

50 signs you have made it? It's not looking good for me at 60

As **DICK LUMSDEN** turns 60, he ponders a new list which claims to include the 50 signs one has 'made it'. Well, has he?

So here we are, two weeks from Christmas and the sand grains of another year are fast running out through the bottom of the metaphorical hour glass.

In January, I'll be entering my 60th year – closing out my sixth decade of life – and it's hard not to pinch myself and say I must be dreaming.

Surely I can't be that old already....? Where has the time gone? In my head I still think I'm in my 20s (although my body can't keep up with my head I'll admit).

There is something quite momentous about clicking over each decade as you go through life.

As a child, reaching 10 is double figures and big school looming. At 20 you're no longer a teenager and embarking on quite possibly the most exciting years you'll ever have.

At 30 you feel you should be settling down and taking things a bit more seriously. At 40 you start to panic about the future for the first time, and at 50 you start to notice all the little niggles and mechanical

breakdowns as your body lets you know it's getting on a bit. And that annoying few pounds you managed to shed every summer before has now settled into a permanent spare tyre that nothing on this earth will shift.

At 60? What can I expect now? Previous generations were probably looking forward to retirement – but I suspect I'll still be sitting at a computer working away full-time in another ten years.

I look around at many of my friends who are already into their 60s and they don't look any different. Maybe 60s are just an extension of 50s nowadays and there won't be any revelations waiting for me... who knows?

Still, it makes me think. On life's great scorecard, have I done well, or will the end of this term say "could have done a lot better"?



■ Above, **Graham Gooch** batting for Essex Suffolk v Essex Cricket at Bury Victory Ground 22nd June 1993, inset left, **Blickling**, the restored 18th century orangery.

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driveway in front of my house that is over 200 yards long (number 9), and nor do I have a sit-on lawn mower (14) or a personalised number plate (15).

I also fall down badly on not being on first name terms with the vicar (48), owning cricket whites (47), or having 2,000 Twitter followers (50).

Actually, in the full list of 50, I managed to rack up just 11 – with one of them being on first name terms with the local pub landlord (hello, Tom!).

So, even with six full decades behind me, it seems I have fallen short of the mark by a very long way.

Still, I haven't done too bad out of

while dressed in cricket whites, awaiting the local vicar to glide up your impressively long drive for afternoon tea on your freshly cut lawn, and then post a selfie with you and the Rev. on Twitter...then I'm happy to accept failure.

And besides...there is still a long time left to tick off a few more on the list.

I might still manage to get a golf handicap of under 15 (in my dreams), I could see Mrs Lumsden and I in matching bathrobes at our "his and hers" sinks, and we might possibly get a pedigree dog along the way.

Whatever happens, I'm going into my 60th year with my eyes open and I'm determined to go through the next ten years in the same way I have gone through every other decade – living life full on...orangery or no orangery!

Happy Christmas!

■ **Dick Lumsden is Managing Director of Owl Marketing Solutions, a specialist in marketing and advertising to older consumers. If you have any views on this article, or are over 50 and would like to take part**