

Greenmount August 2019

Thursday, 1st August 2019

We took advantage of the nice, warm, dry day to walk into Ramsbottom and we had a refreshing, gluten-free, ham-salad lunch at Betty's Tea Shop.

We toured the charity shops as usual. I found a DVD of The Running Man (Arnold Schwarzenegger) and Jenny found a book. We dodged the one, heavy shower and finished off with a quick shop at Morrisons where, surprisingly, we found they were stocking the Moo, organic, chocolate chips again, for which we had been searching for some time. We bought a couple of packets as well as a few other items. Unfortunately, neither Morrisons nor Tesco stocked any organic potatoes and we there were none at the co-operative store at Vernon Road where we alighted from the bus on our return journey.

We made do with the few potatoes we already had for tea.

Friday, 2nd August 2019

We went grocery shopping to Home Bargains in Bury, Unicorn in Chorlton, Waitrose in Broadheath and, on the way home, Bargain Booze in Tottington.

The journey out was alright except for the few impatient motorists who ignored the variable speed limit signs only to reach the traffic jam a few seconds sooner than did I. The journey back was as tiresome as always.

Our lunch at Waitrose comprised a gluten-free sandwich, which we shared and for which we used a voucher we had and a piece of polenta cake which had no gluten-containing ingredients and which we, again, shared.

Saturday, 3rd August 2019

We were up early and at the village drop-in well before the 10 a.m. opening time. We took round all of the items I had repaired at home and set them out on our stall. We commenced work on some new items that had been recently donated to the jumble and I also managed to work through quite a few of new items that had been stored away, awaiting my attention.

It was a productive morning and I sold £5 worth of goods.

After lunch at home, I dealt with more TV recordings and booked a follow up appointment for Jenny at the hospital following her recent eye check up at the clinic in Tottington.

I went out to pick the rest of the blackcurrants. There weren't many. The pigeons and blackbirds had eaten quite a few.

I tidied up the strawberries, followed by the catmint and I planted some basil seeds, placing the seed tray in the conservatory until they germinated and became established, ready for transplanting into pots.

I started clearing the block paving of moss and smaller weeds, having already removed most of the larger ones. This was very slow going and I only managed the section from the fence to the raised beds at the back.

I tidied up when I felt a spot of rain and brought in the washing lines after Jenny had collected all her washing. Needless to say, it didn't rain.

Jenny had spent all day baking bread, scones and making a pizza for tea.

I finished off my day listening to the recording of Jazz Record Requests. Most of it was rubbish again.

Sunday, 4th August 2019

We didn't get up early and by the time we had showered, breakfasted and tidied up it was going on lunchtime!

I was going to resume work on the landing skirting but, after sorting out the TV recordings we had watched, I decided to go outside and cut the grass before it rained. A wet week was forecast.

The back garden wasn't too bad because I had cut it and trimmed the edges soon after we came back from holiday in July. The front was more of a challenge and it took me a good couple of hours to cut it, trim the edges and tidy up.

Meanwhile, Jenny had been tackling the ironing mountain.

We had a tea break about 4 p.m.

I went back out to trim the hedges and finished the one between our garden and the one next door and also the lilac tree that was overhanging the pavement.

I weeded the side at the front and then tackled the hedge on the common land at the side of our house, the one I started ages ago and had to leave off because of the rain.

I was making good progress when the clouds gathered and it started to rumble with thunder. I rushed to pack up the electrical gear and my tools and then dragged the bin, into which I had been putting the garden waste, back across the grass and onto our drive.

With the electrical bits and tools either stored away or under cover of the car port, I fetched Jenny's washing lines in and then finished tidying up. It still hadn't started to rain.

Rachel was on her way using the Metrolink and sent a message to say there were no trams past Victoria due to improvement works, so she was catching a replacement bus. That would take a lot longer than the tram.

Meanwhile, tea was ready and I was starving but we had to wait for Rachel. I eventually picked her up in Bury at about 7:30 p.m.

Monday, 5th August 2019

The first item on the agenda, following the usual routine tasks, was to order a new filter for the Dyson fan. I noticed the previous evening that it was indicating it needed one. My records showed that the present filter had lasted about a year and the replacement cost me £50 with free delivery from Dyson, the same as last year, averaging at about £1 per week. Since the old filter was not recyclable, it was not particularly environmentally friendly and I would have expected better from Dyson.

I had no replies to two E-mails I sent, one to a company in Bury, Chemicals and Supplies Direct, asking if they could supply me with isopropyl alcohol, which I used for cleaning my media (vinyl records, CDs and DVDs) as well as a few other things and the second to Bolton Bathrooms asking if my bathroom refurbishment was still scheduled for week commencing 19th August and whether or not they had managed to source the new stainless steel radiator I wanted.

I also checked the weather forecast, which was for rain in the afternoon. I decided to go out and continue cleaning the block paving. That was superseded by a request from Jenny for assistance with making some apricot jam.

It was our intention to make the jam using agave syrup rather than sugar but the instructions weren't that clear so we made it with reduced sugar instead. The apricots took ages to soften and only a few minutes to set once boiled with the sugar and lemon juice added. It was necessary to stir the mixture all the time to prevent it catching and burning.

During that process, I developed a severe feeling of sickness and dizziness and I had to sit down with a glass of water and a couple of mints immediately afterwards. My right side was also quite painful and my innards remained very tender and bloated. All I could do was rest in the chair and tackle the Radio Times crossword. At least my brain was still working alright.

I remained incapacitated for most of the day, suspecting that during the previous day's activity I must have pulled some muscles inside, my right-hand side having suffered somewhat when I had my gall bladder removed many years ago. Normally, this did not give me any trouble and I forgot I ever had the operation, which sometimes resulted in this sort of thing.

Tuesday, 6th August 2019

This was the day I was going to tackle the landing skirting again, or so I thought.

After the usual morning tasks, Jenny mixed some sodium bicarbonate paste and I helped her clean the tiles behind the sink. It was mainly the grout and silicone sealant that was dirty and the latter had some black mould. We left the paste on to do its work.

Afterwards, while tidying up the landing and making room to work, I had occasion to go into the garage and discovered another leak in the boiler.

It took a while to make room in the garage for the gas man to work. I booked an appointment for the following morning, the repair coinciding with the boiler annual service.

I also telephoned Bolton Bathrooms to confirm everything was on schedule for our refurbishment week commencing 19th August. Kieran, who was organising the work, was not in and I was asked to call back the following day.

We decided to have an early lunch and resume our planned activity afterwards.

I finished off this week's Radio Times crossword while my lunch settled and then, finally, commenced work on the landing skirting. It took a little while to position and glue the section between the toilet and the back wall, making one internal and one external corner.

I started work on the section between the toilet and the bathroom, which had an internal corner. The problem, again, was that the walls were out of true and it took the rest of the afternoon to make the corner using a couple of off-cuts. I finished the day, satisfied that I had the best I was going to achieve and it looked reasonable. The reason I stopped work was that I needed to cut the two lengths from a new long, plank, for which I needed a couple of Jenny's car boot tables on the drive and for which I needed Jenny's help.

Having come downstairs, I gave Jenny some help with preparing the vegetables for tea.

My last task of the day was to print a couple of labels for the apricot jam we bottled the previous day.

Wednesday, 7th August 2019

It was another day on one step forward and two steps backwards.

We started off with a visit from the gas man to fix the leak on the boiler and to service it.

I spent the time while he was here working on the computer, tidying up a few things and I continued after he had gone producing a home-made card with a picture of the village and a few words for Doreen and Alex, our old neighbours who now lived in Gorran Haven in Cornwall and scanning some documents.

The scanning was interrupted by a visit by Jenny to the hairdresser (Cream) in Greenmount while I went to the old school to put a green felt cover on the base of a lamp I had repaired.

From there we went to Bury to collect some isopropyl alcohol from Walker Brothers Services before returning to Bolton Electrical Supplies, where I obtained two light fittings for the bathroom to replace the ones over the wash basin which had started to rust. I couldn't obtain an antique brass bayonet fitting for a lamp that needed repairing at the old school.

At home, I discovered that the new light fittings were unsuitable and would have to be returned and then managed to break one of the existing halogen bulbs by dropping it onto the sink while trying to reconnect the power cable.

I finished off the scanning before tea.

Thursday, 8th August 2019

We went grocery shopping as usual to Unicorn in Chorlton, Sainsbury's in Sale and Waitrose in Broadheath.

We first called at Elton Electrical Supplies to return the light fittings I bought yesterday and obtain a replacement. There was only one suitable replacement in stock and I needed two. I settled on two square, brushed stainless steel fittings rather than round ones.

The outward journey was fairly uneventful. The return journey was faster than usual and alright except that I encountered several drivers who simply didn't have a clue. I narrowly avoided one who was intent on occupying my space, trying to move from the outside lane to the nearside lane while I was in the latter in Whitefield. I avoided a collision by accelerating rapidly into the space ahead. A similar incident just up the road was avoided by prolonged use of my horn. Swift manoeuvring avoided a third potential collision as two lanes of traffic merged into one as I left Whitefield.

Essentially, many drivers had no sense of lane discipline, no special awareness and no concept of zip merging.

Driving today should first be taught in the classroom and potential drivers should have to take an extensive written theory examination before they were allowed on the road.

There was an item on the news about global warming and the effect our diet had on it. It was reported that many scientists around the world were commenting on the inefficiency of farming to produce meat and its effect on the climate.

There was no mention of the effect the use of fossil fuels was having or any suggestion we should cease all air travel, revert to using sailing ships instead of marine diesel engines or expand and electrify (generating electricity from renewable resources) our rail network to carry all our freight instead of using large trucks. The solution to global warming seemed to be to change our diets.

The underlying fear I detected was that our current methods of food production, under threat from global warming anyway, would not be sufficient to feed the world's population. I agreed that this was going to be an issue. The solution was quite simple. Manage the world's population. Stop it growing and even strive to reduce it.

All of this was somewhat academic since our global inaction to seriously tackle climate change would undoubtedly result first in global warming becoming irreversible in a few years' time and second in the extinction of the human race within the next century or two.

And with what were our politician's fully obsessed? Whether or not we should leave the European Union and if we did, whether we should do so with or without a deal.

If I were PM, I know where my priority would be and making the Americans happy and boosting my personal bank balance would not be anywhere near the top of my list.

Friday, 9th August 2019

I dealt with the dirty dishes from the previous evening and this morning while Jenny made a flapjack for our village dementia café, D-CaFF.

I had a little time to spare so I tried one of the square light fittings I had obtained the previous day and it was too large to fit into the hole. I searched online for a suitable stainless steel fitting without success.

We went to the Cricket Club to help prepare for the afternoon's dementia café. Much of the work had already been done. There was a change to the arranged programme in that the lady who was supposed to be leading the armchair exercises was unavailable, so we had various games on the tables (dominoes, snakes and ladders, etc.) as well as a word search and a quiz. That was followed by a sing-along, which always went well.

After the café finished, we went to Bury to collect the Dyson filter for our fan which the Post Office tried to deliver the previous day while we were out.

When we came home, my first task was to remove and dispose of the old filter, clean the fan and install the new filter.

I put in the TV recordings for the coming week and then listened to the news. It wasn't good.

There had been a major power outage affecting most of the country with no explanation of the cause.

The economy for the last month had shown a dip and there were fears that we may be heading for a recession, emphatically denied by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, naturally, in my opinion fuelled primarily by our leading politicians putting their own interests before those of the people they represented, intending of crashing out of the European Union without any kind of deal.

On top of all that, Greenland's ice sheet was melting faster than anyone anticipated and the very fact it was melting would itself accelerate the process, there being less ice to reflect the sunlight and more dark ground to soak up the sun's heat. Of course, some very selfish and greedy people saw this as an opportunity to make money, since it would open up previously unavailable sea trading routes, not being concerned with the global devastation caused by the significant rise in sea levels.

And so the self-destruction of the human race slowly accelerates.

Saturday, 10th August 2019

We went round to the old school to work on the electrical jumble and returned home about 3 p.m., just as the scouts returned from camping, somewhat damp after all the torrential rain.

I made use of the time before tea to first finish my cataloguing of The Goon Show episodes so I could update the list of the ones I had.

That was followed by making a start of processing my pictures of the holiday in Cornwall for my web site. That wasn't quite as straightforward as I expected. One of the pictures on the first day was portrait and did not appear so as a folder icon when downloaded from the camera so I used Windows 10 to change its orientation. Although it appeared to be portrait in the Windows 10 folder, Adobe Photoshop and Google Chrome still thought it was landscape. I had to fiddle around to change it in Photoshop only to discover that when I tried to save it, Photoshop told me the disc was full, which it wasn't and I had to save it elsewhere and then copy it to where I wanted it, overwriting the original.

Completing the first day's sixteen pictures took well into the evening and was interrupted by the need to sort out the recording of Jazz Record Requests.

The old Dell Windows 7 laptop had not recorded the programme and I went to find out what went wrong with Media Centre. There was no error logged. When I checked the guide for BBC Radio 3, there was no information, which was odd because it was there the previous day.

I couldn't figure out what had gone wrong so I first retuned all the channels. That eventually recovered the guide and established that all but one of the scheduled recordings were still intact. I reinserted the missing one.

I then had to figure out how to download and record Jazz Record Requests. That took a while and I eventually managed to listen to it.

Sunday, 11th August 2019

I dealt with my E-mails to find a very nice one from Jenny's niece, Georgina, which included a transcript of Winnie's funeral service.

We went to the Duckworth Arms for lunch with Matthew, Carrie, Bob, Marie, Stuart, Susan and Joe, collecting Bob and Marie on the way and dropping them off afterwards, staying the rest of the afternoon, chatting.

Monday, 12th August 2019

I started the day by cleaning some jars for Jenny so she could reuse them for her preserves. The cleaning involved removing the adhesive used to attach the labels of the original contents. Most of the industry seemed to use glue that was not water-soluble and I removed it using isopropyl alcohol and a cloth. Jenny then washed the jars again.

I resumed work on the landing skirting and got to the stage where I had measured three more pieces ready for cutting and fitting. I went to prepare Matthew's saw, which was in the garage, for cutting the wood.

On entering the garage I discovered the trailer had a flat tyre and I thought I had better deal with that first. I tried pumping up the tyre in situ but that, naturally, didn't work.

I started to tidy up the garage so I could make space to empty the trailer, which was full of wood I had cut for our fire, stored in old vegetable boxes. Jenny came out to help and we eventually piled the wood on plastic sheeting (in case the boiler leaked again) at the back of the garage.

With the trailer empty, I dragged it out of the garage, under the car port, tilted it on one side and removed the wheel with the flat tyre. That was surprisingly easy, using my torque wrench.

I checked the tyre for signs of a puncture and couldn't see one so I took it up to the car, which I had put on the road to give me room to work and pumped up the tyre. That went well and I replaced the wheel, checking the documentation for the trailer for the correct torque for the nuts.

I pushed the trailer up the drive and pumped up the other tyre, checking the nuts were tight on that wheel as well.

The tyre on the wheel I had removed and replaced needed a dust cap and I found a spare.

While I was working on the trailer, I knew one of the tail bulbs was not working so I checked them and found which one it was. I removed the left tail light cover and removed the bulb. That looked alright and I tested it with my meter, which confirmed it was working.

I checked the wiring, replaced the bulb and it worked. I replaced the cover and it stopped working again.

I removed the cover for a second time, removed the bulb, cleaned its contacts, cleaned the contacts on the bulb housing and put it back. It worked briefly.

I traced the fault to the spring-loaded contact under the bulb, which wasn't springing up enough. I adjusted it and tried again. Success, just as it started to rain. I refitted the cover in the shower, made sure the bulb was still working properly and brought the trailer down the drive.

I tidied up, left the trailer under the car port to dry out and came in for a cup of tea. By this time it was after 3 p.m. and not worth starting my wood cutting.

I had telephoned Bolton Bathrooms earlier to find out what was happening about my bathroom refurbishment next week and Kieran said he would call me back later. Kieran telephoned as I was having my tea break to say the work was still as scheduled but with a different fitter and that he had not been able to obtain the radiator I wanted so I was asked to order it and let him know when it could be delivered either later today or on Wednesday morning, since he was not in the office the following day.

I contacted the radiator manufacturers to ascertain the order code for the valves I needed and to obtain the details of a local supplier. I was advised that Bury Plumbers Merchants on Tottington Road was my nearest.

I rang the supplier to obtain a price and availability of the radiator and valves, my having been advised by the manufacturer the radiator was in stock. The merchants rang back to confirm they could deliver within 48 hours and I arranged to go down the following morning to place the order.

I telephoned Bolton Bathrooms and left a message for Kieran to let him know I would have the radiator by the end of the week.

Wasn't life full of little joyous episodes?

The last bit of excitement came just before retiring for the evening when Jenny eyed a rather large spider on the kitchen floor and I had to capture it and put it safely outside. Fortunately, it had stopped raining.

I took the opportunity to put out the bins for collection the following morning.

Tuesday, 13th August 2019

I was up at 7 a.m. and made it to the plumber's merchants for around 9 a.m. to place my order for the radiator.

When I came back home, I went out to see if there was any ripe fruit. What little there was wasn't up to much but I picked it anyway.

The blackberry bush had grown considerably and a few branches needed securing.

After that, I decided to resume the cleaning of my block paving and had to redo some of that I had already cleaned because there was a lot of moss re-growing on it, thanks to all the very wet weather. What the blackberries needed now was some sun to ripen them.

Jenny put out her washing but it didn't stay out long and neither did I. Although no rain was forecast, we had the odd brief, light shower, which we largely ignored and then a heavier, longer one with some hail.

I gave up, came in and changed out of my wet clothes.

We had some lunch and I dealt with a couple of E-mails and then resumed work on the landing skirting. My afternoon's labours resulted in the straight piece between the two front bedrooms being glued in place and the two pieces with the internal corner between the toilet and the bathroom being cut and positioned. Unfortunately, the small piece between the toilet and the corner was not right and I needed to cut another piece, a job I left for another day.

I packed up, ready for tea.

I managed to process another day's pictures of the holiday in Cornwall for the web site before retiring.

Wednesday, 14th August 2019

I didn't rise until 9 a.m. and I felt dreadful. I still felt tired and ached all over.

I sat down after breakfast and finished this week's Radio Times crossword. At least my brain was working.

After that, I processed another couple of day's pictures from the holiday in Cornwall and updated my web site with the last two issues of Greenpeace Unearthed.

At 2 p.m., we went to the old school for the free annual Wednesday afternoon tea, this year with entertainment from the Greenmount Strummers. Bob and Marie joined us and we all had a most pleasant time.

Jenny and I stayed on to help tidy up afterwards and we were home just after 5 p.m., Jenny and Marie both having two items they had won in the raffle.

Thursday, 15th August 2019

After breakfast and the usual spell of pot washing, I nipped round to the chemist for my monthly supply of pills, having run out of one lot.

After putting out the rubbish and Jenny's washing line, then fetching the line back in again because Jenny thought she detected rain in the wind, I rechecked the weather forecast and it had all changed, expecting rain just around lunchtime.

I finished off another day of my holiday pictures for the web site which I had started before retiring the previous evening and then recommenced work on the landing skirting.

I finished the penultimate section of skirting and had lunch. It hadn't rained and the sun was out.

After lunch, I had a brief rest, starting another day's pictures and then put one of the washing lines out again.

There was one last bit of landing skirting to do and this was a small, tricky external; corner between the large front bedroom and the staircase. I started on this and gave up because I needed to borrow Matthew's Dremel. I arranged to collect it as we went grocery shopping the following morning.

I concentrated on more holiday pictures for the web site.

Friday, 16th August 2019

I was up at 7 a.m. and we left on schedule at 8:45 a.m. for our day's grocery shopping.

We started at Home Bargains, using the store at Crosstones, which was nearer home and on our way, rather than the one on the other side of Bury.

From there we called at Matthew and Carrie's house to pick up the Dremel and then headed for the M60 anticlockwise to our exit for Chorlton. As we approached the M60, the car reminded me I needed some fuel.

The M60 was slow going as far as the Trafford Centre and the heavy rain didn't help.

We stopped at Morrison's store in Chorlton on the way to Unicorn so Jenny could purchase some Doves Farm organic corn flour. The store didn't have any.

When we left Unicorn, as we rejoined the A56, making for Waitrose at Broadheath, I popped into the petrol station to fill up with diesel. Had I remembered the tank was nearly empty earlier, I would have called at Tesco in Bury. Not only would it have been cheaper than the BP filling station but we would have got the Clubcard points as well.

The A56 was busy. Nevertheless, we reached Waitrose for 1 p.m. and had lunch as usual before starting our grocery shop there.

We hit the road again at 3 p.m. and the M60 was horrendous. We literally crawled all the way to Prestwich and the 20 minute journey took us an hour. I couldn't understand why there was so much slow moving traffic at this time of day, particularly when the schools were on their

summer break. I could only guess that the heavy rain and poor visibility due to the huge amount of spray had made bad drivers even worse.

By the time we reached the A56 at Prestwich, that was very busy as well.

It had been a most frustrating and tiring day.

At home, we put on the central heating since it was quite cool and I started putting in the TV recordings for the coming week.

Saturday, 17th August 2019

The plan was to go round to the old school and work on the electrical jumble again. Since we weren't ready until 11 a.m. and we had some leaflets to deliver, we decided to give that a miss.

We went up Holcombe Road to deliver the latest issue of the Greenmount Voice to our round on Tor Avenue, Tor Hey Mews and Andrew Close.

We came home to pick up our leaflets for the jumble sale and delivered those round our estate and then had lunch afterwards.

Jenny and Rachel went off to Hobbycraft in Bolton. I stayed at home, listened to CDs, balanced the accounts, updated my blog and resumed work on the holiday photographs.

Sunday, 18th August 2019

I didn't feel well at all. I was very tired and ached all over.

I spent the day finishing my pictures for the web site and publishing them.

Monday, 19th August 2019

I was expecting the man from Bolton Bathrooms to start work on my bathroom refurbishment but he didn't arrive. I was on the verge of kicking the firm into touch and either tackling the job myself or finding someone else to do it.

The chap from Bury Plumbers Merchants telephoned to say my radiator had arrived and I arranged to collect it that afternoon if it would fit in my car.

I spent the morning tidying up my media (i.e. the recorded TV programmes we had watched).

After lunch we potted round Ramsbottom, visiting the charity shops and Morrison's supermarket where Jenny bought some groceries and we spotted Yellowtail Shiraz Rosé on sale for £6 so we grabbed a couple of bottles.

From there we went to collect the new bathroom radiator.

Back at home, I unpacked the radiator and valves to check they were alright and what I ordered and stored it on the landing temporarily.

My last useful task of the day was to file away the new CDs I had acquired over the past months and to which I had listened. They had been piled on top of the media storage unit in the lounge.

Tuesday, 20th August 2019

I spent a lot of the day trying to resolve a problem with a piece of software called WinTV 8 from a company called Hauppauge.

I used Hauppauge devices for recording TV programmes and on the Windows 7 machine, the hardware worked very well with Windows Media Centre. On the Windows 10 system, Microsoft had seen fit to remove Windows Media Centre so I relied on WinTV8 to record TV programmes. A recent glitch with this software not recording scheduled programmes prompted me to report the fault to Hauppauge support and, since yesterday, I had been following various suggestions made by the support chap. This involved a couple of reinstallations of the software, trying to get it to tune in all the available stations, which failed miserably.

I did have another piece of free software, NextPVR, which worked fine but since I purchased the Hauppauge product and the software came with it, it ought to be working properly.

I managed to find time to prepare the final corner of the landing ready for the skirting and the plan was to make the corner piece the following day.

Meanwhile, Bolton Bathrooms telephoned to say the fitter would be here tomorrow and was booked in for week commencing 18th August and not on the 18th August, as I had been led to believe. The main reason for the call was to obtain payment for the new bath screen before releasing it to the fitter, today.

I also fetched two wall tiles and two floor tiles from the garage loft to replace those into which the old radiator was fitted before installing the new radiator.

Wednesday, 21 August 2019

I cut the pieces for the last, tricky corner of the landing but couldn't get them to stick together properly so I gave up and left them for the following day.

Meanwhile, Bryan and Josh turned up to refurbish the bathroom. They fitted the new radiator, the new bath screen and a new flexible hose for the fan vent. They also renewed the sealant round the bath and units to remove the mould and secured the covers over the shower mixer pipe-work.

Fitting the radiator required the replacement of two wall tiles and two floor tiles, which they did.

The only snags were a small water leak that dripped into the kitchen and was soon rectified and the radiator that had no blanking plate and no bleeding valve. Bryan fitted some as a temporary measure and I subsequently telephoned Pitacs who supplied the radiator. Pitacs told me I would have to pursue this through my supplier so I telephoned Bury Plumbers Merchants and the chap there said he would deal with it for me. Bryan had said he would pop back to fit them when I got them.

I took time out at lunchtime to deal with the latest E-mail from Elton at Hauppauge about WinTV8 not finding all the channels when it carried out a scan. It turned out that the problem was due to outdated scanning information for which there was an update. As Elton instructed me, I asked WinTV8 to check for updates and it told me there was an update, which I downloaded. WinTV8 then worked properly and found the missing channels.

If I had managed to complete the landing skirting, it would have been a perfect day.

The chaps who cut the grass on our green spaces turned up at long last and, for the first time, made a complete mess of it. They didn't collect the cuttings and used a ride-on mower which ploughed up some of the ground because it was quite wet. Since most of the residents contributed to a community fund to pay for this, me being one of them, I wasn't happy and I intended to suggest we looked for a different company for the following year at the AGM, later this year.

Thursday, 22nd August 2019

I had another go at sticking the two pieces of skirting together to form the last external corner on the landing. I decided to try using superglue and ended up nearly gluing my finger to one of the pieces. The finished corner wasn't right and I decided to start afresh. Using the same measurements as the finished first attempt, I succeeded in making and fitting the corner in about an hour. The pieces I cut fitted perfectly and I glued them in place using the usual No More Nails adhesive. I left that to set and put my tools away.

Still having the workbench outside, I decided to start tidying up the wood for the fire that was stored under the car port and needed putting in boxes in the garage to finish drying out. There were some smaller pieces, cut more or less to size in a carrier bag and a plastic bag and I dealt with those first.

I cut up three or four other, longer and thicker pieces and filled four wooden boxes, which were also on the wood-for-processing pile.

With lunch prepared for me, I put everything away in the garage and came in, feeling somewhat warm and thirsty after all the exercise.

After lunch, I went out and swept up, putting all the rubbish in the various bins. I then went and picked the ripe blackberries. They looked nice from a distance but most were not very good and I thought it might be time to get rid of the bush and replace it with a new one.

I came in and resumed work on documenting my audio media.

Friday, 23rd August 2019

The grocery shop to Unicorn in Chorlton, Sainsbury's store in Sale and Waitrose in Broadheath would have been better if Waitrose got their gluten-free act together and started providing decent gluten-free lunches. I suggested to Jenny we should start taking our own and, if challenged in the café, insist on taking up the matter with the store manager in a very loud voice, ensuring that everyone in the store was aware of the discussion.

The journey home along the M60 car park was as frustrating as usual.

We were actually back earlier than usual, largely because we started early and I used the rest of the afternoon to put in the TV recordings for the coming week.

Saturday, 24th August 2019

I spent all day working on the jumble at the old school. Jenny joined me shortly before lunch, having waited for the delivery of my radiator bits from Pitacs Limited.

I later discovered that the parcel contained the bleeding valve fitting, a brushed-steel finish cap for same, a brushed-steel finish cap for the opposite side of the radiator top, (for some inexplicable reason) a polished steel-finish cap for same, but no actual screw-in plug to seal the radiator onto which this cap fitted.

Sunday, 25th August 2019

I spent an even longer day at the old school. Rachel and Jenny went car-booting at 6 a.m. and having been up with Jenny at 4:30 a.m., I was there at about 7:30 a.m., having spent a little time continuing the reconstruction of the documentation of my audio media.

I finished about 4:30 p.m. and, after composing a poignant E-mail to Pitacs, I eventually listened to the recording of Jazz Record Requests.

Monday, 26th August 2019

Jenny had decided the previous evening she was not doing a second car boot sale today, so we had a bit of a lie-in until 7:00 a.m. on what was a fairly dull start to the bank holiday.

We made it to the old school before 9 a.m., in good time to finish off the jumble and prepare for the sale at 10:00 a.m.

We did quite well. I had let our retired Minister, Rev Alan Morris, know the previous evening I had quite a good Yamaha keyboard in the jumble, which he asked me to keep for him until he could come to the old school at noon. He arrived to help tidy up and insisted on giving me a donation for the old school before he took the keyboard away to try it. Alan led his musical group that had become known as 'The Greenmount Strummers and they performed at D-CaFF when requested and in church to raise funds for charity and I knew his own keyboard was broken and in for repair.

Jenny and I came home and while she prepared lunch, Rachel, having already emptied the car while we were at the jumble sale, storing the various boxes under the car port, helped me put the boxes of wood I had cut for our log burner back in the trailer in the garage.

After lunch, Rachel and Jenny went out to sort the car booty and store it away.

I went out and cut the grass front and back and started work on trimming the edges at the back. That involved cutting back the blackcurrant bushes because they were encroaching on the lawn. Having filled the garden waste bin, I left the last lot of cuttings in the wheelbarrow on the lawn until the bin was emptied the following morning, tidied up and came in for tea.

Tuesday, 27th August 2019

It was a nice, warm day and I went out and continued gardening, which included picking the blackberries that were ripe. During that process, I found I had a grasshopper walking on my hand, which I gently put back on a leaf so it could deal with any invading aphids.

I finished the back garden just in time for lunch and went out to deal with the front and side afterwards.

Rain put a halt to that just as I had finished trimming back the ivy along the garage wall, at about 4 p.m. and, having fought my way through the undergrowth, I was covered in bits of this and that. Fortunately, none of it was moving.

I tidied up and came in for a shower in fairly cold water to cool me down. It didn't, but at least I was clean.

Wednesday, 28th August 2019

We went into Ramsbottom. Jenny wanted some more Doves Farm Cornflower from Morrison's supermarket and we toured the charity shops first.

I found a CD of the RAF band with the Squadronaires and another copy of the epic film Ben Hur on DVD. The previous one we bought would not play after the first 15 minutes or so and I did not succeed in copying it to MPEG 2 on the PC due to difficulty in reading the disc.

We came home for lunch to find the postman had delivered the part I needed for the bathroom radiator. I sent an Email thanking the lady at Pitacs, the manufacturers and I spent the afternoon working on the documentation of my audio media while listening to the CD I had purchased.

On a more solemn front, it was a day of two disturbing events.

First, there was a newspaper report of bathers in Greenland, 700 miles inside the arctic circle, enjoying a dip in the sea with an air temperature of 22°C. At this time of year the temperature there should be around 8°C and the water in which they were bathing was, not so long ago, a glacier.

Second, our Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, with agreement with our Queen, Elizabeth II, had declared his intention to close parliament for a month so that he could ensure we left the European Union at the end of October, without any deal if necessary. In effect, his intention was to override our democratic process and to act as a dictator. The implication of this action was both worrying and frightening. The last person in Europe to do this was Adolf Hitler and we all knew where that led while people sat idly by and let it happen. Not again, I prayed.

I really feared for the future, especially for the younger generations, particularly when one considered Boris Johnson's close relationship with Donald Trump in the USA.

I was convinced that these two events were not unconnected in that the evil driving force behind it all was oil and that we needed, one way or another, to divest ourselves of the use of oil and other fossil fuels, destroying the oil and petro-chemical industries, as a matter of urgency.

This left me in something of a dilemma. I did not believe in violence and yet I could see no way forward other than an inevitable revolution that would undoubtedly turn violent as democracy in the UK faded into oblivion.

Thursday, 29th August 2019

I did intend filling in the few cracks and holes I had created on the landing while fitting the new skirting. Instead, Jenny wanted her washing line putting out and then suggested I should put more car booty items on the Gumtree web site.

After lunch, I was about to start the plastering when Jenny asked me to peel some potatoes for tea, so I did that job first.

After completing the plastering, I cleaned my tools and decided to have a look at fitting the replacement down lights over the bathroom washbasin. I could not do that because I did not have a hole saw large enough so it meant a trip to the DIY shop on our way out for groceries the following day.

I decided to have another look at obtaining solid stainless steel fittings rather than the ones I had bought, which were finished with a brushed stainless steel look but chrome underneath. That took the rest of the afternoon and I still couldn't find any.

Following on from the Brexit saga, it was reported that the Queen would refuse to meet with Jeremy Corbin if he succeeded in thwarting the megalomaniac Boris Johnson in an attempt to bring some sense and practicality to our exit from the EU. The reason given was that the Queen did not want to become involved politically. She should have thought of that before granting Boris Johnson's request to shut down our democratic process. Now she was involved, she was clearly showing her preference for a potential dictatorship. Maybe it was time she went and handed over to a more sensible sovereign like Charles. I'd have bet he wouldn't have granted Boris' request.

Friday, 30th August 2019

Our day out was interesting. After stopping off for a few items at Home Bargains, we called at Matthew and Carrie's house because they were going on holiday and asked if we wanted to pick up some food they had left over. There was more than we expected and since much of it was from the fridge or freezer, we thought we ought to bring it home before resuming our day's grocery shopping.

Back on the road, we called at Dennis Gore's Chemist at Prestwich for Jenny's Omega 7 capsules, which were £4 dearer than elsewhere on the Internet and we decided we would buy them from the latter source next time.

We went on to Unicorn at Chorlton via the scenic route, though town, the road works on the ring road and the roundabout on Chester Road still causing chaos. (I was told they were supposed to be completed by the end of the month and they were running late.)

We had a fairly easy run to Waitrose at Broadheath apart from one chump who came steaming up behind me from nowhere as I approached my right turn off the A56. He immediately swerved into the left hand lane and I noticed a large dent his off-side rear end, which came as no surprise considering his lack of driving skills. To be fair, I did not signal to move from the left lane to the right lane because when I checked my mirror the first time, there was nothing behind me. From where he appeared as I was pulling out I had no idea whatsoever. He certainly sped away at a rate of knots when the lights changed.

Coming back along the M60 ring road was a pain as usual, although we did keep moving at a fair pace. I was amazed at the number of drivers who paid no heed to the variable speed limit and sped past me on the left to cut in front of me. All they achieved was to reach the slow moving traffic ahead before me. It was this kind of mentality that paid a significant part in jamming up the motorway. I could only hope they all received a speeding ticket.

We were back early and I spent the rest of the afternoon putting in the TV recordings for the coming week.

Saturday, 31st August 2019

I spent much of the day trying to install Windows Media Centre on the Windows 10 PC. It worked except that it would not play live TV due to a reported missing codec and I couldn't fix it so I ended up uninstalling the software.

I had earlier downloaded a copy of a later version of Windows 10 and decided to update the computer with it. I left that running overnight.

I did find time to sand down the plastered bits on the landing and to remove the skirting from three of the walls in the small bedroom, leaving the one behind the radiator because I needed to drain the system and remove the radiator to do so and fit the new skirting.

Will the decorating ever be finished? Will the laptop recover? Find out in next month's gripping piece of drivel.