

OUTDOOR WRITERS GUILD

MEDIA BULLETIN AUGUST 2006

Welcome to the latest Media Bulletin from the Outdoor Writers Guild - a group of nearly 200 writers and photographers about the outdoors.

If you want somebody to go somewhere or want to know something about somewhere, then the chances are that someone from the guild is there already, has just come back or is about to set off.

Here's just a sample of the comings and goings of Outdoor Writer's Guild members, **if you want to find out more then visit our website www.owg.org.uk**:

PEAK PRACTICE

Guild president Roly Smith is editing yet another Peak District magazine. This one is called Peakland Guardian and its the quarterly mouthpiece of Friends of the Peak District (formerly Sheffield and Peak of CPRE). The second (Summer) edition is about to appear, and features many photographs from Guild member Jerry Rawson. Roly is also temporarily acting as Communications Officer for the Friends, in addition to his other PR work. His publishing portfolio, as editorial manager for Halsgrove Publishing, continues apace, and has commissioned about 20 books for them in the past year, one of which was highly commended in the Lakeland Books of the Year awards recently.

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WAY OUT EAST

Robin McKelvie has spent the first half of 2006 reclining on the Orient Express, in Porto supping fortified wine, city breaking in Ljubljana, walking the Southern Upland Way, wading through the floods in Budapest, chilling out in Krakow and the very chilly Tatras, drinking Islay dry of whisky and hotel reviewing in Barcelona, with two trips to Cyprus thrown in for good measure. The rest of the year sees Robin mountain biking in the Cairngorms, trying Shetland for the first time, updating the Bradt Dubrovnik and Croatia guides, cruising the Med and playing for Scotland in the Elephant Polo World Championships in Thailand. With 106 pieces of work under his belt this year so far Robin is looking for story ideas and press trips for early 2007 onwards.

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SCOTLAND BOUND

Roger McCann visited Tobermory, capital of the Isle of Mull, to let his grandchildren find some of the colourful houses used as locations in the children's television series Balamory. He then offered his charges (nearly 3 and 5 years old) further challenges with taster courses in the outdoor pursuits of stone skimming, sandcastle building and paddling in the Atlantic Ocean at Calgary Beach. His next trip (without grandchildren in tow) is to the Shetland Isles to learn more about the traditional style of fiddle playing that is distinctive and a way of life for many Shetlanders. There will be time to explore some of the 'mainland', Lerwick harbour and to participate in other strands of Shetland culture. An autumn trip through the Western Isles will end on the

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HAPPY TRAILS

Over the next few months Paddy Dillon will finish a two-year project to walk all the National Trails, which will leave him bang up to date on latest developments and trail conditions. Editors who want to know about any trail, or the whole lot of them, feel free to get in touch. Paddy's all-in-one guidebook to the 630 mile South West Coast Path has recently been reprinted for the third time in three years. Are there really that many people prepared to walk so far? Paddy's long-distance treks have not been confined to the UK, since the Canary Islands are beginning to piece together a seven-island long-distance trail, which no-one knows about yet, as nothing has appeared in print. Editors who want an exclusive had better get in touch before someone else does!

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JERSEY ON ICE

Clive Tully has recently completed his second visit to Iceland this year, hiking, biking and rafting in the not so frequently visited West Fjords. At the end of July he will be in Jersey for three days, combining walking with other pursuits. Features already commissioned for both trips, but willing to consider other offers.

Photographs online at www.alamy.com/search-results.asp?qt=Clive+Tully.

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MOUNTAIN MARATHONING

In June, FELICITY MARTIN reported on the Lowe Alpine Mountain Marathon (<http://www.lamm.co.uk/>) from Assynt in the far northwest of Scotland through daily webcasts. The terrain (bare, rocky hills) and weather (drizzly mist) made it tough going – and she wasn't even racing like the 1,000 other exhausted and bedraggled souls. Illustrated features written since then have included the Liquid Life Festival (kayak and raft racing); the Isle of May, currently home to a quarter of a million nesting seabirds; and cup and ring-marked stones. Felicity is off to France soon, for a walking holiday in Haut Jura National Park.

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WATERSPORT WONDERS

Judy Armstrong is focussing on watersports this summer. A self-sail (bareboat charter) trip to Greece has generated glorious images. Self-guided sea kayaking in Turkey is next, paddling Koycegiz Lake to visit hot springs and mud baths, the ruins of the ancient city of Caunos and its rock tombs, the Dalyan delta and the remote coastline to Gocek. A week's hiking on the long-distance Lycian Way footpath follows, offering a true taste of Turkey. Features, images on request. Autumn will include via ferrata with children in France, and road cycling in Provence. Enquiries to

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GATHERING HONEY

Ronald Turnbull is spending the summer tasting the sweetness of Scotland's honeypot, the mountains of Lochaber and Glen Coe. He's looking for new and slightly scrambly routes onto the 40 or so Munros, awaiting weather for Ben Nevis's Ledge Route (he forgot to take route details on his previous ascent aged 11), sleeping out on the Stob Gabhar, and wondering if the region has more than six low-level routes worth walking. All of which leaves little time for side jaunts to the Cuillin, Northumberland, Snowdonia, and all the other buzzing and sweetly-sticky regions of UK.

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SCOTLAND BY VAN AND BOAT

Sheila Bowker has recently returned from journeying around the coast of the north west highlands (of Scotland) by camper van and small yacht and is now back behind the desk working on features for The Countryman, Dalesman, Lady, Yorkshire Post.

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NATURALLY SCOTTISH

Based on the Isle of Skye, Chris Mitchell writes a regular 'Nature Notes' column for the regional newspaper *West Highland Free Press* - looking at the natural history of this part of Scotland. Exploring the unusual and obscure with a touch of humour. Subjects covered include the local

weather conditions, orographic clouds and mountain winds, midges, where to spot sharks and whales, alpine flowers, lichens, bioluminescent marine life that flash and glow in the dark, how to distinguish between stinging and non-stinging jellyfish, the local geology and how it affects the distribution of nesting birds. Articles from 1000 - 1500 words with colour photos.

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WILD ABOUT BRITAIN

Christopher Somerville is starting research on truly wild places in Britain and Ireland. Could be a mountain, a cleft in the rocks, a moor, a cave, an island, a savage bit of coast, a place with a wild reputation, a spot where rare wildlife lives undisturbed.

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GOOSSED!

Alf Alderson narrowly missed landing himself a stainless steel goose lately - interpret that as you will. Seriously, though, he was one of three shortlisted contenders for the recent Canada Tourism Media Awards in the 'Best Ski Article' category. This was for a feature on cat skiing on Canada's Selkirk Mountains which appeared in Snow and Board Magazine. "I didn't quite make the podium, though" says Alf, who then left to console himself with a surfing and hiking trip to France's Atlantic coast and the Picos de Europa in Northern Spain. "I'll be happy to provide copy and images from this trip, or from a forthcoming surf trip to Oman in October - as far as I know this will be the first time anyone has written about surfing in the Middle East".

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THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

David Foster is nearing the end of a short walk from Eastbourne to Ringwood. No, that's not an oxymoron - he's busy revising two guides in Jarrold's 'short walks' series, covering the South Downs and the New Forest. The walks themselves may be short, but David will still have covered around 140 miles when the contract ends later this month. Then, he'll be back at his desk editing the news pages for *Countryside Voice*, the journal of the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

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NEW WALKING BOOKS ON THE PEAK DISTRICT

Mark Reid is finishing off a couple of new walking books on the Peak District :

'Walking Weekends: Peak District' - 24 circular walks from 12 villages throughout the Peak District, with two walks of varying lengths from each village with details of where to stay, local inns, background information, historical points of interest and 24 classic walks. Publication date: 1st September 2006.

'The Inn Way... to the Peak District' - book six in 'The Inn Way' series, this guidebook will chart a six-day long distance circular walk throughout the Peak District National Park, taking in the heather moors of the Dark Peak, the gritstone edges above the Derwent valley and the limestone dales of the White Peak, not to mention many classic country pubs along the way. Publication date: 1st November 2006.

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GLOBETROTTING GUIDEBOOK WRITERS

Hugh Taylor and Moira McCrossan are currently travelling in Mexico researching and photographing their latest guidebook, 'Globetrotter Best of Cancun and Yucatan' for New Holland Publishing. In June they were in Jordan working on another new title in the Globetrotter series.

Between April and November they are checking and updating several Pathfinder Guides in the north of England and throughout Scotland for Jarrold Publishing. Hugh has also written the Scottish section for a new Dorling Kindersley coffee table book on world travel and updated an online guide to Stockholm for an American publisher. Although fully occupied at the moment they are willing consider proposals and work offers with deadlines from November onwards.

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TURNING TURKEY

Peter Sommer is off to Turkey for virtually all September and October on a number of archaeological cruises aboard a traditional gulet. He's going to be sailing along different stretches of Turkey's south-west turquoise coast visiting key ancient sites, especially the Greek and Roman cities that litter the region such as Ephesus, Miletus, and Xanthus. He be more than happy to write features about the trips illustrated with photographs.

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HOMEWARD BOUND-ISH

Just returned from three weeks in Madeira where he's been researching for a new travel guidebook, TERRY MARSH is spending August and October working on a walking guidebook to the Forest of Bowland in his home county of Lancashire. In September, he'll be living in a holiday cottage in Glenelg, Scotland, while he revises two more guidebooks based on the Isle of Skye and the Kyle of Lochalsh. Come November, he'll be travelling again, flying out to Darwin in Australia's Northern Territory to join The Ghan for a three-day rail journey through the heart of Australia to Adelaide, from where he'll driving down through the Fleurieu Peninsula to visit Kangaroo Island, one of Australia's finest offshore islands.

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