

Greenmount – March 2008

March started early on the first this year, followed closely by Mother's Day on the second.

We went for a meal to the Fisherman's Retreat on the Saturday evening with Mike and Lorna (our neighbours just down the road) for Lorna's belated birthday celebration. For those not familiar with the locale, the Fisherman's Retreat is a large restaurant at the end of a narrow, uneven, unlit, winding road, rising into the hills from Shuttleworth, across the valley. To add atmosphere to the adventure, it was a pitch-black night, the wind was howling and the rain was not so much pouring down as pouring horizontally. Fortunately, we were inside, looking out.

The meal was excellent and there was a fine choice of beers on tap (Timothy Taylor's, Blacksheep and Riggwelter) as well as over 500 single malts to choose from. By the time we left, I was past caring about the weather and bright sunshine wouldn't have made much difference to the task of finding the car. In fact, I was perfectly willing to stay, even though it is non-residential.

Ignoring tradition, Jenny spent the morning of Mother's Day in the kitchen preparing a meal for seven and Matthew and Carrie arrived with Carrie's mum to a meal of roast beef and Yorkshire pud followed by a choice of three delicious, home-made sweets. Carrie's dad was supposed to be here as well but cancelled at the very last minute due to a heavy cold and cough. Marie took him home a "doggie bag".

The two-way switch for the garage lighting is now operational and darkness may be dispelled equally from the front or rear, reducing the opportunity for visiting the local casualty department.

It has long-since been my theory that nature has a way of balancing out inequalities and it should have come as no surprise that steps to reduce the aforesaid opportunity were mitigated by events elsewhere. While wiring the two-way switch for the outside lights at the front, one rear leg of the step-ladders moved, unobserved, onto drainage grating on the drive. With my weight on the second step, the grating gave way and the step-ladders fell towards the house wall. Having a choice of going with them and breaking my fall by using my head in the most literal sense or throwing myself onto the block paving in front of the garage door, I opted for the latter on the basis that I didn't want to damage the house wall. I was fortunate enough to land on my right-hand side and escaped with a very minor graze to my left palm – or so I thought. Since then, my old stomach problem has recurred and the suspicion is that I have irritated the scar tissue inside left over from my operation many years ago.

As we approached the end of the month, my stomach/chest continued to prove troublesome, hence the lack of progress with developments. I did manage to find one fine spell during which the back garden received some badly-needed attention.

My ailment did not prevent a visit to the Waggon and Horses at Hawkshaw to celebrate our 35th wedding anniversary with yet another excellent meal, for which Rachel kindly acted as our taxi service.

