

Greenmount – April 2017

Saturday April 1<sup>st</sup>: I received a telephone call from Faith during breakfast. The hand-dryers in the toilets at the Old School were not working and it was the day of the Tottington and District Horticultural Society's Spring Show.

I knew what had caused the fault. The water-heater in the ladies' toilets I had switched on had tripped the circuit-breaker again.

Jenny and I went round after breakfast, Jenny to have a look at the Spring Show and I to reset the circuit-breaker. First, I had to isolate the water-heater by means of the switch above the suspended ceiling in the ladies' toilets. I then went in search of the circuit-breaker, which I thought, wrongly, was in the distribution cabinet in the kitchen. I found it in the distribution cabinet in the old staff-room. I had reset it before, so I should have remembered where it was.

We came home for a spot of lunch and I updated the village and Tottington web sites and then continued the work on my web site, organising the picture gallery.

Sunday April 2<sup>nd</sup>: I updated the village web site again and then continued with my web site where I had left off while waiting for Jenny to finish her chores, intending to go out and deliver the latest copy of the Greenmount Voice. A telephone call from the plasterer to say he would be here in about 40 minutes scuppered that plan and I carried on while waiting for him.

The plasterer arrived with his dad to survey the work involved and they went away to think about how much it would be and when they could start.

Jenny and I went out as planned. It was a very pleasant day and the forecast for the following day was good, so I planned to cut the grass again.

Returning, we lunched and I carried on where I had left off and then updated the server.

Monday April 3<sup>rd</sup>: I spent the whole day in the lovely, warm sunshine cutting the grass on the side garden and, after my new Wolf strimmer arrived, cutting the edging. My old Flymo strimmer had a very worn head and I had not yet worked out how to repair it, assuming the spare part I needed was available. After that, I trimmed back the ivy on the garage wall and finished off the day by tidying up the front borders.

Tuesday April 4<sup>th</sup>: Not satisfied with the physical agony inflicted by the previous day's hard labour and conscious (just) of the plasterer starting work between 8 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. the following day, Jenny and I set about clearing the junk out of the small bedroom. We made room for most of it in our bedroom and the rest went into the back bedroom.

Then it was time to clear the dining area. All the heavy furniture ended up in the conservatory, having moved a few odd items out of there into the living room. What did not fit into the conservatory found its way into the living room and we ended up blocking the living room door to the dining area.

With the dining room clear, apart for the dining table, I removed the remaining two banister rails and we positioned all three in the conservatory.

My final task was to dismantle the wood encasing the central heating pipes in the dining room. That was more difficult than expected. The front came off easily enough but none of the screws holding the uprights in place would move and it was necessary to hack the wood to bits with a chisel before dislodging the screws with a pair of mole-grips.

This work was interrupted by a need to fetch the next month's supply of the cat's tablets from the vet in Bury at about 3:30 p.m., Jenny having been told they closed at 4 p.m. The vet's practice was closed when we arrived. It had closed at 3 p.m.

Wednesday April 5<sup>th</sup>: The two plasterers arrived as expected and commenced work. By the end of the day, the landing ceiling and the dining area ceiling had been skimmed and the stairs wall had a rough coat of plaster, ready for skimming the following day. One piece of coving was also up in the small bedroom.

I spent the day working on my web site picture gallery, adding the latest pictures of the decorating progress and also producing an electronic copy (PDF) of the instructions for the Halfords car tyre inflator I had purchased several years earlier. The disintegration of the box as a result of damp conditions and its effect on the original paper instructions prompted this feverish activity.

After the plasterers had finished for the day, we went to the vet for the cat's tablets and the inevitable visit to Tesco.

Arriving home, we tidied up, preparing for the following day.

Thursday April 6<sup>th</sup>: It was almost a repeat of the previous day. The plasterers finished all the work as planned. The newly skimmed ceilings and walls looked excellent. The coving left something to be desired and I wasn't sure whether this was down to the lack of skill of the plasterer or the fact that the walls and ceilings were well out of true. It certainly didn't look as good a job as the lounge but then, it hadn't been painted. I decided to reserve final judgement until I came to decorate.

Friday April 7<sup>th</sup>: Our usual shopping trip to Unicorn and Waitrose, south of the canal, was relatively uneventful. Waitrose still had no gluten-free meals in the café and, to add to the excitement, a couple of drivers decided to pull out suddenly in front of me, one in the fast lane of the M60 and one on the A56 at Whitefield, on the return journey. A suicidal lady cyclist in Greenmount also provided added interest as she rode swiftly past me on the left and then rapidly cut across the road to the right in front of me on the outward journey. I had slowed down to make room for oncoming traffic on Brandlesholme Road, outside the medical centre, which almost came in useful.

We were home for about 2:30 p.m. and round at the Old school for 3:30 p.m. to work on the electrical jumble.

We finished about 5 p.m. and came home for tea.

Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup>: It was a 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. day at the Old School. Unfortunately, we were not in a position to take advantage of the lovely, sunny day.

We packed the car for the following day's car boot trading before tea.

Sunday April 9<sup>th</sup>: A 5 a.m. start placed us in bay in number 21 at Ramsbottom Station car park for just before 7 a.m. Our stall was half prepared by around 8 a.m. when a chap who declared himself to be an official from the organisation that had the franchise to operate the car boot sales on behalf of Bury Council arrived and went from stall to stall telling all traders that there was no car boot sale today and that we all had to pack up and go home. He was carrying a poster to the effect that car boot sales started on 16<sup>th</sup> April. He presented no identification and informed us that if we did not comply with his request to leave the car park, he would contact the police. He also refused any rent on the basis that its collection would be illegal.

We were also informed that the signs like the one he was carrying that had been put up around the car park had been torn down and that the covering on the signs saying "Car Boot Sale here every Sunday" had been removed. Like that was our fault?

That was enough to convince two or three traders in the bays beyond us to leave. The rest, including us, decided to stay put and see what transpired.

In the event, I learnt later, the police did come and speak to one of the traders. The trader asked nicely if we could stay and the police said yes and then disappeared. I could just imagine what was going through their minds; something like "We have better things to do than deal with petty issues raised by jobsworths on a Sunday".

Meanwhile, a steward from the same organisation as the chap who had caused such a stir earlier came down and started bartering for goods with a stallholder. When he was told we had to cease trading and pack up, he was surprised and said he knew nothing about it. As far as he was concerned, it was trading as usual, usual being from the first Sunday in April to the last Sunday in October, as born out by Bury Council's web site that declared that trading was from April to October, no date in either month being specified and interpreted by traders as the first Sunday in April to the last Sunday in October, including Bank Holidays and excluding special event days, as had been the tradition for a number of years.

This week end was the Ramsbottom chocolate festival and Bridge Street had been closed for the event but this was not traditionally one of the events during which the car boot sale was cancelled.

Obviously, the confusion caused by conflicting information needed to be resolved such that it was not repeated and I decided to speak to our local councillors when I saw them next. It was my guess that the organisers of the Chocolate Festival wanted the car park spaces for visitors to the event. In my view, they could have collected £11 from each car boot trader and someone would have been at least £200 better off.

As it was, we were home for about 4:30 p.m. having made a tidy sum on the day.

Monday April 10<sup>th</sup>: It was another long day at the Old School, preparing for and selling at the jumble sale from about 9:15 a.m. to about 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday April 11<sup>th</sup>: I started the day with 2½ hours at the Incredible Edible plot, mostly weeding and preparing the wild flower bed. I came home because I was feeling hungry.

Matthew had arrived a few minutes earlier, on his way to the dental hygienist and he was admiring our plastering and coving. We chatted while my soup for lunch was warming itself on the hob.

After lunch and Matthew had left for his appointment, I embarked on the task of repairing the small, Sony hi-fi system to which Jenny listened in the kitchen. Jenny had put in a tape and when she removed, she found a loose part at the bottom of the compartment. It was the pressure arm that pressed the tape onto the rotating spindle. The part was intact and it seemed to be a simple task of putting it back where it belonged. I was wrong. It wasn't a simple task at all.

I had to completely dismantle the unit to access the front of the tape deck to replace the part because I could not reach down to do so through the tape deck opening from the front.

While I was in the middle of that, we had a telephone call from the lady who purchased our halogen cooker at the car boot sale on the previous Sunday. She had put her tea in it to cook and it would not turn on.

Jenny recovered a replacement from the garage, made sure it worked, cleaned it up a little and made sure it still worked. We headed off to the lady's home with the replacement and with a refund should the worst happen.

Needless to say, the worst did happen. Neither of the halogen cookers worked and we refunded her money. We brought the cookers home and tested them again. The micro-switches on both proved to be temperamental and we consigned them to the tip.

The final task of the day was to put Jenny's hi-fi back in the kitchen and re-test it. That worked and I celebrated the end of my day with a large glass of water.

Wednesday April 12<sup>th</sup>: After the unusually warm, dry spell, the rain was back as temperatures dropped noticeably. We spent the morning at the Old School helping prepare for the Antique and Collectors Fair. The plan was to come home for lunch and then nip to the tip with the Old School jumble as the weather cleared and the sun came out again.

The weather didn't clear and I spent the afternoon working on Jenny's laptop computer, much of the time being spent on identifying web sites that pushed unwanted advertising onto web sites I visited, Google being the main culprit. I published a list of my findings on this web site, on the [Technical Tips Page](#).

Thursday April 13<sup>th</sup>: We took advantage of a fine spell to take the rubbish to the tip and call at Tesco in Bury for a few items. Since wine was on offer with a 25% discount on six bottles or more, we purchased six bottles of Yellowtail Chardonnay and two bottles of Yellowtail

Shiraz, also on offer at £5.75, a £1 discount on the usual price.

I spent the afternoon updating the village web site and the Tottington District Civic Society web site. Alistair, our village chairman, had also asked me to create a new village E-mail account and work out how to access it from a web browser using web-mail. This I did, the former being easier than the latter. Our hosting site ([Zen](#)) support team was, as always, very helpful.

Friday April 14<sup>th</sup>: The usual shopping trip to Unicorn and Waitrose was a breeze, with much less traffic than usual, thanks to the holiday period and, presumably, people going abroad for a holiday break to avoid the lousy weather here.

I spent the afternoon again on the computer, setting up all the TV recordings for the coming week and tidying up the recorded programmes we had watched during the previous week or so.

Saturday April 15<sup>th</sup>: Jenny wanted to pot the organic tomato plants she had purchased from Unicorn the previous day in hanging baskets, since they were a trailing variety. The plan was to grow them in the conservatory. Unfortunately, the hanging baskets we had did not have a drip tray so we could not use them indoors.

Instead, we moved the small compost bin off the patio and onto the garden in the corner of the cat's latrine because it seemed to be leaking underneath and the juices would be better soaking into the ground rather than the patio. The move required the corner of the soil patch levelling and subsequently a cleaning of the cat's toilet.

I decided to start tackling the dandelions in the back lawn and used the hoe to cut the roots just under the ground. I removed the large ones that were threatening to flower. I also tackled a few in the front garden.

The next job was to obtain the dining table furnishings out of the drawer of the large unit that had been temporarily stored in the conservatory while we decorated the dining room. Unfortunately, the drawers were close to my desk and access to them meant pushing the units back so Rachel, being the thinnest of us, could squeeze in front of the unit and open the drawer. That done, we pushed the units back so that Jenny could squeeze past the back of them to reach her plants for watering.

My next allocated task was to rip open brown paper bags in which we had purchased fruit and vegetables from Unicorn so Jenny could iron the dining room carpet to remove a large amount of dried candle wax from the previous evening. We always dined by candlelight and the floor-standing candle holders normally stood on a sheet of plastic to protect the carpet. Since we had started to decorate, the plastic had been removed.

After that, I vacuumed the dining room carpet, Rachel removing a few remaining spots of candle wax using the ironing method.

I finally progressed to repairing the two floor-standing lamps I had brought home from the Old School. I checked the metal one was properly earthed, having fitted a new plug at the

Old School when I was working on the jumble. When tested, it did not work and I checked the 3 amp fuse. That had blown, not necessarily in this appliance, so I replaced it and the lamp worked.

The wooden one needed the socket securing to the wooden stand head. It was a standard bayonet switched socket screwed to a metal plate. The metal plate was held in place by two screws, both of which were loose and would not tighten. I replaced these with two No 4  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch brass screws, slightly longer than the mild steel ones I removed and fixed the plate securely. Screwing the socket back onto the plate soon made it apparent that it was damaged. It was bent and when I dismantled it, the pot bayonet pin-holder inside had a piece chipped off it. It was obvious that the stand had been knocked over at some point, which is probably why it found itself in the jumble. I needed a new bayonet fitting.

After a short lunch break and rest, I rummaged through my electrical spares for a replacement. I didn't find one so the repair would have to wait.

I helped tidy up and prepare the lounge and dining room as best we could under the circumstances for our guests the following day.

Sunday April 16<sup>th</sup>: I spent the morning helping prepare for our guests and then on Jenny's laptop computer tidying up a few things.

Our guests, Matthew, Carrie and Carrie's parents, Bob and Marie, arrived about 2:30 and we sat down to eat our lamb roast dinner very shortly afterwards. That was followed by fresh fruit salad, and drinks for those who wanted them.

After our visitors had left, Jenny and I washed the pots that wouldn't go in the dishwasher and then we settled down to rest.

Monday April 17<sup>th</sup>: We were at the Old School from 8:30 until 3 p.m. helping with the Antiques and Collectors Fair. I spent the day with Frank and Gwen in the Records, CD and DVD department and Jenny helped out with kitchen items and bric-a-brac in the main hall.

Tuesday April 18<sup>th</sup>: It was too nice to stay indoors and the grass needed cutting so I started with the back garden, where Jenny helped me to move our wooden bench so I could cut the grass where it stood, not that there was much to cut since it had been covered up all winter and everything under it had been in darkness. I progressed to the front garden and then the large side garden which was still common land, maintained by me. Thankfully the council chap had not cut it for a couple of years at least and it was looking quite good.

I broke off for lunch, finished the side garden, cleaned the lawn mower, bagged the bucket of dog dung I had collected off the side garden, with Jenny's help, tidied up, came in and changed my tatty sweater and dirty trousers which had accumulated mud on the rear end after I slipped while finishing off the side garden and settled down for a rest about 4 p.m.

The sun was still shining, although there was a cool breeze and I was feeling quite tired. The garden edges were not looking too bad so I decided to leave trimming them until Thursday, provided the weather held.

I managed to squeeze in an update to the village web site.

Wednesday April 19<sup>th</sup>: We spent most of the day selling records and CDs at the Old School as part of the Book Fair.

At the end of the day, I was too tired to go to the village meeting and sent my apologies.

Thursday April 20<sup>th</sup>: Jenny spent the day sorting her car boot stock ready for the week end. I decided it was about time I made a start on the decorating, smoothing down various bits of plaster on the staircase ready for painting and cleaning the plaster off the wooden staircase where the chaps who had skimmed the wall had caught it. I had to pack up earlier than planned because Jenny needed some muscle outside to help tidy up.

Friday April 21<sup>st</sup>: We called at the garage on the way to Unicorn and that took longer than expected. The squeaking noise that was coming from the engine when I turned the steering wheel, particularly on full lock, on inspection, turned out to be a wobbly pulley on the alternator and nothing to do with the steering servo mechanism. The car needed a new alternator. That came as something of a shock, the alternator only having been replaced in October of last year. Since we were going on holiday the following week, the car was booked in for the following Monday and the repair was covered by the warranty of the existing parts. I also asked for the handbrake to be checked since it had become quite slack.

The journey to Unicorn was steady and our shopping trip to Waitrose also went well. The journey back was horrendous, joining very slow moving traffic on the motorway for almost all the way to our exit at Prestiwich, except for a surprisingly fast stretch as we passed the M62 junction, just north of the canal bridge.

Saturday April 22<sup>nd</sup>: We had a fair day for our car boot sale at the Old School, organised as part of the Collectors Fair which was held inside. There were nine vehicles there and I collected the £8 fees for Christine. It was not as busy as I would have expected but we did make a fair amount on the day and what's more, I purchased 18 DVDs I wanted from another stall for 50p each.

When we came home, we had to unpack the car and repack it with different stock for the following day.

Then Jenny cooked tea.

Sunday April 23<sup>rd</sup>: We had another good trading day at Ramsbottom Station car park and came home about 4 p.m.

After a brief rest and a cup of tea, we unpacked the car so we could take it into the garage the following morning.

Then Jenny cooked tea again.

Monday April 24<sup>th</sup>: After a 5:30 a.m. followed by a 5 a.m. start, we had a bit of a lie-in until 7 a.m.

We left home just after 8 a.m. and we were at the garage for just after 8:30, having fought our way through heavy traffic in Bury. The mechanic was not going to repair the vehicle while we were there so we left on foot and started our walk back towards Bury, bearing in mind that Tottington Motors had moved from Tottington to the north of Bury, about 15 minutes' walk away from home to the south and west of Bury

Walking along the road from Radcliffe, towards Bury we reached the River Irwell where it flowed under the road and decided to take the public footpath alongside the river, rather than walk all the way back along the road into Bury.

We had never been on this path before and I did not have a map with me, so I was navigating on instinct. I knew the path headed up towards Elton, in Bury and, having passed underneath the Metrolink rail track, we emerged onto a rough vehicle track which turned out to be Cycle Route 6. That was fortunate because that ran all the way to Greenmount.

We followed Cycle Route 6, past Elton Reservoir, St. Gabriel's School and Bury Grammar School, into Bury before deciding to deviate from it to catch the 474 bus from Bury at Crosstones at 10 a.m., by which time our free passes were operative. We had seen parts of Bury we had never visited before in all our nigh on forty years here and I wished I had my camera with me.

The bus arrived as I was answering a telephone call from Rachel, who had just arrived at work, to inform me of a collision between a bus and a girl on Brandlesholme Road, near the shops and advising me to avoid that route because the road was blocked and there was a long tail-back of vehicles. I informed the driver of the bus and he spent a few minutes checking with his control. There was no confirmation and we decided to risk boarding the bus, with the intention of alighting if the bus became stuck in traffic.

As it turned out, the road was clear and the only evidence of any possibly delay was a single-decker bus at a bus stop with its hazard-lights flashing. I apologised to the driver as we alighted on Longsight Road and I think he said all the delays had been caused by a bus that had broken down.

As we walked the last mile or so home, it started to rain, as forecast and we walked the last ten minutes or so in a light shower.

Having had breakfast about 7:30, we lunched early and I was then all set to collect the car when someone telephoned to say it was ready for collection, which they did just after noon. By then I had remembered my arrangement to meet a chap called Richard Greenwood, who lived locally and had been at junior school with Rachel, in his profession as a plumber, to discuss repairs to the hot water heater in the Old School toilets. I had to delay fetching the car until after meeting with Richard.

I met Richard at the Old School at about 12:50 as arranged and he advised me that a new heater was required and would let me have some prices within the next couple of days.

I returned home briefly to collect Jenny and we caught the 13:50 bus to Bury, arriving just in time to miss the 513 to take us to Torrington Motors, along Bury Road, towards Radcliffe.

We waited for almost half-an-hour for the next bus, the 512, that followed the same route as far as we were concerned.

We collected the car, there being no charge and drove home, making the obligatory call at Tesco in Bury, where we purchased a few odds and ends, together with three 12 x 500ml packs of Highland Spring on offer at £2 each, for our holiday and six bottles of Yellowtail wine, taking advantage of the 25% off six bottles or more offer, finishing today.

I left the car on the road with the intention of washing and polishing it the following day, for which the weather forecast for the morning was good. Time would tell.

Tuesday April 25<sup>th</sup>: I washed the car on the road as planned and then started cleaning the windows inside and out. I had cleaned all the glass except the windscreen and sun-roof when the warm sunny periods, offset by the icy-cold wind, were replaced by dark-grey clouds depositing what seemed to be fine snowflakes. I promptly reversed the car down the drive, under the car port and finished off cleaning the glass before coming in to change for lunch.

I had been wearing my waterproof jacket and trousers and a pair of wellingtons with the intention of keeping my clothes dry. The waterproof trousers did not live up to expectations and were designated tip material. I decided that a complete change of clothes would be best.

After lunch, experience had taught me it was wise to rest for at least half an hour, which I did, giving me an opportunity to update this saga.

Jenny joined me in the lounge, having spent the morning going clean round the bend, making sure we were leaving clean toilets before departing on our week's holiday and also ironing clothes to take away with us.

Jenny's relaxation continued at the hair salon while I polished the car.

Wednesday April 26<sup>th</sup>: We finally managed to depart for Whitby at about 10:45 and, apart from calling at Adsa, Pilsworth to top up with Diesel, we travelled non-stop, the journey time being about 2½ hours. Traffic was light, making driving not unpleasant, apart from the odd few drivers who ignored the speed limit and limited my manoeuvrability now and again.

I did find it necessary to put my foot down on one occasion to avoid a group of drivers whose antics were causing an obstruction on the M62 and I sped past them in the fast lane on the principle that, should they cause an accident, I would be well out of the way. Exceeding the speed limit is not something I usually do unless there is a good reason and this was one of those rare occasions when I judged it necessary to do so for a few brief seconds.

Arriving in Whitby, I was expecting there to be very few, if any, parking spaces. In fact, there were plenty, including room for at least two vehicles outside our accommodation.

We unloaded, chatted to our landlady, Jill, who had sold The Lansbury B&B and was preparing to move out in a few weeks' time to run The Harbour View Café in the town and then we pottered round the town. It was a fine afternoon with sunny periods and a strong,

bitingly-cold, northerly wind and I could have done with an extra layer of clothing.

We visited the Tourist Information office. That had moved from its very nice venue on the quayside, opposite the railway station to take up residence with the harbourmaster in somewhat more cramped conditions, a little more out of the way, no doubt as a cost-saving exercise by Scarborough Council. It was not an ideal arrangement for visitors. Neither was the fact that it was closed.

We ate at The Angel, the Wetherspoon pub and it was very nice. What is more, we managed to find a table for two upstairs with a view of the harbour. Normally, it was packed to the door and all the prime tables were usually taken.

Frank and Steve called to say they were coming down, having finished the Coast to Coast walk and they had already eaten. I told Frank where to find us and we met up, finding a table for four downstairs. We chatted and Jenny and I ordered our sweet. We left about 10:30 p.m. and walked up with Steve and Frank, who were staying overnight a few doors down from us, returning home the following day via Scarborough. Mike had been unable to join them on this last 30 miles or so due to a bad back.

Thursday April 27th: The day started much better than forecast, being slightly warmer and with sunny periods. The expected showers started just before lunch and, thankfully, were not as heavy as predicted. With the extra layer of clothing, it felt much more pleasant, if not too warm when wandering round shops.

Our first call was at the Pavilion Theatre to find out what had happened to the amateur dramatic society, there being no leaflets in the entrance to the TI the previous day indicating what plays were being performed. We discovered we had just missed one.

The rain started as we toured mainly the local charity shops before lunching at The Monks Haven for the second day running, an excellent café on Church Street that had a very good selection of gluten-free food. The weather did not put us off as the showers were quite light. After lunch, we ventured up the 199 steps (without stopping) and went into the Abbey visitor centre. We would have gone into St. Mary's Church too but by the time we reached it, it was closed. With the showers persisting, we decided to head back to base for a cup of tea, a rest and then venture out again for some tea.

By the time we ventured out again, the rain had stopped and we were undecided where to eat. We ended up at the Duke of York. In years past, we had some excellent meals there and I once described it as the best pub in Whitby. This experience was not good and, as far as food and service were concerned, it now had to be one of the worst pubs in Whitby. Jenny could run rings round their chef.

We came back to base for a cup of tea and to retire for the evening.

Friday April 28th: We had a bit of a lie-in and organised our own breakfast in our room because our landlady was away for the day. We had a leisurely morning, strolling down to town, visiting a charity shop that was closed the previous day. We went in the marquis by the quayside that had been erected for the Tour de Yorkshire cycling event and which was full

of stalls selling items made in Yorkshire. We purchased Rachel a present there.

We went off to Tourist Information again, this time to find out details of the Tour de Yorkshire. That was followed by lunch at, where else but The Monks Haven. There we learnt the best place to see the cyclists pass through Whitby was on the steep climb up Green Lane and we slowly made our way there well in time for the event. It was surprising how many other people joined us on the slopes, given that it was a little out of the way.

The cyclists passed us about 4 p.m., after which we went to sit on the pier and watch the tide come in. We had some free, spectacular entertainment as the waves crashed on the stone breakwater and sprayed passers-by over the top. We, of course, knew what to expect with such a high tide (5 feet 9 inches) and sat just out of reach. We remained there until after high tide at 6:15 p.m. and then walked back to The Angel for tea. We both had curry and it was very nice.

We returned to our room about 8 p.m. for a cup of tea and to relax.

Saturday April 29th: We called inside Whitby Pavilion to check again there was nothing on of interest to us and then we walked on to Sandsend on the beach. We scoured Sandsend for an alternative place for lunch to the Sandside Café and found a reasonable pub that looked inviting for an evening meal. So we lunched at the Sandside Café sitting in the new, sheltered, outdoor extension, overlooking the beach. My crab sandwich was very nice, if a little expensive, more so than the Monks Haven and not as well presented. The only gluten-free option Jenny fancied was a jacket potato with beans. It would have been nice if they had a supply of gluten-free bread, preferably from the Good Grain bakery in London.

While exploring Sandsend, we came across a chap in a digger working on the beach by the stream, moving sand around. We later discovered that the object of his labours had been to dam up the stream against the wall using sand for the mallard. The overflow from the dam flowed round the beach side of the dam, along the seaward side of the sand barrier and into the sea by the wall that curved round to form the sea-front wall, supporting the road.

After our lunch, we walked back along the beach to Whitby harbour and sat for a while on the pier to watch the tide come in.

We called at the RLNI shop, where I purchased a new, red, RNLI fleece and came back to our room for a cup of tea before heading back into town for tea.

We decided to eat at The Angel again and we both had the sirloin steak with a jacket potato instead of chips. The meal was very nice, served promptly even though the pub was busy and on warm plates, with a free drink. Needless to say, we also ordered a bottle of Shiraz. To top that, we even managed to sit at a window table, overlooking the harbour. We enjoyed our evening so much, we decided to order a sweet, the gluten-free apple crumble again.

It was going on for 10 p.m. by the time we reached our B&B.

Sunday April 30th: We awoke to a lovely sunny day, although we soon discovered it was not as warm as it looked, with a strong north-easterly breeze.

We walked up to the car boot sale on the Guisborough road and spent a couple of hours looking round the stalls, until the stall-holders started to pack up. Jenny found a few items she wanted before we headed back to our room to dump the rucksack and collect my camera case.

We made our way down to town, our priority being lunch at The Monks Haven. For the first time since we arrived, we had to queue for a table. The meal was very good, the only minor issue being that the young lady who took our order made two mistakes and they were rectified very quickly by a more experienced waitress. My assumption was that the very nice young lady was still learning and, perhaps, a little nervous.

After lunch, we walked back across the swing bridge to the west pier, where I paid my £1.50 to go up the light-house (actually a starboard marker, or for the non-sailors out there, a green flashing light) on the end of the pier. I expected the wind to be strong on the top viewing platform, so I toggged up appropriately and, armed with my telephoto lens fitted to the camera, climbed the tight, narrow, spiral staircase to the top. I was right about the wind. I took several shots, although the light was not very good, with a haze over the land and a sea mist in the distance.

After that exercise, we retraced our steps, past The Monks Haven and walked up the 199 steps to see if the falconry exhibition was still taking place. We discovered the birds were not being flown because the wind was too strong and, in any case, the exhibition was in the grounds of the abbey ruins, for which one had to pay for access. The exhibition was scheduled again for the following day but we had other plans and it was not as though I had not seen birds of prey flown before.

We tried various places around St. Mary's Church to shelter from the wind and the bench immediately at the top of the 199 steps was the best we found. I used that location to take some telephoto shots of the Esk estuary and a North Yorks Moors train leaving station. We came down the steps and called at a restaurant to enquire about their gluten-free menu. We ended up booking a table for 7:30 before returning to our room for a rest and a cup of tea.

We had a very nice evening meal at The Edge restaurant just across on the east side of the swing-bridge and retired about 10 p.m.

The Whitby saga continues in the May 2017 issue.