

The Millennium Fourth Estate

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What A Start!

Whether you believe the new millennium started on 01/01/00 or a year later, last New Year's Eve was certainly a good excuse for the best turn of the year celebration we've ever had.



The Coverdale Ave., Bolton street party was certainly the place to be with fireworks, projection TV, excellent food and just one or two drinks (only to be sociable, of course). The climax of the event was the fabulous Satin Sheen, grunge garage band of street musicians playing live. And here's Graham with one of his admirers!

On The Road Again

Having put on quite a few kilos I approached the Ballycotton 10 Road Race in Cork with some trepidation.



But, no fear, I was well up to adsorbing the inevitable pints of Lucozade stout to give energy for the race. Along with the fine, hearty fellows from the Garstang Running Club we certainly showed the Irish a thing or two during our biennial visit in March!

And Mary MacAleesh, the Irish President, was there to cheer us on and sign my T shirt!

I'll not tell how long it took me to run the 10 miles. Suffice to say that Mum with her walking frame wouldn't have been too far behind!

If She Were a Horse!

Last year I said that if Noelene were a horse then she'd have been put down.

Well, her hypertension and thyroid seem well under control and in January and July respectively she had operations for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and Tennis Elbow and now, despite the usual winter colds that we both have as I write, she's fighting fit.

In fact, I've thought of entering her in a steeplechase at Doncaster next season or at least a point to point

Clever Clogs!

Noelene, despite a lot of time off, passed the first year of her Art BA at Bolton (almost) University and is now doing the second year specialising in sculpture, ceramics and print.

Dawn officially graduated and has a new job as a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, working in the community, and Claire's now with the PDSA full time, raising the money to save all those poor, mistreated cuddly animals.



Carl, Claire's fella, also did well at College and is now in the second year of his Degree in (wait for it!) Consumer Product Design, also at Bolton.

Even I managed to get in on the act and, with my Monday evening class at Turton School, scraped through to the GCSE German course with a very believable rendition of "Ich möchte ein Mittel für Durchfall" (I would like a remedy for diarrhoea!). And that's no comment on my linguistic skills



Careful With That Axe!

Well, '99 had been a good year for sounds but this was even better.

The musicians we've heard and seen in 2000 cover the whole spectrum of the musical rainbow:

- Township Express (African township jazz)
- Hugh Masakela
- Eddi Reader
- the incredible Santana
- Stan Tracey
- Noelene saw Steely Dan at the NEC
- I saw Steeleye Span at Bolton Town Hall (don't confuse them as Noelene did).

The Cambridge Folk Festival was good too and closer to its folk music roots than usual. Stars were:

- Eliza Carthy
- Dr. John
- Joan Baez
- The Afro Cuban all Stars (who we saw again at the England vs. West Indies Test Match at Old Trafford)
- Eddi Reader (again)
- Billy Bragg - keeping us politically "on message"!
- Tony Benn, MP (reciting, not singing) accompanied by Roy Bailey (for me the real stars of Cambridge 2000)

The year has finished with the mind blowing (I kid you not) Australian Pink Floyd Show, surely the best tribute band around today. Close your eyes and you too could be "On the Dark Side of the Moon".



There Wasn't A Bus!

In last year's 4th Estate I made the very rash announcement that I'd be walking the Pennine Way in the summer. Unfortunately, everyone remembered!

So, on 1st July I set off from Edale in Derbyshire on the 450km trek to Kirk Yetholm, just across the Scottish border and arrived footsore but ecstatic 16 days later.

Before doing the walk I thought that I knew England but I quickly realised that there's still so much to see.

Most wonderful of all was High Cup Nick in Cumbria - the most breathtaking blind-ended valley you could



imagine.

Better even than the scenery, though, was the comradeship of the walkers I met on the route. More than once we helped each other through difficult times and made several lasting friends.

I met an amazing couple from Yorkshire called Harry and Elaine doing the walk for their third time and wearing trainers instead of boots. When she had told one of the patients at the hospital where she works that she was planning to walk to Scotland, the reply came "*Isn't there a bus?*"

The full story of the walk, complete with over 200 photos, is at <http://gillatt.org/pennine>. So check it out and leave a message on the "guest page!"



So Where To Now?

- **Another Nordic Experience**

In late April Noelene came with me to a Conference in Norway and we took the "scenic route" to get there.

First a ferry from Harwich to Esbjerg in Denmark and from Fredrikshavn, on another ferry, across to Larvic in Norway, followed by a short drive to Sandefjord. And not a sign of seasickness the whole way!

The Norwegians have a very special way of making you feel at home, even to the extent of providing appropriate entertainment.



While we were there we managed to see the home and studio of the great Norwegian painter Edvard Munch (he of "The Scream") and the superb sculpture park in the middle of Oslo filled with work by Gustav Vigeland.

- **Nach Deutschland Wieder**

Later, in June, Noelene came with me to Speyer again and I really impressed her with my command of the language! Shouting English very slowly really does work with non-English speakers. I recommend you to try it!

- **Up The Backbone!**

The Pennine hills are known as "the backbone of England" and most of our travelling this year was in a slowly northwards direction for 16 days, me on foot and Noelene most definitely with four wheels! (see [Wasn't There A Bus?](#))

- **So Good They Named it Twice**

Finally, at the end of November, we went on the ~~School~~ College Art trip to New York with about 50 others, mostly students.

We stayed at the West Side YMCA (where it's "fun to stay") just off Central Park and saw so many art museums and galleries that I've just about forgotten them by now.



Actually, the Museum of Modern Art (the MoMa to us in the know!) was superb with originals of pictures that I'd only ever seen in books before, including Vincent's "Starry Night" which moved Noelene to tears.

I jogged in Central Park, Noelene braved the top of the Empire State building, we saw the world's most beautiful art deco building (The Chrysler), we walked our legs to stumps, rode the subway and had a thoroughly excellent time.

Not Forgotten

Politics may not be the most popular thing to write about but we're still Socialists even though we are active in the Labour Party!



Billy Bragg put things into perspective at the Cambridge Folk Festival when he said that in 1979 he didn't bother to vote and Margaret Thatcher got elected.

Tony Blair and Co.'s way may not be your or my idea of the "historic path to Socialism" but the alternative of Hague and his lunatic cronies is just too awful to contemplate.

So, come April or May, if that's when the election is, don't call me because I'll be on the campaign trail once again.

Make sure you too "vote early, vote often"!

Our Millennium Top 10

• Film:	Goya in Bordeaux
• Record:	Santana's "Supernatural"
• Book:	"The Shipping News" by Annie Proulx
• Exhibition:	"The Amazons of the Avante Garde" at the Guggenheim, New York
• Performance:	Hugh Masekela at Liverpool
• Place Visited:	New York or was it Celle, Germany or was it
• Restaurant:	Still <i>Chez Goughs</i> , Bolton. The raclette is highly recommended.
• Event:	The England vs. W. Indies Test Match (England won!)
• Party:	The Coverdale New Year Party
• DIY Project:	Fence building with Jane, our neighbour

Finally

Our love, best wishes, a Happy Christmas and a Socialist New Year to all.