

The Fourth Estate '99

John and Noelene Gillatt:

23 4th Avenue, Heaton, Bolton, BL1 4LU, UK

Tel: 0044 1204 84349

E-Mail: giblets@gaijin.demon.co.uk

Internet: <http://www.gaijin.demon.co.uk>



Our Year in One Sentence

got old, Noelene's doing grand at college, Dawn and Claire got jobs and Claire got Carl! But there was a bit more to '99 than that!

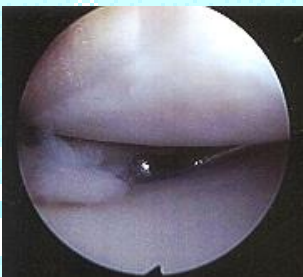
Old Farts Celebrate

What a year of celebration! Both Noelene and I had birthdays ending in "0" and in July we had a celebration to end all. I'm sure I can still feel the twinges of the hangover even now. Dawn was exactly half my age this year (but not twice as fast!), the only time that'll happen.

Having reached my first half-century makes me even more determined to make the best of the second half. Just hope the body lasts out!

Still Crooked

20 years of road running have made the knees protest a bit and in February I had one of my cartilages operated on. Here's what it looked like (it really is the inside of my knee!).



I won't show the picture of the other scan I had done later in the year!!

Anyway, I've just started jogging again and will (probably) be as fit as a butcher's

dog by the time of Garstang Running Club's biennial visit to the Ballycotton 10 race near Cork next March.

If She Were a Horse!

Noelene has struggled and struggled this year. First she has continuing tennis elbow, then an operation for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in June. Finally, we found that one of the main reasons for all her problems has been a severely underactive thyroid gland. That's now being

treated with thyroxin but it's taking a long time for her to get back to normal and in the meantime she struggles on.

She's a Winner!

In June Noelene finished her Foundation Course and passed with flying colours. Now she's on the first year of a 3 year BA in Fine Art at Bolton University College (well, nearly!) and after that.....? Well, we'll never be rich, that's for sure!

And So Are They

After three years Dawn qualified as a Psychiatric Nurse and immediately got a job at North Manchester General and, so far, seems to love it.

One of her birthday presents was a day at Donnington Park in the sports saloons and one seaters. She drove very much the same as when she's on her way to work!



Dawn got a new car too!

Claire's now the star saleswoman at the PDSA shop in town and, after being a voluntary worker for a year, she impressed them so much that they've given her a part-time paid job with the chance of being full-time next year. Earlier in the year she met Carl, another student but a good guy all the same, and they got a



new flat together in Bolton.



Claire and Carl Make Bubbles!

Sounds Good!

After a couple of years of a musical famine '99 brought rather a feast. After a false start last year we saw the Stones in Edinburgh during the summer. 2½ hours of pure energy and the greatest rock 'n roll you'll ever hear. I'm biased, of course, but even Noelene was amazed at how lightly the old guys cast aside their zimmers and rocked!

Cambridge '99 was a must too. Starring were James Taylor, Loudon Wainright III, Christine Collister, The Saw Doctors, The Oyster Band, the dark, depressing Nick Cave and a host of others. The weather was hot too (30°C at times) but WE WERE COOL!



Claire Chills Out!

Noelene saw some of the musicians of Cuba's Buena Vista Social Club and later in the summer we went to G*teborg and spent an evening at the Jazz Festival. The Stan Tracey Quartet gave us an excellent Sunday lunchtime performance at (yes, you heard it right!) Wigan Pier and towards the end of the year we saw the Afro Cuban All Stars and our Socialist conscience, Bill Bragg.

One of the best performances we heard was Dawn's present of tickets to Cheetham's Orchestra at Manchester's wonderful new venue, the Bridgewater Hall. You see we ARE cultured (honest)!



Noelene Keeps COOL at Cambridge

The Wedding of the Summer

As you know I'm rather partial to a wedding or two myself but this summer it was our now "old doctor" friend (well he is in his mid twenties) Thorsten who finally got hitched to Michaela.

The wedding, in their home town of Detmold, was wonderful with the party going on until 3 am the next morning. Our love and best wishes go to them and thanks to Helmut and Monika



Thorsten and Michaela Get Hitched

Holzkomper for their wonderful German hospitality.



Where We've Been, What We've Seen

Aus Deutschland

Thor continues sending me to Germany for a week every month and a couple of times during the year Noelene and I have been able to explore the delights of the beautiful Cathedral city of Speyer together.



Der Dom an Speyer

In the summer I got caught up in the "total eclipse" fever and was lucky enough to see the sun disappear completely for about 1½ minutes - a very eerie experience.

The Nordic Experience

Later in the Summer, (courtesy of Airmiles!) we were able to at last visit Trond and Astrid at their home near Gästeborg on the west coast of Sweden, to swim in the sea, fail to catch fish from Trond's boat and indulge our fantasy for barbecues and good malt whiskey! As Trond says "no brain, no pain!".



The Captain!

A Smaller Island

Noelene's X0 birthday present from me was a long weekend on the island of Guernsey where we spent our honeymoon ("what a romantic", do I hear you say?!). The weather was excellent and the island is so calm and peaceful that we just wanted to stay.

La Fête des Goughies

In July we drove to St. Briac in Brittany for La Fête des Goughs, Anne and Graham's 30th anniversary party. With just four "limeys" (+ 1 "soutgat" - Noelene) and about 30 Breton friends it was a good chance to practice the French I'd learned at school all those years



Noelene, Anne et Ali - la Fête Française

ago. I can't say that we, or they, understood all the exchanges but one thing's for sure, we were never short of food or wine and we've a whole load more friends now.

More French Lessons!

In the Autumn Noelene went on the school college trip to Paris, travelling from Bolton by bus and spending a week in a French "budget" hotel (still too good for students!). She claims that it was a very sober week and that they spent all their time in art museums and galleries. What do YOU think?!

Art Galore

With Noelene now doing her Art Degree I get dragged into all sorts of "arty farty" things. But, you know, I rather enjoy it.

We've been to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park a couple of times with their stunning display by



The Artist With Her Work

Lipschitz and to the Turner Prize Exhibition at London's Tate Gallery. At the time of writing we're fervently hoping that Tracey Emin, with her study of an unmade bed, DOESN'T win the prize

Bolton too has hosted several top exhibitions including of the 1905 - 1925 German Expressionists (or "German Depressionists", as I call their gloomy works) and, of course the College's Student show.

Our Top Ten of '99

- Film: Buena Vista Social Club
- Record: Buena Vista Social Club
- Book: Notes from a Small Island by Bill Bryson
- Exhibition: Lipschitz at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park
- Performance: The Rolling Stones at Edinburgh
- Place Visited: G*teborg
- Restaurant: Chez Goughs, Bolton
- Event: Cambridge Folk Festival
- Party: Thorsten and Michaela's Wedding
- DIY Project: Putting up new TV aerial, half making new curtains!

A New Millennium Challenge

Reading Bill Bryson's "A Walk in the Woods" has inspired me to at least dream of walking the 450 km Pennine Way from Edale in Derbyshire to Kirk Yetholm in The Borders

during the next twelve months. It should be possible to do it in 14 - 16 days.

Anyone fancy a "Walk on the Moors" for two weeks next July?



The Pennine Way

What No Politics This Year?

Er, well, I guess that, although we still work at it and are as committed to Socialism as ever, the reality of Labour in power is to say the least, a bit of a disappointment. I guess that we shouldn't have been too surprised. But we'll keep up the good work.

**A HAPPY
CHRISTMAS
AND MAY
YOUR NEXT
MILLENNIUM
BE AS GOOD
AS YOUR
LAST!**