

Greenmount – June 2008

Work on the hall redecoration continues.

The reason the hall refurbishment is dragging on is that I am spending too much time working on the family history. I am in the process of tracking down all the Deardens. The cemeteries are full of ‘em (ye olde Yorkshire wit).

I have, at last, bought a new Canon EOS 450D digital camera kit from Jessops. I was going to buy a new digital camera for Matthew’s wedding anyway and recent events, like Jenny dropping my EOS 600 on the pavement, have precipitated this course of action. My EOS 600 is in for repair. I would have liked the EOS 1D Mk III but I can’t justify even the discounted price of £4,500 for the camera body alone. This is a camera for the professional (professional bank robber, I think). The matching professional lenses are around the £800-£1,000 each so I’ve gone for the cheaper ones for the EOS 450D because Jenny doesn’t want to continue working past 80.

I also ran out of disc space yet again, my PC being full of family history documents and lots of films, recorded from TV. I bought a new 750 Gb disc to fit in my remaining IDE slot. What I forgot to consider was that the slot is for a CD/DVD drive and the hard disc is much smaller than the space available. A good thing, you might think. It would be if it were possible to bolt the disc in place. Unfortunately, there is a large gap between the anchor points and the disc and it isn’t one of the levitating kind. I rigged up something temporarily and managed to get the disc up and running. That’s because it wasn’t bolted down.

I have since purchased a frame (or caddy) to bolt into the gap and into which I have mounted the disc. I could have obtained one with the disc if I had thought about it. As some famous writer once penned, all’s well that ends well. The new caddy allows me to remove the hard drive without opening the computer up and it has occurred to me that if I run out of storage space again, I can just buy a new hard drive and caddy, remove the old disc and slide the new one in.

Father’s day weekend turned out to be a little hectic. I had booked a meal for four (Jenny, myself and our neighbours, Mike and Lorna) at The Next Door restaurant in Tottington for Saturday evening 14th June, not realising 15th June was Father’s Day. Then Matthew contacted me to invite us to Sunday lunch with Carrie’s mum and dad to celebrate Father’s Day. When I checked with Jenny, she said Rachel had booked an evening meal at a new Italian Restaurant in Whitefield as a surprise.

Three meals out in two days is something with which my system is unfamiliar. Mind you, it is something with which my system could become familiar. Jenny has had a weekend free of cooking and said it was like being on holiday.

I can recommend The Next Door at Tottington. The food is really good, the host is most entertaining and at £30 a head for a five course meal it is good value. They have a “bring your own wine” policy and only open Fridays and Saturdays, with only one sitting.

I can also recommend the new Antonio's Italian Restaurant at Whitefield. Again, the food is good, the table wine, which comes in 1 litre bottles, is most drinkable and the service is good. The food is reasonably priced and the restaurant is clean and well decorated. The staff could be a bit more pleasant and it probably helps if you speak Italian.

The new dehumidifier has started to leak water all over the floor and has gone back under the warranty for repair or replacement. I have sent a message to Amcor to tell them I am not impressed with their product.

The car has started to let in water through the bottom of the driver's door so it is best to drive in Wellington boots when it rains. I need to investigate and fix the problem before we go on holiday at the end of July otherwise we could be doing more paddling than planned.

Carrie (Matthew's partner) has completed her part-time degree in Health and Psychology, achieving a First Class Honours B Sc Degree. Needless to say we are all very pleased and it has come at the right time to give her morale a boost, having been feeling rather worse for wear after the completion of her course of chemotherapy treatment. She commences her daily, 15-day radiotherapy treatment shortly, after which, we hope and pray her scan will show she is well on the way to a full recovery.

Meanwhile, having postponed their marriage, Carrie has legally changed her name and title and is now known as Mrs Caroline Dearden.

We have not attended any of the Friday evening walks this year because we have been just a bit tired. We're up at six or so in the mornings because Jenny goes to do the school crossing patrol in Ramsbottom. Those of you familiar with this pastime will know that Jenny brandishes a long yellow stick with a large, flat, round yellow disc at the top telling motorists to stop. The use of this apparatus in no way supports the rumours she has taken up pole dancing.

Rachel has selected the topic for her final dissertation for her Master's degree and this has received enthusiastic approval from all concerned. She is basing her research on the Youth Offending Team Programme in Bury. Sitting on the panel gives her an insight into the programme and has helped her make the necessary contacts. Voluntary work seems to have its advantages.

Rachel has also started her voluntary mentoring programme in Salford and is working one-to-one with a pupil at one of the schools there on a fortnightly basis.