

Greenmount December 2025

Monday, 1st December 2025

Jenny and I went to Bury, initially for Jenny's medical appointment. Parking was horrendous, with no spare places within walking distance of the Townside medical centre, so I dropped Jenny off and then went to collect her when she had finished.

I went to Halfords for a new towing bracket boot. My old one had disappeared and was split anyway. I also bought a device for extracting the valve core from tyres so that I could save the one from the wheelbarrow tyre that had a puncture and which I had replaced.

We called at Tesco for a few groceries to tide us over before our next weekly shop.

On the return journey, I called at the printers, having telephoned to make sure there was someone in, to drop off the cheque on behalf of the Civic Society for the reprint of "Tottington 40 Years Ago". That detour took us home via Walshaw.

After lunch, we went to Ramsbottom. I posted the parcel of the faulty Yealink telephone to BT and a letter to BT containing the second return label that was surplus to requirements.. Meanwhile, Jenny had started her tour of the charity shops in search of Christmas cards and we bought three packs from the Sue Ryder shop. All the other shops had either none or very few.

We called at Tesco for some gluten-free, sweet potato wraps, not having bought any in Bury because Jenny mistakenly thought we had plenty. The Ramsbottom shop did not have any. We also tried Morrisons without success.

We gave up and came home.

Tuesday, 2nd December 2025

Matthew's mother-in-law, Bob's wife, Marie passed away peacefully in hospital following a short and sudden illness.

Jenny and I started to rearrange the lounge so that we could put up the Christmas tree. We cleaned the lounge as we progressed and I cleaned the wood burner after using it a short while ago. Rachel helped me fetch the Christmas items from the garage loft and we had lunch.

Afterwards, Rachel took over the cleaning of the lounge and I prepared the Christmas tree base, Rachel brought in the tree sections and I put it together, spreading out the branches, then left Rachel to decorate the tree, which she did exceptionally well, while I went into the conservatory to put up some solar-powered, LED bulbs for Jenny.

Rachel commenced decorating the tree.

Wednesday, 3rd December 2025

I dropped Jenny and Rachel off at Bury Interchange for their day out at the Manchester Christmas Markets.

I came home, had a shower and then cleaned the bathroom, leaving off for lunch. I had just about finished when I received a text message saying the ladies were on their way home.

I went down to Bury to collect them, just in time to join the mad rush of people collecting their presumably legless children from school. I reflected on the days when I walked a good two miles to and from school in all kinds of weather.

I was told the markets were somewhat disappointing. The stalls were mostly selling food. There was very little by way of Christmas gifts and no sign of the usual arts and crafts vendors.

Rachel finished dressing the Christmas tree.

Thursday, 4th December 2025

Rachel helped me put the lights on the Christmas tree and she put up some lights in the entrance hall.

It was not a particularly productive day in the domestic sense. I was working on the laptop for most of the day.

I read through my diary updates for the last three months and, having edited them, I published them on my web site.

I interrupted that to go out with Jenny in the car to deliver a birthday card to a neighbour who lived about five minutes' walk away. We would have walked but it was raining fast and Jenny had to keep her left foot dry. I took the opportunity to drive half way to Bury to deliver a letter that had been pushed through our door in error by whoever brought our mail.

I finished off the TV listings for next week, scheduled the recordings and resumed working through the recordings of last week, topping and tailing them and editing out the breaks where necessary, ready for watching.

Friday, 5th December 2025

We went to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park and then to Tesco at Prestwich for our weekly grocery shopping. I called at B&Q at Heapbridge on the way out for some foam spray for the bathroom mould spots.

I dealt with the TV recordings for next week when we returned home.

Saturday, 6th December 2025

Trading was slow at the old school table-top sale this morning and our takings were only about half what we made for the previous two sales. The weather was not that nice, being cold and wet, which may have been a contributory factor.

After lunch, I tidied up the recorded TV programmes we had watched during the week and backed up my data.

Sunday, 7th December 2025

I dealt with my e-mails while Jenny and Rachel went to the Pets in Need event at the old school.

After lunch, we went to see Bob and came home for tea, shortly before the scheduled arrival of Bob's son, Stewart and his wife.

Monday, 8th December 2025

We spent most of the day at the Trafford Centre. Our primary objective was to obtain a new fitted sheet for our bed from John Lewis to replace one that had worn. Having obtained the item from John Lewis, Jenny and Rachel had a look round the kitchenware while I had a look at the technical items. They could not find anything suitable and we decided to visit Lakeland at Sheffield Meadowhall in the near future.

Rachel wanted to look at the rest of the shops in the Trafford Centre, so we ended up walking all the way to the opposite end, to Marks and Spencer, from which Jenny and Rachel obtained some lunch, which we ate on a bench outside the shop.

We walked back to the car park outside John Lewis. The sun had disappeared and it was raining fast as we walked back to the car and drove home, where I fell asleep in my chair for about an hour.

Tuesday, 9th December 2025

Most of the morning was occupied with an order to Ocado for items not available locally and for delivery tomorrow evening.

In the afternoon, I brought the accounts up to date and Jenny and I prepared the Christmas cards for posting/hand-delivery.

In the early evening we discovered that a senior surgeon had recently expressed his opinion that the Pfizer Covid vaccine had been responsible for the formation of blood clots in otherwise healthy people, something we had suspected, knowing several fit people who had been treated for blood clots, Jenny being one of them.

Wednesday, 10th December 2025

We went to Bury for a few things but it was largely a waste of three hours. At least we managed to post the Christmas cards on the way out and to obtain the TV Times on the way back. I dropped off my repeat prescription request too.

When we returned, I jump-started Rachel's car using my car, put Rachel's car on the drive and put her car battery on charge, leaving my car across the top of the drive. Meanwhile, Rachel collected all the apples that had fallen from the tree, putting them into boxes, ready for disposal.

Thursday, 11th December 2025

A fair amount of time in the morning was spent reacting to a disturbing message on the laptop in the form of a blue screen on the top half with a kind of pull-down lip bearing a message that I or anyone else using the computer could lose data.

I rebooted the laptop. I eventually managed to log in and run the Dell Support Assistant, the latter after several tries telling me it was taking too long to load. That ran a full check of all the Dell software, hardware, firmware and drivers to make sure it was all up to date. It found no problems.

I then ran a full virus scan. That didn't find any problems either.

In the afternoon, Jenny and I took a friend, Lorna, to the Cuppa and a Chat session at the old school. There was a Christmas snack lunch and the Greenmount Strummers played and sang Christmas Carols and other songs with a Christmas theme, with audience participation. It was most entertaining. The admission was free and there was a request for donations which would be given to Bury Hospice, to which we contributed.

Friday, 12th December 2025

We set off reasonably early for our day's grocery shopping to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park and Tesco at Prestwich so that we could call to see Matthew and Carrie on the way out.

We spent about an hour and a half catching up on events, mostly revolving around the passing of Carrie's mum, Marie and the funeral arrangements.

On returning, Rachel helped her mum put away the groceries. While we were out, she had brought down the bins after they were emptied and picked up all the fallen apples again.

Saturday, 13th December 2025

I spent the morning on the usual household duties and then sorted out Rachel's Christmas present. That was followed by a few other administrative tasks.

After lunch, Jenny and I made two loaves of bread for me and then I performed my usual media back-up before tea.

Sunday, 14th December 2025

I had planned on going round to the old school to deal with the electrical jumble but Rachel was going to spend a few days at her flat, the old school would be too cold for Jenny and Jenny could not be left on her own.

I completed the revision of the picture gallery for Offa's Dyke and applied the same Java Script coding to the earlier revision of The Yorkshire Wolds Way. Overall, the web site revision was taking a long time and was slow going.

Apart from that, I finally drafted the minutes of the last Civic Society meeting and sent a copy for approval to our chairperson, Christine Taylor. There were various other bits of PC work to keep me busy.

Monday, 15th December 2025

The first job of the day was to place an order for various organic, gluten-free baking items with Healthy Supplies.

I decided to try to tidy up the conservatory again, the biggest eyesore being the pile of items on my desk.

Some of the items were destined for the bottom, left cupboard, which were put away fairly quickly. Several smaller items were intended to be placed in the drawer, which had a removeable, sliding cover, one side of which was a mouse pad and the other a pencil tray. That was where the problems began.

The slider moved backwards and forwards but would not come far enough forward to be removed. This also trapped the drawer, preventing it from coming far enough forward for either the slider or the drawer itself to be removed. Jenny and I spent quite a long time emptying the pencil tray and the drawer. Reaching the back of the drawer, under the slider was easier for Jenny because she had thinner arms but she did not have enough strength to remove the trapped items that were causing the problem. I eventually did so and resolved the problem.

Since the drawer was now empty, I removed it and gave it and the slider a good clean, using wood polish, since it was all made of solid oak. I also cleaned inside the unit so that the drawer would slide more easily.

The next challenge was to put everything back, which was a bit like playing Tetris.

I had just made a start on the bottom, right cupboard when lunch was ready.

I finished off clearing and cleaning the desk in the afternoon and started scanning some of the documents I had unearthed so that I did not need to keep paper copies.

Tuesday, 16th December 2025

We went to the Trafford Centre to collect Rachel's Christmas present from John Lewis.

After lunch at home, we went to Bury, primarily for some batteries for the CO alarm that had been sounding off at long intervals. I had taken the alarm off the wall to have a look at it and I discovered one of the three batteries had started to leak so I removed all the batteries, discarded them and cleaned the contacts to which the leaking battery had been connected.

On the way down I called at the dungeon in Tottington, unlocked it, checked inside. All was well, although it was a bit damp. I locked it up again and decided to query the claim that number one, Turton Road had been, at one time, a police station, since our Civic Society research had found no evidence of that.

I spoke with a very helpful gentleman, John Hilton of Legal Brokers Limited, the property being used by the company. He said he was sure he had seen some paperwork that mentioned it had been a police station and also, at one time or another a brewery and a laundry. He took my e-mail address and offered to send me information about the supporting documentation of it being a police station, which would make sense because of it being attached to the dungeon.

Having discussed that and several other subjects, I rejoined Jenny in the car and we headed towards Tesco in Bury. We took a short detour to reconnoitre the route to the church for Marie's funeral on Thursday.

Wandering around Tesco, we bought only two items, a pack of 4 AA batteries and Christmas edition of the TV Times. We used the scan as you shop facility, not for the first time. We thought it would be quicker at the checkout. No such luck. The system said it wanted a basket check – for two items costing less than £19? A very nice young lady assistant performed the basket check and we were on our way home, where it was time to take advantage of the fine weather to put all the rubbish in the appropriate bin for recycling.

I placed three batteries in the CO alarm and put it back on the wall. It was working properly once more, with no occasional loud beeps.

Wednesday, 17th December 2025

I took Jenny into Ramsbottom for her hair cut and colour. I waited in the car for the 2 hours it took and we came home for lunch.

I decided it was time I sorted out the pictures on my camera and discovered there were some I had never transferred to my PC. I spent the afternoon working out which ones they were, deleting those I had processed from the camera's SD card.

Thursday, 18th December 2025

We went to the funeral of Matthew's mother-in-law, Marie. The service was a Catholic service at Our Lady Of Good Counsel & Guardian Angels Catholic Church in Elton, followed by a short service at Radcliffe Crematorium and then a wake at The Red Hall on Walmersley Road.

For the rest of the day, I finished off the camera photos.

Friday, 19th December 2025

We set off a little earlier than usual for our weekly grocery shopping at Sainsbury's store, Heaton Park and Tesco at Prestwich.

After lunch, I prepared the TV programmes for recording during the coming week.

Saturday, 20th December 2025

Jenny and I went to the old school to deal with the electrical jumble. Graham had kindly put up the tables in the hall on which we worked. Progress was slow due to there being a lot of complicated technical items and a lot of domestic items that needed to be tested in the kitchen.

We managed to test, price and store away about one third of the outstanding items. Fortunately, there was no sale until the first Saturday in February 2026.

Sunday, 21st December 2025

After the usual pot washing session, I emptied the rubbish into the appropriate bins, recycling as much as possible and then picked up the apples that had fallen from the crab-apple tree for the fourth time. It looked like Rachel had also kindly cleared some for the third time.

I put all the boxes of items I used for testing equipment at the old school yesterday away in the garage and in doing so, found two more apples underneath Rachel's car, which was still on our drive. It was connected to the battery charger, which was maintaining the battery charge level.

We went into Ramsbottom, essentially for some organic garlic from Plentiful and we found some organic currants there too, which were hard to find elsewhere. Prior to that, we took the opportunity to tour the charity shops, two of which were closed.

After lunch, I spent the afternoon working on the laptop.

Monday, 22nd December 2025

After lunch we started to give our bedroom a thorough clean and we managed to complete about two thirds of the work. It really needed decorating, which would be a mammoth task for various reasons. Jenny wanted to decorate the lounge first and that presented its challenges. It was scheduled as the first job after Christmas.

Tuesday, 23rd December 2025

We resumed cleaning the bedroom and almost finished it before preparing for our outing to Bury, where Jenny had a medical appointment and also wanted to do a little shopping.

Our Bury trip took us to Marks and Spencer for some ready meals for tomorrow evening. Normally on Christmas Eve we would have a Chinese take-away evening meal. Since our favourite Chinese restaurant in Ramsbottom had closed, because the lease had expired, we decided, this year, we would have some Indian cuisine at home.

We also visited Tesco for a few items before making our way to the police station to report a fraudulent text message I had received, demanding money with menaces. Reception was closed.

We had planned to drop off a couple of Christmas cards and a couple of presents on the return journey but, since we were running much later than planned, we decided to leave that until tomorrow.

Wednesday, 24th December 2025

We finished off our bedroom cleaning and, after lunch, went to see Bob.

We came home and I went to collect Rachel from Bury.

We had our Indian meal and settled down to relax with Agatha Christie's "Evil Under the Sun", with Peter Ustinov as Hercule Poirot.

Thursday, 25th December 2025

Matthew and Carrie arrived shortly after breakfast for a chat before collecting Carrie's father, Bob, for lunch at Owen's restaurant in Ramsbottom with the rest Bob's family.

Jenny's friend, Gwen, popped round for a brief visit.

I helped Jenny prepare the turkey for roasting and put it in the oven. I also helped prepare some of the vegetables.

Having occasion to go into the garage for a pot in which to stand the flowering plant Gwen had brought for us, I noticed the old compost bin pieces had been blown over again and I picked them up. That brought on my vertigo again and I had to rest, sipping a Fever Tree tonic again.

I caught up with my e-mails on the laptop and dealt with a few other items until our Christmas dinner was ready.

Afterwards, we opened our presents and then played a couple of games before watching a couple of the TV programmes I had recorded, the latter being our usual evening's entertainment.

Friday, 26th December 2025

Following the occasional cooked breakfast and a mammoth pot-washing session, I toggled up and went outside in the pleasant winter sunshine to clean the bird droppings that had virtually covered the glass in the kitchen and garage patio doors. The latter I also cleaned inside.

What a lovely start to Boxing Day.

Jenny and I went for a walk to Island Lodge for a little exercise and to feed the ducks and the swans.

Saturday, 27th December 2025

Jenny and I went for longer walk, round the Jumbles reservoir, which, with rests, took two hours. The last part of the journey was a steepish climb from the valley bottom to the car park that overlooked the reservoir and it proved to be quite a challenge for Jenny.

After lunch I caught up with some PC administrative work.

Sunday, 28th December 2025

It was a morning of dealing with e-mails, the household accounts and household duties.

After lunch, Jenny, Rachel and I went for a stroll round the golf course. The weather was fine but overcast and it was quite cold. As we reached home, Jenny was a few minutes of brisk walking from completing her third active ten (i.e. ten minutes of brisk walking), so we walked past our house, up the road, across to Holcombe Road and back down past the church. As we did so, I mentioned to Rachel there was an end terrace house for sale and we continued down Holcombe Road, past the road to our house, to look at it. We passed it and came home, retracing our earlier route up Brookside Crescent. By the time we reached home, Jenny had completed four active tens!

Jenny and I both needed a shower after all this feverish activity and I, at last, managed to trim back my hair and beard before showering. Afterwards, I wiped down the walls in the bathroom and treated a few spots of mould in the grout between the tiles.

Monday, 29th December 2025

We needed to do a grocery shop and made our way to Sainsbury's, Heaton park and Tesco, Prestwich.

Lunch at home was followed by a restful afternoon.

Tuesday, 30th December 2025

After breakfast I took Rachel to the office at Central Park, since she was returning to her flat for the night, after work and coming to us by public transport tomorrow.

I returned to work on the laptop until lunchtime and then Jenny and I went for a tour of the charity shops in Ramsbottom. It was quite cold and two of the five charity shops were closed. We called at Tesco for a couple of items and came home, where I resumed work, updating the accounts and shredding my receipts, etc. from 2018, ensuring I had kept electronic copies of all documents required for tax purposes.

Both my desktop and laptop had exhibited problems overnight, the former for the last two nights and the latter, which is normally powered off overnight, from last night only. Both had resulted in the failure of TV recordings, from which I was subsequently able to recover by various means.

I investigated the desktop issue but I could not find any issues with the computer and I drew the conclusion that the interruptions were caused by power dips.

Wednesday, 31st December 2025

As this year drew to a close, it was useful to be able to look back in this diary at each day's events.

It had not been the best of years and we hoped and prayed for a better life throughout 2026. At the same time, I would continue with my philosophy of taking each day as it came.

I started dealing with some administrative work on the laptop, which consumed most of my day.

Rachel arrived in the early afternoon and we were very pleased to see her since we had not been able to contact her on her old mobile phone, which had run out of power and which she had not been able to charge for various reasons. On top of that, she had problems with the Manchester Metrolink swallowing her money and not issuing her a ticket.

We ended the year by watching Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, for which he designed the set, followed by his *Frenzy*, noted for its camera shot of descending the staircase, back along the entrance to the building and out into and across the street outside, all excellently filmed in a single sequence.