



## McLoughlins' Missive 2003

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Dear

With Christmas approaching, it must mean that another year is coming to an end. It's been an eventful one for us, as it saw our return to the UK from Nassau in April. If this is news to you, we can only apologise for not letting you know sooner – the intended change-of-place letters never materialised unfortunately.

Mike has been working in London since April and our lives have become split between the flat we're renting there for his use during the week and our family home in Halifax, where he returns at weekends. Hazel divides her time between the two places, with regular visits to her parents in Scotland, so has become a bit of a yo-yo up and down the country!

John and Ruth have both moved back home for the time-being, so our family is more together now than it has been for a long time. John is still pursuing his career in public-sector accountancy in Leeds and continues to study for his final accounting qualification—with exams looming before Christmas. His girlfriend, Laura, is an occupational therapist in Wigan, so they spend their weekends together, either there or with us in Halifax. In August he went with her to visit her parents in Taiwan, where her father is working. He had a lovely time and was most impressed with everything he saw there.

Ruth made her mum and dad very proud in the summer, by graduating from Bradford University with an upper second-class degree in e-commerce. Unfortunately, from being a booming sector when she started her course, it has rather collapsed in the meantime, making it very hard for her to find the sort of job she would ideally like to do, either in web-design or as a consultant in a software firm, providing a link between their customers and their technical team. Until something better comes along, she's temping as a typist for Leeds Social Services. She celebrated the end of her final exams by going to Tuscany with her boyfriend, James, and his family, staying in a lovely villa, where they spent most of their time relaxing by the pool, though they also found time to visit Sienna and Florence and she fulfilled her ambition to see the leaning tower of Pisa on the last day before she flew home.

Hazel and Mike have managed a bit of travelling since their return from Nassau. In July they took the Morgan on a charity car rally to Monte Carlo via some of the high Alpine passes—breath-taking views. In September they celebrated Mike's birthday in Prague, a colourful, vibrant city again since the fall of Communism. At the end of October they stretched a business trip to Paris into a very pleasant long weekend, taking in the sights and enjoying the local cuisine. They are now looking forward to a long-planned visit to Australia in February next year, calling on friends in Sydney and Tasmania and revisiting Singapore on the way out and Bangkok on the way

back.

We're all very excited now at the prospect of having our dog, Honey, home for Christmas. She's been living on a farm with some lovely people in Switzerland, avoiding quarantine while re-qualifying for the Pets Travel Scheme, and is due to return to us on December 17.

With the festive season upon us, we wish you a Very Happy Christmas and a rewarding New Year. We hope you'll keep in touch, even if it's only at this time of the year. Our contact details are all on this letter, and we hope to catch up on your news soon. If you're reading a paper copy of this, it means we don't have an e-mail address for you. If you have one, we'd love to know it, and if you'd like to know more about what we've been up to, you can check out our website at [www.mcloughlin.co.uk](http://www.mcloughlin.co.uk), where you'll find lots of pics of the various goings-on in our lives.

All the very best for now,

Hazel, Mike, John and Ruth