

## **CHAPTER FOUR : A NEW SORT OF EXPERIENCE AND A NEW NAME!**

*Do the “dead” live on? Two strange experiences; Inner friends and family : a “spirit” aunt and my “dead” father; Marital problems: are these experiences a preparation? More latihan experiences: A new name! Spiritual and earthly marriage; my wife’s 2 “dreams”*

It was about this time that a member of my wife’s family died. A short time after, I had a curious experience such as I had never had before. I felt a kind of “inner” contact with him! I remember it began very gently and quite unobtrusively: there was a sort of “jump” inside myself (I honestly cannot describe it in any other way!) I suddenly felt excited and intrigued; something quite new was happening to me. I then became aware (I am not sure how) of his presence! It was as if I just knew he was there! Then came something of a flood of thoughts and feelings, which were quite “impersonal” to me! I was as interested in them as if “someone else” was actually saying them to me and I was just listening!

First came a strong feeling of real happiness with an idea I had never come across before: to die at the right time is a good and happy thing. I thought of all the sadness associated with death, with his death, in fact, and this seemed quite an opposite, even shocking, point of view. It seemed that he himself was excited and very happy about it! Then I realised that his death had also put an end to the indignity that had befallen him at the last part of his life and he was glad of that. Yes, I could see the truth of this: he had been a man who had been proud of his job as Entertainment Manager of one of our big out-of-London theatres. Unfortunately, he had lost this job, or left it for some reason, and he spent his last years with a much reduced income and status. I knew him well enough to know how hard that would have been for him. It was as if death had taken him back to the happiest time of his life. Then I saw that what was happening to him now reminded him of his navy years, which had been very happy years for him. In fact, it now felt as if he was getting ready to join a new ship again: it was as exciting as those times had been for him. Yes, he felt young, independent and as excited as he had done then!

Next, came a feeling that he had absolutely NO sympathy for anyone’s grief here! He knew he was alive and well; he was so excited and happy he simply could not share “grief,” especially with people who had, in fact, had very little contact with him in the latter part of his life. It was as if they had not thought much about him then so he had but little thought

for them now. His family seemed to him to be just “reacting as expected.” He did seem, however, to be surprised at my wife’s reaction to his death. (It occurred to me at this point that this might be the reason why this was happening to me). He had thought that their relationship had been more “emotionally free” than this. It seemed that he understood things differently with her now and I was left with the strong feeling that he would now be able to help her. I did not know specifically how but I felt quite certain that he would now be somehow closer and more involved in her life than before. I have to say that it was not going to be long before she was going to need all the support –from whatever source- that she could get: her life and mine were going to go through a huge trauma in the coming months... Finally, I felt his happiness, again, and a sense that he was eager now to get on with his “new voyage.”

Well, I was quite taken aback by all this. Of course, I related all of this to my wife but I have, unfortunately, no idea whether it was of any help to her. She listened and said ---nothing!

It was not long before a similar experience to this one occurred again.

This time it did not involve a family member but instead an elderly couple who lived nearby. They were the sort of people who “kept very much to themselves” i.e. they were quiet and not particularly sociable. He was a minister of one of the local churches and, after serving in the Far East, he and his wife had ended up in our little village. I often saw them out walking on the fields that were so attractive here. I used to smile when I saw them out and about because usually he would walk in front, following their dog, and his wife would be a few yards behind: all three of them seen in the distance in a line at the edges of the fields rather than, as other couple’s usually walked, side by side! You knew who they were even if they were a mile or two, away! They were generally well-liked and obviously very fond of each other. I do not think any of us really knew much about them: they just seemed a very ordinary, quiet couple who seemed to have very few visitors. Well, he was to die first and, sometime soon after, as before, I felt a kind of “jump” inside me and quite unexpectedly I felt his presence! This was particularly surprising to me because I hardly knew the man and had barely said more than the occasional “Hello!” to him although I was as keen on walking as he and his wife were and often passed them on my many walks. Strange to say, I was actually going to get to know more about him in the next few moments than I did in all the time we had lived on the same little estate.

Again, I felt an initial sense of his happiness: death had, it seemed, also brought him a joy. Then, I felt that here was a lovely, gentle, modest and considerate man whom it was so easy to underestimate! He was obviously quite content to keep his “light hidden” and, as I already knew, it was very easy for the rest of the world to ignore him almost completely. At this point, my heart went out to the man as being a noble and, I guess, something of a rare character in our, more often than not, materialistic and aggressive society. He was certainly neither of those things- in fact, I was certain that he was the sort who would never knowingly hurt anyone. Then I saw that one reason for his joy was because he now had “so much to do!” Clearly, he had felt underused in his recent life and it was, of course, easy to see that this could well be so because he had been ministering to a handful of “flock” who, I guessed, were not at all challenging to him. Now it was as if he had been given a new lease of “life!” I felt he was a genuinely good man with the wish to actively help people. No sitting about playing harps for him then!! I felt again that his modesty and unassuming nature had helped to keep his considerable abilities and talents hidden.

I saw that he was a sincere Christian who had genuine and real spiritual aspirations and for whom prayer was an essential part of his life. I saw that this had brought him a happiness in his life which was really akin to joy. He seemed to impress on me that I should not dismiss the reality and power of Christianity as people like himself had experienced it (I think at that time I did; I hope I do not now). One thing it had helped him to do was to die well! Wow, this impressed me! I saw then how bravely this man had borne the suffering that came with the end of his life. His faith had really given him power so that he had carried on his “ministry” in great pain and largely without other people being aware of it even! I then got a quick flash of a memory I had of that time when I had seen him, at the end of a service, obviously one of his last. He was standing shaking hands with a longer line of people than usual (It was a special service- a Harvest Festival, I think) and I remember feeling, as I watched, just how patient this man was being. I now saw that not only was he being patient but he was also being extremely brave because, I realised now, he was also in a lot of pain at that time. I could not help feeling that on looking at this man I am sure that no-one would have realised just how strong his religion had made him.

I was extremely impressed with both the man and his religion. I would certainly have more respect for Christianity after knowing him in this way now. I then asked, mentally, if there was anything personal he could give to me i.e. anything that would be helpful to my life. Immediately, I

got the picture in my mind of “an old pair of socks.” Now this made me really sit up because the socks I saw were, what I called, my “latihan socks.” Because it is the practice in Subud to remove one’s shoes before the latihan, a lot of us had taken to wearing a second pair of socks over our usual socks. This kept our ordinary socks clean (some of our latihan floors were dusty!) and our feet warm (some of our halls were very draughty!) I laughed because not only did I feel I was getting to know this man in a way I had not done before but it seemed to me that he was also showing me that he knew something about me that I would not have expected him to know: it looked as if he knew about my Subud interest! This was very surprising because at that time only a handful of people knew about this interest of mine. Intriguingly, the image of the socks carried a sense of warning about it. Oh dear, he was warning me about Subud! It seemed that for him Christianity should come first, even before Subud. I understood this easily enough: Christianity had worked for him and, perhaps, to him also it really was an exclusive way. I did not argue but accepted the warning. One good thing that also came out of this warning was that I always remembered it and, if anything, it made me even more critical of Subud in the future. I am grateful now that I have never lost this critical streak and I believe it has helped me to see more than one perspective on life i.e. not just a Subud one or a Muslim one or a Bapak one or even a Christian one!

After this, there came a sense that this man was very concerned for his wife. Now this was to be expected, I suppose, but it led to an interesting little happening afterwards. I got the feeling he was wanting me to do something for her. He seemed to know how difficult it would be: I had never really had a conversation with his wife and she, too, had a very retiring nature. He seemed to be impressing on me that it would be enough to make some sort of gesture of help to her and, although it was only a little-albeit difficult- thing to do, it was nonetheless very important. Well, I felt this was what he really wanted to get across to me and so I was left wondering what on earth I could do about it. I did not have to wait long.

One early evening I decided to go for one of my walks and just as I got to this woman’s bungalow she came out of her back door with a tray of ashes from the fire which she was obviously emptying. She seemed to look straight at me and, unusually, hold my gaze for a while. If this had happened in the past we would simply have acknowledged each other and got on with our own business. Because of what I had felt had happened with her husband I started up a conversation with her in a way that I never would have normally done. It was what I can only describe as a real

and genuine conversation in which we told each other things about ourselves that I am sure we would not have done under ordinary circumstances. Anyway, the conversation ended with her agreeing that if she needed any help at all, or any companionship at all, she would not hesitate to call on us. At this point her face visibly brightened in front of me and, although she never took up the offer, I am sure that it gave her a little peace of mind to know that there was somebody close at hand to call on if she needed to. I know she must have had some church friends around but I do not think there were any as close by as we were. I think, too, that because she and her husband were such private people most, if not all, of their neighbours tended to leave them very much to their own devices. At the very least I like to feel that the offer of help was a bit comforting and, I am sure, I would not have thought of it without the previous experience with her “husband.” Anyway, after a matter of weeks she moved off to a retirement home and I never saw her (or heard from her husband!) again.

### *Inner Friends And Family*

At this time I was also having some little, although very interesting, experiences with “dead” people in a much more personal way- in a way that was purely to do with myself and not anyone else around me. I think future events were going to show that I was to need these very much. They were to turn out to be much more relevant experiences than I was to think at the time.

It began with an insistent, though inexplicable, feeling that I had some “inner friends”! Later, when I made one or two friends who were spiritualists, they were to refer to them as Spirit friends and I came to think that that was a good way to describe them. At this time I had no idea what they looked like; I simply felt that they were there. I could NOT prove that was so-not even to myself. The feeling was so strong that I was interested in seeing where it might lead, however. At first “they” seemed to be urging me to be more compassionate towards the people around me; to be willing to share more with these people; to always show them as much respect as possible; and, most important, to be sure NOT to interfere in their lives in any way at all. It also seemed very important that I make time for little “acts of service” to them and to fully understand that words were not enough: the old adage that “actions speak louder than words” was fully upheld here! I could see nothing to argue with in all this but what I was soon to learn was how difficult it was going to be for me to do things, however small, simply for someone else! It amazed me to discover the depth of my selfishness and self-absorption! I wonder if you

would find it so difficult? I rather hope so otherwise I am even worse than I thought! Anyway, the difficulty was clearly not the most important thing- doing things for others, however small, was!

Next, there followed an interesting development: I wanted to deepen my experience with my Spirit friends and I began to wonder how I could do this. Immediately I received a warning: I felt that I should not do anything other than simply be willing to find time to sit quietly and do “nothing in particular”. Any more than this felt quite wrong! It was as if I had to leave everything else to “them”: they were wiser, stronger, more experienced, more loving than me! If I was to do anything it was to do my best to develop strength of character in the world, social confidence, the capacity for more effort in my ordinary life and the preparedness to follow advice! Yes, I could not argue with that; I could even follow advice if I could see it to be good advice: I would most definitely not follow it otherwise There was a real sense of chastisement here which once again found a very apt expression in an inner image of myself as a holiday camp comedian! I walked out on the stage and then realised I knew no jokes and was completely out of place! The point was I had not done my preparation and I was not to put myself forward in this way. My role was simply to be very much in the background. It also seemed important for me to realise that I should not “fear anyone!” That felt a bit of a tall order but I realise now that I have, in fact, lost a lot of my fear of other people over the years so that I am not easily “intimidated” now. I see that respect is a good thing; fear is not. Along with many, if not most, of my generation much of my young life seemed to be controlled (by teachers and others) by fear. Then I was puzzled-and still am- by a question which came both in my quiet “doing nothing in particular” times and over and over in my latihan at this time: “Is there love in your heart for the many who will come?” It was to come so often to me that I often wondered whether one day crowds of people were going to come to Subud and it would be necessary to have “love in my heart” for them. To date a few have come and, alas, I have to admit that I have not even enough love for them! Still, it is not a bad ideal to have is it?

#### *A Spirit Aunt And My “Dead” Father!*

Next, I was surprised by a feeling that I had a closeness to an aunt of mine who had “died” some years previously. This was to catch me completely by surprise because up until then I had had no sense of these “friends” of mine being particular people. Also, I remembered her from my childhood as being overweight and generally rather tired. Here she seemed much slimmer, younger and full of life. She had obviously lost a

couple of stone and several years! Instead of being a rather preoccupied person, as I remembered her, now she seemed lively and good fun to be with. Whenever I was to feel that she was “around” I always felt uplifted by the sense of life and energy she brought with her and that is still so even today. On this first occasion, I felt she brought with her a real sense of the closeness I had with my mother’s family, both those alive and dead! This I had never ever felt before. If anything, I had always felt a bit of an outsider; something of a “black sheep of the family”. I now had no contact with my father’s family and up until this moment I really had had no sense of real or deep connection with my mother’s family. Now I realised through this experience that I was, in fact, strongly connected to them and I somehow felt a “bigger” person for it. I felt my aunt was in some way supporting me and also showing me that I was not just on my own. I learnt that one’s family bonds were incredibly strong, much stronger than I had realised. Moreover, it was quite something to feel that these bonds stretched back through so many years and forward into the unforeseen future. What a sense of continuity and significance my little life seemed to have, suddenly. I had really never thought of this before and I could not help but think: what a strange way to learn this.

Soon after this, I felt an equally surprising link with my father in what was to be a very similar way. I knew very little about my father and had only one or two memories of him before he died when I was six years old. I had long got used to his not being around and really hardly ever thought about it. Then, quite suddenly and, at first unexcitedly, one day, there was the simple but strong feeling that he was there! There was simply a feeling of his closeness and a sense that he was looking with love on his grandchildren. And that was it: a rather low-key meeting that left me intrigued. Was he really there? I just did not know: it just *felt* as if he was. It was all over in a little while- there was no time for a big emotional meeting. I could see no reason for this happening at all: I had not been thinking about him or anything to do with families or anything related to this at all. I had just not been thinking of anything in particular beforehand.

After this it began to feel as if there was a real sense of inner support with me and this was somewhat worrying: what could I be needing this inner support and strong sense of my family behind me for? It was not long now before it all made perfect sense and one of the most positive things that was going to come out of it all was to deepen this type of inner experience. The feeling that my father, although dead, was very much back in my life was going to be shown to be absolutely true--- to my own satisfaction anyway. That was to happen just a little later.

### *Oh Dear, Marriage Problems: Is This Why All This Is Happening?*

Meanwhile I was still living with a strong sense of dissatisfaction in my marriage and it later became clear that the breakdown of my marriage was to bring me the biggest test of my life to date. It was a test that was so severe that I was going to need all the support (unearthly as well as earthly) that I could get simply to survive it. Yet still, at this time, I did not see it. I still-so stupidly!- thought that, although things between my wife and myself were obviously not as either of us would want, things would eventually sort themselves out for the better. Well, they did but certainly not in any way that I expected. I believe now that much of what was happening in my life at this time was preparing me for what was coming with the break up of my little family. I certainly think this is why my aunt and my father were impressing me with their presence and support, especially as more of it was to come in a little while now.

### *More Latihan Experiences And A New Name!*

The latihan was also continuing to give me advice as well as urging me to shout, run around, dance, sing, chant and all the rest. After each latihan I would feel refreshed and strengthened. The advice continued to urge me to be strong and to stand on my own two feet. One latihan at Cambridge made me feel that my insides were being pounded away as if by a boxer in training! Certainly, I could understand that I needed “toughening up!” Curiously, also, after this latihan one man came over to me and said that he thought I might need a “new name that would give me more aggression in the world”! I was really surprised by this for a couple of reasons. First, it is very unusual for anyone in Subud to give another person advice like this, especially if it is unasked for. Second, I, myself, had been having lots of moments in my own latihan when I was singing or shouting about names, especially about them being sacred and holy.

Now it is quite common for Subud members to change their names, perhaps feeling that they have outgrown the name that their parents had chosen for them or that they need a name that helps them to grow in some desirable way. I think the practice stems from the story that Bapak was sickly as a child until his name was changed and he was certainly more than happy to give names to people when asked. The practice was still being carried on today by a member of Bapak’s family: Ibu Rahayu. I did not really have a lot of sympathy with this- even though I knew that it was quite common for people to change their names when they entered a religious order, for example. I had also read that one of the foremost



Christian mystics, Ruysbroeck, had said that “everyone had a spiritual name” which was “a secret” between him (or her) and God. But in Subud it seemed somewhat ridiculous to me that so many Westerners were walking about with Muslim names ( I lost count of the number of Latifs I met, e.g.) whereas I am pretty sure there are not so many Muslims changing their names to Western ones! I have to say, too, that the idea that someone else has the authority or right to give you a new name is rather abhorrent to me.

So, all in all, I was extremely surprised to find my latihans going on about holy and sacred names so insistently. Finally, I found myself shouting out joyfully over and over again: “I give you a name! I give you a name! I give you a name, Hussalu!” I was unsure of the spelling, particularly of the “u” and the “a” either side of the double “s”. Anyway this name came to me in the latihan and in quiet moments outside of the latihan.

Once again, some confirmation was to come from an ordinary event in the outer: this time it was a visit of a Subud friend (Guess what his name was? You got it: Latif!!) As we were enjoying our afternoon tea and biscuits, Latif told me that he had begun learning Arabic. My ears pricked up! I was sure this name I was singing was Arabic. It was a word I had never come across before but I thought it sounded Arabic to me, so when Latif said he had his books in his car I asked if I could see them--- without at this stage saying why. He brought in two or three huge books. I looked in the first- a bulky Arabic/ English dictionary- and there it was: Hussalu. It meant “to receive- something like an honorary degree!” Wow, my heart leapt! I explained my excitement to Latif and at the first opportunity I had I told my next door neighbour the amazing story. The book also explained that there was also some problem with the spelling: it could be either “u” or “a”! Latif explained that in Arabic it was the beginnings of words that were most significant- in this case the “Huss.” I believe this is the important root for meaning and, if I understood this right, the other letters were less significant. Anyway, the word I had received in the latihan was easily identified in the dictionary. I especially liked the meaning: “to receive an honorary degree” because “receiving” was what the latihan was all about.

I told a few people about this receiving but it became a problem for some people. I suppose they had not come across someone receiving their own name before and were, therefore, unsure how to treat it. Worse, Bapak did not seem to have mentioned it in his talks, so I guess he was not on hand to tell them what to think! Anyway, I was not prepared to get involved in discussions about it or to get het up about it. When I saw there was a

difficulty for some people about it, I just spoke only briefly about it when I had to and decided to carry on answering to my old name. I was happy having a spiritual name that was between me and God. I have to say, too, that a few people had no difficulty with it at all and one or two continued using it when they wrote to me for years afterwards. This seemed to be one of my oddest experiences and yet, also, one of the most clearly verified!

### *Earthly And Spiritual Marriage*

Another series of latihan at this time had a theme that should, I suppose, have alerted me more to what was happening in my marriage. I seemed to feel it important to see myself as “married to the latihan.”! This was so insistent that I actually went to the jeweller’s and bought myself a cheap wedding ring! It gave me an enormous sense of satisfaction to have a wedding ring on each hand--- one for my earthly marriage and one for my “spiritual marriage.” To wear two rings like this made me feel that my life was in balance and it felt good. It also reminded me of the “spiritual marriage” that Christian mystics like St. Theresa spoke of. Of course, mine was not the same as their experience but it did have a little similarity: the ring was a symbol of the importance for me of my “spiritual life”; the importance of the latihan for me.

Meanwhile my earthly marriage was beginning to plumb new depths ...

My wife and I were poles apart: we had shared the adventures of setting up homes together, having children together and we were both teachers. As the marriage went on, I guess, our values, wishes etc. all become more and more different. She was putting a great deal of energy into her work, in improving the home, doing more and more; I was reluctant about all of this, more interested and excited by ideas and inner experiences. She used to joke that when I died she was going to have me stuffed and put in a chair with a book in my hand and nobody would notice! I hasten to add that, like all the best jokes, there was some truth in this- but also *some* exaggeration as well! By this time, I suppose the joking was over and things were getting a lot more serious... The latihan had been giving me advice almost as soon as I began experiencing it and it still was largely, at this stage, through my feelings (which meant I did not know how true they were). I began to feel that ahead of me there was “pain, pain, pain; great destruction. I see that the secure routines of my life are destined to be turned upside down, sooner or later. I FEEL her strength.” I also understood something of her suffering: “She does not feel understood. She feels isolated and unable to share.”(of course, we BOTH felt like

that: I wanted her to share my inner life, too...) I also saw that she had some obviously good qualities: she inspired a deep love from our two children; she worked extremely hard as a teacher; she had a strong will especially when faced with physical pain and she was particularly good with people in any sort of need. But I saw, too, that she felt belittled as if everything she did was criticised! I see now that when two people are so different each can so easily feel like that. A friend of mine was to say to me later that he noticed how stooped over I was throughout my marriage and I did not stand upright and at all confidently until the marriage was over! I do not think this is anyone's fault- it seems to be a natural result of such big differences between two people.

At this time also I had the unwanted feeling that I was somehow being "withdrawn" from the children. It sometimes showed itself in my having a feeling of being "pushed back" and prevented from joining in with some of the children's games! It was extremely odd: normally if they were playing nearby I would at some point go and mess about with them for a while. Now it felt as if I was not to do that. With hindsight I wonder if they, too, were being prepared for my being around them less and less? I also noticed how much more independent the two of them were becoming, anyway; they were not toddlers any more! These feelings were to be regularly repeated over the coming months so that I could not forget them even if at that time I just did not know what to do about them. It was not long, in fact, before I was to feel separate and withdrawn from both my wife and children. I would watch her take them off to various clubs and outdoor activities and the gap between us just seemed to be getting wider and wider. When we were together there was very little to say between my wife and myself. There were lots of sad silences and I remember long journeys in the car were the worst: just the noise of the engine almost the whole way! I suppose by this time we had become a "non-husband and wife" to each other and the lack of sharing, the emotional isolation, our absence to each other was becoming unendurable. .

I, in spite of latihan warnings and advice, continued to hope for some sort of magical change that would sort it all out. There were a couple of occasions when I thought this might in fact happen because it seemed as if the latihan was becoming directly involved.

The first occasion was quite unlike any experience I had yet had...I came downstairs one morning surprised to find my wife cleaning windows and singing happily! This was a surprise because my wife was not really one for such happy housework!! At the same time, my own feelings were

extremely negative and for some reason I associated them with the need in me for a latihan, so I mentioned to my wife that I was just going upstairs to “have a bit of latihan.” Just as I was leaving the room my wife suddenly said to me: “Oh, I meant to say to you I had this funny experience last night...” She then went on to recount how she had “heard this beautiful, motherly, singing in the night and it was so lovely.” At first she thought that perhaps the television had been left on and eventually she went and saw that it had not! Then she realised that it must have been a “dream” and so she just lay back and enjoyed it. Again, she said it was just like a loving mother singing to her! As soon as she began to tell me about this, my feelings lifted and I, too, felt happy and I no longer felt the need for a latihan! I felt that she had had a latihan-type experience which would show her what Subud was all about from her own personal experience This was confirmed for me when I read a section of one of Bapak’s talks given at the Cilandak congress in 1971. He talks there of a beautiful singing that can occur in the night “when you are in the presence of a person with a highly developed soul” (which I take to mean in this case a person who has experienced the latihan). And because the experience was all so happy I really felt positive about our future.

The next experience happened several months later and was not to be so positive. This time my wife recounted a dream in which a burglar was trying to break into the house by cutting holes into the glass in the front door! “And, guess what?” she said, “the holes were perfect circles with lines in them: they were your Subud symbol!” She had described the Subud symbol clearly but I could not help but think it was not being welcomed into her life now. Perhaps the door was the barrier in her to Subud and the symbol being cut in was Subud coming into her life in a way that the Bible says the Holy Spirit can come: like a “thief in the night”. At this point, I did not feel hopeful; I was left with the impression that Subud was being resisted. It began to look as if Subud was not going to magically transform this relationship of mine. The latihan was not something that would force anything. I knew that. So I know began to be a bit more fearful about what was going to happen.

At the beginning of all this, my wife had been brought very low so that she looked tired and drawn and clearly unhappy. But she obviously worked things out for herself, perhaps with friends who were unknown to me at that time, so that she got on top of it all. She started going out more and doing things more independently of me. She began to look happier and even younger. True we did try going out more, doing more together

for awhile but it was too late; decisions had been made: I simply had not caught up yet!

As it was, there was to be a bit more time because there was a Subud World Congress coming up and this time it was to be in England. Every 5 years (it used to be 4) Subud members from all over the world have a chance to get together at what is called a "World Congress." Because Subud does not belong to any particular country, these are held in a different country each time. To date, such World Congresses have been held in Indonesia, the U.K., Japan, Australia and U.S.A .e.g. This one was going to be held in Windsor and it seemed too good a chance to miss: it might, in fact, be my only chance to see such a gathering at first hand. By now, I think the prospect of a week or two apart seemed like a good idea to both my wife and myself. In fact, in the lead up to my going things seemed a lot more relaxed between us and by the time I left our difficulties had temporarily taken a backseat. I can see now we BOTH had new and different things to occupy us!