

Greenmount November 2021

Monday, 1st November 2021

I was still struggling with adding the Canon i990 printer, connected to my desktop Windows 7 system, to my new Dell laptop. I was rapidly coming to the conclusion that Windows 10 sucked. I had successfully added the printer to the Lenovo laptop (Windows 10 Home Premium) and on Rachel's Microsoft Surface laptop (Windows 10 Professional) so why didn't it work on my new Dell Laptop (Windows 10 Professional)?

I helped Jenny take down and store away the Halloween decorations for another year. The illuminated board that read "HAVE A SCARY HALLOWEEN" would be out again in another four weeks for a Christmas greeting.

Just before lunch, I checked the security on the Windows 7 desktop and there was a setting in the sharing centre for all networks that related to the home group managing access rather than username and password. I wondered whether that was the reason the printer would not connect. I changed the setting, which required a restart and it wasn't convenient to do that at that time. I left the problem until later, when I spent the rest of the afternoon trying to install the Canon i990 on the new laptop without success. I did manage to install the Canon MG2950 network printer though and that worked a treat once I downloaded the software from Canon.

Tuesday, 2nd November 2021

I found some more advance sharing options on the desktop Windows 7 system and I made some small changes. I also changed my password to be the same as my laptop. Still I had no success installing the Canon i990 printer. I gave up and decided to concentrate on tidying and cleaning the lounge.

My day fell apart when one of my CD stackers fell apart. I did manage to move all of my CDs from the stacker onto the coffee table in the lounge and I then went into the back bedroom, still work in progress, not that there had been any progress for months, to glue and clamp the stacker, leaving it overnight to set.

I finished off auditing my CDs as far as I could and gave up on the day since it was approaching 4:30 and the daylight was fading.

We had planned to walk round and make sure the line-dancing banner outside the old school was still in place and undamaged but we hadn't made it.

I was hoping for better weather and better luck tomorrow.

I spent an hour at the end of the day probing the printing problem.

Wednesday, 3rd November 2021

The weather was good and we did walk round to check the line-dancing banner. One of the ties had worked loose, so I fixed that and took a picture of it. We called at the convenience store for a copy of next week's Radio Times.

Apart from that, putting out Jenny's washing lines and fetching them in again, my day was one of trying to resolve my remote printing problem and I finally identified the problem. Inbound TCP port 135 needed to be allowed through the Norton 360 firewall on the desktop computer.

I had already concluded, from various tests, that printing worked if I disabled the firewall on the desktop computer and it was a question of working out what network protocol or protocols were not being allowed through the firewall. To do that, I downloaded a protocol analyzer on the desktop computer, disabled the firewall and ran a print test. Having identified the IP addresses on the Dell laptop and the desktop, the analyser (Colasoft Capsa-Free) gave me the network TCP packets that passed between the two computers and I was able to see the TCP ports used. I had also done some research into the ports likely to be involved and the TCP port 135 was one of them, which stood out in the analysis. All that was needed was an additional rule in the firewall to permit this port inbound on the desktop computer.

I don't know whether this resolved the Windows 10 search for printers not finding the shared printer but since I could add it manually, this wasn't a problem.

In the early evening, I thumbed through the first couple of days of the TV listings to see what was worth recording. Jenny had already ringed a couple of items she wanted to watch.

Thursday, 4th November 2021

We went grocery shopping to Unicorn in Chorlton and Waitrose in Broadheath, near Altrincham.

We didn't get off to an early start. It was around 10:30 by the time we hit the road and the main A56 being closed between Whitefield and the roundabout at Prestwich, where we accessed the M60 Manchester ring motorway, didn't help.

We diverted down past Heaton Park and took the scenic route, round the Manchester inner ring road and out towards Chorlton.

We had lunch at Waitrose, sharing a gluten-free sandwich and returned by the more direct route, using the M60.

I went to check on the glued CD stacker and it fell apart again when I removed the clamp. I glued it again using the wood glue, clamped it again and left it to set.

Having succeeded in installing the printer on the new laptop, I re-installed it and tested it on the old one. I had previously removed it from the old laptop when I started using the new laptop, thinking I would no longer need it on that machine.

I finished off thumbing through the TV listings for next week.

Friday, 5th November 2021

I cleaned the bathroom radiator for Jenny, who had cleaned the bathroom.

I ran through the list of TV series we watch for episodes I may have missed thumbing through the Radio Times and added some TV recordings for next week.

I fetched down the glued CD stacker, having removed the clamp and when I put it down in the living room it came unstuck again. I took it back upstairs and glued it again using No More Nails, clamped it and left it for another night.

I put in the TV recordings for next week.

It was then time to check my E-mails for the second time this week. There was a lot of them and it took a while.

Saturday, 6th November 2021

Our morning was taken up with the table-top sale at the old school, selling electrical items. Jenny managed the sales while I continued to work on items donated to the old school.

We sold quite a few items but what we did sell didn't make much of a dent in our stock.

After lunch, we had to go into Ramsbottom for Jenny's Covid-19 booster and 'flu jabs.

Returning home, I retrieved the CD stacker from the back bedroom. The No More Nails had done its job and the two shelves in the middle were firmly glued in place so they could not bulge outwards and cause the shelves to collapse.

I finished auditing my CDs. I needed two more shelves for which I needed to make some supports. I thought I had some thin dowelling I could cut to the desired length and left that job for tomorrow, with two stacks of CDs on the lounge coffee table.

Sunday, 7th November 2021

I finally sorted out my CDs, with both stackers in place and almost full, having cut some thin dowelling to make four shelf supports for a single shelf. There was space in one of the stackers for another shelf but I needed to make a shelf and to cut four more supports for it.

Rachel arrived and we all went to the Trafford Centre, the main objective being for Rachel and Jenny to purchase some items they needed for their baking for Santa's Christmas Cracker from Lakeland. I pottered round the store while they shopped for what they wanted. Two items they needed were out of stock. One they arranged to have delivered for free since it was in the warehouse but not in the store and the other being

due in the store tomorrow, which meant another visit when we were passing. I purchased an electric scrubber, a little like a large electric toothbrush, primarily for cleaning awkward bits and the grout between the tiles in the kitchen and bathroom.

We briefly paid a visit to W H Smith but Rachel couldn't find what she wanted.

I was going to look at the technical items in John Lewis, through which we passed to the car park, but I was too hot, being dressed for the cold outside and too weary by the time we had finished the other shopping.

Safely home, I listened to a recording of Jazz Record Requests which, this week, was looking forward to the London Jazz Festival. Most of the tracks had been requested by performers at the Festival and the whole broadcast was a pile of the proverbial. Thankfully, I wouldn't be attending the Festival.

Monday, 8th November 2021

We had a day of cleaning the lounge and covered about two thirds of it. It was amazing how long it took to clean thoroughly. The problem was that with other arrangements, we would not be able to continue until next Monday.

Tuesday, 9th November 2021

Jenny had an appointment at the eye clinic and Manchester Royal Eye Hospital, arranged for 2:30 p.m. at very short notice, due to a cancellation.

The morning was taken up with testing a satellite receiver that had come into the electrical jumble. Having reconfigured it for the Astra 2 Freesat satellite it worked fine, except that the power on/off button on the remote control was somewhat temperamental. The power button on the box worked alright.

The connection to the TV was a composite video and stereo audio phono plugs. It occurred to me that the tuner would work to the Hauppauge TV capture box and WinTV on the laptop. I tested that and it was perfect. I decided I could use the box to record programmes from 5Select, which was only available in high definition on Freeview and the Hauppauge tuner did not recognise high definition channels on Freeview. Replacing it was work in progress.

I decided to schedule a test recording.

We set off at about 1:20 p.m. and it took just over an hour to reach the Eye Hospital, which was somewhat excessive, mainly due to road works on Manchester Old Road at Prestwich. I dropped Jenny off at the door and went to find a parking spot on the road nearby.

I sat and listened to Jazz CDs, reading the previous issue of Private Eye and breaking off to eat a sandwich for a late lunch. I sat there as it turned dark and it was turned 5 p.m. before Jenny telephoned me to collect her.

Jenny was quite upset. She had been left sitting around for two hours after checking in and it was only when she made enquiries that she was seen. Furthermore, it was then too late for her to take the Field Test. When she finally saw the consultant, the news was not good and she needed an operation on her left eye to reduce the pressure. It was suggested that this be done mid December. While unpleasant, I said the previous surgery had been a huge success and she was a lot better for it, not that I would cherish having to face it. Still, there was no reason to suppose that the second surgical procedure should not be as successful.

We fought our way home through the heavy, rush-hour traffic, the journey taking a good couple of hours.

I did suggest having an evening meal out but it was really too late to do so. We had a snack at home.

Wednesday, 10th November 2021

I had planned to take the car down to the body-shop in Bury to have its new near-side, front wing fitted. Jenny had originally planned to go down to Bury with me but decided to stay at home.

I set off at about 8:15, before breakfast. Traffic was horrendous on the Bury ring road and it took me half an hour to reach the body-shop.

After dropping off the car, I walked quickly to Bury Interchange to catch the 9:25 480 bus, operated by Rosso, back to Greenmount. By 9:38, the bus had not turned up and I made for the 474 that would take me within ten minutes' walk of home. That departed as I was about to cross to catch it. The bus to Tottington arrived and I boarded that, leaving me with a similarly distanced walk home.

I was home for 10:10, ten minutes later than the time for Jenny's new eye drop. Having administered that, we had breakfast.

Cleaning of the lounge resumed and we almost finished it when there was a telephone call to say the car was ready for collection.

We both walked down to catch the 472 bus to Bury as the next 480 through the village was not due for another hour and a half. I left Jenny at Home Bargains at the retail park as I went to collect the car and I returned to pick up Jenny as we drove home.

Thursday, 11th November 2021

We attended the Remembrance Service at the church and I took the usual photographs of the wreaths being placed at the memorial for the village web site.

We headed off to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park for our weekly grocery shopping and I took the opportunity to refuel the car on the way out. We drove to Tesco at Prestwich for a few additional grocery items and then came home for an early tea, having skipped

lunch, since the Costa Coffee café inside the Tesco store did not have any gluten-free items.

I started thumbing through the Radio Times listings for the coming week for programmes to record.

My test recording of a 5Select channel programme using the satellite receiver I had brought home from the old school jumble was successful and I decided to hang on to the box until I could find a more modern replacement.

Friday, 12th November 2021

I spent the day deciding what TV programmes to record for the coming week and scheduling them.

Saturday, 13th November 2021

We went to the old school to work on the electrical items for the jumble sale. Matthew and Carrie called in for a chat on their way home from a couple of days out to the Forest of Bowland.

We came home for lunch. Afterwards, we went into Ramsbottom for a tour of the charity shops and to buy a few grocery items from Plentiful. While we were wandering round, Matthew's mother-in-law, Marie, telephoned and invited us to call in for a cup of tea and a chat, so we made our way up to their bungalow when we had finished shopping.

When we came home, Jenny fetched in her washing and prepared tea while I rearranged files on my portable drives.

Rachel joined us for tea.

Sunday, 14th November 2021

I continued rearranging the contents of my portable drives and undertook a few jobs while that was in progress.

Our friend from the wood-turners group, Robin, called to deliver the cover he had made for Rachel and Jenny's Christmas food stall at the old school on 4th December. It needed some finishing touches, like sanding and varnishing and possibly some hinges for the top but otherwise it was exactly what we needed.

It was one of those rare dry days, so I decided to tidy up a bit outside, cutting back the remaining blackberry runners, sweeping up the leaves on the patio and the side passage. I raked the leaves off the grass at the back as well.

Jazz record requests was a load of tripe again, featuring artists from the London Jazz Festival, past and present.

Monday, 15th November 2021

The plan was to finish cleaning the lounge and start on the kitchen. I ended up helping Jenny renew the lining paper in her kitchen cupboards.

As we left off for a snack around lunchtime, Lorna, who lived down the road, dropped in for a coffee and a chat, which was nice.

After Lorna left, I finished off my day of toil by cleaning a few of the remaining items in the lounge that needed cleaning, balancing precariously on Jenny's step stool (the one off which I had been known to fall on several occasions) to reach the ceiling lights.

Tuesday, 16th November 2021

I was up at 8 a.m. and I walked round to the post box to deposit Trevor's (my cousin, Ann's, husband's) birthday card before the collection at 9 a.m.

I had washed, dried and tidied away the dishes from last evening's meal by the time Jenny joined me.

After breakfast, I did the same with the breakfast dishes and took the rubbish to the various recycling bins before I recommenced renewing the shelf covering in the kitchen cupboards while Jenny cleaned, tidied and reorganised them.

We left off for lunch at about 1:30 p.m. and resumed afterwards until 6 p.m. with still four or five cupboards to do.

Wednesday, 17th November 2021

We were up early and had finished breakfast by just turned 9 a.m. The plan was to go to Bury for a bit of a break, after administering Jenny's eye drop at 10 a.m., so I passed the time by starting to read the issue of Private Eye prior to the current one and, having just missed the hourly bus through the village, I continued to do so for another half hour or so.

We caught the 10:59 a.m. bus opposite the church to Bury and pottered round the shops. I had two purchases in mind, one being a birthday card for my old school chum, Terry, from The Card Factory and the other a pack of rubber bands from Rylands.

In the event, the pack of rubber bands didn't look as good as the last purchase and I was pretty sure the price had shot up so I gave that a miss, deciding to look online. I made my card purchase as planned and Jenny also bought a couple.

We came home for lunch, catching the 13:25 bus back to Greenmount. We had thought of having lunch at Leckenby's tea rooms in Bury but their choice of gluten-free meals was extremely limited and none of it appealed to us. We also thought of Marks and Spencer but that would have meant a pre-packaged sandwich and we were not terribly

keen on the gluten-free bread available commercially, which is why Jenny made and baked our own.

By the time we had settled down to relax after lunch it was nearly 3 p.m.

I caught up with some E-mail messages, then went into the garage to read the meters and I submitted the readings to the utility companies, two days earlier than usual.

I walked round to the convenience store for next week's Radio Times and started looking through the listing for items of interest to record.

Thursday, 18th November 2021

We didn't rise as early as planned. I didn't feel that well and I was very tired. It was nearly 9:30 by the time we set off grocery shopping.

We called at Holcombe Brook Post Office for some stamps and I posted Terry's birthday card. Jenny wanted to call at Lynn and John's house, which wasn't out of our way, to drop off a card for their daughter, Alison, who was recovering at home following a recent operation. John was in the garage and we stayed to chat with him.

It was turned ten o'clock when we returned to the car and past the time for Jenny's morning eye drop, which we had brought with us. That administered, we headed for the M60 motorway at Prestwich and down it to the Trafford Centre where we made our way to Lakeland to collect some icing bags Jenny had ordered.

We rejoined the M60 and drove to Unicorn in Chorlton, where I remained in the car, listening to a CD of Max Miller, a music-hall comedian from the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. Max was known as "The Cheeky Chappie" since a lot of his material was quite risqué for the time.

From there we took the A56 to Waitrose at Broadheath, near Altrincham and the plan was to grab a gluten-free sandwich and share that with a cup of tea in the café. There were no gluten-free sandwiches left and the café was closed.

We were home for about 4 p.m. and had a welcome cup of tea and a quick snack. It seemed like a long, tiring day.

Friday, 19th November 2021

I worked on the TV recordings for the coming week, programmed them and tidied up my media.

Saturday, 20th November 2021

I was at the old school for about 10:15 a.m., after administering Jenny's eye drop. Jenny remained at home, preparing her mincemeat for the Christmas mince pies.

I spent a good amount of time chatting to various people, so progress was slow and I came home at about 2 p.m. for lunch, having tidied up. I didn't have time to test everything that had been donated during the past week, let alone start on the outstanding items.

After lunch, I did some more tidying of my media, which involved manually copying an application to the list of programmes on the laptop and then manually adding it to the Windows 10 start menu, finally pinning it to the start icons, so that it was easily accessible. The application did not come with an automatic windows installation facility.

Sunday, 21st November 2021

We were up early. I dealt with a few E-mails and then we set off to collect some electrical items for the jumble sale.

We went to see a friend who was having a problem with her telephones and I couldn't decide whether the problem was that it needed new rechargeable batteries or the base unit was faulty. I left details of the batteries required and she was going to buy some new ones to see if they made any improvement.

That visit resulted in a chat with Denis, the manager of the Village Bistro on Vernon Road. The owner, Claire, had applied for planning permission to extend the evening opening from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., the letter from the council being dated 21st October and allowing three weeks for comments from the public. There had been three objections.

Given the date for comments had passed, there was little that could be done to argue the case that the request should be granted. After all, the Bistro was not licensed to sell alcoholic drinks, while the Co-operative store on the end of the block was and remained open until 10 p.m. It was my opinion that small businesses like The Bistro needed every opportunity to recover from the devastating impact of the Covid pandemic.

Meanwhile, we called at the old school on the way home. Jenny wanted to look round the Pets in Need sale and I wanted to drop off the jumble items. It was too busy to do the latter, so I brought them home for the present.

After lunch, I sent an E-mail regarding the Village Bistro to the village chairperson, Julie, to request that the village committee consider giving the Bistro their support if it wasn't too late, although it did occur to me that we might not be able to do so without putting to a vote at a village meeting and there wasn't the time to do that.

On a personal note, I wrote to one of our councillors on the subject, since the planning committee was not making a decision until mid December.

Jenny was baking bread and asked me to help by washing some pots. Afterwards I continued putting lining paper in the kitchen cabinets and completed the three more. There was still a few to do

I came into the lounge to listen to Jazz Record Requests on BBC Radio 3. It started off a little better than of late, with some passable tracks and amongst the rest of the rubbish were a couple of very nice Traditional Jazz numbers featuring Ollie Patterson with Chris

Barber and his band and Bunk Johnson and his band. The programme finished off with a decent Count Basie tune, Jumpin' at the Woodside, played by Bob Wilbur and his band.

Monday, 22nd November 2021

We were up at 9 a.m. and I did three amazing things before breakfast.

I wound up the grandfather clock in the lounge and put it right because it had stopped.

I wound up the wall clock in the dining room because it hadn't stopped, stopped it, put it right and restarted it.

I cut up one of the four loaves Jenny had baked yesterday so we could have some toast at breakfast.

As we finished breakfast, I had a message on my mobile telephone from my bank to inform me they had processed a large transaction so I checked my accounts. It was the monthly payment for gas and electricity to Bulb. One didn't need a horse, a mask and a pistol these days to commit highway robbery. All it took was ownership of a fuel supply company.

It was time to cut up the remaining three loaves so Jenny could store the slices in packs of six in the freezer.

So to the main task of the day – the kitchen. I continued to help Jenny reline the cupboards until we ran out of paper. That meant a trip into Ramsbottom for another roll, but not today.

After lunch, I started on the cleaning, working top down and the first bit to tackle was over the top of the older fridge-freezer, the top of the pull-out unit and over the cooker. It was awkward to reach the tiles at the back and there wasn't much room to clean the accumulated grime and grease on the top of the units. That took some effort, several old rags and a good deal of eco-friendly cleaning materials. I knocked off at 5 p.m.

Tuesday, 23rd November 2021

The kitchen cleaning continued, tackling the tiles between the fitted units and the worktop to the left of the cooker, round the top of the cooker hood and between the cooker hood and the cooker. I also cleaned the top of the cooker hood.

We took a little time out after lunch to pop round to the village convenience store for next week's Radio Times.

Wednesday, 24th November 2021

It was cooker-cleaning day and that involved relining the hob with fresh pieces of thick foil, cut to size and with cut-outs for the burners. I also scraped the deposits off the

inside of the left oven glass door and helped clean the left oven. The right oven had not been used a great deal.

I finished off in the kitchen by refitting the PIR sensor for the burglar alarm. I had damaged the fixing while cleaning the tiles behind it on Monday and I had to glue it back together yesterday. Now the glue was set, I could put it back together and test it.

My last job was to reassemble the coffee grinder after dismantling it on Monday so Jenny could clean it. It was a case of working out which bits went where and in what order, having taken it to pieces without taking too much notice of how it was assembled. That was not too clever. Still, I was good at puzzles and liked a challenge.

Thursday, 25th November 2021

We set off grocery shopping at about 8:20 a.m., intending to call at Matthew and Carrie's house before 9 a.m. Traffic down to and through Bury was horrendous and we only just made the usual fifteen-minute journey in time.

It was just after 9 a.m. when we left and the long line of traffic down the main road had miraculously disappeared. We headed for Asda at Pilsworth, primarily to buy some of their excellent Janneau Armagnac brandy. There was none on the shelf and no space for it, the assumption being they no longer stocked it.

We took the M66 southbound to Sainsbury's store at Heaton Park to undertake our main shop of the day, waiting ten minutes or so in the car park to administer Jenny's morning eye drop at 10 a.m. We found a decent looking Armagnac there and decided to give it a try.

It was then on to Tesco at Prestwich for a few additional grocery items before heading home for lunch. That journey went well, with all the traffic lights at green until we were at the ring road in Bury, which must have been a first in all my 43 years here.

I had planned on calling at the chemist in the village for my monthly supply of tablets (I only took one tablet a day, which seemed to be something of a record, talking to most other chaps my age) but the shop was closed for lunch.

When I did go round, later, I discovered I had taken the last tablet of the last batch this morning and that the prescription needed renewing. Fortunately, the pharmacist said she was able to do that and my tablets would be ready tomorrow afternoon, which meant I would have to forego the one at breakfast.

Time was getting on and it was a little late in the day to start anything productive in the kitchen.

My last practical task of the day was to go out in the cold and dark to put out the general rubbish bin for collection tomorrow morning.

I remembered to order Jenny some sea buckthorn omega 7 capsules from Holland and Barrett. Normally we bought them from Dennis Gore's chemist shop at Prestwich but they had increased in price to over £50 for 150 capsules. They were almost £10 cheaper

at Holland and Barrett and, what's more, there was an offer of buy one and purchase a second at half price. And delivery was free. Even better, having cost over £60 for two packs, next-day delivery was free.

Friday, 26th November 2021

The day was a disaster. I had planned to do so much and achieved so little.

I was up at 8 a.m. and we had planned to nip into Ramsbottom for some more lining paper for the kitchen cupboards immediately after Jenny's eye drop at 10 a.m. We were delayed by about 15 minutes by a telephone call from Christine who manages the old school and needed to talk to Jenny about the line-dancing sessions. I took the opportunity to let Christine know that I wouldn't be able to be at the old school tomorrow morning to deal with the electrical jumble because I had too much to do at home.

We made it to Ramsbottom and toured the charity shops as well as calling at the hardware shop for the lining paper. The hardware business was up for sale, which was a bit of a blow because it was the only one of its kind in the vicinity. We were told that only one of the four interested buyers was likely to retain the present business.

Jenny bought five books and I bought three CDs from the various charity shops.

We had lunch on returning home and Jenny went to line dancing.

I decided to look for some new charcoal filters for the Leisure Rangemaster cooker hood. That was like pulling teeth and took ages. I ended up sending an enquiry to one supplier of spare parts that had a similar filter that, according to the dimensions, wouldn't quite fit and another to Beko, the owners of the Leisure brand. Searching for the model (CH120) cooker hood replacements resulted in one offering that bore no resemblance whatsoever to my old model.

An hour or so later, I decided to start scanning the TV schedules for programmes and series in which I was particularly interested. I used the search facility in NextPVR on the laptop. That didn't find the expected number of episodes of All Creatures Great and Small on the Drama channel so I ran a schedule update. The result of doing so was that it found even less.

I thought about giving Windows Media Centre a try on the desktop but it was recording an episode of the programme and I didn't want to disturb that so I left it for an hour or so.

I'd had a response to my enquiry about the charcoal filter that I thought wouldn't fit requesting a picture of my filter so I sent that. There was a quick turn-round to my E-mail suggesting that the filter should fit my cooker hood, so I ordered two. Jenny returned from line-dancing as I did so

I took delivery from Hermes of the Omega 7 capsules I ordered yesterday from Holland and Barrett while Jenny was in the shower.

We set about cleaning the underside of the cooker hood and the grease filters. I tackled the former and Jenny the latter. When we had finished, I put the old charcoal filters back in temporarily and in doing so, discovered there was a little tolerance in the size, so, hopefully, my new filters would fit when they arrived.

I later put the grease filters back as well, after they had dried out sufficiently.

I succeeded in using Windows Media Centre to complete my list of TV recordings for the coming week and was relieved to find there were none to schedule for tomorrow so I could leave that task until tomorrow morning.

Jobs for tomorrow in the kitchen: line the rest of the cupboard shelves with paper, clean the rest of the tiles, units doors and windows and scrub the floor. Oh, and replace the sealant around the sink area. I won't mention the sink unit needed a new tap and a new drain in the half-sink and possibly one in the main sink. In fact, it probably needed a new sink unit.

Saturday, 27th November 2021

I was up at 8 a.m. and we finished off lining the kitchen cupboard shelves. After tidying up, I finally sat down at 3:30 p.m. with a headache and fell asleep in my chair in the lounge for a good hour and a half. It took me another half hour to acknowledge reality, my headache having subsided somewhat.

We had a cup of tea and a snack, Jenny reminding me we had tickets for the Lancashire evening at the old school at 7:30 p.m. with entertainment from the Greenmount Strummers. A hot-pot supper was included (we had been assured there was a gluten-free option) and it was a case of bring your own drinks and glasses.

We had a most enjoyable evening with the Greenmount Strummers and guests providing the entertainment and people we knew from the village and surrounding area. The gluten-free hot-pot was very nice and there were even gluten-free mince pies for dessert. We celebrated Lancashire Day with good friends and good humour, even though we came here from Yorkshire over 40 years ago!

Sunday, 28th November 2021

I had a mixed day, cleaning the tiles in the kitchen, removing the mouldy silicon sealant from the tiles behind the sink and round the sink where it fitted into the worktop, driving through the snow, up to Mulberry Fabrics at Helmshore, in the unsuccessful search for some dark fabric to cover the window in which we were planning to display our contribution to the village advent windows and fetching the Nativity set from the garage loft.

I also helped Rachel put together our advent window, screening it with some black fabric we had acquired from the old school.

The plan in the kitchen was to put some new silicone sealant at the back of the sink and round it but the sealant I had was clear and not white so that was a task for tomorrow

when I had bought some white sealant. I still had some tiles and the top of the cupboards along the dining room wall to clean as well as the PVC door frames, the doors to the dining room and the entrance hall and the floor to scrub. I had two days left to finish cleaning the kitchen.

Meanwhile, Rachel would be finishing off the Advent windows.

As well as all this feverish activity, I replaced my old Microsoft Office 2007 installation with Microsoft Office 365. What a culture shock that was. It would take some time to become familiar with Office 365. At least the new version Outlook (mail) retained the settings of the old version so I didn't have to reconfigure it.

Monday, 29th November 2021

I finished cleaning the tiles and I cleaned the top of the cupboards along the dining room wall. I also cleaned the two UPVC door frames and doors, the two wooden door frames and doors and the glass in all four doors.

Rachel finished the main Advent window.

Tuesday, 30th November 2021

I scrubbed the kitchen and hall floors. Jenny kept me supplied with buckets of clean water as I needed them. The kitchen was now ready for Jenny and Rachel to commence their baking for Santa's Christmas Cracker at the village old school, although I still needed to touch up around the sink area with sealant.

I had decided we needed a new kitchen sink and tap as soon as we could arrange it. I had also decided to have it fitted professionally if I could find someone who was reliable.

We went to Hobbycraft in Bolton because Rachel wanted a few items, including another pack of wooden numbers because she was missing a couple for her Advent house, which she had bought previously and was busy painting and decorating. Unfortunately, all the packs had been sold and no more were expected. I had long since decided I would not do business with any supplier if it was not consistent with its stock so Hobbycraft was now on *my* blacklist.

(Fortunately, Rachel later discovered she was only short of a number 6 and only because the one she had was damaged slightly and I was able to fix that with superglue.)

From there we made our way to Tesco at Prestwich for some more items Rachel and Jenny wanted for baking items for Santa's Christmas Cracker on Saturday.