



Robinson News



2003

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Winter Fun

We have only just returned from a business trip to Philadelphia and it is already mid-December and we are late producing this newsletter, so it will have to be a very rushed job...

2003 has definitely been a year dominated by Reportlab. Just before the end of the last year we secured the first round of funding so we had lots of reasons to celebrate. We welcomed the New Year with some friends in their home near Paris where we had a feast of foie gras, roasted meats and some very fine wines. With five kids running around it was quite a merry evening and everybody had loads of fun. We experienced the magic transformation on the Champs Elysée as all the lights come on at 5 pm.

February half term saw us in France again, this time skiing in the Alps. We had the benefit of Alisa's Mum, who came to help us while her husband was touring Australia with Alisa's brother. She thought it was a fair exchange as the Chamonix valley never looked better: sunshine every day, mild temperatures and lots of snow. The boys advanced so much that they are now very comfortable on skis. Tim's target was to advance from the "baby" lift to the big button lift which he did in a couple of days and then he was unstoppable - storming down the big run at Les Chosalets with an English pal he made friends with. He was a bit

disappointed that we refused to have his Birthday Party in the Alps (his idea was to take 20 pals with us skiing). We choose a much cheaper option - a sports party at Tiffin's School Sports Centre.

Harry, meanwhile, was not bothered about his skiing technique at all - he is a speed freak and we would occasionally see him zooming past, using trees as stopping points.



Boy Racers

A week-long conference in Oxford stopped us from going away from Easter but it was all worth it as we got a chance to show our investors around sunny Oxford and impress them with Andy's punting skills. We managed to have a long kidless weekend in Barcelona too at the end of Easter which was quite relaxing, and another visit to Paris in May, this time for business and without the kids.

May and June were extremely busy with work. Reportlab was growing, we were looking to finish off another round of

investment and were recruiting like crazy. Alisa's Mum & Dad came in time for Harry's birthday where he and another 25 kids had a "splash" garden party and we nearly collapsed from exhaustion and heat.



Birthday Splash



Work, glorious work

Soon after, we flew off to Seattle for 10 days of conferencing and a bit of sightseeing in the Pacific NorthWest. One of the meetings was in Vancouver and the view from our hotel, which was right in the harbour, was really breathtaking. The seaplanes, the usual means of transport around there, were taking off and landing every few minutes and big liners were arriving and leaving to Alaska from there. After Seattle and Vancouver we headed down to Portland in Oregon for a 4 day conference. We sealed the deal on our second round of investments and came home very happy indeed.



Snoqualmie Falls, Seattle (note the lodge from Twin Peaks)



Chinese Garden in Portland, Oregon



Bill Gates move over...



Summer Vacation

Shortly after the school was over we all set off in our van to Croatia (including Alisa's parents). We stopped in Chamonix to show Alisa's Dad what he missed out on when he went to Australia, and to prove to Alisa's Mum that this place is just as beautiful in the summer as it is in the winter. Again, we were blessed with sunshine and the moment they stepped onto the balcony of the flat and saw Mont Blanc in its full glory their breath was taken away. We went up some mountains, had lots of lovely walks and the boys even rode ponies in the forest.



Harry and Tim on ponies

The low point of the journey was 6 hours driving through a blazing hot Italy to get to Ancona, from where we took an overnight ferry to Split. It was so hot outside that we did not dare stop and leave the comfort of an air-conditioned car (hence the record of 6 hrs including the Mont Blanc tunnel!). We spent some time in Bugojno as Tim was keen to check on his new assets (an extra floor Alisa's parents put on top of the family home) and then had 3 weeks in the beach house. The two of us did the usual thing and drove off to explore some more bits of the coast and even crossed the border into Montenegro, but got rather disappointed with the crowds, inflated prices and general level of chaos, so ended up back in Croatia within hours. We ended up in our favourite place, staying at a lovely villa on top of a hill from where we had great views of the bay and the little islands surrounding it.

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Going back to England we took a different route this time. We went inland and saw two amazing sets of waterfalls in Croatia (Krka and Plitvice lakes), then drove through the Austrian Alps, stopping in Salzburg to stock up on Mozart Kugeln and visit the birth place of the man himself, then driving all the way to Strasbourg (a great place to stay) and carrying on the following day via Luxembourg (terrible parking problem) and Lille. We realised on this journey that we were going to have to refresh our general knowledge as Tim wanted answers to all sorts of questions, discussing everything from politics to foreign exchange, world currencies and inflation. We're grateful for the Internet as we need to turn into talking Encyclopaedias.



Swimming in the Krka waterfalls in Croatia

School started again in September and Harry joined Tim at Coombe Hill. He could not wait to put his uniform on and he looks so cute in it. We still cannot imagine that our "baby" (he hates to be called that) has started proper school aged 4 years and 2 months. Surprisingly, he is doing really well, proudly signing his full name and surname on everything he creates and despite being really "lively" concentrates (apparently) really hard at lessons. Tim is doing very well indeed and is in the top 5 of his class according to his teacher. He is very good at reading and has an amazing vocab.

At the Christmas concert (which sadly we missed due to the Philly trip but both sets of grandparents attended) he really shone as one of the main narrators. He received a certificate of achievement. He will be moving to the junior school next September.

Having recruited 3 more people we needed bigger and more prestigious offices so we moved to Wimbledon Broadway where we now have 2 very nice offices.



White Wedding

The big event for this year was Arifa and Arno's wedding in Amsterdam in October. The whole family gathered together, including Andy's parents for a white wedding with a twist. Arifa married her

fellow doctor and it's not just her beautiful dress that was white. Not even in their wildest dreams could they imagine snow in mid October, but that is what they had. Despite the initial shock it was one of the most romantic and best organised weddings we've been to.



Alisa's parents came back to babysit for us (again!) while we flew off to Boston and New York for business. The only break we managed this Autumn was a night in Lenox, The Berkshires, in New England where our NY friends recommended an absolutely delightful and very romantic B&B. New England was spectacular with all the autumn colours and foliage. (Central Park did not look bad either as seen from our 42nd floor hotel window).

Upon our return we had a few very frantic weeks preparing for Reportlab's big event of the year - sponsoring an xml conference in Philadelphia. This was our first time running a stand at a big trade show, and resulted in lots of US contacts. We have just returned from the event and look forward to our New Year's skiing holiday. We really are due for some real holiday

The header on page 1 shows Tim and Harry having one too many at the ReportLab Office Party two days ago! For more pictures of our year go to:

www.pasic-robinson.org

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Seasons Greetings

Andy, Alisa, Tim & Harry