

Episode 4

We are now into October, we are already about a month behind our normal schedule but the decision to scale things down this year eases the time pressure for completion. This year we won't be holding viewings for friends and family as in previous years. A hard decision as it was so much fun having people round with their children and grandchildren, to be enchanted by the scenes in our village. We have raised hundreds of pounds for charity in the process and that's the hardest part to put an end to, but the truth we have to face is that it was taking all of our spare time in December, evenings and weekends hosting. We realised we were not doing enough "things" together, just Sue and I, to enjoy the festive season. We couldn't do anything impulsively as times were all booked in advance for visitors.

We set aside a weekend for the village build, as mentioned previously all the boxes humped down the stairs. Crates and boards retrieved from storage in the garden shed.



We had already set some items aside for sale. We got our basic village set up, Sue doing a nice job of landscaping Santa's workshop and surrounds.



It was at this point we realised something very serious. It was as if without speaking our minds we're thinking the same thing.

This village was not the best we could do, it was rather half hearted and I think that was something neither of us was happy about.

As regards to the village people, we were aware many rumours were flying about. Usually at this point the village "chatter" was excited voices speculating on their roles this year. Who would get a prime spot, who would be "in the video" for worldwide fame.



Let me introduce you to John. Here is a very unassuming villager, no obvious position to take in the display but has been with us for many years. I featured him last year, possibly unkindly suggesting he contributed little to the proceedings.



It has come to my attention that John is held in high regard by all the villagers. He is often chatting in small groups with them, reassuring those who are not fully visible, explaining it's a team effort and maybe next year a bigger role awaits.

One group was having none of it, the duplicate skiers, bought in error a few years ago, were more than happy to be in the "for sale" box as it meant they might finally get to feature in a village, albeit elsewhere.



Going back to our earlier thoughts... we decided that the time had come to finish our villaging exploits. Everything is up for sale! Initially we thought to sell the items already displayed after Christmas and concentrate on the rest, still in boxes.

We set up a table and set it all out with carefully researched prices attached. We wanted to get as much as possible for the pieces but obviously attractively priced to entice buyers.



Our local selling site advert was starting to get responses for the items already advertised. My idea of selling on E-Bay really wasn't practical for the vast number of items we had. It would have took ages to pack and post, photograph etc. and anyway Sue was so set against E-Bay, saying things get damaged and other issues as people saying items hadn't arrived etc.

I did get a small reprieve as I selected an item which I noticed had sold for quite a bit over what would be expected. This was "Ron's Fish n Tackle shop" a retired piece, and I thought I'd prove Sue wrong when it attracted a high bid. The Olde Fashioned Chocolate Shop was one of the pieces already advertised and receiving enquiries. When we opened the box to check all was working as it should we were horrified to notice that the people inside the shop were loose and laying down instead of standing up. They certainly were not like this last year when packed away. Probably a cause of all the shifting and lifting. Well how could we sell that at top price now! We decided on £60. Our first buyers arrived, having driven over an hour to get to us.

They bought the Chocolate Shop and several other pieces including the Station, Chestnut House and a couple of other things.

A bit later another lady arrived to purchase the three non Lemax items for £10. She wasn't even going to get out of her car, sending her daughter to the door with a bag and the money.

I rushed out to her and explained there was a lot of Lemax items for sale and would she care to come in and have a look.

She parked up and came in, her eyes wide with excitement at all the stuff for sale. She stayed a good while chatting and selected many items for her own, new and expanding village. In all, over the next week or so she returned four times to collect a few more items each time. She was a lovely lady and sent us pictures of her village, complete with many of our much loved pieces. That helped reduce the sadness we felt, seeing our pieces getting the love they deserve in a new home.

Cheers for now!
Phil and Sue
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