

Dear all,

A quick note from the frozen north, I apologise for the fact that we cannot send you all individual letters this year but things are too chaotic. Enough of that, here is a summary of what the Rishtons are up to.

To begin with, on 7 Feb Katie Ellen was born. We knew immediately that we had a baby in the house since all semblance of order went right out of the window. We had three months of colic that almost drove us from our senses. Things have improved from there, and today we have a gorgeous ten month old. Katie is into everything, and keeps us on our toes. For those of you that remember Beth as a baby, Katie looks exactly the same and as Beth did and is already saying lots of words.

Thomas (6) started school this autumn, and loves it. He and Beth walk the half mile to school each morning together; for us it is odd to think of him so big. Thomas is also tall, much to Matt's irritation! The interest in tractors has never changed: Tom is not happier than when he is playing with his toy farm or visiting one of our farmer neighbours.

Matt (9) has had an easy-going year, he is still very interested in nature and science, and says that he wants to be a research scientist when he gets bigger. Other than that, he enjoys playing football and using the computer; he does have a habit of changing things and reprogramming things, much to Tim's irritation.

Beth's (11) great love in life is horses. Unfortunately in the summer we had to have her pony shot, as she had got chronic laminitis which the vet was unsuccessful in treating. This only put a temporary stopper on Beth's enthusiasm, and she is now looking after an Icelandic pony in all her free time. Other than that she is a happy, kind and helpful young lady.

Tim and I are keeping up with all the children's activities, which can be quite a feat at times, as well as our own interests. With regard to work Tim has had two jobs this last two years, one of them a pilot project within church music. It has been a real success although there has been a lot of travelling involved. Tromsø, which is as far up north from here as the UK is south, is the centre for one of the jobs, but this project will be coming to an end this summer and we are looking forward to having more time together.

As we enter 2001 we look forward to a time of change. After almost ten years here we have decided to move homewards, back to the UK. Tim has got a job researching into distance teaching in church music on the internet. This will be an EEC-funded project involving several different European universities. Tim has been offered a Professorship, which he is pleased about. Due to the nature of the project we will be able to live just about anywhere we want to, and deciding where is not as easy as it sounds.

We wish you a very merry Christmas and a blessed new year.

with love from the Rishtons