

Greenmount April 2023

Saturday, 1st April 2023

We collected Wilf and Anne from The Red Hall and they came back to our house for a while before we dropped them off in Bury to commence their journey home to Sheffield.

After a late lunch, we went round to the old school to commence work in preparation for the jumble sale on Monday.

Sunday, 2nd April 2022

It was a day spent working on the electrical jumble.

Monday, 3rd April 2023

We resumed work on the electrical jumble until it was time for the sale at 3 p.m.

Tuesday, 4th April 2023

I spent my day in the garden, giving the grass its first cut of the year. I would have finished off strimming all the edges but I ran out of strimmer line, so I ordered two more spools after I had finished for the day.

Since I could not finish off the grass and there was not enough time to deal with the borders, after cleaning the mower and strimmer and putting them away, I tidied up the four small raised beds, one of which was the herb bed and two were strawberry beds. The fourth was awaiting some lettuce and other goodies, possibly broccoli.

Wednesday, 5th April 2023

It was a day of grocery shopping, close to home, at Sainsbury's and Tesco. Both had offers on wine with 25% off six bottles or more, so we took advantage of both with two bottles each of Yellowtail Pinot Grigio, Shiraz and Chardonnay from the former and three bottles of Yellowtail Bubles, two of Yellowtail Rosé and a bottle of Yellowtail Merlot from the latter.

Thursday, 6th April 2023

I tested a couple of electrical items that needed a power supply from the car and then caught up on a shed load of administrative work on the laptop.

Friday, 7th April 2023

It was Good Friday and the sun was shining in a clear blue sky, a rarity in these parts. Despite the sunshine, it was not very warm, with a slight, northerly breeze bringing cold air down from the arctic.

I had forgotten to put the garden waste and can/glass/plastic waste bins at the top of the drive for collection and I had missed one of the collections but I didn't know which. I later discovered the garden waste bin had not been emptied, which wasn't too much of a problem.

Jenny put the washing out to dry before we made our way to the old school, firstly to return some jumble items I had tested in the car yesterday, secondly to see if Christine wanted me to put out some lamps I had tested for the Antiques and Collectors Fair tomorrow and thirdly to see if help with the sale was required tomorrow.

I did set up some lights, although there were two already on display, one of which needed some attention and both needing 3 amp fuses which I did not have.

Jenny was asked to take the money for any toys that were sold tomorrow. I later received confirmation from Frank that he would welcome my assistance and company tomorrow, selling CDs, DVDs and records.

We had a look at Frank's stock and found a few DVDs and a couple of CDs which we brought home and for which I would pay Frank tomorrow. Jenny bought a baking tin she had seen previously.

After lunch at home, I finished off selecting and scheduling the TV recordings for next week.

Saturday, 8th April 2023

We were at the old school for about 8:30 a.m. and Jenny went to help look after the toys and I went to help Frank with the DVDs, CDs, Vinyl and Cassette Tapes.

It was not as busy as previous years in the music department and at the end of the day, at 3 p.m., the takings were a little down on previous years.

Jenny and I had lunched at the old school. Trish Ribchester had been working in the kitchen and had taken charge of the dietary requirements of customers, providing us with gluten-free lunch, which, for staff, was free.

When we returned home, I catalogued the CDs and LPs I had bought, having dealt with the DVDs yesterday.

Sunday, 9th April 2023

We walked up to see Gwen and Frank. Jenny had promised to drop off some of the balloons we had for our 50th wedding anniversary for their granddaughter's birthday tomorrow.

When we came back I went outside to tidy up the large strawberry raised bed, which took quite a while, breaking off for lunch.

After that I cut back the red rose bush and also cut the thorns and small branches off the lower part of the hawthorn tree.

The last job of the day was to plant the two yellow rose bushes we had been given for our 50th wedding anniversary. I had to clear a spot in the back border for them, which meant digging up the herb bed in the border. That wasn't too much of an issue because we had a raised bed for herbs and they fared much better in that. We were growing some herbs we did not use in the back border too.

It was turned 6 p.m. by the time I had finished and I was shattered, not having used my spade and fork for a good while.

The old tree stump was still in the back border and needed removing. That was a job for another day.

Monday, 10th April 2023

We were back on duty at the old school for the second day of the Antique and Collectors Fair, Jenny helping Gwen with the books and me helping Frank with the music media.

We had lunch at the old school and came home to relax. We watched a recorded episode of Jamie Oliver's One-pan Wonders.

Tuesday, 11th April 2023

The two spools of strimmer line arrived from the Grean Reaper, so, given some fine weather, I could now trim the rest of the grass edges.

We went into Ramsbottom for some groceries but we could not find everything we wanted. We had enough food for today and decided, after lunch at home, to go grocery shopping tomorrow instead of Thursday. Having made the usual tour of the charity shops, I ended up with a CD of Acker Bilk and His Paramount Jazz Band and an unusual compilation of songs from the sixties on a 3-CD set called Lamon Popsicles and Strawberry Milkshakes.

After lunch, I caught up with some administrative work since rain was forecast for the afternoon.

Wednesday, 12th April 2023

Running low on food items, we had decided to go grocery shopping, which resulted in a trip to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park. This week, the bill was well within budget, making up for last week's spending spree.

In the afternoon I tidied up a backlog of odd jobs that had been piling up and afterwards, I could actually see the top on the occasional table next to my armchair.

Thursday, 13th April 2023

We went to help out with the ongoing sale at the old school. It was very quiet and Frank and I only had a couple of customers in the music section. Jenny fared a little better with the toys.

The sale closed at noon so we came home for lunch. On the way, we met our neighbours, Mike and Liz from across the road. Mike wanted some advice about purchasing a new computer and I suggested they should pop round to discuss the subject in more detail.

After lunch, I finished off pricing the last item for the old school jumble I had brought home to test. I could not test it because I did not have a computer with the required connectivity, namely a Creative EAX sound card, so I just looked up the price on E-bay and, as usual, reduced it.

I started to compile some information for Mike and that took me almost up to teatime.

Friday, 14th April 2023

The main event of the day was the usual D-CaFF session, which was packed, where we were entertained by The Greenmount Strummers.

Saturday, 15th April 2023

We spent most of the day helping at Greenmount Old School with the final day of the week-long Antique and Collector's Fair.

Sunday, 16th April 2023

It took me most of the day to sort out my backlog of pictures and to put together a DVD of all the D-CaFF pictures from the Launch in 2016 up to the session prior to last Friday. One of the volunteers, Paul Mountfield, was compiling a document for Joani spanning the last seven years and he wanted some pictures, which he should have been able to download from the web site, but that was giving him some difficulty. I sent Marcus, our webmaster, the latest pictures and I mentioned Paul was having some problems.

Monday, 17th April 2023

We went to Paul Davies in Bolton to organise the installation of a new sink and new worktops in the kitchen.

After lunch, Paul Mounfield called round for the DVD of D-CaFF pictures I had prepared for him.

I dealt with a few e-mails and worked on the new version of my web site.

Tuesday, 18th April 2023

It was the warmest and sunniest day of the year so far – a perfect day for working in the garden. I cut the grass back and front, strimmed the front and some of the back and started hoeing the soft-fruit bed, completing about two-thirds of it before packing up for the day.

After lunch I took a little time out to gather up the twigs that had accumulated on the green area on the side of our house and harvested three barrow-loads of wood that was ready for burning and which I could use as kindling.

Wednesday, 19th April 2023

The plan for the day was a simple one. A quick run to the tip with the trailer full of rubbish was to be followed by another productive day in the garden. That WAS the plan.

In reality, the day unfolded somewhat differently. First, when I awoke, I ached all over from the previous day's feverish activity. I eventually managed to move the trailer out of the garage and it took a while to sort its contents into the various categories in order to minimise the time we spent at the recycling centre in Bury. All went well until I came to check the lights on the trailer. They didn't work.

I spent a fair amount of time trying to track down the problem, without success. The fuses were intact, as far as I could gather, so I decided to make the trip with no working lights on the trailer and to call at Bowman's towing centre in Bury, where the towing bracket was fitted to see if someone there could find the fault.

The journey to the recycling centre was painfully slow, with one lane on the dual-carriageway ring-road closed at the entrance to Tesco. Once we arrived, offloading the rubbish didn't take long and we travelled on to Bowman's shop.

There was only one chap in the shop, the rest of the staff taking their lunch-break. He was busy with another customer so I had a bit of a wait. When I explained the problem, he found my details from 2007 on his computer system and said he would check my towing power socket on the car using his test board.

I went to bring the car into the yard, having parked on the road temporarily while he served another customer, so I had to wait again.

The test board responded to all the tests, so the power socket was working and the chap deduced that the plug on my trailer was faulty. The cost of having a new one fitted would be around £50 so I asked if I could fit one and he said I could if I knew what I was doing. I explained my electrical/electronic training background and he said it should be easy for me and sold me a new plug for £6.

I thanked him for his very helpful assistance and we made our way to Tesco for a few groceries. By this time, the road obstruction had disappeared.

Jenny went into Tesco while I listened to a CD in the car. Although the shopping took over half an hour, Tesco had very little to offer by way of organic items and, as far as we were concerned, we later concluded that the shop might as well close.

We came home for a very late lunch, it being mid-afternoon by the time we had finished.

My next job was to slice the two loaves of bread Jenny had made yesterday, ready for freezing.

I prepared for the village committee meeting and dealt with a few e-mails, which took me up to an earlier than usual tea-time so I could be at the old school before the meeting started at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting was well attended and lasted longer than I expected. I left after two hours, as the others discussed the date for the next meeting and came home to administer Jenny's eye drops about 45 minutes later than usual.

Thursday, April 20th 2023

The first task of the day, after the usual pot washing and such, was to put the refuse bins out for collection tomorrow.

The fitting of the new plug on the trailer cable was net on the list and that took most of the morning. Had I connected the cables correctly the first time, it would have been completed somewhat sooner. I did take a picture of the connections on the old plug before removing it, so there was no excuse for not doing so. Still, there was no harm done.

When testing the trailer, I noticed that the outer red sections of the trailer board did not light up, although all the lights did work properly. I decided to have a look inside the cover and removed the nearside one first. The side light and break light used a double-filament bulb in the inner compartment and there was no bulb or connection in the outer compartment. I replaced the cover and I renewed one of the screws that had rusted.

On checking the offside cover, I noticed one of the screws had rusted too, so I decided to replace it. That was easier said than done. The screw was so badly corroded that there was no way of using a screwdriver on it. I had to drill it out. That took ages and I left off for lunch at about 1 p.m.

I resumed work about an hour and a half later and succeeded in removing the screw head and the cover. Unfortunately, the heat had melted the part of the cover behind that guided the screw and which was designed to allow the screw to be countersunk into the cover.

When I replaced the cover, I used a slightly longer and larger screw with a washer, so the screw head was on the outside of the cover. It looked reasonable, so I was satisfied with the result.

I packed up and came in, feeling quite tired.

Jenny had gone to “Cuppa and a Chat” at the old school so I washed up the dishes from lunch and then, at Jenny’s request, cleaned the bathroom stainless-steel radiator, since she had cleaned the bathroom apart from that one item before lunch.

I sat down just before Jenny returned and rose again, at her request, to help put out some washing to dry in the evening sun and gusty, easterly wind.

Friday, 21st April 2023

It was grocery shopping day at Unicorn in Chorlton and Waitrose in Broadheath. The trip out was not bad at all, the M60 ring-road being a little congested and slow until we reached the Trafford Centre and the roadworks at Chorlton delayed us a few minutes. We managed to circumnavigate the road works on leaving Chorlton.

The M60 on the way back was very busy and the traffic was slow-moving most of the way back to our exit at Prestwich. Several emergency vehicles sped in the opposite direction, sirens wailing and blue lights flashing so it looked like there had been a serious incident further back on the ring road.

We had left at about 10:30 a.m. and arrived back at about 4 p.m., having lunched at Waitrose, where Jenny found TWO gluten-free, chicken-salad sandwiches. With the sandwich, a pot of tea and the Guardian to read, who could ask for more?

The lead story in the paper was the enquiry into the bullying allegations made against Dominic Raab, the deputy Prime Minister. Those appointed to undertake the enquiry had published their finding but, it was reported, had failed to draw a conclusion. That privilege was left for the PM and he had been studying the report since yesterday. It seemed to me that had there been insufficient evidence to substantiate the claims, made, I understood, by around 30 people, that it would have been a simple matter to conclude there was no case to answer. The fact that the report did not do this suggested that the accusations were justified and that there was no alternative than for Dominic Raab to go.

I later learnt at home that Dominic Raab had resigned as deputy PM some time this morning, thereby saving the PM from having to sack him.

To quote the old saying, “There is no smoke without fire” and I would have thought it would be appropriate to throw Dominic Raab out of the party completely.

Saturday, 22nd April 2023

We spent the morning and the early part of the afternoon at the old school dealing with the electrical jumble. We had a packed lunch there at about 1 p.m. and had to pack up at

about 2:30 p.m. because the team from Pets in Need arrived to arrange the hall for their fair tomorrow.

We brought the rubbish home and had a nice cup of tea. I scheduled the TV recordings for the coming week and decided to tidy up the programmes we had watched over the last week or two.

Sunday, 23rd April 2023

It was not a very productive day.

After pot washing, I helped Jenny clean the shelves from the oven. I then looked at the procedure for steam-cleaning the oven. Smeg had sent me some links to Youtube videos, one of which took me through the procedure, except that my oven did not have the programme required. There was a work around but the instructions were vague so I sent an e-mail asking for clarification.

I was then side-tracked by the e-mail from Octopus about my account they had taken over from Bulb. The bill was for electricity but there was no mention of the gas we had used. I sent in a gas meter reading and a revised electrical meter reading, following up with an e-mail asking why they hadn't used my gas smart meter reading.

Meanwhile, Matthew and Carrie had called in for a chat on their way to do some grocery shopping for Carrie's mum.

After lunch, I did some tidying up. I reviewed items that I needed to repair and made no real progress repairing anything. One of the items needing repair was a Christmas tree outdoor light set for the old school, which needed a new plug. The original moulded connection was damaged. I had a new moulded plug that fitted into the power supply but it needed to be connected to the original cable. There was no problem in making and soldering the connection but it needed to be weatherproof so my plan was to shrink-wrap the connection.

I spent ages trying to locate a shrink-wrap kit (including the heat gun) with shrink wrap sleeves of the required, small size without success. I did find some sleeving for a very modest price at B&Q so I decided to buy that and then try to locate a suitable heat gun.

Now it was time to listen to a recording of this week's Jazz Record Requests, or as much of it as I could stand, to see if there was actually anything of interest. Last week was a washout.

This week's offering was equally rubbish and, from the content, it seemed that the programme could more aptly be entitled Alyn Shipman's Chat Show, with contributions from various performers and members of the what-passes-today-for-jazz fraternity, the initial emphasis being on Scandinavian music (using the term loosely). I'd rather have listened to an hour of Abba.

Monday, 24th April 2023

We walked up to Holcombe Brook for my 11:40 a.m. dental appointment and Jenny wandered round the shops while I was drilled and filled.

About half-an-hour later, we strolled home, one of us with a frozen, left jaw, having had one upper and one lower tooth repaired.

At home Jenny had lunch. I had to wait a couple of hours for mine and in the meantime, I dealt with my e-mails, one of which was an update of my energy bill from Octopus. I also ordered some organic, gluten-free supplies online from Healthy Supplies and from Dolphin Fitness. The Rizopia Lasagne sheets were still not available. My lunch was served when I momentarily forgot the access code for my mobile phone, which was a most alarming experience because entering it usually required no thought whatsoever. I suspect the anaesthetic had drifted upwards.

Bob and Marie called in for a chat since they were passing.

I updated the accounts with the purchases from earlier.

Tuesday, 25th April 2023

I spent the day working in the back garden, hoeing, tidying and feeding the borders. I also gave Jenny some help when she needed it, sorting her car booty on the patio. It was nicer to work there since the sun was on the back for most of the day and it was much warmer than under the car port at the front.

Wednesday, 26th April 2023

Jenny went round to the Greenmount surgery to keep an appointment that was arranged by one of the doctors there, only to find that the appointment had been rearranged for 2nd May without notifying her. What a complete shambles that was.

Having wasted half the morning, we eventually made it to Ramsbottom. I had a most successful tour of the charity shops, purchasing the complete DVD box set of the original Darling Buds of May, starring Pam Ferris and David Jason as well as five trad jazz CDs, swelling my collection for which I was already running out of room.

Jenny found a book but her luck didn't hold at Plentiful, where the stock of organic caster sugar had expired. Had I known, I could have ordered some online with the orders I had placed a few days earlier. It wouldn't have been so much of a problem if she hadn't needed it for baking the coming weekend.

We had a late lunch at home and I caught up with some administration work on the PC.

Thursday, 27th April 2023

We started cleaning the dining room but didn't make a lot of progress. Having moved the table and chairs to clean the display unit and vacuum the floor, we left off for lunch and Jenny went with Lorna to Cuppa and a Chat at the old school while I listened to one of the Jazz CDs I had purchased yesterday and did a little more PC work.

I was still beavering away when Jenny returned just after 4 p.m. and I decided enough was enough by 5 p.m. and settled down to watch Pointless.

After an early tea, I went to the Tottington District Civic Society Committee Meeting at the old school at 7 p.m., which lasted an hour.

Friday 28th April 2023

We went grocery shopping to Sainsbury's at Heaton Park. I called at Finney's garage on the way out to have a new headlight bulb fitted on the nearside. I had noticed it had gone last week when returning from Waitrose on the motorway.

Jenny had an eye appointment at the in-store branch of Specsavers and that took a while. She needed some new spectacles and we didn't have time to choose any frames there and then so we made arrangements to return at a later date.

We didn't call at Tesco in Prestwich since we had purchased most of what we wanted and the chances of Tesco having anything of interest were negligible since a lot of their organic items seemed to have been withdrawn.

Having left in a rush in the morning, we came back for a late lunch, followed by a pot-washing session.

Saturday, 29th April 2023

The plan had been to complete the cleaning in the dining room and then return to Specsavers to finalise the purchase of Jenny's new spectacles.

Mike arrived for a chat, mostly about the Civic Society and we talked for a good hour and a half about that and other things. Lorna joined us briefly.

After Mike left, I finished the cleaning, we had a late lunch and then we headed off to Specsavers to finalise Jenny's new glasses.

We called at Home Bargains huge store at Pillsworth on the way home and bought a few items there.

Sunday, 30 April 2023

I had intended doing so much today. That didn't happen.

I started off by consolidating all the “to do” items that I had written down on odd bits of paper. The list was growing but at least I had a list.

While tidying up my paperwork, I came across the notes from last Thursday’s Civic Society meeting which, as Secretary, I had to type up as the minutes and issue. That was another job for today.

I commenced by bringing my diary up to date and that was interrupted by a request from Jenny and Rachel to do some notices for the cake stall at the village fair tomorrow.

By the time I had finished that and this (as opposed to this and that), lunch was ready.

I spent the afternoon tidying up my portable hard drives, which were becoming somewhat cluttered. That was interspersed with preparing more signs for the village cake stall tomorrow.