity to visit some deserving communities in Lesotho to experience first-hand the work by The One Foundation. We also visited an HIV care centre and Beautiful Gate, a home for abandoned babies. Time also allowed me to relax with some horse riding in the Lesotho hills and then onto Cape Town to relax and enjoy a little of South Africa.

Samois & Paris

A few years ago, I promised my father to take my mother to Paris for the weekend. Listening to her pre-John stories I researched the small village of Samois just outside Paris where my parents lived in the 50's. Taking the old photos we traveled by Eurostar to Paris. A short journey then allowed us to visit their village cottage and discuss other memories. The local shop owners were amazed at my mother's stories and the 50+ year old photos.

Spain

Our little place in La Marina almost feels like another home for us. A short flight from London and we are soon settled. Over the visits we have been building a network of local friends and find this a good way to get away from the busy life of work and London.

Rome

A birthday treat saw me being taken to Rome for an extended weekend relaxing and playing as a tourist.



Photography

My camera goes with me as I travel, and is also used in-country for events and the occasional weddings I cover. My Photoshop skills have come in use at work. Every year I tell myself to do more photography but I never find the time I promise myself.

Snoopy

A new member of our extended family, this few-month old miniature poodle has brought a lot of fun, happiness to everyone that meets him. I sometimes look after him at the weekends and he has soon brought back memories of my childhood with Henry as I relive walking through Bricket Wood fields, the common and stopping off at the Old Fox pub for refreshments..

What's On My Mind

Although I have traveled and seen a lot, I found that spending time in Lesotho and South Africa and experiencing first-hand some of life's challenges makes me more appreciative how lucky we are in the UK. We have easy and instant access to good water, health, education and sanitation. The charity I chose to support this Christmas



was Beautiful Gate, an organisation in Lesotho that takes in abandoned babies, most of which either have caught or have lost their parents through HIV. Watching the UK news, many people are always moaning about health, welfare, the cost of living or education. I wish they would open their eyes and appreciate how lucky they are. Open your eyes a little wider and ensure you appreciate family, friends and comfort as you over indulge yourself during the holiday season. Have a thought for those struggling with life's basic needs.



Wishing you Seasonal Greetings, a Happy New Year and good health to you, your family and friends.

Read more at www.HappyChristmasFromJohn.com © John Pannell 2010

