

# Northern *news*

BRINGING YOU THE LATEST NEWS  
FROM OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS  
AROUND THE WORLD

AUGUST 2009



# Editorial Ramblings

Congratulations to Grace this month for passing the Knowledge of Life in the UK (and English language) examination. Without this, she wouldn't be able to extend her visa to stay in the UK, and would therefore have been thrown out of the country, so it was an important step for her.

I never thought it would be difficult to buy a car! Millions of cars being advertised and, after weeks of searching, I still have no car. Incredible. I have trawled websites, visited numerous dealers, car supermarkets and have attended car auctions.

Nothing to show for all my efforts. Of course, there are lots of cars, but most of them are absolute rubbish being sold at top-prices - even at the trade auctions. I used to be able to turn-up at a trade auction and buy a car in showroom condition for a very low price. Now, that car would cost about twice the price - and would, most likely, be in a dreadful condition. I spoke to a dealer about this and he confirmed my own thoughts by telling me there was a tremendous shortage of good cars. He went on to say that his dealership would normally have at least 200 cars on display, but they were down to half that number because they just couldn't re-stock. When I've visited a dealer, they're not even prepared to negotiate on the price - *take it or leave it* are the only options they are offering. All I'm looking for is a large estate car with at least a 2 litre diesel engine and manual gearbox with a sensible mileage on it so that I can tow a caravan (one not quite as big as the one in the photograph below).

We have been really delighted to receive a visit from Nadia this month - straight from her wedding in the Philippines. Luckily, Grace's old car kept us mobile so we were able to take her to lots of places in historic *Olde England*. In fact, we travelled almost the full length of England, from Brighton, on the South coast, to the Lake District in the North West of the country - covering over a thousand miles in the few days she was here - including one day where we travelled 360 miles. Our trips even included a full circuit of the M25! Apart from Brighton and the Lake District, we visited Stratford-upon-Avon, Lichfield, The Cotswolds, Birmingham Bull Ring, Preston (Lancashire), The South Downs village of Clayton, Jack and Jill Windmills, Ditchling Beacon, Haywards Heath and Lindfield (Sussex), Greenwich (Royal Observatory), London - including Harrods (of course!), We even managed a visit to our own home in Wolverhampton! - and went to a car auction!

Another highlight of our adventures this month, was the reunion of Grace with one of her school friends who she hasn't seen for over twenty years and with whom she'd lost touch until recently. Jenny is also living in England as, like Grace, she too married an Englishman (sensible girl!) and came here to live. We were very touched by the kindness and hospitality we received from Elwyn and Jenny who invited us to stay in their delightful home for a few days. We were also delighted to receive a warm welcome from another couple who they introduced us to; David and Carmen, who shared their bank-holiday with us and who made us welcome in their home too.

This has been quite a month, so read on - we hope you will enjoy the photographs of our travels.



**Photograph above:** A real caravan! At the fair - more on other pages.

**Cover photograph:** One of the magnificent trucks that haul John Carter's fair around the country



Little Lad with his face painted in a *Spiderman* design, by make-up artist, Heather Talbot of Weston-super-Mare ([heather\\_talbot@hotmail.com](mailto:heather_talbot@hotmail.com)). Heather did this gorgeous face painting while we were visiting the fairground.



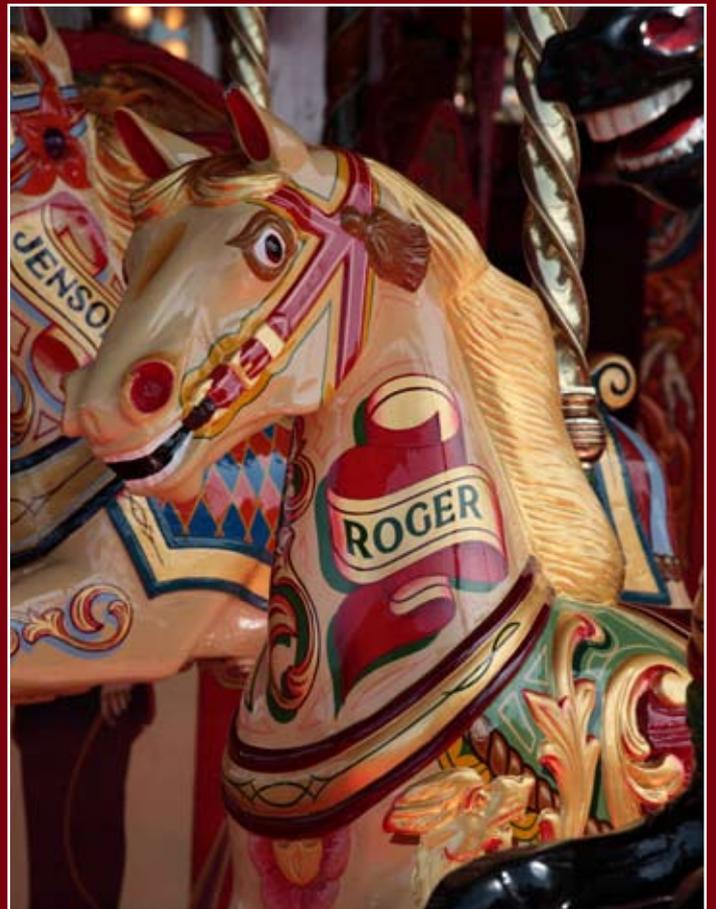
*All the fun at the fair!*



We visited Carter's Steam Fair whilst on a recent trip to Weston-super-Mare and were fascinated, and most impressed by this old fashioned fair. It was wonderful to see the old steam engines, the trucks and caravans that tour much of the country. The text I've included on a later page has been taken from their website at URL: <http://www.carterssteamfair.co.uk>

It was great to see these old stagers so beautifully maintained. They are a great credit to the folks who live their life on the fairground. They don't have an easy life, I'm sure.

We hope you enjoy these photographs, depicting the entertainment equipment from a different era.





*and their magnificent old trucks*





JOHN CARTER & SONS

CARTERS



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E19 UCY





Carters Steam Fair travels around London and the South East, for seven months of the year. The other five months are spent in a frenzy of restoration, painting and repairing. Some of the family have even been known to wander into the shed on Christmas Day just to finish some work off!!! Carters is the result of John Carter's passion for collecting old and interesting items, discarded by the owners, as being too unfashionable or too derelict to preserve. Over the last thirty years a whole funfair has been collected, complete with historic vehicles to transport it from site to site, with vintage living vans to complement the show. Jonathan Ross described us "as more like a film set than a travelling fair". Unfortunately we lost John to cancer at the untimely age of 58 in the year 2000. The fair still goes from strength to strength, with a growing number of loyal supporters. We continue to add to the collection. In the last few years we have added the Victory Dive Bomber along with various other stalls and attractions. The latest big project was Teddy Andrews' Ark, packed away since the early 1980's. All 500 pieces had extensive works in preparation for the 2006 season. We are very thrilled to have custody of this machine and grateful to the Andrews family for entrusting us to take care of it.





*and caravans.....*

*these caravans are 61 years old*







# News from Michelle



Michelle (Grace's youngest sister) sent us these photographs from Doha, Qatar, where she works. She recently attended an AML training seminar and is shown here in-class at the college of the North Atlantic - Qatar, and with her colleagues.







## *Wedding of Leonardo to Nadia*

On 1 August, Grace's sister, Nadia married Leonardo Domingo in the Philippines. We wish Nadia all the luck, and God's blessings, that she is sure to need.

*Photograph below:* Nadia and Leonardo with Nadia's parents



One of England's historic churches, Clayton in Sussex.  
The murals on the walls were painted circa 1100AD.



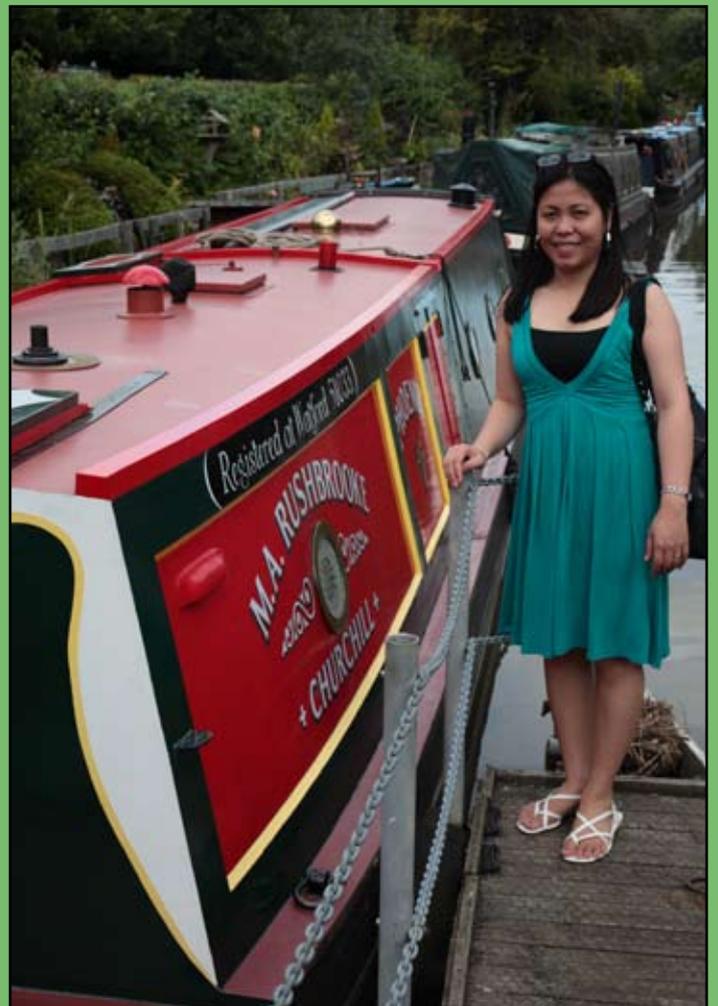
# *Nadia's first visit to England*

As I write this, we have had Nadia staying with us for a few days on her first visit to England. We are doing our best to show her some of the historic places and beautiful places that time and weather will allow. The little church at Clayton (*previous page*) is nestled at the foot of the South Downs and is one of those places that is so old, yet so overlooked by the visitor. We are blessed to have so many treasures such as this in our country. Nadia is here for just 10 days, so we cannot show her the whole country - only a tiny glimpse of what this country is all about.



*In Sussex...* with Grace by the Royal Pavillion in Brighton, By one of the *Jack & Jill* windmills on the South Downs and a view of Balcombe Viaduct.





*In Warwickshire...* Stratford upon Avon and Anne Hathaway's Cottage. Standing by a canal boat.

Nadia, with Alan and John on Ditchling Beacon on the South Downs, in Sussex.  
*Photograph by Grace*





Lichfield Cathedral - a view from the high altar, through the Choir.



*In Greenwich...* A visit to the Royal Observatory, once, in many ways considered to be the most important place on Earth. Grace and Nadia standing on the 0°, Greenwich Meridian line where East meets West and where universal standard time (GMT - Greenwich Mean Time) originated.

The top photograph shows the National Maritime Museum on the edge of Greenwich Park, taken as we climbed the hill to the Royal Observatory. Behind the museum is the Royal Naval College.





The spectacular entrance to Clayton Tunnel that allows trains to travel through the South Downs in Sussex.



*In London...* In front of Buckingham Palace and shopping in Harrods. The photograph below is of the magnificent memorial to Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband that stands opposite the Royal Albert Hall (*right*).





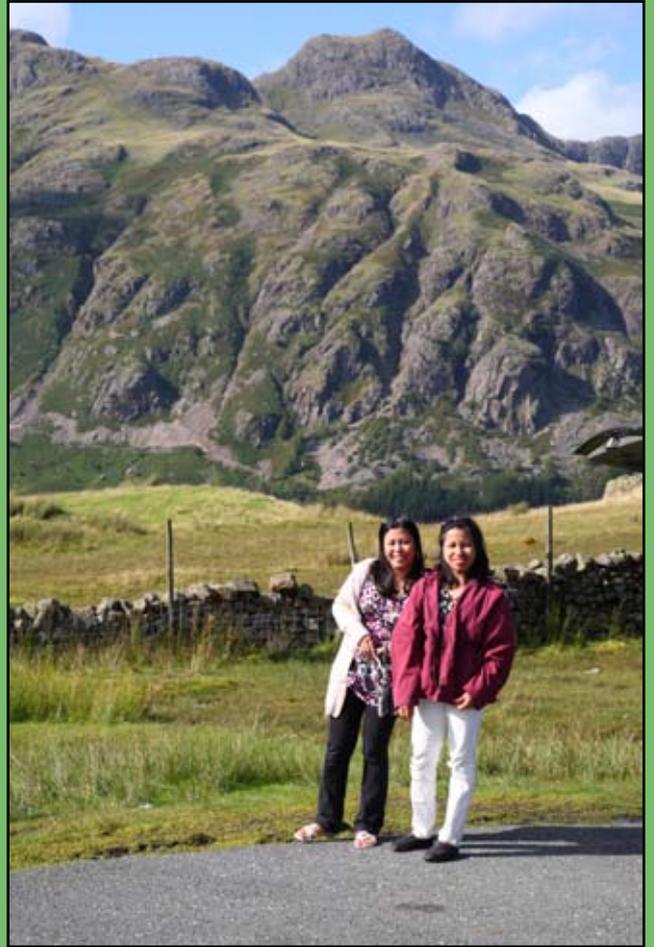
Photograph by Grace

*In the Cotswolds...* Lower Slaughter (*above*) and in *Birmingham...* below.





*In Cumberland and Westmoreland...  
The English Lake District...* This is a  
very special place...The best place on Earth.

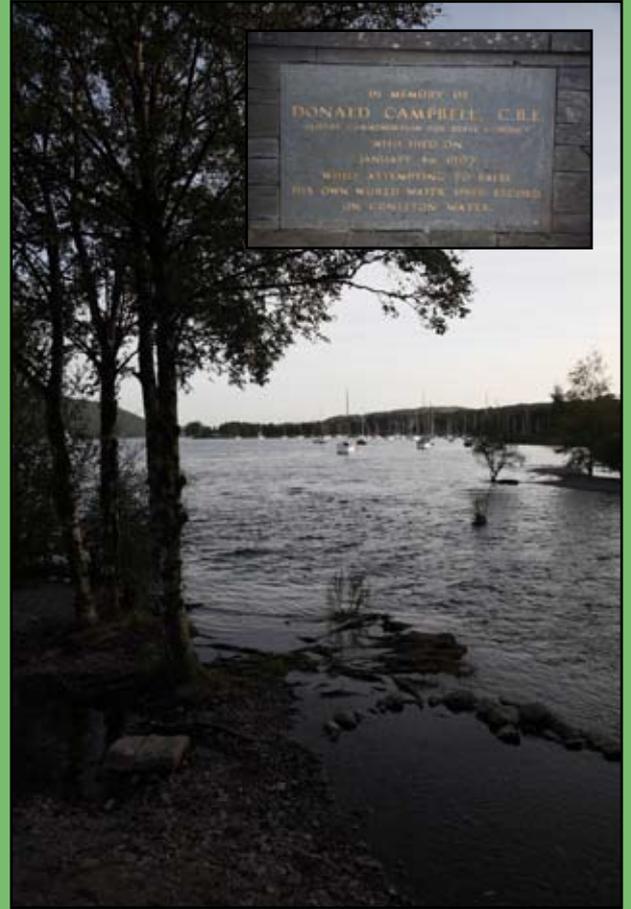


In this beautiful, peaceful place (*below*), we met a man who'd  
been visiting here for 23 years. He was alone, but not really alone  
as he was living his memories of the time his wife was sharing  
this place with him - and still does, as her ashes are scattered here.





Even Little lad found it to be a special place and is very keen to return to this paradise.



IN MEMORY OF  
**DONALD CAMPBELL, C.B.E.**  
FIRST PARASITICIAN FOR ROYAL AIR FORCE  
WHO DIED ON  
JANUARY 30, 1957  
WHILE ATTEMPTING TO RAISE  
HIS OWN WORLD WATER SPEED RECORD  
IN CONGLETON WATER.





## *Get together - after 20 years!*

*Photograph above:* Grace and Nadia with Jenny. Grace last saw Jenny 20 years ago while they were at high school together. It seems remarkable that two friends from the same remote area of the Philippines should both marry Englishmen and go to live in England. We have had a super few days with Jenny and her husband, Elwyn, and their children, who received us with open arms and tremendous hospitality and friendship. They also introduced us to some of the friends, all of whom gave us a fine welcome and hospitality. Our hearts were touched by these gestures of friendship.

*Photograph below:* Grace and John are front left. Behind John is Elwyn with his sons, Andre (*left*) and Quentin (*right*) and his wife Jenny. On the right of the photograph is David and his wife, Carmen and their children Daniel and Grace.



# *Party at Neczy's*



Despite being total strangers, Grace and I were given a royal welcome by Neczy (*above, left*) and her husband, Andy who hosted a party in their home. We were taken along by David and Elwyn and their families and we all had a great time. As you can see, Grace got to play with their dog and the kids had a great time in the bouncy castle



