

Greenmount September 2021

Wednesday, 1st September 2021

The first task of the day was to pay for my Dell laptop configuration using my credit card. That went well until the bank decided to add on some extra security checks before authorising payment, by which time the quotation had expired.

I spoke to my bank about that....eventually. It took five minutes to get through all the recorded rubbish and then a further fifteen minutes listening to music and a lady repeating she would put me through as soon as possible every thirty seconds.

I was all in favour of technology. I had spent my life introducing it into hospitals, mostly in the north-west. The trouble was that senior management and consultants thought it replaced people. It didn't. It was a tool to help them do their job better and quicker.

When I needed to speak to a person, I needed to speak to a person, whether it be someone at my bank or my GP, not some stupid, automated, impersonal machine that had no ability or flexibility to make decisions from what was discussed.

I was assured that no payment had been authorised and if I repeated the transaction, it would be processed without a hitch. Believe that and you'd believe anything.

The very helpful lady at Dell sent me a revised quotation. To avoid a repeat of the morning's earlier fiasco, I gave her my card details over the telephone. That transaction was rejected, as I later discovered on repeating the telephone exercise of earlier with similar delays, because, apparently, the card details submitted were incorrect.

I contacted the lady at Dell again. That took two E-mails from me. I painstakingly submitted my card details again. It was a case of third time lucky and a waste of three-quarters of a day. At least the order was submitted.

The bad news was that the lap top and docking station would not be arriving until late October and the adaptor cable for audio I/O until late December. Still, I had waited this long....

Jenny and I walked round to the newsagents for this week's Radio Times and I started looking for programmes to record for the coming week.

Thursday, 2nd September, 2021

The highlight of my day was a telephone call from and subsequent meeting with Chris Rogan, the Chairman of The Friends of Huntfold. This was concerning my plans to renew the fencing between my property and what I called the common land on the north side of my house. Essentially, Chris wanted to understand what I intended to do about the bushes that may be obstructing the work and the trees, particularly those close to my property.

The Friends of Huntfold, who leased the land from Bury Council and maintained the grassy areas using voluntary, annual, householder contributions, had certain legal obligations, bound by the terms of the lease and the discussion we had was very useful in clarifying what I could and could not do under those terms and conditions.

Chris kindly offered to draft a letter to local residents who had views of the grassy area in question to advise them of the forthcoming work as a matter of courtesy.

Friday, 3rd September 2021

We went grocery shopping to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park and Tesco in Bury, calling at Dennis Gore's chemist shop for my Saw Palmetto, which had shot up in price yet again.

The journey down to Heaton Park was an absolute nightmare due to road works on Middleton Road, near the store, where three lanes merged into one. Traffic on the motorway roundabout was backed up in all directions and tempers were frayed.

By the time we left, the road works, repairing pot holes, had ceased. It was, of course, a complete waste of time and public money. In my long driving experience, repairs to pot holes did not last long and the only cost-effective method of repairing a road was to completely resurface it with a fair thickness of good quality material.

There was a lot of traffic on the road (A56) up to Bury and as we joined Angeloume Way in Bury, leading to the retail park, several police vehicles came screaming up from the police station. An accident had just occurred on the opposite side of the dual carriageway and stationary traffic was starting to build up.

While Rachel and Jenny were shopping in Tesco, I took the opportunity to drop into Currys/PC World to collect the disc I had ordered on Tuesday. For the rest of the time, as at Sainsbury's store, I sat in the car listening to Jazz CDs.

It was almost tea time when we arrived home and I resumed the task listing the recordings of TV programmes for the coming week, something I had been doing at the odd moment, since purchasing the Radio Times on Wednesday. It was late at night before I had the opportunity to start scheduling the recordings.

Saturday, 4th September 2021

We were up at 7 a.m. and round at the old school for just after 8:30 a.m. for the first of a series of table-top sales. Jenny and I sold electrical items as usual, although Jenny had to leave for her hair appointment at 10:00. She rejoined me before the sale ended at noon.

We didn't do too badly, selling a few good items and, after tidying our unsold goods away, we came home for lunch.

I picked up where I left off last night, putting in the TV recordings for the coming week and then tidying up the ones we had watched this week and backing up my files.

I had recently bought a CD of Brian Carrick's Heritage Stompers called First Choice which listed ten excellent tracks, of which only nine actually registered and seemed to play. I decided to look into the anomaly.

The first job was to rip the tracks off the CD into MP3 files, which I would normally have done with Windows Media Player. In this instance, I couldn't find the RIP facility, although there were settings for doing it automatically. I gave up on Media Player and downloaded the NCH, which was brilliant.

What I eventually discovered was that track 9 seemed to be a combination of tracks 9 and 10 but since it was 2 a.m. by the time I reached this point, I decided to leave further investigation for another day.

Sunday, 5th September 2021

It wasn't an early start and I started my day by installing the new 2 TB hard drive into the desktop and running Acronis True image to back up my Windows 2007 system. That went well and I had a working 2007 system disc and a back-up in case it failed, so Windows 7 would, I hoped, keep going for some time.

I put in an order to Abel and Cole for delivery on Tuesday morning of a few items it was difficult to obtain elsewhere, not that Abel and Cole were particularly competitive when it came to pricing but the quality of food was good and much of it was organic.

I also had another go at backing up the Lenovo laptop system using Acronis. That found some disc errors again on my system disc and would not copy some sectors. I made a note of the first error and I was determined to find what files were affected.

A little bit of research identified a little utility called nfi.exe that would list files allocated to a given sector on a Windows NTFS disc. So far, so good.

Finding a download of nfi.exe was like trying to find rocking-horse droppings. After hours of searching, I stumbled on a forum that said the nfi.exe utility was in a zip file called oem3sr2 and I located it and downloaded it. My plan was to publish this download on my web site in the Technical Tips pages when I found the time, since it was so hard to find.

I ran the utility in a command-prompt window with Administrator privilege. I gave it the sector reference from Acronis and it told me there were no files allocated in that sector. My assumption was that, having told Acronis to ignore all errors, all the affected sectors were file-free, since the disc checker had not found any issues. So, in theory, I had a back-up of that Windows 10 system as well.

Monday, 6th September 2021

We had a morning out at the recycling centre in Bury, followed by a visit to Tesco. We took a trailer and boot load of rubbish to the tip and had to sort it as we dumped it into the various recycling (or not) skips as appropriate. At Tesco I waited in the car and listened to Jazz while Jenny bought a few grocery items.

My afternoon was one of negotiating, firstly, the price for and then ordering a skip for the fencing renewal, commencing on the 27th. The skip was to be placed either on the drive or on the garden at the front to avoid the cost of a road licence for it.

The second discussion concerned my AA renewal and I managed to obtain a very reasonable price, fixed for two years.

That left my insurance to negotiate with the AA and I asked for the documents to be resent by e-mail, since I had misplaced them.

Tuesday, 7th September 2021

The next item on my list was to find out what was happening with Jenny's driving licence renewal.

Contacting the DVLA was proving more difficult than contacting the dead, not that I practiced the latter. The telephone number was either engaged, gave me the reversed ring-tone or played me a message saying that all lines were busy before disconnecting me. The online chat service web page did not even display the chat button – simply a message saying that all chat lines were busy.

I sent a highly-charged complaint via the feedback e-mail link and copied it to my MP.

I then sent a more restrained but just as angry letter to the Secretary of State for Transport, who was ultimately responsible for the DVLA.

After a few minutes, I tried the telephone number again. Lo and behold, it rang. I went through the automated script and finally reached the point where I was in a queue. Had somebody read my feedback and done something about it already?

I handed the telephone to Jenny, since they would only speak to her about her licence and medical condition and she was queuing for about ten minutes.

The result of the conversation was that the lady said the DVLA had written to Jenny on the 2nd September. Jenny said she hadn't received the letter. No doubt someone was typing it as she spoke and it would be back-dated to the 2nd, arriving tomorrow. My guess was that it was a touch of "the cheque is in the post".

Another point was that Jenny was told she was entitled to drive even though her licence had not arrived.

So that was four hours well spent even though it should not have been necessary.

I renewed my car insurance with the AA, having received a quotation that was less than last year.

After peeling the spuds for tea, I had a couple of hours clearing the access to the public land side of the garden fence in preparation for access when the fence was due to be replaced at the end of the month.

Wednesday, 8th September 2021

Jenny's driving licence arrived. Now there's a coincidence – or not.

I spent the day clearing access to the fence from the public land, cutting off some blackberry runners that had grown through the fence, taking out branches of the blackcurrant bushes that had grown through the fence and taking out two very prickly bushes that I had transplanted from the front garden several years ago. I also started taking off the lower branches of the holly tree in the far corner and left off for a shower before tea.

Jenny had been out for a walk with Gwen and brought the following week's Radio Times back with her, so, I spent a little time scanning the listings for programmes to record.

The work remaining was to remove more branches from the holly tree, hoping that would suffice for access to the fencing corner post and allow enough manoeuvrability to insert the base panel and the wooden panel behind the tree. I didn't really want to cut the tree down. There was also some garden wire between two posts that needed removing and some overhang of another bush at the back corner of the garage that needed trimming off. Again, I didn't want to remove the bush if there was sufficient access to insert the base panels and the wooden panel there either.

Thursday, 9th September 2021

The letter for Jenny from the DVLA, supposedly sent on 2nd September, arrived today.

We went grocery shopping. Apart from a bit of a traffic jam through Bury, we made good progress in both directions, leaving at 8:30 a.m. and back by noon, having visited Unicorn in Chorlton and Waitrose in Broadheath.

I continued looking through next week's Radio Times for programmes to record.

Friday, 10th September 2021

I put in the TV recordings for next week, tidied up what we had watched this week and backed up my media.

Jenny recommended her line dancing in the afternoon and caught up with the latest village news.

Saturday, 11th September 2021

We were at the old school by 8:15 a.m., where jumble was being received again after the relaxing of the pandemic restrictions, testing and pricing electrical equipment that had been donated. Jenny drove round, the first time behind the wheel after being diagnosed with glaucoma and since receiving her renewed licence. She also drove back, after I had nipped into the Bull's Head (or Miller and Carter, Greenmount as Mitchells & Butlers prefer to call it, refusing to retain the old pub name, established, I think, in the early to

mid 19th century) to book a table for next Saturday to celebrate my 74th birthday, two days after the actual event.

After lunch, we nipped into Ramsbottom for a few grocery items and, of course, a visit to the charity shops, where I found a DVD of “Arrival” (not to be confused with “The Arrival”), still in its wrapper, for £1.

Sunday, 12th September 2021

I cut the grass back and front, cleaned the lawn mower and trimmed the grass edges front and back, except I forgot the most prominent edge by the patio as I was rushing to finish, cleaned the trimmer and put it away before the rain started.

I came in as it started to rain, to listen to Jazz Record Requests, which had one decent track.

Monday, 13th September 2021

We were expecting a visit from Simon, Jenny’s nephew and his wife, Vicky, from Sheffield but, unfortunately, Simon sent a text message to say something had arisen and they could not make it.

I dealt with a few E-mails and found a web site that sold an organic Bay tree – collect only, in Devon. I couldn’t find an organic Venus Fly-trap anywhere though.

We walked up to John Greenhalgh’s home and posted a card of condolence through the letterbox following the recent passing of his wife, Faith.

What we knew of Faith was that she had spent a lot of time at the old school, sorting and selling books at jumble sales to raise funds for the old school, which was our village community centre and for the village church. She had started the pre-school play group at the old school, which was attended by our children, Matthew and Rachel, amongst many others in the early 1980s and she had been a member of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. She had brought joy to and would be missed by so many people.

After returning for lunch, I rearranged the appointment at the garage for the slow leak in the car’s rear, off-side, tyre and arranged to take the car into the body shop tomorrow for the rust on the front, off-side wing to be examined.

After lunch, I went outside and recommenced clearing access to the fence on the north side of the property in preparation for its replacement, now only two weeks away. I cut back the overhang from the bush near the back of the garage and then from the holly tree at the back on the public land – at least, as much as I could reach.

I managed to squeeze all the cuttings into the garden waste bin, almost filling it. I still had a trailer load from my last clearing session.

Today’s work left a few, high branches of the holly tree to cut back from my side of the fence and, more problematical, a high branch or two of the oak tree. There was also a

lump of concrete between two posts that needed removing, which might prove easier than the branches. To access the latter, I needed to use my ladders and there were a few blackcurrant bushes in the way. That needed some careful planning.

Tuesday, 14th September 2021

We went to Bury. I took the car to BM Autobody to obtain a price for repairing the rust on the nearside front wing. The best option was to have a new wing fitted and I arranged for one to be ordered. The plan was to paint the wing before fitting, one day next week. Fitting should take two to three hours so we could potter round Bury while it is in the body shop.

We called at Tesco, primarily for some Highland Spring water and picked up a few other groceries as well.

The return journey was via Falshaw's Tea Rooms on Walmersley Road to obtain a gluten-free menu. They didn't have one but they did do gluten-free food so Jenny came out with a verbal choice of roast dinner between lamb and beef. We let Matthew know we preferred the lamb, since he and Carrie were booking the lunch.

After lunch, I busied myself with the Radio Times crossword from the current week's edition and then scanned the first three days of listings of next week's Radio Times for programmes worth recording.

Wednesday, 15th September 2021

It was a nice sunny day and I went into the garden to remove a great chunk of concrete I had laid several years ago between two of the back fence posts, the intention being to close the gap, a job I never completed. Now I was having new fencing, the gap would disappear and removing the concrete would make the job of replacing the fencing easier for the Cacklestorm installers.

I tipped the rubble into the trailer, on top of the cuttings and bushes already in the trailer to weight them down.

After lunch, we took the trailer load of rubbish to the recycling centre in Bury. Separating the rubble from the garden waste was not easy and, on reflection, it would have been better to put the rubble into a container.

Thursday, 16th September 2021

I'd made it to 74!

We went grocery shopping to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park and Tesco at Prestwich. On the way home, we called at Matthew and Carrie's house where I was presented with a birthday card and a bottle of Scottish, single malt.

We came home for lunch and my afternoon was one of finishing off the TV listings for next week and dealing with e-mails.

One of the e-mails was a message from the AA requesting an additional fee for my car insurance renewal. Apparently, the incident when someone reversed into my car and scraped the offside had been recorded by my insurers, Zenith, as a "No fault" claim and my renewal quotation was based on that. Zenith had revised the accident as a "Fault" claim because the offender was never identified. Both the AA and Zenith knew I had no clue as to the driver who had caused the damage at the time and still the incident was classed as a "No fault" claim at renewal time. When the new insurer discovered that this was a "Fault" claim, they increased the premium by almost £50. This was despite me having protected no claims discount on both the old and new policies.

Guess who probably wouldn't be reinsuring with the AA next year.

I also reconciled the accounts. I discovered that my contact at Dell had credited me with the cost of the cable that had been shipped to me for use with my new laptop, when it arrived. The cable was not that for which I had asked. I had not, thus far, been sent any return instructions. Since it only cost £8.41, my guess was that it wasn't worthwhile going through the return process.

Friday, 17th September 2021

I finished off checking the TV listings for next week. I tidied up the programmes we had watched throughout the week.

I went outside to pick the blackberries and ended up spending some time removing dead and non-fruit-bearing branches from the blackberry bush. That took longer than expected and I was still working on it as Jenny returned from her line-dancing class. Jenny helped by putting the cuttings in the trailer since the garden waste bin was full.

I came in and started to schedule the TV recordings for next week while tea was ready.

Saturday, 18th September 2021

We were up just after 6 a.m. and at the old school for 8:45 a.m. There was some last-minute discussion about the arrangement of our tables for electrical goods at the table-top sale, commencing at 9 a.m. That settled, we started to unpack the boxes of equipment that had been tested and priced.

Jenny dealt with customers while I had a table to myself for checking equipment that had not been tested.

We did quite well this week, selling some of the more expensive items and we started to pack up at about 11:30, the sale due to end at noon.

I boxed up some items for dispatch to Father Wyatt in Salford and I brought home a Humax Freesat HD reorder to test since I did not have the facilities at the old school. The unsold items were boxed up and stored away for the next sale.

We came home for lunch at about 1:45 p.m. and I spent a couple of hours working on the Humax recorder, resetting it to the factory default, retuning the Freesat and deleting all of the recorded programmes. One check I did make was that reception of the ITV Freesat HD channel was of good quality with no breakup. The Sony Freesat television I have had never had good reception of that channel. I made a note of the frequency of the channel on the Humax receiver and intended to find a way of comparing it to that on the TV.

I priced up the Humax receiver ready for the next table-top sale.

I had a shower and changed my attire, ready for the evening meal at the Bull's Head, aka Miller and Carter, Greenmount.

I turned my attention to backing up my files, dealing with a couple of recordings from this morning, followed by my e-mails while waiting for Jenny and Rachel.

Jenny, Rachel and I walked across to the nondescript eating establishment (well, it was convenient) and met Marie, Matthew and Carrie who were having a drink outside in the beer-garden. Marie's husband, Bob, couldn't make it. We all walked round to reception and announced our arrival a little before 7 p.m. We had to wait about ten minutes for our table to be vacated.

We ordered a round of drinks and then our food and a bottle of wine for Jenny and me. We had decided to limit ourselves to a main course and a sweet.

Our drinks arrived, shortly followed by our wine in a floor-standing, table-high ice-bucket but with no cloth to wipe the wet bottle, on which the screw-top, quite rightly, was still sealed.

It must have been the best part of an hour before our food arrived. My full rack of barbecue spare ribs was very nice indeed, except my and Matthew's order of the same were mixed up. Matthew had ordered French fries (chips) with his and I had ordered crushed baby potatoes. Fortunately, they were in their own containers so we simply switched them. We had both ordered a side of sautéed greens, which was quite nice and an average serving. (At home, we normally ate a lot more vegetables and far less meat.)

For dessert, I ordered the Crème Brulée, which was described as being dressed with fresh berries. There was plenty of crème and it had a nice brulée top. The berries turned out to be a single strawberry cut in half. It bore no comparison to that at the Duckworth Arms, which was much less in price.

As for the South Australian Chadonnay, we found it was passable but nowhere near as good as Yellowtail and it cost almost three times as much as the latter in the supermarket or wine shop.

It was my opinion that the Miller and Carter was overrated and expensive. For me, it was the Duckworth Arms any time. Both offered a decent gluten-free menu and the latter was much better value with very good service.

Sunday, 19th September 2021

I felt shattered after yesterday. That didn't stop me going into the back garden to pick the ripe blackberries, finish cutting all the dead branches off the blackberry bush and cutting down the dead raspberry canes. I felt better in the fresh air. All the cuttings went into the trailer.

I also started cutting back the blackcurrant bushes to make way for the renewal of the fencing and raked up all the rubbish on the ground I had exposed. The garden waste bin was brimming over by the time I left off for lunch.

After lunch, I tidied up and fetched in the washing lines that had been out in the overnight rain and dried off in the morning sun as rain was threatening again.

We spent an hour and a half jam-making, using Friday's and this morning's blackberries.

That took me to Jazz Record Request time and I settled down to listen to the usual hour-long programme. To be more precise, I muted most of it because it was utter, cacophonous rubbish, waiting for the one decent track (the tenth) I expected, "Cake-Walking Babies from Home" featuring Humphrey Lyttelton.

Monday, 20th September 2021

Before breakfast, while Rachel was preparing to leave, I tidied up a lot of old e-mails.

After breakfast, I telephoned the body shop in Bury to arrange to have the near-side, front wing replaced. The new wing had not yet arrived and so I left it with the gentleman to telephone me when he was ready to fit it.

Following the usual morning tasks, I labelled the jam we had made yesterday and stored it in the fridge.

I resumed work, cutting back the blackcurrant bushes. Progress was fairly slow and it would take at least another day to finish it.

Tuesday, 21st September 2021

We had another morning out at the Bury recycling centre, dumping the trailer-load of garden waste.

After lunch at home, we had an afternoon out at Finney's garage, where I had a puncture repaired in the car's offside, rear tyre while we waited (a pre-arranged appointment), at a very reasonable cost, followed by a visit to Tesco in Bury. To be more precise, I sat and listened to my Jazz CDs in the car for a good half-hour while Jenny went into the store.

The shortage of HGV drivers, due primarily to us leaving the European Union, was playing havoc with deliveries. It seemed we had been depending a great deal on foreign drivers. Why at least some of our own unemployed people could not retrain to be HGV drivers I failed to understand, although that would take time to fill the vacancies and the

need was urgent. Again, why our politicians who encouraged us to leave the EU didn't foresee this catastrophe, I failed to understand.

Another problem was the lack of meat on the shelves due to a shortage of carbon dioxide. Apparently, that was used to stun animals prior to slaughter. The carbon dioxide was obtained from fertilizer manufacturers. A major fertilizer manufacturer had stopped processing, resulting in the lack of carbon dioxide, because of the rapidly rising cost of natural gas, caused by very cold weather in eastern Europe, creating a higher than usual demand for the gas for heating. What a complicated society our politicians had created for us all.

Wednesday, 22nd September 2021

Due to lethargy and a spot of morning drizzle, it was noon by the time I made it outside to recommence bush-cutting. Despite the late start and a late, one hour lunch break, I had finished making room to access the fence and tidied up by 5 p.m.

That was another job to cross off my list.

Thursday, 23rd September 2021

We had a trip into Ramsbottom, primarily for some Highland Spring water from Tesco, where we bought one or two other grocery items, after a potter round the charity shops.

A late start meant a late lunch and I spent the rest of the afternoon working through the TV listings for the coming week.

Friday, 24th September 2021

For the most part, I finished off the TV listings and programmed all next week's recordings. I even managed to start tidying up the items we had watched during the previous week.

Saturday, 25th September 2021

I forgot to set the clock alarm and we arrived at the old school to work on some electrical jumble later than planned. We came home for lunch to discover the house alarm had tripped, showing an intruder in the lounge for the third time recently, during the daytime. Strangely, it had never tripped at night.

We were at a loss to explain who or what the intruder was since nothing had been disturbed and all the doors and windows were secure.

After lunch, I tidied up the fire. We had lit the stove twice in the last week, in the evening as it was turning colder.

We started searching for a creature that was occupying the lounge, triggering the alarm, although we couldn't work out on what it was living if there was one.

We thought the favourite place might be behind the piano, which seemed to weigh a ton. Nonetheless, I managed to move it out far enough to inspect behind it and that led to cleaning behind it, as it hadn't been moved since we last decorated the lounge. Even so, it wasn't as bad as I expected. There were some signs of what appeared to be slug trails, but no sign of the slugs. There were also signs of what appeared to be dried mouse-droppings but no sign of a mouse and I put that down to the time when our cat brought in a mouse and released it in the lounge. It took us ages to catch it and release it back into the wild, a safe distance from the house.

I put the piano back. The plan was to set up a webcam in the lounge to record what was possibly causing the problem when we were out tomorrow.

I finished tidying up the programmes we had watched last week.

Sunday, 26 September 2021

I woke at about 4:30 a.m. and suddenly remembered I had not set the alarm for 6:30 so I could move the car before Holcombe Road through the village was closed north-bound. I set the alarm and went back to sleep for a couple of hours.

I was at Holcombe Road by about 7 a.m. and the "No left turn" sign was already out. Since the closure did not come into effect until 8 a.m., I ignored it and turned left, then right into Brandlesholme Road, our escape route for later, and parked in the old school yard.

The brief walk back was quite pleasant, if a little overcast and damp. It was not as cold as it looked and it was very quiet, apart from the odd few birds twittering away.

Jenny was up when I returned and we had breakfast.

I backed up my files and dealt with some snail-mail before preparing for our lunch with Marie and Bob, Carrie and Matthew and Sue and Stuart.

We left at about 11 a.m. and walked across the closed road, dodging the cyclists, to the car at the old school, driving to Ramsbottom via the scenic route to collect Marie and Bob.

We reached Falshaw's Tea Rooms at about 11:45. Carrie and Matthew had just arrived and Sue and Stuart followed us into the car park. We all had a nice lunch.

Jenny and I took Marie and Bob home, where we spent a good part of the afternoon, joined by Sue and Stuart, chatting and viewing a couple of home movies.

Jenny wanted to come home at about 3 p.m. to fetch in her washing that had dried on the line. To our amazement, the house alarm had not triggered.

I settled down to listen to Jazz Record Requests, before tea, at 4 p.m. The programme had one decent track. I'd had no notification of a request I submitted a few weeks ago, having found a tune with a vocal from a young Lonnie Donegan. My request was for that track and a second one of an example of Lonnie Donegan's Skiffle days, for example Rock Island Line, to contrast the two, the latter not being exactly Jazz but a damn site better than a lot of the other rubbish requested.

Monday, 27th September 2021

The skip from ISM arrived at before 8 a.m. – earlier than I expected, even though I said I needed it early! The chap who delivered it was very helpful and put it exactly where I said I wanted it, on the front garden, near the top and over to the right.

The Cocklestorm delivery of the fencing posts, base panels and wooden panels and the gate all arrived at about 9 a.m. Again, the driver was most helpful and put all the items on the front garden, as requested.

Colin, the chap in charge of installing the fencing, arrived soon afterwards and we went through exactly what was to be done. The heavy rain had give way to light rain and Colin proceeded to install the gate. He had to rush off at about lunchtime to sort out a problem for another customer and said he would be back, with his son, tomorrow, to start the fencing.

I spent my day dealing with E-mails and designing a poster for the line-dancing class at Greenmount old school, which had been suspended due to lack of interest and for which Jenny was trying to gather enough support to have it restarted.

I also caught up with scanning some documents so I could dispense with the paperwork.

Tuesday, 28th September 2021

Colin was back and his son, Sam, joined him. Despite the bad weather, they made good progress, finishing the back fence, apart from a minor job on Sylvia's side and starting the side fence. Heavy rain drove them to leave off earlier than planned, which wasn't a problem since three days had been scheduled for the work.

Meanwhile, we went to Faith Greenhalgh's funeral service at the church. She would be missed by so many, apart from her family members. We met one of our neighbours, Lorna, on the way and she joined us for the service.

We called at the village convenience shop for the Radio Times for next week's TV viewing.

After lunch, I laminated the line-dancing poster for Jenny and made a fire, since it was quite cool outside.

I telephoned Sylvia to make sure she was happy with the fencing,

I started working through the TV schedules for next week, looking for items to record and finished the first three days.

The doctor telephoned me about my ears and the opinion was that I needed to have the wax syringed out. The surgery no longer performed that service and I would have to go elsewhere. The doctor suggested Specsavers. I wasn't happy about the procedure being performed by someone who was not medically qualified.

Wednesday, 29th September 2021

Having had a problem with three TV recordings on the desktop yesterday, which was most unusual, I had powered it off last night before retiring and I had no reason to leave the laptop running either.

I had also discovered that, if I powered off the Hauppauge WinTV-HVR-190 and then powered it on again before loading the Windows 10 laptop, it worked better than if I didn't.

I took the opportunity to clean the inside of the desktop before replacing the left cover, after having installed and created the back-up Windows 7 disc.

I dealt with a few e-mails and thumbed through next Tuesday's TV listings for programmes to record.

Once the rain stopped, I went outside to tidy up a little. The fencing installers had finished before lunch despite more bad weather and with the wet conditions, there was a lot of mud on the patio. I managed to clean up the worst of it.

I also replanted a blackcurrant bush that had been dug up.

While I was out, I picked the ripe blackberries and then came in to take over supervision of the fire Jenny had started. She was having trouble keeping it going.

Thursday, 30th September 2021

The highlight of the day was having the skip full of rubbish collected. I spent the day doing various bits of administrative work.