

The Fourth Estate 2008

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This year we're not sending cards again and also e-mailing as many of the Fourth Estates as possible. The money we'll save will be donated to those who aren't as fortunate as us this Christmas — the destitute refugees and asylum seekers in Bolton who are being cared for by BRASS (*Befriending Refugees and Asylum Seekers*), Victoria Hall, Knowsley Street, Bolton BL1 2AS. Why not help too?

A Fast German Car?



I could have sworn that Noelene said she wanted a Porsche but instead all we've got is a three sided extension around the front and garage doors. So that's

been our "housey" project for this year. It does look rather spiffin' and does help keep the house warm; but I reckon the car would have been cheaper (and much more fun)!

Two Weddings and.....

Lots of fun! First there was Ali and Graham's wedding in a very (and I mean VERY) cold New York at the end of February and then in October it was our friend Beverley's turn to tie the knot with Cam (that's his name, NOT his function!). Now you know how Johnny Three Weddings loves iced fruitcake so you can imagine what a good time we had at both wonderful events.

Ali's nuptials were all the more poignant when she laid her bouquet on the John Lennon memorial at Strawberry Fields in Central Park and there were many tears amongst the

laughter. Noelene, despite the cold and her fear of heights, bravely made it to the top of the Empire State and almost looked over the side!

Places to Go.....

People to see. Well, John's work "empire" seems to be expanding all the while and this year he saw yet more places for the first time:

Bangladesh — very poor but full of great people and lots of huge bats in the park! Seeing the sunset over the Bay of Bengal was just spectacular

Sri Lanka— Would be even better if there weren't armed road blocks every few hundred metres. The whole island, though, did observe a minutes silence to mark the passing of Arthur C Clarke, which was brilliant.

Nigeria — worrying!

Mexico — just wonderful. The pyramids at Teotihuacan were the highlight of a wonderful (business?) trip and the old fart managed to climb to the top of the biggest.

Iran — off there next week so look out for a report in a years time!

Maybe next year we'll get to Bridlington (but see over the page!).



Sunset — Bay of Bengal



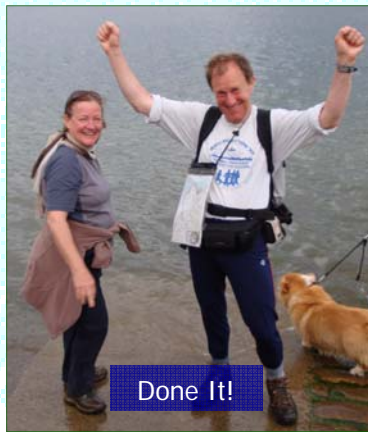
Pyramide y Sol

Heading East!

Unfortunately only one decent walk is allowed every three years. So in the last year of my sixth decade (work that out!) I plodded over ~310 kms of moorland day after day seeking some sort of spirituality in sore feet and aching limbs and completed the Coast to Coast Walk (the C2C to those of us in the know) in 12 days, ably supported and partly accompanied by Noelene, Goughie and Julie. In the Wainwright Bar at Robin Hood's Bay, the eastern end of the



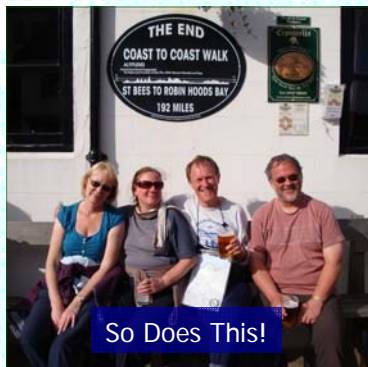
What — Me Lost?



Done It!



That Feels Better



So Does This!

trek, I recorded that I was "footsore, brain dead and comfortably numb!" But it was just FB. The full story and more piccies are at www.gillatt.org/c2c.

No, Not Bridlington!

To those of you in the know you might remember that in 2009 we both have birthdays ending in a "0" (not a hint, **honest!**). Although I was all for celebrating Noelene's by doing the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path or the Southern Upland Way she thought that it might be a better idea to disappear off to somewhere nice and see some real pyramids instead of those piddly little things they have in Mexico.

So in February we're heading South East; and I don't mean to Kent, for a few days in Cairo followed by a cruise down the Nile and all things archaeological. More next year or see www.gillatt.org/egypt some time in April.

In the case of the other old fart the lure of long distance travel just doesn't have the romance it used to. So we're having a

party instead and you're all invited: **BE THERE!**

When? Saturday June 20th from afternoon until late

Where? The home of the Fourth Estate, of course

What Else?



Racing for Life

Well, once again in memory of our wonderful friend Anne, Noelene and a gang of her mates yomped around Leverhulme Park, Bolton in the *Women's Race for Life* and I collected a fair few quid for her donation to breast cancer research.

In May John had the local Tories worried when he "came out", declaring himself the Socialist candidate and once more standing in the local elections. Although, as usual, he didn't win he was quoted as saying "I do believe that I've laid the foundations for victory in the years ahead" (or something like that!).

The year hasn't been musically completely dead either. We've seen Eddi Reader (twice!), Eliza Carthy, her dad Martin along with newly reinvigorated Dave Swarbrick and the wonderful Steeleye Span. But best of all, and just before the Fourth Estate went to press we saw Leonard Cohen at



the MEN Arena — Noelene for the first time and me for the first time in 40 years! It was amongst the most wonderful of concerts we have ever seen — full of fun, energy, emotion and wonderful, wonderful singing with a superb band. If you get the chance you **MUST** see him. "Dance me 'til the end of time"

Want to Read More!

There's just not enough space for all we want to say at this time of the year but there's more at www.gillatt.org/2008. There's also no room for our Top Ten of the year yet again. But numero uno this and every year is:

- The love of our families and all our friends

Finally

If you like our photos you can see lots more of them at:

<http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/gaijin1234>. You never know, you might just spot yourself in one or two of them!

