

Greenmount October 2019

Tuesday, 1st October 2019

Where does time go? I was up just after 7:30 a.m. and by 1:30 p.m. I hadn't really achieved a great deal.

I started by putting out the bottle and can recycling bin for collection and washing, wiping and putting away the dishes from the evening meal last night. Jenny joined me for breakfast.

I intended a brief session on the computer to publish last month's diary update on my web site. Then I discovered some page formatting issues as a result of changes to the web site a few weeks ago and started to try to put this right. That was proving time-consuming and I gave up for the present.

There was a telephone call for Jenny from Carolyn Tickle about booking a table for the gluten-free produce at Santa's Christmas Cracker in the village old school in November. Carolyn had sent Jenny an E-mail and she had not responded.

The reason Jenny had not dealt with her E-mail was because, although she had an E-mail account, she had never shown any interest in using it, so, not only had I not set up her E-mail on the computer but Jenny didn't even have an account on the laptop.

Creating an account in Microsoft Windows 10 was not easy and took ages. The configuration of her E-mail client took a little while and then started to download 78 messages from the server. I dealt with the one from Carolyn on her behalf.

With the table booking form completed and the cheque written, I updated the accounts and then verified these with the bank's online service.

I noticed that the central heating system and boiler maintenance contract was coming up for renewal with British Gas and it took me ages to find out what it was likely to cost. Being a loyal customer was going to cost me between £50 and £100 more than if I were a new customer walking in off the street, as it were. So I started to look round at alternatives, which would cost me a lot less the BG. I landed on the Which web site and it made interesting reading but didn't actually publish any meaningful comparison statistics. For that I needed to either pay a subscription to Which or go to the library. I decided to do the latter and I had until the end of November to negotiate a new contract.

By this time, Jenny had prepared lunch.

After lunch I helped Jenny with her bread making using the bread machine we bought some time ago.

Joani Beale collected me at about 6:30 p.m. to help with a dementia awareness session at the Guardian Angels church hall. We stayed on for the dementia friends session, normally presented by Joani but on this occasion by Laura Roberts, Laura being a member of the congregation. I was home for around 10 p.m.

Wednesday, 2nd October 2019

I took advantage of the beautiful sunny day after all the recent rain to tackle the mound of debris on our neighbour's front garden from the hedge between our two homes. The hedge had been removed the previous day by a chap using a mini digger.

John and I dealt with the debris and loaded it into my trailer. I made three runs to the tip and by the end of the day we had disposed of about half of it.

Thursday, 3rd October 2019

It was a grocery shopping day. Fridays were now allocated to other activities, so this was likely to be our regular day out.

We started by calling at Carlyn Tickle's house to drop off the booking for our table at Santa's Christmas Cracker.

Our second, local visit was to the post office at Holcombe Brook. Having run out of stamps, I purchased a new book of twelve, using the first one to post a letter to The Alzheimer's Society.

Joani had asked me if I would obtain a batch of 25 copies of *The Dementia Guide: Living Well After Diagnosis*. I had sent my request to the Society by E-mail to the address on the back of the copy of the book Joani had given me, info@alzheimers.co.uk, only to receive a response saying the message could not be delivered. I checked the web site and there was no sign of the E-mail address for enquiries, so I sent a letter rather than use the 03 telephone number provided. While 03 numbers were charged at local rate and included in my call plan with British Telecom, my experience was that using numbers like this generally linked to an introductory, recorded message that took up quite a bit of one's time, so I preferred to write.

From there we went to Home Bargains in Bury, to Unicorn in Chorlton, then to Sainsbury's store in Sale and on to Waitrose where we had lunch as usual.

Leaving Waitrose, the traffic was very heavy on the A56 but at least it kept moving, which was more than could be said for the M60. The journey was as tiresome as usual.

Friday, 4th October 2019

Over the past few nights I had been suffering with a bad throat, a cough and catarrh and when I awoke I felt dreadful. My shoulders and neck ached and I felt completely drained. I cancelled my appointment for my 'flu jab the following morning and spent the morning, well wrapped up, putting in the TV recordings for the following week.

After lunch, I carried on with some computer administration work while watching the *Clockwork Orange* DVD while Jenny went to the new, introductory line dancing class at the old school. I was supposed to go too but I just wasn't up to it.

I had also E-mailed Joani to let her know I wouldn't be at the D-CaFF fund-raising entertainment in church tonight at which the Greenmount Strummers were performing. I was supposed to be part of the male voice choir (I use the description rather loosely) on stage, singing sea shanties.

Saturday, 5th October 2019

I started looking at revamping my web site. My objective was to rewrite it without using Tables. I spent most of the day working on the home page and almost finished it despite not feeling well, which is why I didn't go to the village drop-in.

While I was at home pondering over java script code, HTML and CSS, Jenny had been to have her 'flu jab and then to help out at the monthly village drop-in, where I had been missed.

By tea-time, I was feeling particularly tired and I was losing concentration so I gave up and decided to relax.

Sunday, 6th October 2019

I spent most of the day in my chair working on my web site. I left off briefly to go out and dig up the few potatoes we had grown in one of the raised beds.

Monday, 7th October 2019

I helped Jenny make some damson jam which took most of the morning.

After that, I continued working on my web site in between tending the log fire I had lit to provide enough warmth to help Jenny's bread dough rise. I also helped to shape the dough and put it in the tin ready for baking.

Jill, our next door neighbour, called round in the early evening with a gift of a bottle of rosé wine for helping John last Wednesday which was very nice of her.

As it was time to go to bed, I realised I had not paid the window cleaner for cleaning the windows last week. I commenced the process, which, due to a change in the ownership of the round, required me to set up a new bank payment. That's as far as I got. The online system, not satisfied with all the other security measures asked me for my customer PIN and I didn't even know I had one, not for online banking. I was very pleased to see the bank was taking security very seriously but when the level of security prevented me from doing legitimate business, it was damn well impractical.

Tuesday, 8th October 2019

After washing up the dishes from last night's evening meal and the breakfast pots, including the juicer I had used to make my orange juice, I helped Jenny make two batches of juice, one to combat her arthritis and the other to maintain good eyesight.

After washing the juicer for the third time, I turned my attention to the fire, which we used yesterday. The glass needed cleaning and the hearth needed tidying up. There wasn't enough ash to warrant removal and the hearth was not that dirty, so I didn't bother washing it.

I repaired one of the supports for our beach tent, a job left over from our holiday in July. The support comprised a number of fibreglass rods connected together with a threaded, elastic cord. One of the rods had split along the seams from one end for about a third of its length, being made of two horizontal sections with a central groove (for the cord) glued together. I fixed the edges together using super glue, taking care not to glue the cord to the support and Jenny tied the end of the support together with an elastic band to hold it in place until the glue set.

Jenny then brought in her handbag and asked me to stick a piece of one of the handles that had come undone back in place, which I did and, again, Jenny tied an elastic band round it until it set.

A spot of lunch allowed me a break to process some of the TV recordings thus far for this week.

I went into the garage, essentially to put all the logs, stored in old vegetable boxes, back in the trailer, freeing up the floor space at the back of the garage once more.

I finished off processing the TV recordings and then listened to a recording of Jazz Record Requests from its new slot on Sunday. The theme was tunes associated with Sunday, yet another pointless category or theme. It sounded more like a category of the most nauseating and longest performance. I did find one two-minute tune of interest out of the hour-long programme, which was "Never on Sunday", not a number I have associated with jazz. There was still no mention of the request I sent in a few weeks ago asking for something with Marty Grosz.

Wednesday, 9th October 2019

I was working on the computer most of the day, mostly on the new web site design. I did manage to tidy up a few things.

Thursday, 10th October 2019

We went grocery shopping, heading for Unicorn. The M60 anti-clockwise at Prestwich, where we join it, was more or less blocked with traffic so I took the main A56 to Manchester, the ring road anti-clockwise to the roundabout on Chester Road (A56 again), the other side of the city and, from there, the old road directly to Chorlton. That wasn't too bad a journey.

We called at Sainsbury's store in Sale on the way to Waitrose in Broadheath, had lunch at Waitrose and, after our grocery shop there, made our way back along the A56 to the M60 and chanced that back to Prestwich, followed by the A56 north to Bury from there, as usual.

The M60 was busy but at least we managed to keep moving faster than usual. Hitting Prestwich at the end of the school day made the journey slower than expected with heavy traffic through Whitefield and approaching Bury.

I managed to squeeze in a bit more of my web site development in the evening.

Friday, 11th October 2019

After perking up a bit on Wednesday, I was feeling rough again.

I managed to contact our builder, Steve Bithel, for Matthew. Steve had been seriously ill and was recovering but he said he would try to sort Matthew out.

I dealt with my E-mails and by the time I had done all that and showered, it was time to go down to D-CaFF, taking a couple of boxes of publications I had ordered for Joani from The Alzheimers Society which had been delivered to our next door neighbour the day before while we were out and which I had collected on our return from grocery shopping.

We were entertained at D-CaFF by the very good Eddie McCray Band and it was quite busy.

I collected my monthly supply of tablets from the chemist on the way back, the last batch of the present prescription, so it was a good job I had my annual MOT booked for Saturday.

The task for the rest of the day was to ensure the TV recordings were entered for the coming week. Recording programmes and editing them to remove the advertisements where applicable and topping and tailing them meant that I only had to watch the programme itself and not the other nauseating and pointless rubbish. The BBC in particular used to be much better when they had the old interludes, or an announcer who spoke correct English between programmes and who never ended a sentence with a preposition, although some people reading this will no doubt be in total ignorance of the various parts of English grammar.

Saturday, 12th October 2019

I went round to the old school to work on the electrical jumble and Jenny joined me a little while later. We packed up and came home about 3:30 p.m., bringing home an Apple computer and the Horticultural Society's PA system. The former had been donated to the jumble sale and needed a monitor, a keyboard and a mouse and the latter wouldn't power on and needed fixing, if possible.

Jenny and Rachel went off to Tesco in Bury and I dealt with the TV recordings and then continued the work on my revised web site.

The laptop was giving me some grief with both Hauppauge's WinTV 8 not working properly and the free NextPVR not automatically starting its recording service, without which it was not possible to watch live TV. I spent some time trying to fix both.

Sunday, 13th October 2019

I started off by washing last evening's pots and then helping Jenny juice some carrots, some celery and some chicory (or endive) to produce a concoction to promote healthy eyes, all before breakfast.

After breakfast, Jenny asked me to lay a fire to warm the lounge (the central heating went off at 9:30 a.m.) so she could prove her bread. I did that while bringing the list of stored names in the dining room telephone into line with those in the lounge telephone. That took until just after lunch because the only way of doing it was to manually enter all the information. That was two handsets down and three to go.

Jenny then asked me to download the pictures I took at the dementia café on Friday so I could put away my camera. I did that, although it wasn't quite as simple as it sounds.

The pictures were destined for the village web site. Downloading them was the first stage in the process. Once downloaded, the pictures had to be examined to see which ones were worth keeping and of those, which needed improving. The name of the picture files contained a two-digit sequential number and had an upper case file extension. The files needed to be in numerical sequence and deleting some pictures meant the remainder needed renumbering. The extension also needed to be changed to lower case since the files were destined for hosting on a Unix server and the web page code accessing the files used lower case extensions. Unix servers treated upper and lower case as totally differently whereas Windows servers couldn't care less.

Fortunately, I had written a Java procedure to simultaneously renumber the files and change the extension to lower case.

The next step was to create smaller image files and even smaller thumbnail files from the large original pictures. An old version of Adobe Photoshop had a built-in procedure to do that.

With the originals, images and thumbnails ready, I could then prepare the web page that would display the picture gallery. That wasn't too difficult. I used an earlier picture gallery, copying it with a new name and editing it using Notepad.

Then I had to edit the page that listed all the galleries to link to the new one, again using Notepad.

The last part of the web site preparation was to generate the individual pages for each image, there being 24 in all. Again, I had written a Java procedure to do that.

Now the web pages and pictures were ready, I had to upload them to a Google sharing site from which our new webmaster, Marcus, could download them for uploading to the village web site and then I had to E-mail Marcus to tell him they were ready for him to place on the web site.

All that took the rest of the afternoon.

Having put away my camera, I decided to update this diary.

Monday, 14th October 2019

The plan was to start cleaning the lounge – the beginning of the preparations for Christmas.

It was such a nice, sunny, autumn morning, Jenny suggested a stroll round Ramsbottom, which yielded a gluten-free cookery book for Jenny and four DVDs for me as well as a few grocery items from Morrison's supermarket.

It was lunch-time when we returned home and, after putting out Jenny's washing line and digesting lunch, I was going to start cleaning the fire when Jenny asked me to take down the lounge curtains for washing.

Jenny then brought in an armful of cleaning materials and I was directed to the left-hand lounge window. I cleaned the curtain rail, the vertical blind track (which needed replacing anyway), the UPVC frame and the glass. The dirt on the frame was really hard to remove and took a good deal of time to clean with a aid of a scouring sponge.

By the time I had finished. It was too late to start on the other window. I put out the paper recycling bin for collection the following morning, processed the most recent TV recordings and resumed work on my web site until tea was ready.

Tuesday, 15th October 2019

The lounge cleaning continued and by the end of the day all that was left to do were the door to the dining room, the hearth and stove and the TV corner.

Wednesday, 16th October 2019

I had to be at the surgery for 9:05 for my annual check-up and when I had arrived and signed in using the touch-screen, I summoned the receptionist using the bell provided for the purpose and explained that I needed to rebook my 'flu jab after cancelling the earlier scheduled appointment because I was unwell. The very nice young lady checked my details (and who could blame her) and informed me that the nurse, Diane, I was seeing would give me the injection while I was there.

My check up went well, with my blood pressure spot on, to use Diane's exact phrase and my heart rate was fine, she having her finger on the pulse. I had lost seven pounds in weight since last check-up and my weight was back to its 2011 level, a step in the right direction.

Diane took two phials of blood from my right arm for the routine tests and said that the results would be available next week. If I didn't hear anything from the surgery, there was no problem.

Then it was time for my 'flu jab and Diane asked me if I wanted my Shingles injection as well. I said I had shingles a short while back but she said that didn't make any difference so I opted for that as well. Both injections went into my left arm. I was told there was a

possibility that the shingles injection site might blister and Diane put a plaster over the site just in case.

On my way to the surgery, I had met Joani Beale, exchanging a few words and on my way back, I met a neighbour, Dave Hulton and we briefly discussed the large trees on the common land at the side of our house. One was close to our house and the trees had grown to the extent that they were obstructing the satellite signal to the houses across the road. I suggested we raised the issue at the Friends of Huntfold A.G.M., due shortly.

We resumed cleaning the lounge until lunchtime. After lunch, we went out to collect some jumble from a lady in the village and we took it to the old school. Then we went out again to deliver the leaflets advertising the jumble sale and the Remembrance Day service to the residents on our estate.

The lounge was finished off before tea.

Thursday, 17th October 2019

This was another grocery shopping day at Home Bargains in Bury, Unicorn in Chorlton and Waitrose in Boradheath, where we also lunched as usual.

The M60 was busy in both directions but not as bad as usual, unlike the A56 back into Bury. Lunch was a case of sharing the last gluten-free chicken sandwich followed by a blueberry muffin bar we had brought with us.

Friday, 18th October 2019

This was a busy day. We attended the D-CaFF (our village dementia café) A.G.M. at the cricket club at 11:30, which lasted a good two hours and then headed down to Matthew and Carrie's house. Matthew was working from home and we went to drop off my bow-saw he wanted to borrow so he could trim back some tree branches that were overhanging his back fence from the common woodland on the other side.

The branches had given a rather large and determined squirrel access to his roof and it had found a way in to his loft space. The council's approach to removing it was to lay some poisoned bait in the loft, the animal being classed as vermin. It seems the squirrel had outwitted the exterminator and had not taken the bait.

The access it had made was letting in rain and had resulted in some damp in the ceiling. Matthew's insurance company had organised a handyman to temporarily fix the rainwater penetration. I had asked my builder, Steve Bithel, if he could have a look at the roof for Matthew and, despite him recovering from a very serious illness, he had organised his roofer, Paul, to visit Matthew and he had been that morning.

Matthew's attempts to trap the squirrel had also failed, so it was hoped that repairing the roof would block the access and the squirrel would go elsewhere.

We came home briefly about 3 p.m. to collect the items I had been testing and pricing at home for the jumble sale and took them round to the old school, where we started to

organise the room in which we would be selling the electrical equipment, setting out all of the items we had tested and priced thus far.

Later in the evening, the laptop I use for testing equipment at the old school and which I also used at home failed to load Windows 10. Fortunately, I kept all my personal data on external hard drives and I did manage to get into the command prompt to offload my Outlook pst file containing all my E-mail, contact information and diary to my external drive, which was just as well.

Saturday, 19th October 2019

We spent all day preparing the electrical jumble for the sale on the coming Monday and came home about 4 p.m.

I started on the repair of the laptop computer by downloading a Windows 10 ISO image from Microsoft using the Windows 7 laptop and burning it to a DVD. Inserting that in the Windows 10 laptop installed a fresh version of the operating system. How this managed to obtain the licence key, I was not sure but it worked fine, although I was up until 3 a.m. reinstalling some of the applications I needed and making sure it would record the TV programmes I had to reschedule for Sunday.

Sunday, 20th October 2019

With the laptop up and running and set to record the TV programmes, we headed for another day at the old school and came home to find everything had gone according to plan. The installation of application software continued and would do so piecemeal over the next few days until the laptop was completely up to date.

Monday, 21st October 2019

It was yet another long day at the old school (with the repaired laptop this time), the jumble sale being from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and we were not home until 6:40 p.m. after helping to tidy up.

During the week end I had also been repairing a desktop Acer system at home for a lady who helped out at the jumble sale, replacing the unresponsive, old Vista operating system with Windows 7. She came to collect the desktop and printer at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, 22nd October 2019

This was the first real opportunity I had to start on the backlog of TV recordings. I didn't have much time to do that because we went for an outing to Manchester, courtesy of TFGM (Transport for Greater Manchester). I must say that the bus and tram services were excellent, except for the ten-minute walk to and from our nearest bust stop because there was no useful, regular bus service through our village. Returning early evening, we were fortunate to find the bus we wanted waiting at Bury Interchange as we emerged from the tram station. The busses did not run very frequently in the evening.

Wednesday, 23rd October 2019

I spent most of the day working on restoring the Windows 10 laptop to the way I wanted it and dealing with the TV recordings.

We had a brief interlude at the dentist for a filling and a clean and polish each around lunchtime.

Thursday, 24th October 2019

What can one say about the usual grocery shopping day to Morrison's supermarket and Unicorn in Chorlton, Sainsbury's supermarket in Sale and Waitrose at Broadheath where we also had lunch? It was, essentially, a variation on the usual theme.

The experience of travelling there and back was no different even though the schools were on half-term holiday. There was the usual quota of impatient and inconsiderate motorists and the concept of leaving a gap for vehicles to manoeuvre and zip-merge was foreign to most, resulting in queuing and very slow-moving traffic.

It proved to be a long and tiring day.

Friday, 25th October 2019

It took me all day to store all the TV recordings for the following week, deal with the most recent recordings from this week and tidy up the recorded TV programmes we had watched, something I had not done for about a month.

I started looking at the Apple Mac Pro 6.1 running the OS X El Capitan operating system I had brought home from the jumble. The first problem was that the system kept going to sleep at seemingly random intervals and had to be awakened by pressing a key on the keyboard. Whether this was because I was using a USB PC keyboard (and mouse) I had no idea. Maybe an Apple system kept polling the keyboard when not being used and if it didn't get a response, maybe it timed out and went to sleep, in which case, an Apple keyboard would, presumably, respond to the poll, whereas a PC keyboard wouldn't.

Anyway, I ignored that for the present.

The key issue was to wipe the system of the previous owner's information, the user still being present. The only snag was that I didn't have any access codes.

I successfully entered recovery mode, using the PC keyboard Windows Key as the Apple Command key in the Command-R sequence while powering up and managed to erase the data partition. So far so good.

Reentering the recovery mechanism, I commenced the reinstallation of the OS and this is where it all fell apart. I had already configured the wireless connection to my network and the reinstallation connected to the Apple web site and started asking for the owners registration details, which, naturally, I didn't have. I wasn't happy, although I can well

understand the need for such security in the event of theft, not that the machine was that easy to carry, being extremely heavy.

I decided to contact Apple support except they didn't have an E-mail address so it was either telephone or live-chat. Being late in the day, I didn't opt for either and compiled a text message in some detail in preparation for the latter.

Saturday, 26th November 2019

I awoke still feeling extremely tired and aching all over. Jenny was also somewhat exhausted. We decided not to go to John and Mary's 40th wedding anniversary celebrations that evening and I sent an E-mail to that effect explaining we weren't very well.

We were up late and, after breakfast, spent the rest of the morning in the kitchen washing dishes, tidying up and preparing two lots of home-made juice concoctions for Jenny. My turn with the oranges would come the following morning.

After that, I chatted briefly with Matthew on Skype, dealt with my E-mails and updated my web site, which, having reinstalled Windows 10 recently, had the added challenge of creating my desktop folder to access my web site using FTP.

I dealt with the TV recordings for the day.

I also chatted with Apple support online, receiving some advice on how to make progress.

Sunday, 27th October 2019

I had another look at the Apple Mac Pro 6.1 running OS X El Capitan v 10.11.6. I still couldn't make any headway and contacted Apple support again. The chap was helpful but didn't really resolve the problem I had reinstalling the OS. Also, the machine kept going to sleep about every four minutes which made recovery difficult and eventually impossible.

I checked online and it seemed that this sleeping was not uncommon. Unfortunately, nobody had identified a single cause so I decided to give up and sell the item at the old school jumble as seen for spares.

Monday, 28th October 2019

I worked outside, cleaning the block paving yet again. We had hit a rare dry spell with a fair amount of sun, although it was quite cold. The work kept me warm, though.

With the hours of daylight dwindling as winter approached, I worked outside for as long as I could and managed to clean most of the block paving at the back.

I came in for a hair-cut and a shower.

There was some good news for once. The EU had extended our deadline for leaving, thwarting Boris Johnson's idiotic plans to leave without a deal if he could not negotiate one that was acceptable to Parliament by 31st October. Boris had said he would rather be dead in a ditch than have an extension so I lived in hope.

I was now hoping that there would be a general election, Labour would be elected with a majority and then we could have a second referendum on whether we left the EU or not. I was hoping that, if we did, the vast majority of people would see sense and vote to remain in Europe. It might not be the perfect solution but it would be the easiest to manage (at least we would continue to have a say) and it would not threaten our way of life.

The original referendum, in my view, was undemocratic in that the public were not presented with the facts by either side. Having originally voted to leave, I now realised this would be catastrophic. The decision as far as I could see boiled down to the following points:

- If we left, we needed to negotiate a trade deal with other countries and the USA and Canada couldn't wait to take full advantage. What's more, I had heard that some high ranking British officials were very keen on the idea of a trade agreement with the USA, largely because they stood to make a lot of money out of any negotiated arrangement.

The first problem with any such agreement was that the USA couldn't wait to get its hands on the NHS (American drugs companies already wanted the NHS to pay more for their products).

The second problem was that we would have to lower our food standards and much of the informative labelling about contents and their quality would disappear, so shoppers wouldn't have much of a clue what they were actually eating. For example, chlorine-washed chicken is currently not allowed under EU regulations. Without the protection of the EU, the market would be open to such contaminated food.

The third problem was climate change. With the current USA leadership being in total denial and Canada about to boost its fossil fuel output by 50%, where would leaving the EU put our commitment to reducing our carbon emissions? What we were proposing thus far was not enough and even other European countries were dithering about. If this issue was not tackled immediately and globally, the human race faced extinction with the next century or two at the most and, as matters progressively worsened, life would not be pleasant. The vast majority of people did not realise what their grandchildren were going to face and the extent to which they would have to physically fight on a daily basis for survival. If I made it to 100, approaching the middle of this century, I would expect to see the beginning of the end of human civilisation, if it hadn't started already. My consolation was first that I told everyone so (a bit like Noah and the Ark in the Christian Bible) and second that I had no grandchildren to worry about.

If you think that is total rubbish and would never happen, let me tell you that there is evidence that the earth has gone through about half-a-dozen or so

previous extinctions where almost all life had perished and had subsequently regenerated, so another one was more than possible.

Finally, I had no desire to become a member of the 51st State of the USA.

- If we left the EU, how would we manage the border in Ireland? We still did not have an acceptable solution to this problem. Further, if Scotland pushed for and gained independence and then joined the EU (in the last referendum, Scotland was vastly in favour of remaining in the EU), how would we manage the border between England and Scotland? Perhaps the Scots would rebuild Hadrian's Wall, this time not to keep the Scots out of England but to keep the English out of Scotland. I for one would very likely seek a residence permit for Scotland so we could move there if this were the case. My other option would be to move to Ireland.

Tuesday, 29th October 2019

It was another nice, sunny, autumn day with a little more of a cold breeze. I spent another day in the garden, the first task being to sweep up the leaves that had blown down onto the patio I had cleaned yesterday.

I cut the grass on the back garden and the mower also gathered up all of the leaves off the grass and I ended up with three large loads of debris which I just managed to squeeze into the garden waste recycling bin.

I cleaned the block paving round by the outside lamp post and down behind the raised beds before starting on the side passage, where I left off yesterday.

I managed one section of block paving, between the last bay section of the conservatory and the fence, before lunch.

A brief rest after lunch gave me the opportunity to listen to the Goon Show I had recorded from BBC Radio 4 Extra that morning. It was the story of the Silent Bugler and the original version was first broadcast in 1954. This was the Vintage Goons version, recorded in 1958 but not broadcast in the UK when recorded.

I already had both the original and the Vintage Goons recordings but the former was very poor quality and this recording of the latter was better quality than the one I had. I also had a version of this on cassette tape but I didn't know which one, so I made a note to check. There are some differences in the script between the two versions and the original was produced by Peter Eton and the later version by Charles Chilton.

After the lunch break, I went back outside and it had turned much colder.

I cleaned the mower from its use earlier and stored it away, leaving the front garden for now. I started on the next section of the passage, this being up to the next fence post, about six feet. After that, I tidied up and came in.

I couldn't put all of the leaves still in the wheel barrow in the bin so I left the barrow in the garage as it was, the plan being to put the leaves into plastic sacks until the waste bin had been emptied in a week's time. A job for tomorrow, I thought.

Wednesday, 30th October 2019

I didn't put the leaves in bags. Instead I resumed the block paving cleaning and progressed as far as the chimney down the side passage.

Thursday, 31st October 2019

We went grocery shopping, or, alternatively, lane crawling.

We first stopped at Village Greens in Prestwich for some non-organic psyllium husk powder, which Jenny thought they stocked, the organic variety being out of stock at our suppliers. They didn't have any.

Leaving empty-handed, we crawled down the M60 as far as the Trafford Centre, where we were able to speed up to the exit we took to reach Unicorn in Chorlton. Following a brief visit to Sainsbury's in Sale, we motored along the A56 towards Broadheath, encountering two lanes of slow-moving traffic as we approached the major junction just before our turn-off to Waitrose.

Lunch at Waitrose was a treat. There were two egg and watercress, gluten-free sandwiches and a chicken salad gluten-free sandwich in the self-service cabinet and some polenta cake with no gluten-containing ingredients at the café. We settled for an egg and watercress sandwich each and shared a slice of the cake, all with with our pot of tea.

Traffic back along the A56 to the motorway was heavy but at least we kept moving at a fare pace. That was short-lived when we joined the M60, rarely managing to shift above second gear for much of the way to Prestwich.

The A56 back to Bury was also extremely busy and, in taking advantage of a gap in the left-hand lane of traffic to detour round a vehicle turning right in the right-hand lane at Whitefield, naturally after indicating, inspired the mindless idiot in the van behind in the left lane, to speed up, trying to squeeze down our left, brake sharp and sound his vehicle's horn long and loud instead of giving way to the manoeuvre which would not have disadvantaged his vehicle's position in the traffic flow one iota. Jenny, in the passenger seat, was quite alarmed. I simply carried on driving and ignored him.

As I have said before, the key to good driving was to leave a gap between your vehicle and the vehicle in front so that drivers could safely change lanes.