

Northern

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FROM OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS
AROUND THE WORLD

news

March 2017



Editorial Ramblings



We are gradually settling into our new home and the routine of travelling between our various destinations in Preston. Trying to find good tradesmen who can do jobs towards improving our home is proving to be something of a challenge. Of course, my time is now very limited now I'm working once again. As I'm sure I've said before, one either has the time and no money; or money and no time! These last few weeks have been very tough going at work and I've been under a lot of pressure to meet impossible deadlines. However, by sheer monumental effort, massive progress has been made and even our client seems happy with the result so that's put me in good stead with the powers that be. That's life as a contractor! Once again, I apologise for the lack of content in this edition. I've hardly taken a photograph since I got back to being at work.

That said, the weather has been really terrible. It's hardly stopped raining for months and months (although we did have a white carpet of hailstones on the motorway a few days ago!), as is usual in this area of England. Why anyone chooses to live in this country is beyond my imagination to comprehend. It certainly isn't my choice. If it wasn't for Grace and JP, I'd be out of here on the next 'plane! (or maybe with car and caravan). Someone asked me the other day where I would choose to live. Given the money, my choice would definitely be Switzerland; the most civilised country in the world. Of course, one needs a huge income in order to be able to live there as the cost of living is incredibly high. During the time that JP and I were on our bicycle ride last summer, I got into conversation with a few Swiss people. They were telling me that the 'open border' policy isn't doing them any favours, as 'weekend criminals' from Eastern Europe travel to Switzerland for the weekend, steal whatever they can get their hands on, then drive back to where they came from with their ill-gotten loot, which they sell during the week, before returning for another load the following weekend. The criminals do much the same in other European countries too (no doubt that was what happened to my bicycle; stolen in Worms, Germany). Another problem that the Swiss face is that, because of the very high exchange rate, their exports are taking a big hit, which is affecting employment and the country's income. Tourism is taking another big hit as many people can no longer afford to go there for a holiday - they can go to Germany and Austria, for example, for far less cost. One can only hope that the Swiss will devalue their currency in the not too distant future - then maybe we can go to live there!

Grace has been working extremely hard at her college courses and her grades have been very high. She obtained 'distinction' in all her assessments throughout her Beautician course as well as good grades for her Hairdressing. She has also passed all but one of her English language examinations - the final exam is next week. JP is still extremely unhappy at school, although he does seem to be doing a little better in his studies. It is very sad to see him so unhappy and I have no idea what I can do to help him - apart from taking him out of school altogether, which is something I've considered in the recent past and which is still a possibility, although one not to be taken lightly.

With the start of Spring now under way, we hope to bring you more photographs in the near future.

We hope you have a happy and safe month ahead.

Cover Photograph: Red sky after sunset; from the beach at Fleetwood. Taken on 25 March 2017

Photograph next page: A carpet of crocuses and other spring flowers cover the churchyard in Warton where Annelise is buried. Taken on 11 March 2017.

