



MCLOUGHLIN'S MISSIVE

December 2001

2001—all over bar the shouting *By Mike*

2001 is all over bar the shouting – God how time flies!!

I suppose the highlights of the year have been John's 21st and graduation – I'll let him tell you more about them – but a commendable 2:1 made us all proud. The timing of the graduation was perfect as we managed to get our wedding anniversary, John's graduation and Ruth's 20th birthday all in one trip back to the UK! Ruth also managed to finish her first year at Uni with flying colours and we are hoping that in a couple of years or so she too will be coming home with a good degree.



On the work front Nassau is gradually taking shape, or should we say getting more ship-shape, so the

powers that be decided I was having too easy a life (it must be all those tales of fishing – more later) and threw in Grand Cayman and Toronto

for good measure. At least it will permit some additional travel and get us 'off-the rock'

so to speak.

Mind you this year we managed one or two trips away on Bonnie Lass and visited other Bahamian Islands.

The trips were down into the Exumas, a chain of over 350 islands/cays running north to south with the nearest point some 35 miles east of Nassau. The sand and seas are postcard colours and we really fell in love with them, especially Staniel Cay where we have met some interesting friends. In between times, and when the boat is running – though I won't bore you with those tales – I've spent many an hour fishing. Besides the Baraccuda (which

you don't want to eat though the locals do say it is good even if it is potentially *(contd. Page 3)*

Special points of interest:

- *March—John's 21st*
- *July—John's graduation (BA 2:1 Honours in Business Management)*
- *August—Ruth's 20th (no longer a teenager!)*
- *November—Hazel's 1st hurricane*

I'm a Survivor! *By Hazel*

Hurricane Michelle provided water-works rather than fire-works for Guy Fawkes Day this year, with winds gusting over 100mph, driving rain and angry waves sending great plumes of spray into our yard and swimming pool. For

a while it got very scary, but fortunately Michelle had spent a lot of her force on Cuba before she got to us, and came and went in a hurry. We woke the following morning to sunshine and clear skies - and a lot of

mess! Our swimming pool was full of sand and we had our own private beach around it! The roof was missing lots of tiles, which were strewn all over the ground, along with a lot of foliage from the trees, *(contd. Page 2)*



Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year



I'm a Survivor!

but our two tall palm trees were still standing.

We had survived – we being myself and my cousin, who wasn't looking for an exciting holiday but certainly got an experience to remember! Mike was in Switzerland and was upset that he'd missed all the excitement! Michelle left some glorious weather in her wake - bright, warm sunshine but with a pleasant coolness to the air, much appreciated after the hot, sticky summer.



On the whole I'm enjoying life here but am glad of the occasional trip back to Good

Old Blighty. I shall be back for the first

two weeks of December and plan to post my Christmas cards when I arrive. We've got builders working on our house in Halifax and I'm hoping to be on hand when they fit my new kitchen.

To those who only hear from me at Christmas, I apologise again for not being a better correspondent, but promise not to lose touch completely. If anyone has an e-mail address I don't know about, please let me have it as I do keep in touch better that way.

I hope this finds you and yours in good cheer, and wish you all a very merry Christmas and a rewarding new year.

Another hectic year *By John*

Well it's that time again, when I try to review another hectic year. So where to start? Perhaps a good place would be the end of three years hard work at University. Final year, although enjoyable, was a time to get down to work and a lot of time was spent revising and at times the stress did get to me. Fortunately I have a very supportive family and network of friends that helped pick me up when I was down, and I thank them all for it. I don't think I would have achieved what I did without them and am very pleased that after all the effort I achieved a 2:1 Honours in BA Management Studies, and had a thor-

oughly lovely graduation ceremony too.

Of course the whole year was not just spent working. I had a fantastic 21st Birthday consisting of not one, but two parties!! Having had a superb night out with friends from University I had a lovely day with the family and thank all those that came and helped make it a special occasion.

(contd Page 3)



My dream come true *By Ruth*

Looking back over the last year there doesn't seem to be too much to tell you, but then so much has changed since last Christmas there must be. It's been very much a 'John year', first his 21st birthday and then his graduation but I'm sure he'll tell you all about them, but they were very good excuses for a good party.

My first year at university went really well. I am enjoying my course very much, and

passed my first year exams with the highest average mark out of my year. In January after my one 1st semester exam I had a spare week so went down to Wales to see Clare and Sian, some old friends from school.

The next main even was John's 21st which mum and dad came over for, and then soon after it was the Easter holidays which I went home to the Bahamas for. It

was whilst I was at home that my biggest ever dream came true, I finally got to swim with dolphins, it was definitely worth the wait. I couldn't possible begin to explain but it was one of the most amazing experiences.

The short summer term at uni went quite quickly and soon it was the summer holidays, which I spent most of at home here *(contd. Page 3)*



My dream come true

in the UK. Mum and dad came over again for John's graduation and also stayed for my 20th birthday. We all spent a weekend in Scotland visiting Grandma and Grandad, Janice and Alasdair. We stayed in Aberdour, the seaside town where Grandma and Grandad lived when we were kids and John and I relived some old childhood memories.

I spent most of the summer working mornings at a small private health club as a pool lifeguard, which I enjoyed although sitting by a pool for two hours at a time sometimes became a bit boring. Then I went over to the Bahamas for a couple of weeks before the start of term, I had a great holiday. We spent a weekend on the

boat in the Exumas, which really has the sandy white beaches you all imagine when you think of the Bahamas.

Since being back at uni things have become a little more eventful. I am once again single and very much enjoying it. I have a job in the union bars, which I really love, everyone who works there are great and we all have a good laugh. My friend Ann and I have moved into our little student



house, which we love although we never seem to be in much and if we are we're sleeping after a late night at work.

Since there doesn't seem to be much more to say and I am already

over my suggested word limit I had best go. I leave you all by wishing you all a very merry Christmas (I hope Santa is kind to all) and a happy new year, another excuse for a party, excellent!

Another hectic year

Since University I have had a couple of temporary jobs in order to raise some money to participate in a Voluntary Service Overseas project, working with marine life and fishermen in Tanzania. I am thoroughly looking forward to this challenge and at the moment am working all the hours physically possible, for The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on the Foot and Mouth crisis. This has opened my eyes into how well (cough cough) government

departments are run, although the work itself is interesting and enjoyable.

From a leisure point of view I have maintained my interest in football and am currently playing for (a rather poor) Sunday league team and am finding it very hard to get up for 10am on a Sunday morning in order to play!

For the following year, other than the

planned trip to Tanzania, I plan to find a graduate job that I could return to when I am back in September. I am currently looking towards a career in Actuarial work and Risk Assurance, and shall have the test of many interviews to come.

All that is left for me now is to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and I hope to see you all soon!!

2001—all over bar the shouting

a poison) we mainly caught Dolphin – no the fish not the mammal – and this (known locally as Mahi Mahi) you do want to eat – bit of mayonnaise and lemon, wrap in foil and place on the BBQ for 7-8 minutes per side – perfection!!!

The weather interest came whilst I was away visiting New York, UK and Switzerland. Hazel survived the experience so no doubt she'll give you the more pertinent

details.

That flight through the year leaves me little more to say than we send you our very best wishes for the Christmas Season and may 2002 bring you ever more joy and happiness.



Hazel & Mike

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Photos

- Page 1: John's graduation
- Page 2: Hurricane from patio door
John with Tuna & Dolphin
- Page 3: Ruth's birthday
Bonnie Lass II
- Page 4: Our 'back yard'
"That Way, This Way" -
Staniel Cay in the Exumas

