

# The Notley Review 2016

This year I've left it later than ever to write a Christmas newsletter – it's now 2nd January 2017. And we did even worse on Christmas cards – if you got one from us, you were very lucky! (*We solemnly promise to do better for Christmas 2017*).

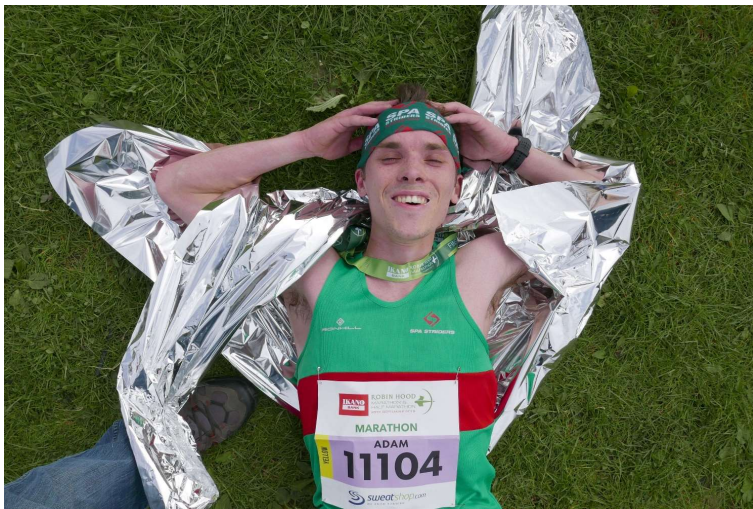
So, a very quick summary of our year...

Mark spent the first 6 months of the year touring Italy with a theatre company teaching Italian kids English through drama. He spent his 21st Birthday in Venice; we caught up with him in Verona a few days later.

In September he started a three-year Physical Theatre BA course at East 15 in Southend-on-Sea. It sounds like a lot of hard work, but he's certainly making the most of it.



Adam has been taking his running very seriously over the last year. With a few half-marathons under his belt, he ran his first full marathon in September, the Robin Hood Marathon in Nottingham. He completed it in an incredible time of 3 hours and 2 minutes. This is inside the 3:05 qualifying time for the London marathon, so we're hoping to cheer him on in London in 2018!



After two years with Business Insight, Adam has decided to move on: he starts his new job at the AA this week. It's going to involve a longer commute, and he doesn't even get a company van!

There was also a job change for me in 2016. I was made redundant from Dell at the end of March, and re-joined them in mid-July, totally wasting over 3 months of 'holiday'.

In September, the day after Adam's marathon, we headed off to Portugal.

We spent a couple of nights in Porto, before hiking for five days through the Peneda-Gerês National Park in the north of the country. Only about 60 miles on this trip, but a couple of very tough days.

We enjoyed the beers, the wines and ports, the people and places, and of course the company of Peter and Rachel, but could have done with a little less salted cod on the menu.



In December, Laura and I celebrated our 30th Wedding Anniversary. Blimey! We spent a week in Mexico, staying in a fantastic resort near Playa del Carmen, right on the Caribbean Sea. We took it pretty easy, but did make the trip to see the ancient Mayan city, Chichen Itza, as well as sailing out to Isla Mujeres.



I may not be the biggest fan of a beach holiday, but I think I could get used to the life!

And so to Christmas (just) past. In a slight change to the traditional story, there was no room in the stable, so my Aunt had to stay at the inn! With Laura's mum and my Uncle here too, the combined age of our three guests was 253! As always, Laura spoils us rotten with the food – my waistline is now more like a coastline.

Next year we hope to visit Debbie and Bill in Canada – it's three years since I caught pneumonia there, so I'm ready to give it another go ... in the summertime. And after three years in Beijing, Liz and Paul are now in Dakar, Senegal. We never made the trip to China, but we will see them back in West Africa. Christmas 2017 in the sun sounds good!

We hope you've had a great Christmas, and that you are looking forward to the coming year. See you soon!



*With love,  
Richard, Laura,  
Adam and Mark  
xxx*

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