

The Fourth Estate 2016

John and Noelene Gillatt: 23 Fourth Avenue, Heaton, Bolton, Lancs BL1 4LU, UK
Tel: +44 (0)1204 843429, us@gillatt.org, http://www.23fourth.org, Skype: john.noelene

Instead of Cards!

Each year we support a charity we believe in rather than spend £100 or more on Christmas cards. This year has been a terrible one for millions fleeing war and persecution in their own countries and we are proud to support the Bolton Destitution Project, caring for refused asylum seekers, asylum seekers and refugees; people who have absolutely nothing, no rights, no care or help. Please also help people such as them this Christmas.



The Nerve Centre!



So, How Was It?

After almost 49 years with his nose to the grindstone retirement took John almost two days to get used to!

Advantages:

- No M60 motorway journeys
- No 5:30 am waking up
- Reading in bed of a night
- Afternoon cinema
- No worries about work after a late night out
- Travelling where we want to, when we want to
- Mid-week walking

Disadvantages:

- Missing some of the lovely people at work
- Er.....



No big new erections this year but we did manage to finally sort out what used to be the study.

Now it's the headquarters of the Heaton & Lostock Labour Party and Noelene's quilting sweatshop, complete with new sewing machine and strange "devices" that completely baffle me!

Green Fingers?



Growing Up!

That cute little boy Mr. Jack is now, er.. still a cute little boy — most of the time. School seems to be going well, he's a Beaver (didn't they used to be Scout Cubs?) and is still a complete Lego fanatic, though he has learned to "speak Minecraft" which we find pretty incomprehensible. And he just loves camping with his dad — well, we and Carl think so!



He's already decided that he wants to be a policeman, or a fireman, or..... I keep telling him that Microbiology would be a much better profession **but he just won't listen!**

There's no doubt that Noelene is blessed with green fingers and this year has brought a fine crop of just about everything — even figs ripening in the searing Bolton summer heat! John mowed the lawn with great skill and tried to keep the neighbour's cats out!

And what could be better on a fine summer evening than a big G and T in the garden and an even bigger hosepipe!



Ouch!

Just when things were going so well — plenty of running, swimming and even a bit of cycling I managed to fall off a bike in Spain (I WON'T blame my companion — at least not in public!) and ended up at the local A&E. But thanks to my European Health Insurance Card (eek, what will we do when they're gone?!) I received the excellent advice to take paracetamol for my broken rib! After four months it's just starting to get better so, hopefully next year will see an explosion of energy and some lovely long distance paths walked. If I'm not too traumatised I might even get the bike out again!



East Fife in the Sunshine

Places and Faces

Now that life is ONE LONG HOLIDAY it's great to be able to go where we want and when — albeit Ryanair rather than BA Business!



To Yaapieland!

So, off we went with Gary and Charo for almost six weeks in wonderful South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique, saw all three days of the 2nd test match, dived in the Indian Ocean, went turtle watching (but it rained so hard they hid!), walked in the Drakensberg Mountains, visited Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, saw live music, took the Blue Train to Pretoria — I guess you get the picture. Oh, and a beer and glass of wine or two were consumed along with lots of other good things!

En España

In the summer we headed for “rather warm” Spain for a couple of weeks of the finest Almoradi hospitality, excellent food and wine courtesy of Señor and Señora Titley and the care of the Orihuella A&E Department!

So to Caledonia

A year couldn't pass without at least one visit north of the border and in August we went with “the gang” for a week in the beautiful East Fife fishing village of Pittenweem — both of us walking, despite the old fella's broken rib, relaxing (life is SO hectic!) sightseeing and just enjoying the beauty of a part of bonny Scotland we'd not visited before. It's wonderful — get yourself there!

Dwa razy w Polsce

And then to Poland in September — beautiful Zakopane in the Tatra Mountains followed by intriguing Lodz, the Manchester of the country, and a very fine city too. In fact the country was so good that we're off to Krakow just before Christmas, of course for the market but also to remember the Holocaust at Auschwitz.

We Don't Like to Mention It!

Well, what a \$%&@ year it's been on the political front. John did his “usual” in May (yes STILL not on the Council), Mr. Jack is in training and we were



proud to be amongst the 48% in the referendum. But it was 58 : 42 to leave in notloB and we were devastated. At least the Yanks can get rid of Trump in four years — we are doomed I tell you!

Musically Challenged? I Think Not!

Another good musical year with Runrig's 40th anniversary tour, Steeleye Span still going strong, Marry Waterson and David A. Jaycock, the Trio Dhoor from Belgium and last, but not least Billy Bragg and Joe Henry touring with “Shine a Light”, their “railway” album. And very good it is too. Who knows what 2017 will bring — apart from Johnny no mates going to see the Australian Pink Floyd Show in October!

Want to Read More?

Yes, we've run out of space again but there is much, much more on our new Fourth Estate website - www.23fourth.org/2016. 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 2017.