

Hope you have enjoyed journeying along with us. And we are still speaking to each other! Some fraught moments but no angry words!

### 8th June

This time I'm sitting in the comfort of our own home with a table at a good height, a comfortable chair and an electric socket to plug into so no rush in case it all dies on me!

We arrived home on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – two months after we set off. The last week in France was lovely because we were staying with friends. Irene and Tom made us very welcome – with a choice of rooms or even the two if Jim's snoring got too bad! Good to see them looking happy and settled in Castlesarresin. Irene invited some other friends-Joanna and Don - from Riyadh for Sunday lunch so we had quite a time reminiscing. Unfortunately the weather was not in our favour and there was quite a bit of rain and wind, but we did manage to see enough of the surrounding area to decide that we'd make a return visit in the future. Jane and Peter were from Annan area but now in Charroux also made us very welcome. When we left Irene and Tom we had intended to spend a night down on the coast but after the third very heavy horizontal rain shower we questioned the wisdom of this and phoned Charroux. Peter didn't hesitate – Just come here. So we did, and as Jetta and Andrew were also there, we had a hilarious evening altogether. Again the weather was not brilliant but Jim enjoyed his first visit to that area and more wine was added to the car. I must say that we had jettisoned bits and pieces as we traveled along and once we decided that camping was out we suddenly seemed to have much more space! At Charroux we got into the web and booked a ferry from Calais. We left Jane and Peter and spent the next night in Abbeyville. Another lovely town with lots of good shops and a very pretty town center. But the hotel we stayed in was less than wonderful. The room was fine with a big bathroom and a double bath!! But the dining room left a lot to be desired and the food also. So in the morning we opted for the café across the road for breakfast at half the price!

By this time I think all we wanted to do was get home and so when we got to Calais we got an earlier ferry with time to load up with more wine and some cheese and other goodies. A smooth crossing and an even smoother run through customs. Surely someone would query the car! But, no it was straight through and off North. Jim did the first bit round the M25 and I did the round Birmingham patch. Jim insisted we'd paid enough on road tolls and we stuck to the motorway, avoiding the toll road which would only have added a few pounds to the cost of the trip! Perhaps getting nearer home had brought out the Scotsman in Jim! Soon we were past Lancaster and the Blackpool turn off, then Penrith and Carlisle. We cheered as we crossed the border and headed for Annan. We parked at about 10 minutes to 10 just before it got dark. This was important as we couldn't use the headlights after dark. The car was unloaded into the dining room and some soup was on the table in record time, then a nightcap and we fell into our own bed.

The last few days have been busy trying to sort everything out, do the washing and generally getting the house organized for living in. Also Jamie, Lucy and Lydia came and stayed overnight and although delighted to see them we did find it all a bit tiring! Sorry Youngmilnes!

Lots of bits and pieces to sort out. The car needs to be registered but haven't yet found out how. Jim had made lots of calls and sent off lots of info and I guess we now just wait. But it has been insured. Another problem because we still have the Saudi plates, so it has to go on the chassis number and several companies were not interested, but the AA were quite willing and a very reasonable quote. If anyone is interested in the ins and outs of all this then get in touch and Jim will tell you how including any pitfalls.

Today we've been to the bank and Jim has waded through the pile of post from them that has accumulated over the last few months. I'm sure it will all be sorted in time.

Since arriving back the weather has been brilliant and we have been out in the garden – planting and eating and drinking and sometimes just sitting!

A fantastic journey to be recommended if you are considering doing something similar, but it was good to get home! Do get in touch if you need any more information.

Now I have a pile of ironing in the room that gets decorated next week so must go and attend to it!

Love to you all,  
Over and out,  
Jim and Margaret



The photo is taken at the fantastic campsite at Tasucu with all the noise - just to prove that we have camped. We did another three nights at Alexandroupolis after this.