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Christmas 2013 and New Year 2014 Wishes

This has been another all change year! Sea Bunny will be in the same place this Christmas as last year. Why!

Regular readers will know that by this time we were intending to be in another continent - Africa. We were progressing along these lines. We had spent nearly a month at One15 Marina in Singapore getting a really major service done on the engine. Final, final food shopping, Asian bank accounts emptied and requisite documentation obtained, all communications checked, watermaker unpickled etc. We had got as far as Nongsa Point Marina on Batam Island, Indonesia - all of 18 nautical miles from One15. In late August Susan was scrubbing the decks to get rid of the Singapore grime, happy to be ready to leave for South Africa.

The next morning we heard that Susan's mother had died in Edinburgh, aged 104. We had always said that if this happened & we were able to return for the funeral, then we would. We were, so we did. All change - 31 August saw us heading NW at 500 knots, instead of south at 5, knowing that this meant that we would miss the weather window for the 5000+ nautical miles to South Africa.



Martha Lizzie
(Betty) Billitt
1909-2013



The new genset arrives on the cargo/rubbish boat

Christmas 2012 and the New Year were spent in Phuket. Sea Bunny left Phuket for what we thought would be the last time on 31 January. We headed to Rebak in Langkawi where we fitted a new generator, shipped out from the UK, and planned to leave Sea Bunny there for our Easter trip to the UK. We were just about to book flights when we got an invitation to Susan's nephew Simon's wedding at the beginning of June. All change - we needed to be further south on our return. The UK trip was replanned with flights from Singapore, with Sea Bunny berthed in Puteri Harbour, just across the Johor Strait in Malaysia.

Seven weeks in the UK saw us doing the usual rounds of family.

Highlights were seeing the development of our four grandchildren.



While Catharine is in Scotland we are making an effort to explore areas that we did not see when we lived there. So a trip to the western highlands of Scotland for Catharine and Steve's skiff racing regatta at Achiltibuie was a must as was Simon's wedding to the

delightful Susie in Leicester.

Back in SE Asia, the engine service in Singapore took rather longer than expected and required the shipping of a new starter motor from the UK to replace the one we had fitted in Phuket, which was incorrect, made horrible noises and was causing damage.



The Newhaven skiff Wee Michael at Achiltibuie



With Susan's sister Sarah and Barrie at the wedding



The Cloud Forest dome at Gardens at the Bay

A “must see” in Singapore is the impressive Gardens by the Bay with its indoor cloud forest, simulating conditions found at various levels on a tropical mountain such as Mount Kinabulu all within a huge air conditioned greenhouse.

And so, to Nongsa Point and final abortive preparations for South Africa.

On our return from the UK we were able to take advantage of the fact that we were already in Indonesia to head 180 miles out into the South China Sea to one of the isolated Anambas Islands - Pulau Bawah, a sheltered lagoon anchorage with great corals. Susan was invited to join a group of Singaporean art students in a roped climb up “Pinnacle Rock” where the view down was of a perfect desert island. She ached for several days afterwards! This trip acted as a shakedown and



At the top of Pinnacle Rock

revealed a few remaining maintenance issues which could have been a problem on the S A trip but which will be relatively easy to sort in Singapore and later in Thailand. Boats are definitely a work in progress!

In Phuket we will come across some more of the yachts planning the Indian Ocean crossing in 2014.



Josh

As we “go to press” we have heard that our eldest grandchild, Joshua aged 14, Jane & James' son, has just been selected to be one of the 700 UK scouts (36 from Dorset) to attend the World Scouting Jamboree in Japan in 2015. The funds (amounting to £3000 per scout) have to be raised to enable him and the others to attend. If you would like to make a contribution, however small, please email us (contact at the bottom of the page) and we will advise you how to proceed and/or put you in touch with Josh so he can give you further information

We wish you & yours a Merry Christmas & a Peaceful New Year.

Richard & Susan

At Straits Quay, Penang, Malaysia