

## Greenmount October 2018

### Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018

I started off the month by making arrangements with the vet to end Toffee's suffering at 4 p.m.

I followed up that with a call to Rossendale Pet Crematorium, arranging for an appointment at 9:30 the following day and providing a list of our requirements.

Being too distressed to do much, I worked on the computer all day, part of it still trying to fathom the issue with the hangs and crashes, of which I had four.

I ran some Windows 7 built-in software, verifier, to try to locate a dodgy driver. It was supposed to do this by finding the driver and then crashing the system, producing a dump, which, when analysed, would indicate the faulty driver (with any luck). All verifier did for me was to hammer the PC, making it unusable. I had to persevere with reloading verifier to delete the configuration I had set to initiate the diagnostics. All changes to the configuration required a reload.

After taking Toffee to the vet and returning with her lifeless body in a box, we placed it in the cold conservatory overnight.

Jenny and I went to the jumbler's (Greenmount Old School volunteer's) meal at Owens in Ramsbottom in the evening and the pleasant company distracted us for a while from our grief at home.

### Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018

We set off ten minutes later than planned, at 8:40, for the pet crematorium at Crawshawbooth, on the way to Burnley. We had planned to allow an hour for our journey. As it was, we had fifty minutes and that proved more than adequate, the journey taking us just over half-an-hour and that included a ten minute wait down the access road to the crematorium due to a highways maintenance lorry blocking the narrow road.

We waited for a short while in the chapel and then explained our requirements which I had printed on a sheet of A4 so there was no misunderstanding. We left the chap to take a cast of Toffee's front, right paw and then we carried Toffee down to the incineration room where we said our final farewell and watched as she was placed in the empty kiln. The whole process was expected to take about two hours so we walked down to the village, pottered round and stopped at the very nice tea rooms, [A Right Royal Tea Party](#) for a pot of tea for Jenny and me and a latté coffee for Rachel. We would have had a gluten-free cake of some description but the proprietor did not have any. She did have some gluten-free items but not what we would have liked.

A little more pottering about, a stroll back up the hill to the crematorium and a walk round the pet cemetery just about exhausted the two hours and we went back to

reception. Toffee was not ready for collection so we waited for a short while in the small, private room.

We received Toffee's ashes in a very nice wooden casket with the engraved name plate we has requested, her paw print in a nice wallet and a cremation certificate, all in a nice box and a nice, sturdy, carrier bag.

We were home for just after noon and Rachel assembled the paw print and casket on the mantle shelf. Toffee had always liked to be close to the log fire when it was lit, so it was a fitting location.

There was an eerie emptiness in the house without Toffee; with all the cats I had owned in the past, I had never experienced anything like this and I was at a loss to understand why. Toffee seemed to have such a huge personality, if the word can be applied to an animal. More than that, she had been a member of the family with an unparalleled degree of empathy and, I was convinced, communicated bi-directionally telepathically to a degree.

I tried to settle down to work on the new version of the village web site and managed one picture gallery before I had to give up. I was tired and on top of the stress of the past couple of days, I had a bad cold or 'flu. I tried sleeping but couldn't nod off so I watched one of the DVDs, U571, we had purchased from one of the Ramsbottom charity shops.

On a more positive note, a thought struck me regarding the computer crashes. I ran a piece of software to copy DVDs called Alcohol 120%. One of the additional; facilities it provided was a virtual DVD drive and I had created one some time ago. Since then I had updated the software with the current version. Now, I had experienced problems with virtual drives before and it occurred to me this might be the source of the problem this time, although none of the dumps had pointed to it.

I deleted the virtual drive and left the computer running overnight.

### **Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018**

The first task was to check the laptop was still running. It was. I was hopeful I had finally solved the problem and I wondered whether updating the software with the virtual drive in situ was the issue. The first step was to make sure removing the virtual drive had done the trick.

After the usual morning chores, I started to listen to an episode of Beyond Our Ken I had recorded that morning. It was an episode from 1958 that had not seen the light of day again until now – a real gem.

I paused that when Lorna turned up for a chat.

We had a quick lunch and then we took Toffee's surplus food, medication and blankets up to the Bleakholt Animal Sanctuary. They were very grateful indeed for the medication and the renal food, almost £100 worth.

On the return journey we called at The Duckworth Arms to check it out for Sunday lunch and it looked really nice so we booked a table.

We called at Ramsbottom for the usual potter round the charity shops and Jenny paid a visit to Tesco.

On returning home, I finished listening to my episode of Beyond Our Ken.

### **Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

Still not feeling well, I spent the day working on the computer.

While watching a recorded film in the evening, the computer froze three times and I didn't have much of a clue why.

### **Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

We left for our grocery shopping trip much later than usual.

We started with a journey into Ramsbottom where we struggled to find a parking spot, settling for a space by the curb on the steep, cobbled hill by the side of the Grants Arms Hotel. Jenny stayed with the car while I went to Mother Earth for a bottle of Saw Palmetto tincture and a bottle of Broncoforce cough tincture. After being charged £21 for the two rather than the usual £19.50, I decided I would not be purchasing anything else there. I didn't mind paying a fair price but I wasn't prepared to be ripped off.

We headed down to Prestwich on the motorway, intent on a visit to Village Greens. We had great difficulty in finding a parking spot and had to tour the public car park a second time before we were successful.

The M60 to the Stretford turn-off, leading to Unicorn in Chorlton, was a breeze. At Unicorn we had to queue for a parking spot for about five minutes.

We called at Sainbury's store in Sale before making our way along the A56 to Waitrose, with a long tailback of traffic at the double set of lights approaching Broadheath. We arrived about 2 p.m. and had a late lunch in the café.

It was about 4 p.m. when we left and traffic was heavy on the A56 back to the motorway but at least it kept moving at a fair pace, which was more than could be said for the M60.

The traffic was queuing to join the motorway and when we finally made it into the first lane, I swiftly manoeuvred across to the fast lane, maintaining an average speed of about 10 m.p.h. until we were past the M62 junction, when it all speeded up.

By the time we arrived home it was 5:30 p.m., the journey taking twice as long as usual.

### **Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

Not feeling well enough to go to the village Drop-in with Jenny, I spent most of the day updating the village web site.

### **Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

The computer stopped just after starting a TV recording in the morning due to the processor temperature exceeding 90°C. I decided to vacuum the air vents before restarting it.

Simon and Vicky came to visit and we lunched at The Duckworth Arms. It was Thomas the Tank Engine week end on the East Lancs Railway as we passed it in Ramsbottom and the sun was shining on the car-booters.

The lunch menu had a lot of gluten-free choices, except for the sweets and we contemplated a Christmas lunch there, having had a very nice meal with excellent service.

Simon and Vicky left soon after we returned home and we settled down to watch a few recorded films on TV.

### **Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

Not feeling well, I spent the day working on the computer.

### **Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

I spent all day working on the new version of the village web site. The one really useful job I did was to remove the vertical blinds in the bathroom and prepare them for washing.

In the evening, I went to the village meeting at the Cricket Club.

### **Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

It was a lovely, sunny day and I worked on the back garden for most of it despite still having the 'flu. The fresh air did me good.

### **Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

I spent most of the day looking for a replacement bulb for the outside light. One of the halogen bulbs went a few days previously and these were banned from sale from September so it was a case of finding a LED alternative and it wasn't easy. First, it was a case of finding the light output from a 100 watt halogen bulb. The best I could do was to obtain a figure of between 16 and 24 lumens per watt for a halogen/incandescent bulb so my guess was that a halogen bulb would be nearer the higher figure. Then, locating

the same for an LED bulb, which was between 80 and 100 lumens per watt, I calculated that I needed an LED bulb of around 30 watts, which seemed a bit high. I decided to settle on an average figure of around 20 watts, giving a minimum of 1600 lumens. That seemed to match most of what I had read on the Internet. The other important factor was the Colour Rendering Index, which needed to be as close to 100 as possible to represent daylight. In practice, 95 or higher would be acceptable, from what I had read.

I made a note of what I wanted and decided to call at the local electrical shop on the way out to our next grocery shop.

I had earlier added some organic Psyllium Husk Powder to my Amazon shopping cart, needing another £10 or so to achieve free delivery.

I went in search of the Craighopper Kiwi Winter Lined Trousers I was going to buy for us last year and couldn't find any in the stores to try on. This time, I found the men's trousers on the Debenhams web site and I added those to my shopping cart so I could "click and collect" allowing me to try them on in store before purchase. Unfortunately, the only women's trousers they stocked were the Pro version, which were stretch trousers. I deferred my decision to order, looking for a store that stocked both men's and women's trousers.

I found that Blacks had the women's trousers but not the men's.

At that point I gave up.

### **Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

I spent the morning working on the revised version of the village web site.

Steve the builder called round with some bits for repairing the conservatory roof. He had a quick look at the problem and deduced the bits he brought had the wrong profile. He said he could probably manufacture something from the bits to cover up the and would pop round one Sunday to repair it.

We went to help out at the Dementia Café, D-CaFF, at the Cricket Club in the afternoon. Jenny dressed up as a witch, since we were celebrating Halloween and she was the best witch there. We were entertained by the Greenmount Strummers Band, joined by Donna Short (who manages the Incredible Edible plot) on accordion and they were brilliant. We all had a really good time. The head count was 110.

In the evening, a scouting chap came to the door selling bonfire tickets and we bought three. Being scouts, we had in the past gone in for free but I thought it was time we contributed since we were not helping out in any way.

### **Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

I felt terrible. I ached in every muscle and I felt very tired. It took me ages to crawl out of bed.

After a late breakfast, we headed out for food, calling at the chemist in the village for my monthly supply of pills, not that I expected to last that long.

We made it to Asda at Pilsworth and I managed to wander round the store with the support of the shopping trolley.

The drive to Unicorn in Chorlton hit a busy stretch of the M60 between the East Lancs Road and the Trafford Centre, where everybody seemed to be heading.

The trip on to Waitrose along the A56 was fine. Most drivers seemed content with the nearside lane and we tootled nicely along the outside lane with very little obstruction.

All this driving required a fair amount of concentration, which diverted my attention from my aches, pains and catarrh, not to mention feeling sick.

We lunched at Waitrose as usual, even though it was mid-afternoon. I didn't feel that hungry, though.

I managed a similar tour of the store to that of Asda, hanging on to the trolley.

The journey home was much quicker too. I noticed that, although it was windy and had been raining, the outside temperature was 19°C, somewhat high for this time of year, particularly at 5 p.m.

After unpacking the car, I dealt with the TV recordings and listened to Jazz Record Requests, much of which was utter tripe. I put in the recordings for the coming week.

After tea, we watched some of the recorded programmes, as usual and an episode of Last of the Summer Wine from the complete DVD collection before retiring about 11 p.m.

My thinking and concentration was still all over the place, more so than usual and I was beginning to wonder if my touch of 'flu was turning out to be something much more serious. Time would tell and if I suddenly stopped publishing this rubbish, you will know I was right.

### **Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

I spent most of the day updating the village web site.

### **Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

It was almost a touch of déjà vu. I spent the day working on the revised version of the village web site, with two short interludes, not including lunch.

We went out to deliver the jumble sale and remembrance-day notices to residents on our new round, our estate. Later in the day, we went for a walk up to Hollymount and back through the golf course, a short round walk we often used to do with the children in the evening when they were little and it brought back memories of Rachel and Matthew walking on the stone wall alongside Hollymount Lane as it climbed up to the old

nunnery, past the farm. Sadly, the nuns have long since gone; the chapel was turned into flats years ago and it was, at the time of writing, an up-market, residential area. Neither was there any sign of activity at the farm, which, I thought, had been earmarked for residential development as part of the Greater Manchester Framework which, if it went ahead, would destroy the beautiful Two Brooks Valley, all in the pursuit of material gain.

## **Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

It was one of those rare occasions, a relatively productive and successful day.

I started by booking the gas man to come and service the boiler the following morning. The time slot offered on the British Gas web site was 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., which meant waiting in all morning until the engineer telephoned to say he was on his way.

I followed that by telephoning BT. My contract for telephone and broadband expired in December and I needed to arrange a renewal either with BT or an alternative supplier. The chap in sales with whom I eventually spoke after waiting for someone to become free, discussed my present package with me and when I asked about negotiating a price, he passed me onto a very helpful lady, Tanya, in the contracts department.

I explained I wanted to continue with my existing bundle. The price had recently dropped by about 10% due to changes in BT's pricing and I said I was looking to pay something between the original cost when I first took out the contract and the new cost. Tanya immediately quoted me a price that was marginally more than the new cost for my existing contract, which was acceptable to me. It was more than the competitors but the service from BT was good and it was less than I had been paying for most of the past year.

Although my existing contract was not due to end until December, the new, 24-month contract started immediately, which was fine by me. It was not a fixed-price contract but if there were any increases and I did not like them, I was free to leave BT without any penalty.

My next challenge would be negotiating a new contract with British Gas for boiler maintenance when that was due for renewal, also in December.

After a late lunch, we went for a walk. We called at the local hair salon where Jenny booked a slot for a hair cut the following day and then we headed down the Kirklees Trail, also known as Cycle Route 6 and the old railway line to Bury. We took the first path left, down through the woodland to join the main path by Island Lodge. I wanted to see if there were any signs of the problem with raw sewage leaking into the lodge. North West Water was supposedly investigating this problem that recently came to light to try to locate the source. It seemed that a foul sewer somewhere had been connected to a surface drain.

Another problem was that the wall damming the lodge had been reported as being in need of repair, the cost having been estimated at somewhere between £100,000 and £500,000 and, strange as it may seem, no organisation could find this kind of money to pay for the work. It looked like it would be up to voluntary organisations to raise the necessary funds. Given the circumstances, it was imperative that the water in the lodge

be contained before any contamination reached the stream and subsequently, the River Irwell.

We walked round the lodge, along the narrow path between the lodge and the stream, on top of the concrete wall that supposedly needed repairing. Although there was some decay, it did not seem to be about to collapse, although I was no expert in such matters.

Neither was there any sign of anything nasty in the lodge and the foul sewer leakage may only have been visible after rainfall.

From the lodge, we left along the track at the back of the Cormar Carpets factory and up, across the field to Stormer Hill. Crossing Holcombe Road, we went up through Old Kays Park and turned right to come down through the wood by the brook we had followed earlier. Before descending, we sat at on the bench under the oak tree at the top of the hill to take in the panoramic view of Two Brooks Valley, Hollymount, Holcombe Hill with the Peel Tower on top and the West Pennine Moors.

We came down to the junction of Hollymount Lane and Holcombe Road, making our way home via Brookside Crescent, arriving home about 5:30 p.m.

### **Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

'Twas this morning the gas man came to call. He arrived nice and early, serviced the boiler and cleaned the magnetic filter. I declined a check on the radiators since we had recently installed two new, stainless steel ones and a check on the carbon monoxide alarm in the lounge because that was examined when we had the log-burning stove serviced a couple of weeks earlier.

After finishing the Radio Times crossword, I listened to another recording of Beyond Our Ken from 1958. The BBC was transmitting episodes never heard since the original broadcast, although there was still some missing.

When that had finished, I took the wheelbarrow to fetch some logs from the side of a neighbour's driveway. I had seen the logs while out walking a couple of days earlier and asked if I could have them. The reply was that they had been promised to someone else but had not been collected so I could have them if I wanted to fetch them. Every little helped.

After unloading the wheelbarrow and storing it away, I came in to update this blog.

After lunch we went to Bury. I suggested we went to Debenhams to see if they had and Craighopper Kiwi Winter Lined trousers in stock. They hadn't and I asked a lady behind the counter if it were possible to order some to try on. The answer was no. I had to order them myself from the web site, pay for them and then try them on when they arrived in store for collection. If I didn't want them I could return them for a refund. I gave up and we went to Tesco for a few odds and ends. I tried a couple of stores for some blank dual-layer DVDs without success.

I managed to find some time to work on the new version of the village web site despite not feeling too well.

## **Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

After dealing with a tricky bit of the new version of the village web site, I went to discuss the tree in our neighbour's garden. Jill had said she wanted it trimmed back. When I spoke to John, he said she wanted it completely removed, so I must have misunderstood Jill's intentions. I started work on its removal.

It was too tall to be removed in one piece and I told John I intended to start high up and remove it in sections. I fetched my ladders and bow saw and commenced sawing. The branches I cut fell safely to the floor and Jill came out to help move them to the top of the lawn out of the way.

I removed the main trunk in manageable sections and started work on removing the stump as close to the ground as I could manage, leaving off for lunch.

I brought all the cut pieces onto my drive and finished the day by cutting up the smaller branches, putting all the off-cuts and leaves in the bin and storing the wood in the garage.

## **Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

It was a relative stress-free and uncomplicated grocery shopping day with a pleasant journey to Unicorn in Chorlton and Waitrose in Broadheath, encountering only the occasional imbecilic driver. The journey back was as horrendous as ever until we passed the M62 junction on the M60. After that we managed to speed up and there was no reason for the slow-moving traffic at all except the inability of the vast majority of drivers to comprehend the need (a) to leave a gap between your car and the one in front and (b) the principle of zip merging when traffic is joining the motorway from a slip road. Two significant abilities most drivers seemed to lack were those of anticipation and patience. If they were built into the driving test, the failure rate, particularly if existing drivers had to be regularly re-tested in order to renew their licences, would, in all probability, be around 80%.

## **Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

We spent the day at the Old School preparing for the jumble sale.

## **Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2018**

I went round to the Old School to continue the work on the electrical equipment and Jenny joined me a little later. We tidied up and left just after 1 p.m. to come home for lunch before driving down to Bury for a service to celebrate the life of the son, Stewart, of a lady, Sheila Tanner, who used to work with Jenny.

Stewart had recently died after a short illness in the United States of America at the age of 42, which, these days, was not very old. It was a very nice celebration of Stewart's adventurous life. It was tragic that someone should die so young and our thoughts and prayers were with his family on this sad occasion.

## **Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018**

It was another long day at the Old School. There was still a lot to do before the sale at 4 p.m. In the event, we were not back home until 7 p.m. after spending over an hour tidying up after the sale finished, making it a 9-hour day.

## **Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018**

I started tidying up in the conservatory, which was a bit of a tip again. I concentrated on my desk and managed to find the leather surface in the middle.

I took Rachel's old Dell XPS laptop into the lounge and brought Windows 7 up to date. I needed to find a home for it.

I set up the HP Compaq desktop computer I had brought from the Old School after locating two spare kettle leads in the garage. That booted up into a new installation of Windows XP SP3 and it needed an Internet connection to install the network driver, a cabled network connection and the updates for XP installing. I brought it into the lounge and attempted to locate the drivers using the Jenny's laptop. HP was no longer providing them.

I commenced an installation of Windows 7 Ultimate and that seemed to go well. I spent most of the rest of the day applying updates.

## **Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

The update of the Compaq continued while I listened to an old recording of Beyond Our Ken from 1959. That was after sweeping up all the leaves off the back patio and the back garden, half-filling the recycling refuse bin that had, thankfully, been emptied the previous day.

I interrupted my labours for a walk into Ramsbottom, where we toured the charity shops and we found two nice door-stops, one in the shape of an old VW campervan.

We came back on the new Red4 bus service from Ramsbottom to Bury and walked back from Longsight Road, calling in at the Co-Operative shop on Vernon Road that had been raided for its cash machine in the early hours of Monday Morning. Work was in progress to effect repairs.

Back home, we had a quick snack and I finished off the work I had started earlier before giving Jenny a hand to make the bed, she having removed the sheets for washing earlier.

## **Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

I worked on the revision of the village web site for much of the day.

The most productive task I performed was to thoroughly clean the bathroom window (the tiles around the window, the UPVC and the glass), first taking down the vertical

blind track and thoroughly cleaning that. Once the window was nice and clean, I replaced the track and re-hung the blinds that Jenny had washed.

The whole job took about 2½ hours and I finished about 6:30 p.m.

### **Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

We took the rubbish from the jumble sale (or, at least, the rubbish we came across while testing the electrical equipment) to the tip in Bury before making our way to Unicorn in Chorlton via the M66 and the M60. The journey was fine apart from a slow section between the A580 junction and the M62 junction due to the sheer volume of traffic and drivers not leaving enough of a gap for people to manoeuvre across lanes.

The speed of the traffic over the canal bridge was not as fast as it could have been, again due to inept drivers trying to queue jump the traffic in the off-ramp for the Trafford Centre, thereby blocking the through lanes on the motorway. Once past there it was a case of maximum permitted speed.

On reaching our exit, cutting across to the left-hand lane required some pretty accurate timing due to slower-moving traffic and, again, inadequate gaps between vehicles. The vehicle in front of mine taking the exit without signalling didn't help, either.

Apart from many drivers totally ignoring the speed limit and the odd one or two taking the chance to go through traffic lights after they had changed to red, our onward journey to Unicorn was fairly comfortable.

From there we went to Sainsbury's store in Sale and then to Waitrose at Broadheath for lunch and to complete our trilogy of grocery shops. Amazingly, Waitrose had some polenta cake in the café and Jenny grabbed a slice, since polenta (a form of corn) contained no gluten.

The journey back was bad enough along the busy A56 to the motorway but the M60 was worse with all lanes full of queuing traffic. Instead of joining the M60 clockwise, we went across it and came back to come home along the A56 instead.

That went reasonably well until we reached the large roundabout on Manchester city centre ring road. On the approach to the roundabout there was a lane closure to accommodate the building work alongside the main road and that was causing a long tail-back.

No sooner had we cleared that and taken the slip road to join the ring road than we reached queuing traffic with the blue lights of an emergency vehicle ahead. We were stuck there for about ten minutes before we reached the ring road where we had to cross two busy lanes of traffic going straight ahead to follow the ring road to the right.

That took us to the A56 again, to Bury and all went well for a couple of minutes, until we reached another queue of traffic at temporary traffic lights at road works in Higher Broughton.

By this time I was losing the will to live.

Nonetheless, we eventually negotiated the road works and made it to Prestwich where the last straw was an idiot in a van who deliberately drove up to the back of the car in front in the outside lane to prevent me merging from the left lane into the single stream of traffic ahead. I had had enough. I put my foot down, accelerated ahead of the vehicle in front of the van (my apologies to the driver, whoever he/she was) and cut in front of that vehicle. The alternative was to rearrange the bodywork of some parked vehicles, not to mention mine.

From there onwards, the journey became more pleasant and we arrived home safely, the 45 minute journey taking the best part of two hours.

This should give you some indication of the volume of traffic and the state of the infrastructure in Greater Manchester – and some idiot wanted to increase the conurbation's population.

### **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

I started off with a little administration work and then helped Jenny to commence the preparation for the car boot sale the following day before going down to see Matthew and Carrie, dropping Rachel off at work in Bury. Matthew had just finished installing a couple of new radiators and I went to take a look.

We chatted for a while and I called for some anti-freeze for Rachel from Halfords on the way back. Rachel's coolant level had dropped and needed topping up. I wasn't sure why at this stage.

After a bit of lunch at home, I helped Jenny pack the car for the following day.

It was late in the evening when I decided to have a look at this month's church Digest, sent to me at my request so I could have a look at the layout required for printing it on A4 sheets so they could be folded to produce an A5 booklet. It was 2 a.m. by the time I made it to bed and it was fortunate that it was this night that the clocks were put back an hour to G.M.T., affording me an extra hour in bed.

Having looked at the weather forecast, we decided against the car boot sale so we did not have to rise early.

### **Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

I spent most of the day updating the village web site and about half an hour updating mine. Meanwhile, Jenny and Rachel emptied the car and stored away the car booty in the garage. I kept breaking off, first to make a fire and then to keep feeding it with logs because it was rather cold in the house.

Needless to say the rain forecast for the afternoon never matured and Jenny and Rachel could have done the car boot sale after all. So thanks to the Met office for that. I was contemplating sending them a bill for loss of income since they got the weather wrong – again.

In the news recently there had been growing concerns about plastics and about climate change, the latter resulting in the forecast for sea rise by about a metre before the end of the century. That was way below the figure I had in mind. The major concern was coastal flooding affecting homes. There was no mention of the loss of arable land on coastal plains and potential food shortages as a result. Even more perverse was the British Government encouraging “fracking” to produce yet another carbon-based fuel when we needed to be reducing carbon emissions to minimise the effect of climate change. We were winning the race for self-destruction and our politicians were cheering us on.

### **Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

We went to York for the day, pottering round the various shops, the open market stalls and, of course, The Shambles. Jenny bought a fair-trade, wool poncho from the market. We bought three more glass baubles for the Christmas tree from York Glass and we bought some groceries from Tullivers. We lunched at Bailey’s Tea Rooms as usual and we called at the Swan and Cemetery on the way home for tea.

Traffic was heavy in both directions but we made good time, the only strange event being an unnerving bright flash behind us on the return journey which I thought at first was an emergency vehicle trying to get past. It then made me wonder whether I had read the variable speed sign on the gantry under which we had just passed correctly and the possibility of it being a speed camera occurred to me. As far as I recall, I was not speeding; I never did, except on the odd occasion to avoid a potential incident when absolutely necessary, unlike many drivers who only slowed down when approaching speed cameras or travelling through average speed cameras.

### **Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

I worked on the modifications to the village web site in the morning. I was preparing to join Joani Beale at Nazir Haque’s Wealth Management premises in the village for a dementia Awareness Session when she arrived at the front door with something for Jenny so I went round with her.

I set up the computer for the first part of the session, a Microsoft Powerpoint presentation and discovered it didn’t work. I rushed back home to pick up the village laptop on which I kept a back up copy and loaded that up, which worked fine.

Afterwards, I brought Joani’s laptop home and, after a little more work on the village web site, I tackled the presentation problem.

Initially I thought it was due to some recent modifications to the security on the laptop at PC World. My investigation into the problem was hampered by the wireless network connection not working and I had to disable the MacAfee firewall to make it operate correctly. As for the Powerpoint problem, I discovered that Microsoft had implemented some changes to the security in Powerpoint and Shockwave movie clips no longer worked. It took me a while to discover that and to implement a new method of playing the movies using the built-in movie insertion feature. That needed the movies to be in an acceptable format and I found that .wmv files worked satisfactorily...eventually. It was a case of deleting the old slides and all the macros and configuration that went with them

and then recreating the slides using the new technique. It was very kind of Microsoft to create all this extra work and not to bother warning people about it.

### **Wednesday, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018**

I wasn't sure what I was going to do today. That little problem soon resolved itself. Rachel was trying to print out a Halloween template from Jenny's laptop for the pumpkin she was carving and the printer, which was connected to my desktop computer, didn't work.

The resume button on the printer was flashing green and orange alternately and attempts to use the printer put an error message and code on the screen. Researching the code on the Internet came up with a solution involving switching off the printer and switching it back on again. That was a fairly obvious first step and I had already tried it without success.

Further research suggested removing the cartridges, unplugging it and then holding the resume button while it was plugged in, immediately releasing the resume button and then pressing and holding it for two seconds within five seconds, then pressing and holding it again for two seconds, then powering the printer off and back on. Strangely enough, that worked without removing the cartridges.

Unfortunately, when I reconnected the USB cable, the computer reinstalled the printer, the device name having "Copy 1" appended to it. That wasn't much good, since all the computers that shared the printer on the network referred to it without the appendage, so printing across the network still didn't work.

The strategy was to remove the original printer, which, to all intents and purposes didn't exist anyway, and then rename the copy to the original. The only snag with that was that removing the printer in Windows 7 did not actually do what it said on the screen. The printer disappeared from the Devices and Printers window, at least until it was refreshed but was not actually removed from the system. To do that I had to edit the registry, find the printer entry and delete it from the registry. I was then able to rename the copy to the original and everything burst into life.

While I was in the middle of that process, Jenny needed some help in the kitchen. The old Bosch fridge/freezer had iced up in the freezer section again and she could not remove the drawers. It kept doing this because the design of the auto-defrost was somewhat lacking to say the least. The drain hose did not thaw out so the water produced by the defrost cycle overflowed inside the fridge/freezer, dropped down to the freezer section and, of course, froze in a great chunk, causing the drawers to stick.

I was on my knees chipping out the ice and then wiping and cleaning the freezer section. I successfully removed the drawers and Jenny cleaned the ice off those before I refitted them.

After all that, I did a bit of administrative work, ordering some print cartridges from Amazon which was much cheaper than using my usual supplier, Inkmasters and finalising the month-end accounts.

After a quick, late lunch, I just had time to dilute some anti-freeze for topping up Rachel's car's coolant before driving up to Holcombe Brook to the dentist.

I saw Ann Howard since my regular dentist was on holiday and she sorted out the chip on my lower, front tooth. The position of my front teeth was such that the front edge of my lower teeth were under considerable pressure when I bit into food and were prone to chipping in this way. This was likely to keep happening and the treatment for the foreseeable future was to keep patching it, since the rest of the tooth in question was healthy.

On returning home, I topped up the coolant in Rachel's car.