

This letter is being written on a train journey to Preston (which is why it's getting off to a rather juddery start). Seems safer than the car (if any wheels fall off, at least it's not my problem!).

At the beginning of this year we weren't sure where we'd be by the end of it. It's fair to say that the last months have turned out even more complicated than we'd imagined. [Must add here that the conductor's just arrived and refused to give Matt a half-price ticket because his train pass was issued in Yorkshire, and we're in Lancashire at the moment. Who said the War of the Roses has finished?]

Tracy's new job is as Area Missioner for a chunk of West Yorkshire, along with being Resident Priest in Cross Roads parish, Haworth. It's an interesting and creative role, helping parishes to find innovative ways of working, both separately and together. Doing some of these things herself in Cross Roads keeps catching the attention of the local press, which delights in whacky headlines which cause no end of amusement. In connection with a recent service for animal lovers, a large photo of Tracy was placed under the headline "Holy Cow!", whilst her plan to base the Christmas-morning sermon around chocolate produced the headline "Local vicar is a fruit and nut case". Her innovations were even reported in yesterday's "Sunday Telegraph", though the article title was very boring in comparison. Tomorrow she's off to Leeds at 5 in the morning for a BBC radio interview.

Finding a house turned out to be no easy job and things looked very bleak for a while. But we shouldn't have doubted -- we ended up with a wonderful house in a quiet corner of Haworth. The house is (amazingly) the same size as the one we've left behind in Kelbrook but is double glazed and warm! Very luxurious, and even enough ceiling height for the organ, so we're delighted!

The long delay in getting a house, a fairly traumatic move and a good deal of work to do afterwards (like re-wiring, plastering, damp-proofing and the like) means that most of the year seems to have gone in moving and getting straight, which is why we've not written before now with a change of address. People ask whether we've settled in, but the truth is that we've not had time to consider that question yet! But up to the end of 2007 we're still receiving post sent to Kelbrook.

The year has, if it's possible, been even more dynamic for Beth. This Summer she left for Norway, taking a teaching job at a college in the far north. She loves being back "home" in Norway and is very obviously enjoying herself there. A few weeks ago she was offered another job close to our old home. She took this and is now enjoying being able to regularly see all her old school friends and the people and places that she grew up with. She's still deciding whether to come to Britain in the Autumn or to study in Norway or to carry on longer with her job. Whichever she chooses, we imagine there's a fair chance that she'll eventually settle in Norway.

Matthew and Katie have both got new schools. Matt is in the 6th form at Bingley Grammar School, which he really seems to be enjoying, though I don't have his permission to say so (it just wouldn't do). He's doing A levels in Maths, Physics, ICT and German. Katie is going to a local primary school (Oakworth), which is a wonderful place and which she prefers to Kelbrook school.

We're just passing Andrew's old school at the moment. His new school is rather different. Having gone round every available school in the region and found that the Head of even the best of these had to apologise for having such a crummy place we decided that there was really no alternative to home schooling. He has resources provided by various bodies, and we're fortunate that there's a retired headmaster nearby who's very pleased to supplement our efforts, so it's all going very well indeed. Andrew claims that his favourite aspects of his new "school" are the uniform and the journey to and from school -- but actually he's very content. One spin-off benefit for him is that he gets to go on lots

of "school trips", accompanying Tim on concert tours, page turning and doing projects on the history, geography, society and language of the place. For instance, three concert tours in Germany this Autumn have led to a project on Germany. After looking at the Wars and reading the Colditz Story, Tim and Andrew visited Colditz Castle the other week. They walked around the high perimeter walls and spotted things mentioned in the book. Then they noticed that a large gate, leading in to the grounds, was open. There being nothing to stop them, they decided to go in for a look round. They walked right up to the castle itself and had a very interesting time. Coming back they found that the gate had been closed and locked on the outside. The walls are much too high to climb; their subsequent break-out and escape from Colditz is shortly to be made into a feature film ...

We're just passing Rishton at the moment (the place, that is). We had a visit a few weeks ago from an American professor who's writing a book about the lawlessness of the 16th-century Rishtons (we thought we knew about all their misdeeds, but there were apparently many more!). Makes even our present age sound quite tame in comparison.

Apart from trips to Germany, Tim's been busy as usual with concerts (a dozen in Norway and plenty elsewhere), writing, consulting and with his job in Lancaster.

So as a family we've had an unsettled year, but not without its highlights, including a trip to Sardinia in February and a summer holiday in the Hebrides, when we were all able to relax a little.

The coming year is of course an unknown quantity as yet, but we've learned again to hang on and trust that all will be well, whatever it may bring! (Sorry to rush the last couple of sentences: got to get off the train in a moment!). Hope you have a blessed Christmas and every joy in 2008.

New address

Revd Tracy Rishton - Dr Tim Rishton
Beth, Matt, Andrew & Katie Rishton

**79 Prince Street
Haworth
KEIGHLEY BD22 8JD
Tel. 01535 640633**

Email addresses remain the same:
tim@rishton.info
tracy@rishton.info

Beth's address is now:

**Haahjem Gaard
6260 SKODJE,
Norway
Tel. 0047 993 56 921**