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Click or Touch Santa for a smaller Christmas Newsletter :-)

1996 !



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## 2023 Christmas Newsletter from the Lovelock Family in Sunninghill



[www.gpss.co.uk/xmas23.htm](http://www.gpss.co.uk/xmas23.htm) updated 1215 ( GMT/UT/GPS Time ) Tuesday 12th December 2023.



Seasons Greetings All ! I've been writing these Christmas Newsletters since 1995, online since 1996. Tap or Click on Father Christmas, at the top, for our 1996 Newsletter. Tap on the Printer to [Print xmas23.pdf](#) . Tap or Click on pictures to expand, visit links, relevant pages, or play videos. My mugshot is linked to [www.GPSS.co.uk](http://www.GPSS.co.uk) and Tody to [Guard Cat](#) ! In 2023, over 60 videos were added to [www.youtube.com/user/RobinLovelock/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/RobinLovelock/videos) , including trips to NGS Gardens, open for charity, and photo-trails showing life with the Lovelocks in Sunninghill. Yes, there are a LOT of photos and information in those videos: too much for most of you ! :- ) I hope all the right words and pictures follow below - but probably not in the right order :- )



Homer is on "Christmas Guard Duty" again, helping Bentley & Tody keep an eye on our property, including the Camper.



On Monday 1st May 2023 we enjoyed walking down to the village, and watching the [Sunninghill Wheelbarrow Race](#) .

Robin would have liked to compete, but neither June nor Samantha would sit in the wheelbarrow :-)

Tody also declined the offer :-)

On Sunday 19th November, we enjoyed the Sunninghill Street Fayre - which was once called "the Sunninghill Victorian Street Fayre".

The last Sunninghill Victorian Street Fayre had been in November 2019, but I see no mention of it in our [2019 Christmas Newsletter](#) . No surprise, since 2019 was also a very busy year ! :-)



The big event was on Saturday 19th August 2023: [Gary & Saskia's Wedding](#) which, of course, has it's own page on [www.gpss.co.uk/wedding2.htm](http://www.gpss.co.uk/wedding2.htm) .



June & Robin have been great fans of the National Garden Scheme (NGS) Charity for many years. We try and visit at least one place each week, and have been known to drive an hour or two to somewhere "special". It's unusual to visit 5 places in a week, but we did in February 2023 ! I guess we visited 50 NGS places in 2023 - but who knows ? :- ) You can try a [Youtube search on "NGS June & Robin Lovelock"](#) .

But better to visit an NGS garden and see for yourself. Visit <https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/> or hit their logo on the right.





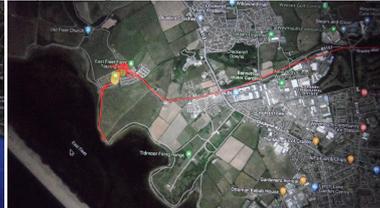
We flew out by Easyjet on Thursday 1st June and returned to England on Thursday 16th June 2023. Most of our stay was at our favorite Hotel La Riva in Giardini Naxos. The UK DVLA say Robin must not drive, but this turned out to be a benefit: we were delighted at being ferried to and from Catania Airport by Enrico & Matilda - seldom has a holiday been so relaxing - even if hectic! :-). e.g. the surprise stay in Calabria; the trip north to see Giorgio & Agata's new house near Antillo, to taste their cherries and Strawberries :-)

Few will want to play all the hour of rough cut video, on the left, but it does more than "give a flavour" of the delicious food, lovely places, people, and wildlife - including dogs, cats, cows, and sparrows :-)

Robin did a better job of that 2015 video on the right, despite poor sound synchronisation. Some will enjoy seeing the same places and people 8 years earlier :-). Maybe in slower time, Robin will extract a few of the many photos, to put here, and/or on a linked "Sicily in 2023" page. But, as he often says, "There are just not enough hours in the day" :-)



"Weymouth by Camper" is a 2 hour video with over 3100 photos! Sunday 3rd to Thursday 7th September. We stayed at East Fleet Farm Touring Site.



We met up with 1970 ex- [Ferranti](#) workmate Keith Hocking who showed us around the Weymouth area - including places we would never have known were there :-)



Robin has been able to do a LITTLE bit of work on Snoopy's Robot Boat, Snoopy Sloop 11, that survived 6 weeks at sea last year, before miraculously sailing into Rottingdean, east of Brighton, so many miles from where it was last seen, west of Weymouth. This picture, from [Blog 10](#) - linked from the [Snoopy](#) page, shows much of the basic work on the boat completed, by the end of October 2023. i.e. hull, sails, rudder, etc. BUT much more remains to be done, if and when Robin has help to at least check his work, such as soldering :-)

The video on the right, of Snoopy's autopilot being given a "Tea Tray Test", shows what most will consider the most complicated part of Snoopy's Robot Boats - the GPS Autopilot, which includes GPS, computer, and a servo to move the rudder and steer the boat.

This stuff has not been changed for years and is well tested. The stuff that failed are simple things, like a rudder breaking off, due to being made of carbon fibre rod instead of steel, or what happened last year: the rudder fell out, then water got in, because Robin had not fixed it in properly. LOTS of other simple things to check - like dry soldered joints! :-)

On Monday 22nd May 2023, Robin enjoyed a trip down to Chesil Beach, near Weymouth, to meet Phil Smith, and see "Phil's Boat" - even smaller than Snoopy's! Dick was kind enough to pick Robin up from Sunninghill, and we enjoyed the conversations on the trip. We particularly enjoyed meeting Phil, and his family and friends. We also met up with Peter, also of Team-Joker. Robin admires Phil's Boat, since it has performed better on the East-to-West Microtransat Atlantic Attempts than most, if not all the others :-). Phil made the attempt later in the year - and Dick helped with a rescue. But that's another story :-)



"Cornwall in September" is a 1 hour video with many photos! Saturday 23rd to Friday 29th September. We stayed with Steve & Gill Gurney, at their Airbnb at Wykeham House, in the lovely little village of Lanreath. Gill is June's sister, so we got free accomodation and a chauffeur service, including trips to Fowey - pronounced "Foy" :-)



Several places: Wykeham House in Lanreath; the ferry across to Fowey - pronounced "Foy" :-). Polperro with harbour and Museum Tea Room; historic Charlestown.

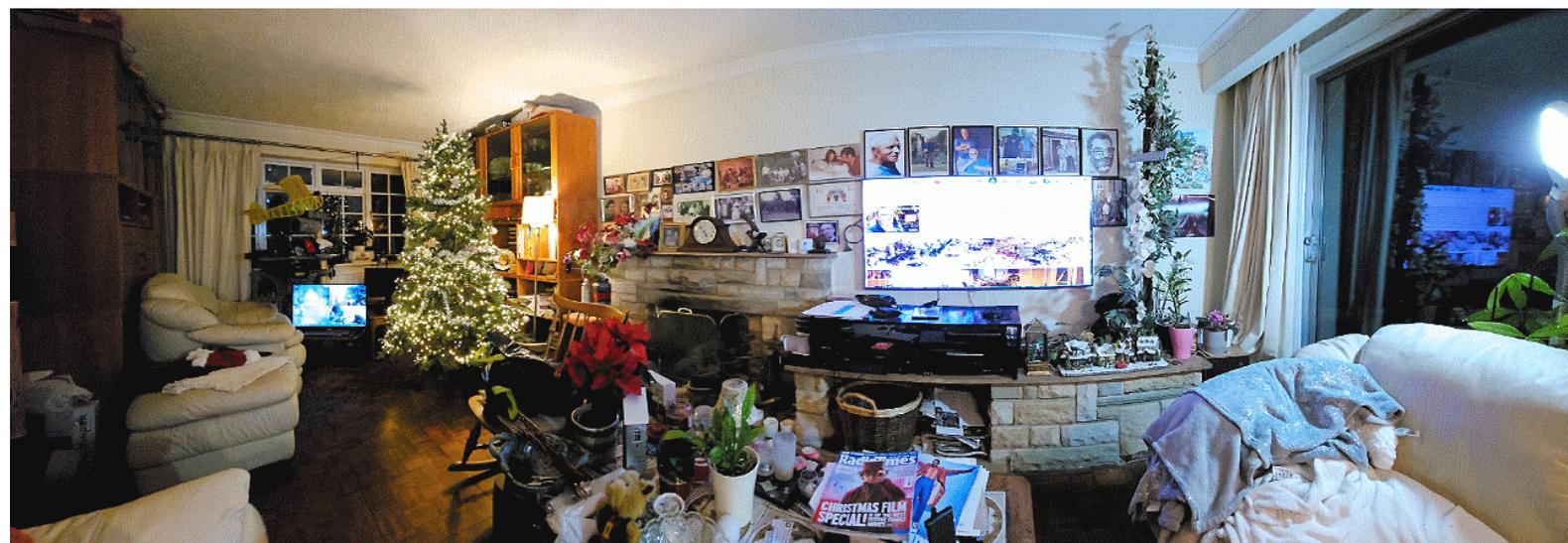


Work in house & garden: June's Kitchen is now a LOT better than for 3 years. Tap on photos to enlarge. See [Roof, Kitchen, and House](#) page. i.e. much delayed plastering, then painting - mostly by June. Robin even got to put in some "temporary test mirrors" into those skylights :-)



**11th to 17th November 2023** Did someone say "Work" ? Everyone knows that, since the 1970s, Robin spends much of his time getting others to do the real work - he likes to "use his time efficiently" ;-). Robin's "Cunning Plan" - taking advice from his friend Baldrick in 2022 - was to create space in their back garden for tools and materials to be moved from places like their Games Room, into more suitable accommodation. Important work was done in 2022, including rainwater drainage into the "Top Pond", down the stream, into the "Lower Pond" - now the "Duck Pond" with its new "mossy" fence - and into the "bog garden" at the end. SOME more work was done in 2023, seen in the first 15 minutes of this year's video on the left. The panorama photo below show our back garden, after a brief flurry of snow on 12th December 2022; then Samantha working in our cluttered "Games Room".

Patio with Barbecue; Top Pond & Bridge; Lower (fenced, Duck) Pond; Washing Line; 6'x4' Toolshed; Summerhouse "Lab"; Workshop; Greenhouse.

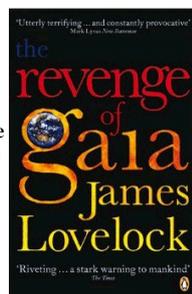


***Global Warming, The Revenge of Gaia, throwing mankind back 10,000 years, and James Lovelock ....***



"We can't stop Global Warming, but we may delay it by a few decades, to give us time to prepare for its effects: vast areas of the World, including as close as continental Europe, becoming arid desert; shrinking of habitable areas of the planet to much smaller parts of the planet, closer to the Poles. The Earth will then only be able to support a small fraction of its present population, and there will be the need for massive migration. Places like the UK will remain temperate a little longer, so will be an attractive destination. We need all World Governments to cooperate, to prepare for this inevitability; also to agree things like reduced use of fossile fuels, to give us a few more decades to prepare."

The above is not a quote, but how I remember what James Lovelock said in his book "The Revenge of Gaia: Why the Earth is Fighting Back and How We Can Still Save Humanity", published in February 2007. I read the book years ago, and have watched how World Governments have failed to grasp his main message. In my opinion, if Jim's prediction is true ( the end of this civilisation, throwing mankind back 10,000 years ), it would probably be after Worldwide anarchy, and at least one nuclear or bio/chemical war. I hope he and many others are wrong, but I fear that they may be right.



Most people don't understand the main thing that James Lovelock said. In short: Global Warming is going to happen - and you ain't seen anything yet !

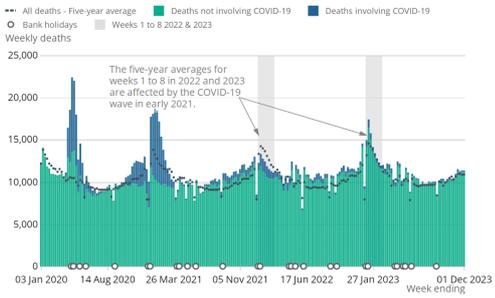
This has been on my [Grumpy](#) page for years, and appears near the end of many of my 2023 videos on [www.youtube.com/user/RobinLovelock/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/RobinLovelock/videos) .

[Covid19](#) has "eased off". BUT the UK National Health Service (NHS) has been neglected for decades, by ALL UK Governments. No change needed to [NHSCare.info](http://NHSCare.info) ! But topics overlap...

In early 2022, Robin was contacted by Dr John Raffetto in USA, resulting in significant updates to Robin's "NATO" page: [Memories of SHAPE Technical Centre and Sir John Manniello](#) . Perhaps the USA will take an even bigger role in the NHS ?



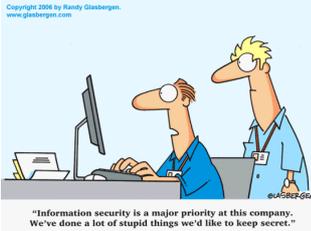
Number of deaths registered by week, England and Wales, 28 December 2019 to 1 December 2023



Source: Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales from the Office for National Statistics



Robin's Driving Licence: *from 2022 Newsletter:* In early February, June & Robin were surprised by a letter from the DVLA, which banned Robin from Driving. Robin's response was not conventional: he simply created a new ["Press" page](#) , linking to a detailed [DVLA Funny Farm](#) page, putting all details into the Public Domain. He then contacted several people. He did not drive for two months, but found alternative transport - see below :-). Miraculously, on April 1st, "April Fools Day", he was told he COULD drive again. But "the jury is still out" on how this happened, and it may happen again \*, so this page remains open and updated. Robin will let others speculate, and/or research, things like cash flow, and to what extent this is a common problem, and if it makes "business sense" for "deliberate mistakes" to happen - particularly within the physical and mental healthcare industry. i.e. NHS, Social Services. and those contracted to do the work :-). \* *It DID happen again, in 2023, but the DVLA did not recognise their mistake. No need to change this section, including the pictures below :-)*



I had half a page of paper left here, so good to end on a lighter note: our visit on Sunday 1st October to the Twyford Water Works, to meet up with Peter, Dick, and wife Liz. Peter and Dick ? Check out the [Snoopy](#) pages :-). When I started these "Rough Cut Photo Trail" videos, as an "Aid to my memory", I had no idea how difficult it might be to decide what NOT to put in the newsletter :-). What's that old black & white photo on the right ? It's Robin's old Mk3 Triumph Spitfire, being vandalised by friends at our wedding in 1971. That's a yellow Mk4 Spitfire below it. I had to remind the owner ( who also worked at [Ferranti](#) ) that the Mk3, unlike the later Mk4, could (allegedly) do more than the "ton" ( 100 mph ), along suitable stretches of road, such as the A30 past Blackbush Airfield :-)



More may be added to the online copy of this on [www.gpss.co.uk/xmas23.htm](http://www.gpss.co.uk/xmas23.htm) : more pictures, videos, and later news: hopefully good ! :-)  
**Have a Great Christmas, New Year, and a Good 2024. Love & Strength ! :-)**

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