

Greenmount September 2023

Friday, 1st September 2023

We went grocery shopping to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park in the morning.

In the afternoon, we were back at the old school setting out our electrical stall for the table-top sale tomorrow.

Saturday, 2nd September 2023

We were at the old school in good time for the table-top sale from 9 a.m. to noon and trading on our electrical stall was slow and steady. We took £106, which was reasonable.

After lunch, we went into Ramsbottom for a fruitless tour of the charity shops and a few grocery items.

Sunday, 3rd September 2023

We spent the morning making seven jars of blackberry jam.

I worked on the laptop in the afternoon, intending to place an order for some meat with Abel and Cole. That was a waste of time. The joints were not particularly large and one of them was not available this week. Instead I ordered a lamb shank, a pork leg joint and a topside roasting joint, all organic, from Gazegill.

Monday, 4th September 2023

Since the weather was nice and looked to remain so for the week, I intended spraying the weeds in the block paving with home-made weed-killer in the morning and painting the back bedroom walls in the afternoon.

It took me all day to spray the back patio and the side passage and the path at the front. I had to give up anyway, because I ran out of the main ingredient, white wine vinegar.

In the evening, while watching a recording of an episode of The Brokenwood Mysteries, we were treated to an amazing display of bats flying past our lounge window for a good quarter of an hour. They flew so fast that it was not possible to identify what type of bats they were but one in particular seemed quite large while most were very small. I did know we had several species of bat in the Kirklees Vally and in Redisher Wood, both of which were close by and I had seen them flying past the conservatory before.

Tuesday, 5th September, 2023

We had an interesting morning at Fairfield General Hospital.

Jenny discovered a foreign object protruding from the outside of her left leg, just below her knee. It was about six centimetres long, frayed at the outer edge. That was the leg on which the arterial bypass operation was performed in May 2022 and it looked to me like a suture, although the operation was performed on the inside of her leg.

I wasn't happy about pulling out the object and suggested we go round to the local medical practice. The receptionist, after consulting her colleagues, suggested we should go to A&E.

We drove to Fairfield General Hospital on the other side of Bury and a triage nurse at A&E looked at the wound straight away. Rather than us wait in A&E, she directed us to the emergency treatment centre in the hospital.

We had a short wait at the treatment centre and Jenny was seen by a nurse, who, after looking at Jenny's leg and consulting her medical history, was not happy about removing the offending item either. She asked a senior colleague for his opinion.

After closely examining the point of entry, the chap took hold of the foreign body close to the skin and pulled gently. It came out easily and it appeared that it had only been embedded a couple of mm or so. He said it was made of the wrong material to be a suture. It was simply something that Jenny had caught and it had penetrated her leg. The nurse placed a plaster over the wound that was now bleeding.

We were extremely relieved that it was nothing serious and apologised for troubling the medical staff. They said it was no trouble and we took the correct course of action under the circumstances.

We called at Tesco in Bury for a few items, including a dozen bottles of white wine vinegar with which to make more weed-killer, on the way home.

After lunch, I gave the back bedroom walls another coat of paint using the roller. Two down, one to go.

Wednesday, 6th September 2023

I picked the ripe blackberries and there was a fair few. They went into a plastic tub in the fridge until we could use them.

I cut the grass back and front, trimmed the edges and cleaned the mower and the strimmer and tidied up the garage a little.

Thursday, 7th September 2023

I had to take Jenny to Bury. Last evening, a lens came out of her glasses and we could not find the screw that held the frame together so it was a case of taking the frames and the

lens to Specsavers. The gentleman there was extremely helpful and secured the lens within a few minutes. He also checked Jenny's reading glasses to make sure the screws were tight.

We had lunch on the picnic bench on the patio and, afterwards, Jenny went with our neighbour, Lorna, to Cuppa and a Chat at the old school while I picked more blackberries and then tidied up the blackberry runners, forcing them where I wanted them to go.

Jenny returned as I was about to tidy up and started the preparations for tea, putting in the oven a nice piece of beef topside to roast.

Friday, 8th September 2023

We started making another batch of Blackberry Jam before going to D-CaFF at Greenmount Cricket Club in the afternoon, where we were entertained by Eddie McCrae and his band.

We finished off the jam on our return.

Saturday, 9th September 2023

We went grocery shopping to Unicorn in Chorlton and Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park.

We called at Matthew and Carrie's house on the way, for a chat and to look at Matthew's development of a cabin in the side garden. The base was virtually complete and looked very good.

We would normally have taken the M60 on the outward journey but the motorway was very slow-moving west-bound as we approached it at Prestwich so I switched lanes and went down through Manchester, taking the inner ring-road. On the approach to our exit from the inner ring-road, there was another traffic jam, largely because the ring-road was closed as it became the Mancunian Way.

When we reached Unicorn, there was a queue of vehicles waiting to park and we had to wait for a few minutes for spaces to become available.

We came back through Manchester to Sainsbury's and home via the M66 and Bury in the scorching heat of 29°C. Fortunately, we had the air conditioning to keep us cool.

Sunday 10th September 2023

I spent my day at the old school, working on the electrical jumble.

When I came home, Jenny was not feeling well. She was rather dizzy and tired. She rested on the bed for an hour or so but it didn't really improve matters.

Monday, 11th September 2023

Jenny was still feeling poorly and she telephoned the Greenmount surgery. The receptionist took her details but said there were no appointments available today and that if no-one telephoned her, she should call the surgery again tomorrow, which wasn't at all satisfactory.

I suggested going to A&E at Fairfield Hospital in Bury but Jenny declined and we carried on with the usual morning jobs.

Jenny received a call from a doctor at the Minden practice in Bury and he asked her if she could come to Bury to see him. We made the appointment for 11:45.

I drove to Bury and Jenny went in on her own while I found somewhere to park the car. All the disabled bays in the Minden car park were taken and parking in other bays with a disabled permit was not allowed so I found a disabled spot on the road just round the corner.

We met up again after the consultation. Jenny said that her blood pressure was high and the doctor wanted her to buy a monitor and take readings morning and afternoon for a week, submitting the results to the Greenmount Surgery.

We drove round to Tesco for some organic cherry tomatoes, which Jenny had forgotten to buy from Unicorn last Friday. The store did not have any.

We drove up to Ramsbottom to buy the tomatoes from Plentiful. After parking the car, we booked a table for us all for my birthday, next Saturday, at Owens Restaurant.

Jenny decided to walk up to the hair salon, Hairworks, to book a wet cut, having failed to obtain an appointment at Cream, in the village, which she had frequented for the past 25 years. The lady at the reception desk offered to cut her hair straight away and for a lot less than Cream charged. While Jenny was occupied, I went to buy the tomatoes and then returned to the car to listen to Chris Barber's Jazz Band until Jenny returned. The lady in the hair salon was not impressed with my attempt to cut Jenny's hair.

We came home for lunch and I looked for a blood pressure monitor, finding one at Boots for £16.12 with 10% discount when using our Advantage Card. We went down the Boots in Bury to buy one.

While in Bury (for the second time today), we went round to the rubbish recycling centre with the rubbish from the old school.

Returning home, I took the first reading of Jenny's blood pressure, which was still high.

Tuesday, 12th September 2023

It took me a good half of the day to sort out my car insurance. The AA wouldn't play ball and reduce the premium when I eventually spoke with someone on the telephone. (The online chat didn't work, possibly due to my ad blocker). In fact, his best offer was more than the online renewal already quoted in the email reminder.

I told him I was not renewing at that price and used moneysupermarket.com to find a better deal. I ended up with Swinton, except that, after making my payment and receiving my documents, I discovered my date of birth was wrong. I eventually created my account and managed to get the online chat working after I disabled my ad-blocker, Ghostery. I made contact with someone straight away and the chap was very helpful, making the required change. Normally that would have cost me £35, which I thought was a bit steep, but in this case, since the policy had not yet commenced, there was no charge and it did not affect my premium, which I had already paid by credit card.

Since I had a cooling off period, during which I could cancel the policy, had there been a charge, I would have terminated the contract and I made this quite clear.

Nonetheless, I was very grateful to the gentleman for amending my mistake.

The rest of my productive day was spent dealing with e-mails and sorting out some flowers for Edith's internment in New Zealand.

Wednesday, 13th September 2023

I had intended starting on the third and final coat of paint on the walls of the back bedroom.

It was approaching noon before we had finished the routine morning jobs and I had put out the washing lines for Jenny to dry some clothes in the lovely sunshine. It was such a nice day that I decided to do a little work in the back garden and it was a case of one small job turned into a day's work. It was too nice a day not to be working outside and, given the forecast for the next few days, the only opportunity this week.

Thursday, 14th September 2023

The day fell apart when Jenny's blood pressure rocketed. We had been monitoring it since the beginning of the week after she had a strange turn last Sunday.

We spent most of the day at A&E in Fairfield General Hospital while Jenny was thoroughly checked out by an excellent doctor. Fortunately, he found nothing physically wrong and prescribed some medication to lower her blood pressure. The only aspect he was unable to check in detail was her sight and he suggested she should see an optician as soon as possible.

Friday, 15th September 2023

We went grocery shopping to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park and Jenny was able to have her eyes examined straight away at the in-store Specsavers opticians. The only problem detected by the excellent optician was that the cataract in her left eye needed attention sooner rather than later. Jenny intended to raise this with the Royal Manchester Eye Hospital.

After returning home for lunch, we packed the car in readiness for the car boot sale tomorrow.

Saturday, 16th September 2023

Well, I'd made it to 76, having clocked up another year. Lorna, one of our neighbours, had popped round with a card for me from her and her husband, Mike, yesterday.

We went to the car boot sale at the Emmanuel Centre on Longsight Road, about five minutes' drive from home and took just over £30, which was pretty dismal, really.

We came home in the early afternoon and unloaded the car, storing all the car booty in the trailer, in the garage, for the present.

In the evening, we went for an excellent meal at Owens restaurant in Ramsbottom with Rachel, Matt and Carrie and Carrie's parents, Bob and Marie.

Sunday, 17th September 2023

I was not at all well. My arms and neck were painful, My chest felt tight and my head felt quite hot. When I stood up to walk, my legs also ached. My nose was running and I developed a cough

I had a hot toddy and went to sit in the conservatory, wearing my fleece and fell asleep for two or three hours. I had lunch and spent the afternoon in my chair in the lounge with a blanket round my legs to keep warm.

After tea, I resumed my rest in my chair and had another hot toddy before retiring.

Monday, 18th September 2023

I didn't sleep that well and I kept waking up, coughing.

When I did finally crawl out of bed, I did feel a little better than yesterday. I still had my dry, tickly cough and runny nose though. I didn't think I was infectious, there being no discolouration of my mucus or phlegm, which would have suggested a viral infection.

Jenny's blood pressure, which we were monitoring twice a day, seemed to be falling slowly, which was a good sign.

It was a foul, wet day and not very warm.

After breakfast, I tackled the Radio Times crossword; after a very slow start, I finished it, so my brain was functioning pretty well. It was just the rest of me that was currently a wreck.

Since I wasn't able to do much. I caught up with some PC work.

Tuesday, 19th September 2023

After another restless night with periods of terrible coughing, I was not keen to leave my bed. I had to rise to take Jenny's blood pressure, which had started to rise slightly last evening and it did so this morning as well. It was still well below the initial values though.

I was not coughing as much and my nose was less runny but my vocal chords were affected and I was losing my voice. With not sleeping well for the past couple of nights I was also quite tired.

I spent my day going over my diary for the past three months and then updating my web site. Prior to that, I put an online request to the doctor for another batch of Omeprazole after the Pharmacist had telephoned me yesterday to say the medication needed to be reviewed.

Jenny telephoned the Royal Manchester Eye Hospital about her cataract. The lady there said she wanted a referral from her GP, so Jenny went round to the surgery to explain what was required. It took three attempts before the receptionist grasped what she had to do. It must have finally sunk in because Jenny received a text message from one of the doctors saying that she would forward the opticians report to the Eye Hospital Glaucoma Team. I had given Jenny a copy of her last letter from the hospital to give to the receptionist.

Jenny's second blood pressure reading was the lowest so far, which was good news. It still had a little way to go, though.

Wednesday, 20th September 2023

I was still unwell. My cough was not as bad but my voice was down to a whisper.

I drove Jenny to her podiatrist appointment in Bury at 10:30 and waited for her in the car, listening to a trad jazz CD.

After that, I drove round to Tesco and I again waited in the car, finishing off the CD. I should have brought another one, but I didn't expect Jenny being so long.

We came home for lunch and I finished off documenting the recordings from the TV listings for the coming week, while Jenny rested in her chair for the what was left of the afternoon.

Late in the afternoon Jenny went into the kitchen to start the preparation for tea. I emptied the bucket of food waste that was outside the back door into the compost bin and the recycling rubbish into the appropriate rubbish bins, bringing in the paper and card bin that had been sitting outside the front gate since the weekend because the weather had been atrocious. Fortunately, it had abated and we actually had a bit of sun, although it didn't last long.

I left Jenny to carry on with the tea. Shortly afterwards, I heard a funny noise and went in to find out what it was. Jenny was not well. She had a dizzy spell and felt sick. I helped her back from the sink, onto the stool and supported her. She was barely conscious and then she was sick. She complained of a tight chest, aching in her neck and pain in her back.

Rachel dialled 999 while I kept Jenny conscious by talking to her, although she did go very quiet for about a minute, not realising she had been sick. I tried taking her blood pressure but couldn't obtain a reading, so it was either too high or too low for the machine.

The paramedics arrived sooner than we were told to expect them, which was a great relief. By this time, I had escorted Jenny into her chair in the lounge and we helped her change her clothes.

The paramedics were brilliant. They checked her over and did not find anything major, referring her to the Same Day Emergency Care ward at Fairfield General Hospital to be checked by a doctor. Rather than use the ambulance, they asked if we could take her.

I was not well enough to go. Rachel had already told her mum she would drive her there. Jenny gathered a few things together and off they went.

I had a text from Rachel to say they had arrived and she gave me the BP and pulse readings that had been taken there, which, given the readings before she started the medication, I didn't think were of major concern.

It was a good couple of hours before I received a call from Rachel, the doctor asking for Jenny's BP readings for the last couple of days.

Meanwhile I had grabbed a quick snack and a cup of tea. I wasn't feeling much like eating.

Jenny and Rachel were home at about 11 p.m. The doctor had told Jenny to double her Amlodipine. If that didn't sufficiently reduce her blood pressure, a third tablet would be required.

Thursday, 21st September 2023

I spent a fair while documenting Jenny's blood pressure history and readings for her GP's appointment next week.

Mattew called round to see his mum.

Rachel started with similar symptoms to me but she was not coughing as much.

Friday, 22nd September 2023

Jenny's blood pressure was coming down nicely.

We went grocery shopping to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park, starting with a visit to Plentiful in Ramsbottom to collect an item we had ordered and I bought a bottle of their organic, fresh orange juice. As we were parking the car, Jenny realised she had forgotten her disabled badge so we had to find a regular spot in the car park.

We came back through Holcombe Brook and headed down to Cosa Lea at Killelea House on Brandlesholme Road. Jenny decided to cancel her car boot pitch altogether and collected her £10 refund. The car boot sale was the last Sunday in the month and this

coming Sunday would have been our third attempt to have a stall and the third Sunday in a row with rain. After two postponements, Jenny gave up.

We took the main road from Bury to Whitefield and then Manchester Old Road to reach Sainsbury's store instead of using the M66 motorway.

Grocery shopping took us a good two hours. I was not at my best and found the episode quite tiring.

As we left it was raining and I had left my waterproof coat in the car!

We came back via the M66 to Bury. Traffic was heavy, the time being about 3 p.m., about the time schools finished for the day. There was a lot of surface water on the motorway.

At home, I finished off the grocery shopping by putting in an order online to Healthy Supplies for items we could not purchase elsewhere and I brought the accounts up to date.

Matthew had made arrangements to come tomorrow at around 10 a.m. to help install a hand-held shower he had obtained for me and a seat we could use in the bath until the bathroom was refurbished.

Saturday, 23rd September 2023

After pot washing and tidying and wiping part of the kitchen worktop, I planned to deal with a TV recording from last evening. Unfortunately I couldn't access the desktop and I found it was powered off, which was strange. Furthermore, it wouldn't power on.

I tested the power lead and it was still live. My conclusion was that the power supply had failed and I went upstairs to look in some of the car booty we had in a box in the back bedroom. Having found two spare power supplies, I decided to replace it.

Jenny was thinking of tackling some ironing. I suggested it might be better to consider cleaning the oven we had used many times but never found time to clean since we bought the new SMEG cooker.

I started to dismantle the oven, following the instructions in a video provided by SMEG. I placed about 40ml of water mixed with lemon juice and washing-up liquid (we had no white wine vinegar) in the base of the oven, sprayed the sides, back and top with the same solution and set the oven on the self-clean program for 18 minutes.

While I was waiting, I removed the power supply from the PC and then started to clean the shelf supports I removed from the oven sides.

When the clean sequence had completed, I removed some of the burnt-on residue from the bottom of the oven and then wiped the oven out and left it to dry while I finished the side supports. That took ages and we paused for lunch.

After lunch, I finished the oven side supports and started cleaning the two, slid-in shelves. I had to leave off because Jenny wanted to cook a chicken for tea. We dried everything

off, paused the cleaning until tomorrow and I left Jenny to prepare tea while I installed one of the spare power supplies in the PC.

I switched on the PC and it immediately burst into life. I tidied up and consigned the old power supply to the rubbish.

I was now able to continue with my routine of scheduling the coming week's TV recordings, which I finished just before tea.

Sunday, 24th September 2023

It was not a particularly productive day.

Jenny and I went for a walk down to the Co-Op store on Vernon Road and came back taking the detour down the Kirklees Trail, out onto Holcombe Road and back up through Brookside Crescent for the exercise.

I tidied a few things up on the computer and had a look at mending the set of village Christmas Tree lights for which the power connection was damaged last year. I was going to solder the plug back on but the weatherproof shrink wrap I had purchased to cover the soldered joint in the wire was too tight and I needed to obtain some of a slightly larger diameter.

Monday, 25th September 2023

I still felt unwell – dizzy, tired and confused with a slight ache in my neck and shoulders.

We went to Bury. Jenny wanted a few groceries and I needed an adapter for the bath tap. Matthew had bought us a fitting for the tap that diverted the water to a shower connection so that we could at least use a hand-held shower until our bathroom was refurbished in December. Unfortunately, the connector was too small screw into the tap when the existing aerator was removed. Neither of the two plumber's merchants I tried had anything that would fit. The lady at Boro was most helpful in that she informed me that the tap fitting was not a standard one, so it was unlikely I would be able to obtain an adaptor that would fit.

I had left Jenny at Tesco while I went to the plumber's merchants and I rejoined her there. We came home for lunch and then I accompanied Jenny to her medical appointment. I sat on a wooden bench across the road in the sunshine and mild, south-westerly wind, while Jenny went to see the doctor.

We met up afterwards. The doctor had been most reassuring. He had prescribed a single, blood-pressure tablet to replace the two she was taking in the morning when the existing supply was exhausted and a second, new tablet to be taken at night. Jenny was booked in for a further appointment on 9th October and we were to resume recording blood pressure readings morning and evening five days prior to that.

As we arrived home, Gwen was at the door talking to Rachel and we brought her up to date with events. She was quite shocked at what had happened.

Shortly afterwards, Lorna arrived for a coffee and a chat.

Tuesday, 26th September 2023

We spent most of the morning tidying and doing a little cleaning in our bedroom.

Most of my afternoon was dedicated to the Tottington District Society, distributing the minutes of the last meeting and the A.G.M. and continuing the revision of the membership list that, due mainly to Covid, was out of date. That was one of that tasks I had inherited in the role of secretary.

Afterwards, I started to scan "The Brushes Story", a publication about the history of my grammar school in Sheffield, written by T. F. (Spike) Johnson, the senior history teacher. The publication did not bear any copyright as far as I could see.

Wednesday, 27th September 2023

I collected Jenny after her flu jab and we spent the morning in Ramsbottom, doing the usual tour of the charity shops, calling at Plentiful and brief visits to Morrisons and Tesco.

When we returned home, we discovered Rachel had taken delivery of our food order from Healthy Supplies.

After lunch, I spent the afternoon listing the TV recordings for next week and dealing with a few E-mails. I was still coughing.

Thursday, 28th September 2023

My first useful job of the day, during breakfast, was to register my account with the Charities Commission for Tottington District Civic Society.

After tidying up, I dealt with the TV recordings from yesterday.

Lunch beckoned, followed by some ironing for Jenny and some painting for me. Yes, I finally made my return to the back bedroom and I spent the afternoon cutting in round the edges of the walls and the obstacles in the walls so that I could use the roller on the rest. That was for another day since it had taken me about four hours.

Friday, 29th September 2023

We went grocery shopping to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park, calling at Matthew and Carrie's house on the way out to preview his building in the side garden, which was very much work in progress and coming along nicely.

What was left of the day, I spent working on various bits of administration on the laptop.

Saturday, 30th September 2023

There were a few items not in stock in Sainsbury's store yesterday so we decided to try Plentiful in Ramsbottom, visiting all the charity shops and Morrisons small store first. The only item we were missing was our weekly supply of organic blueberries.

Being the month end, I resumed the administrative work on the laptop in the afternoon.