

The Fourth Estate 2009

John and Noelene Gillatt: 23 Fourth Avenue, Heaton, Bolton, Lancs BL1 4LU, UK
Tel: +44 (0)1204 843429, E-Mail: us@gillatt.org, Internet: <http://www.gillatt.org>



As in the last two years we're not sending cards again and once more we're e-mailing as many of the *Fourth Estates* as possible. As in 2008, the money we save will be donated to those whose lot is just as bad this year as last — 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?

About Time Too!



Mummy To Be

We promise to not be (too) doting grandparents and bore you, our regular readers, with every poop and pee of our future grandchild. But there is something really special and exciting about being in this "happy condition" for the first time. Claire and Carl expect Jack William or ??? May on 15th June. So that's well and truly buggered our holiday plans for 2010! I think, for the first time since

Dawn and Claire were born, the prospect of a howling, screaming little thing (and I DON'T mean Noelene!) really does fill us with unbelievable joy.

Old Farts Both

I suppose that with future grandparenthood comes the wisdom of age and, as you know, I began my seventh decade in June with my child bride only starting her sixth last January. But it's GREAT— bus pass, free prescriptions, free swimming, cheap theatre tickets, winter heating allowance and many more benefits. But



Paddling in The Nile

How Old?!

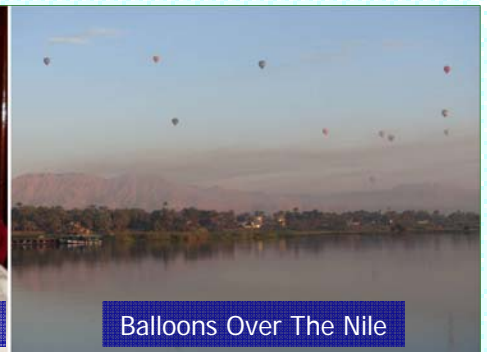
PLEASE PLEASE make sure the Tories don't win the next election or we'll just be poor oldies! We celebrated The Boss's half centenary with a paddle in the River Nile and Old Fart's "diamond geezer's" just as you would expect!

Places to Go.....

I must admit that the idea of a Nile Cruise wasn't at the top of my agenda but Noelene's dreamed of it all her life and, to be honest, it was just fandabbydozy. I have to say that, towards the end, we were suffering from just a twinge of "temple fatigue" but it was even more spectacular than we had hoped or dreamed of. If you ever get the chance or excuse — just do it.



Queen of Sheba?



Balloons Over The Nile

Hello Mother

Some of you might think that having your mother-in-law with you for three months is just about the worst punishment there could be. But we were very, very pleased when Merle left the warm and dry South African winter for the cold and wet English summer (*eh?*), with her smoking gazebo outside the back door blowing away in a mild mid-summer breeze!

We took her to the north (Edinburgh), the east (Norfolk), the

west (Cornwall) and even the south (Windsor) as well as exotic places and events such as Bolton Market and the Mela. And you know, she cooks one of the finest lamb curries this side of Rawalpindi; so come back any time Merle!



At The Eden Project

Where Else



Seafood Chef



Doing It The Hard Way

Cornwall with Merle in the summer was the second time we'd been this year, the first, with Goughie and Julie, was to catch up the celebration of his own "diamond geezer" birthday a couple of years ago with a day at Rick Stein's seafood cooking school. And didn't he look pleased, as well as a little "tired and emotional", at the end of his day!

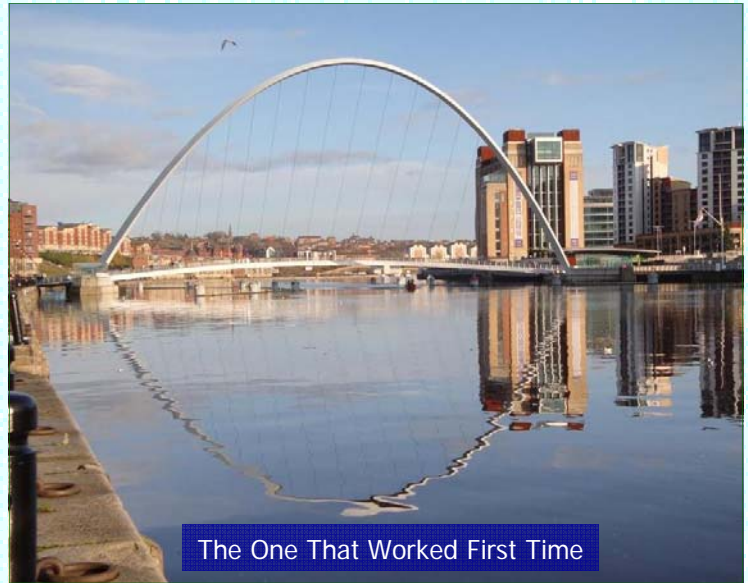
We continue going to Julie's friends' cottage in Wales as often as we can and will be there over New Year again. We've almost finished walking the Llyn Coastal path, apart from the bits that aren't on the coast and Noelene has decided to show us all how to do it the hard way, insisting on carrying a huge piece of driftwood along the entire route!



It Still Holds Wine, Though

Dawn and Jon's diamond pressie for the Old Fart was a day at the National Glass Centre. So, in November, we stayed on the North Sea coast at Roker, DIDN'T get blown off and John did his thing with pieces of hot glass. It was just terrific, even if some of

the pieces were just a little wonky! The day after, our exploration of The Tyne made us realise just what we've been missing all these years. The Baltic, The Sage, the Millennium Bridge (the one that worked first time!), the sculpture trails and the river are just wonderful. Okay, it ain't the Nile — but it's well worth a visit.



The One That Worked First Time

Finally, in December we sat outside eating Charo's wonderful paella at her and Gary's place in España as she did her Abba Dancing Queen impression!

What Else?

Musical highlights of the year were Gary Moore at The Manchester Apollo and the incredible (and exceptionally loud - as it should be) 30th anniversary performance of *The Wall* in Liverpool by the Australian Pink Floyd Show. We left feeling very "Comfortably Numb"! Finally, without a sign of a finger in the ear we saw folkie and social commentator Chris Wood at the wonderfully refurbished Band on the Wall in Manchester. And we've already booked to see Tangerine Dream at the Royal Albert Hall next April - COOOOL!!



We Don't Need No...

Want to Read More!

As always we've run out of space but there's more at www.gillatt.org/2009. There's also no room for our Top Ten of the year yet again. But number one this and every year is the love of our families and all our friends — which we send in return to you all.

Finally

If you like our photos you can see lots more of them at: <http://picasaweb.google.com/giblets09>. You never know, you might just spot yourself in one or two of them!

