

# The Fourth Estate 2013

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## No Cards Again!

**act:onaid**

**T**he death of Nelson Mandela and John's travels to Africa and India make us realise that, for all the moaning and groaning we hear in this country, we are truly very lucky indeed. So, as in previous years, we are giving our Christmas card and postage money to **act:onaid** one of the very good charities that really does make a difference.

## What happened

**t**o that lovely little baby, Mr. Jack Morris? Seems that he's turned into an even lovelier, chatterbox. He's now at pre-school nursery and school next September, always likes to chat on the phone — though mostly to Noelene. Oh, and he has been known to chat up the ladies - especially the one who answers when you dial 999! Hola Mr. Jack!



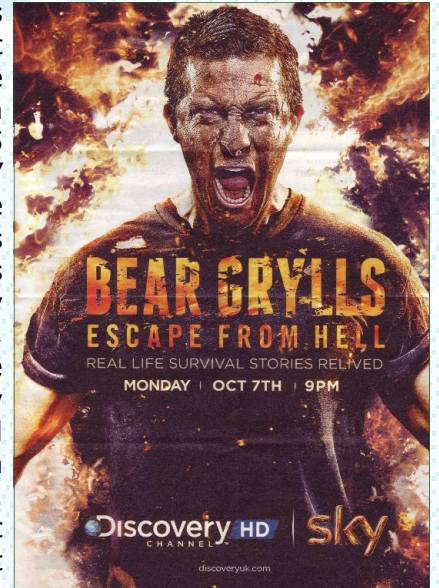
## On the Bonnie, Bonnie Banks

**T**his year's walk took us along the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond - and a lot further too. John walked and Noelene drove the almost 100 miles of the West Highland Way. You'd think that, distance aside, a walk partly along the shores of a lake would be easy but the combination of not fantastic weather and the hills that someone added made it quite a challenge. However, it was absolutely wonderful and there cannot be more spectacular or beautiful places in the world than Glencoe in the sunshine. Then there was Ben Nevis to climb at the end and John got a hankering to climb all three of Britain's highest mountains, which he did. After Ben Nevis in July there was Scafell Pike in August and Helvellyn in September.



## Jungle Tales!

**A**fter eight years you'd think that John's "jungle trek" would have been forgotten. But his "15 minutes of fame" continues. In March he signed a deal to tell his life story (actually that's not true but it possibly got you worried!). No, we were asked to be part of a Discovery Channel survival programme and spent a day filming in London. Now, we both think that Bear Grylls is a prat but whoever wrote the script did a pretty good job and the programme was shown in early October, to worldwide acclaim, I'm sure! If, like 99% of the populace, you didn't see it there are clips here — <http://bit.ly/18IjRci>.



## And then one day you find...

**20** years have gone! Yes, we really did celebrate May Day 1993 in a big way by tying the knot and since then we have become so comfortable with each other that we really can't think of anything better than going on this way for another 20, 30 ..... years! To still be best friends, lovers, soul mates and partners after all this time amazes us both. So, in May this year we toddled off to Guernsey, our honeymoon island, and celebrated what has been and anticipated what is yet to come in very fine style!





## On, On...

**W**ell, the threatened running comeback hasn't amounted to much but John did the Salford 10k again and did "very well for his age"! But we're both swimming regularly now — Noelene even managing the early morning session most days. I'm determined that when my pension starts next June I'm going to draw it until I get my contributions back (who am I kidding!).

## Travels

**N**o month in an exotic place such as South Africa this year but we started 2013 with a superb New Year in Wales with Mr. G., Mrs. B. and the Titters .....



..... and then, after the West Highland Way trek, a spectacular week in the Highlands with the Titters - fantastic weather, wonderful food and "liquids" and excellent company. What could be better?

Of course, there was our week in Guernsey, wandering about, revisiting many places and their memories and generally being "smootchie".

In October we visited Kew Gardens and were given a personal guided tour of Parliament by Noelene's boss, Julie Hilling, MP.

Steam train journeys seem to have featured in our lives this year — first in Wales at New Year, then in the Scottish Highlands and finally in October when we went on a 1930s themed "Murder Mystery" train trip on a dark night in Loughborough. It was great fun — good food and wine, us in fine style (of course) and the murder mystery going on around us as we travelled through the night. Whodunnit? Well, that's a secret but we certainly got it wrong — and after watching all those Poirot and Midsomer programmes!

We're off to Brussels for new year and plans are already afoot for next year — Spain in March with "the gang" and



the Outer Hebrides revisited in the summer. But I ain't walking the length of the islands this time!

## Not lying down

**I** think, as we get older, we both become more and more angry at the injustices in the world and just how badly so many people are treated, the conditions that they have to live in and the dangers that they face every day. That's why we continue to do what we can to protest against the excesses and injustices in our society. We hope that you share our thoughts and will also not be part of the "silent majority"!

*No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.*

*Nelson Mandela*



## What Else?

- Garden landscaping project going very, very slowly and "rather costly"
- John raised almost £300 by growing a few hairs in "Movember"!
- Good music this year from Roger Waters, Aussie Pink Floyd, Hugh Masekela, Billy Bragg, Eddi Reader with Mike and The Mechanics and Runrig booked for 2014
- Next year it's Lionel Ritchie's "special birthday" but he's not planning to retire quite yet!
- John's new car due anytime now

## Want to Read More!

**A**s always we've run out of space but there's lots more at [www.gillatt.org/2013](http://www.gillatt.org/2013). Our love, best wishes, a very happy Christmas, a peaceful New Year and we look forward to keeping in touch, or even seeing you in the flesh in 2014.

