

A trip to remember

2011 - ENGLAND

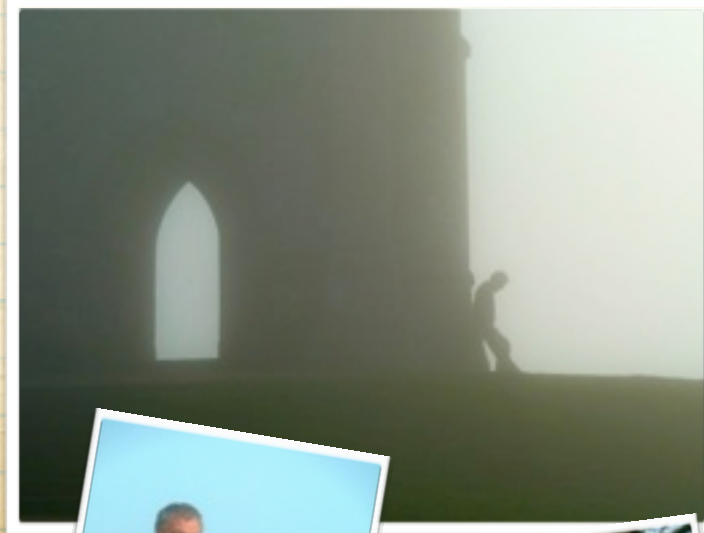
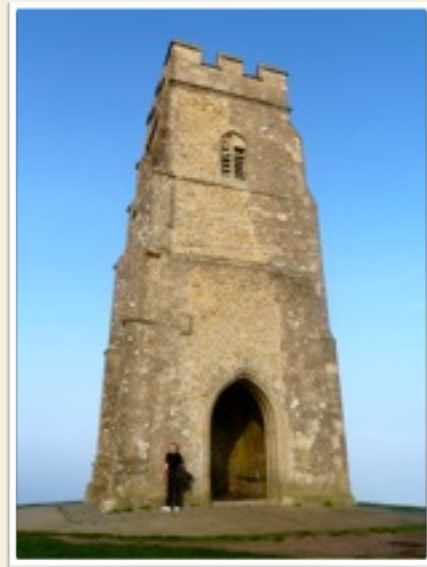
17 April 2011

A tor is a hill - a damn steep one.

A BIRTHDAY TO REMEMBER

Today was Sig's 63rd birthday. It started out really nicely with a 7am rise (this is early in these parts!), and a walk up up up to the Glastonbury Tor - a high hill.

It was fabulous. There was mist everywhere and it made the morning really ethereal. The resident cows and lambs kept an eye on us as we walked (read struggled for Heather), up the very steep incline of the public footpath which, according to Sigg, was still not as steep as The Plateau!. "Hills are my friend" - a constant reminder from Cheryl ringing in my ears. These footways abound in England. They regularly cross farmers boundaries and are often accessible by stiles or by sturdy self-closing gates. There was no view from the top of the mound on which the tor stood. However we felt we got the better deal with the mist. Judge for yourself.





Bath Cathedral ceiling

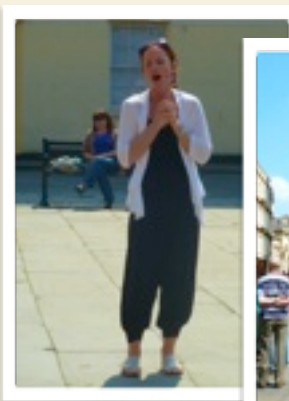


After a leisurely breakfast, cooked by Heather of course, and served on a silver platter, we decided to drive out to within striking distance of home base to allow for the return of the van on Tuesday. Our destination was Oxford, the university town. We saw Cambridge all those years ago when we came with the kids. Oxford, like Cambridge is reported to have many highlights so we were keen to see them for ourselves.

We stopped in Bath on the way and did a brisk, coach-tour type visit. We enjoyed a view of the buildings and a busker who was singing opera.



Bath Cathedral was awe inspiring





The major stop for the day was Bampton - birth place of Heather's great great great grandfather (Thomas Trotman) and grandmother (Mary Brooks). Thomas was sent out to Australia as a convict in 1821 for "larceny". We haven't any more details than that. It is thoughtful to consider that Mary, his wife, followed him out to Australia with her young children. One of these was Heather's great great grandmother, Elizabeth Binstead (nee Trotman). She is buried in the Melbourne General Cemetery with her convict husband George Binstead. If you remember we visited his birthplace (Eartham), earlier in the trip. It is nice to say that this village was as quaint and nicely kept as any that we have seen. Thomas and Mary had a beautiful home that was swapped for Port Arthur.

Sig enjoyed an extra long birthday today. His mum Sigrd would not doubt have been thinking of him from the start of the day in Australia (some 9 hours ahead of UK time) and then he had 24 hours of celebration here.