



Welcome to the latest news from the **Outdoor Writers and Photographers Guild**. This Bulletin details what members have been up to recently, and where some of them are heading next.  
[www.owg.org.uk](http://www.owg.org.uk)

### Close to the Orcas

**Vivienne Crow** is hoping for close encounters of the orca kind when she returns to Vancouver Island this summer to sea-kayak in the Johnstone Strait area. Then it's off to the Rockies where, hopefully, her constant singing of 1970s classics will keep the bears away. Later in the year, she'll be making her fourth trip to India – probably to Maharashtra and Karnataka, but she's open to suggestions. Vivienne is always interested in feature enquiries from editors/publishers relating to any of the above.

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### Welcome to Jordan

The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the guide to Jordan – *Walks, Treks, Caves, Climbs & Canyons*, by **Tony Howard** and partner, Di Taylor, is due out from Cicerone Press in July and reveals even more of this country's unexpected delights: river-filled canyons, forested hills, flower-filled valleys, wild mountains and deserts. Meanwhile, they have been invited to join the emergent Leadership Team of the Abraham Path Initiative ([www.abrahampath.org](http://www.abrahampath.org)) a long distance trail project 'In the footsteps of Abraham' from Turkey to Hebron, in Palestine. Their personal involvement concerns research and delineation of the Path in Jordan, especially if it extends south of Madaba towards Petra, Wadi Rum, and the Red Sea. Concerned about the resistance to such trails passing through Reserves and the total ban on climbs in the Reserves and Petra Park, they have initiated discussions with Jordan's Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature and the Petra National Trust in an effort to ease restrictions. They are also still discovering ever more new treks and climbs; so much to do and such little time to do it...

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*The canyon of Wadi Numeira above the Dead Sea.*

### Full Circle

**Terry Marsh** has gone full circle. His first published book was *The Summits of Snowdonia* by Robert Hale, way back in the mists of time when he could be up and down Snowdon in under two hours. Now his ageing bones are working on a more leisurely interpretation of that first book: *Great Mountains Days in Snowdonia* for Cicerone. Also in hand is a walkers' guide to the West Pennine Moors in Lancashire - back yard stuff, really - but a sequel to his recent walkers' guide to the Forest of Bowland and Pendle.

He is just back from five weeks in France, which included return visits to the Pyrenees and Cantal, and from Madeira where he continues to organise the annual Madeira Islands Walking Festival ([www.madeiraislandswalkingfestival.com](http://www.madeiraislandswalkingfestival.com)). Later in the year, he will be heading for Skye to work on a revision of his walkers' guide to the island.

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### **Carolina to Cowal**

**Ronald Turnbull** is just back from a five day walk in the woods across the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. The 17-year cicadas were swarming in millions, otherwise the trails were pretty quiet. For the next few months he'll be exploring Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, from Cowal to Loch Goil, from Ben More to Loch Lomond shores.

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*Ben Lomond from An Caisteal, Balquhidder, Feb 08*

### **From Desert to Snowfields**

**Roly Smith** has no fewer than three books being published this autumn. His long-awaited biography of Walter Poucher, *A Camera in the Hills*, and *Swaledale*, in partnership with photographer Mike Kipling, are both from Frances Lincoln, for whom Roly acts as commissioning editor. *Britain's National Parks* is an AA Publication, (with a glowing endorsement from Bill Bryson and foreword by fellow OWPG member, Chris Bonington). He was also a contributor to *Walking the World's Natural Wonders* (New Holland), which should also come out at about the same time. Roly's travels include recent trips which have ranged from the desert heat of Jordan (Petra and Wadi Rum), to the Alpine snows of the Canadian Rockies (three days at Lake Louise), all within 10 days. He has commissions for both trips, including Journeys, the magazine of Princess Cruises. And as a slightly eccentric aside, Roly handled the PR for a major Morris Dancing event in the Peak District village of Winster in June.

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### **Roaming Roger**

Queen Victoria loved the Scottish Highlands, and in particular her Balmoral Estate. **Roger McCann** followed in some of her footsteps on Deeside's Victorian Heritage Trail. Letting the train take the strain, he was then in Bruges, eyeing locations used in the film of that same name. Another train carried him northwards, to Arisaig for a boat trip to the Isle of Eigg (dolphin spotting almost guaranteed). From the Highlands, he travelled to the Lowlands, to meet food producers who supply Castle Douglas, Dumfries and Galloway's Food Town. Having recently moved home, to Glasgow, he has been exploring the city, including the Forth and Clyde Canal and River Clyde walkway. A trip to the Isle of Arran is imminent.

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### **Bothies and Bites**

Early in the year, **Rob Yorke** checked out bothies in Wales and Scotland with an article in July's *Country Walking* and a piece in *Try This* of the *FT Weekend* magazine. Meanwhile fishing continues unabated and *Waterlog*, an eclectic subscription angling magazine, published *A Midge Too Far* in its Spring 08 edition on an attack of our Scottish fiends while landing his third salmon. *Total Flyfisher* (June 08) extolled the virtues of a sporting lodge in South Uist.  
07900 891564

### **Best Feet Forward**

**Mark Reid's** new venture is TeamWalking, which offers a range of unique, effective and powerful team building experiences that utilise the power of the natural environment to facilitate learning, empathy, communication, understanding, inter-dependence, growth and development.

They offer adventurous hill-walking experiences that are fun, exciting and completely different. The venues are the hills and valleys of the national parks of northern England, including the Yorkshire Dales, Peak District, Lake District, North York Moors and Northumberland, which offer some of the world's best hill-walking landscapes.

Team Walking experiences are ideal for team building, corporate activity days, conference energisers, unique corporate entertaining, incentive, reward and recognition. All it needs is a sense of adventure! TeamWalking is operated by Mark Reid, author of 'The Inn Way' guidebooks ([www.innway.co.uk](http://www.innway.co.uk)). Mark is an experienced hill-walking guide and fully qualified Walking Group Leader (MLTA).

[www.teamwalking.co.uk](http://www.teamwalking.co.uk)

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### **Mull to Morocco**

**Judy Armstrong** spent early summer exploring the west coast of Scotland on a 'whisky and walking' pilgrimage, including the islands of Islay, Mull and Skye. Words and images for this, plus coast and mountain walking in the Far Northwest, are available from mid June.

Corsica is another island on the agenda: Judy and her husband will tackle the GR20, one of France's most challenging long distance routes, in a bid to see the island's diversity from a human-powered perspective.

Thinking ahead to winter schedules, she can offer new features on husky sledding in the French Vercours and horse herding in the Pyrenees. Morocco is becoming a hot destination – Judy plans to explore it the cool way, on ski and foot, in February.

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### **Back to a Black Eye**

**Jon Sparks** has barely had time to draw breath since the last Bulletin. He's been checking 50 walks in Shropshire for an AA guidebook, and then switching into travel-writer mode to produce *Travellers Baltic Cruise* for Thomas Cook. There wasn't much actual cruising involved, but Jon visited destinations around the Baltic. Copenhagen, Stockholm (ask him about the Nobel Suite!), Oslo, Riga, Tallinn and St Petersburg are just the main names; Jon already knows Helsinki better than most. (And yes, he does know Oslo isn't actually in the Baltic). Naturally, the camera's been working overtime, too.

Simultaneously Jon has been working on *Expanded Guides* to Nikon's D3 and D300 cameras for Photographers' Institute Press, and now there's a D700 in the pipeline.

Most recently, he's just back from tackling the West Highland Way on – and occasionally off – his mountain bike. A beautiful black eye is one legacy of the trip, but he hopes his words and photos will last longer. Jon's writing this up for *Great Cycle Journeys of the World*, to be published by New Holland, but is still looking for a magazine outlet for the story.

Also from New Holland, *Walking the World's Natural Wonders*, on which Jon was lead writer, and which features contributions from eight other OWPG members, is about to hit the shelves.

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*Fountains in the River Neva, St Petersburg*



### Meeting the Challenge

**John Manning** has successfully shrugged off the mantle of full-time salaried desk bunny to make his mark as a freelance outdoor journalist and consultant. The former *TGO* deputy editor contributed a feature about the future of rights of way to the most recent edition of *Walk*, the Ramblers' Association members' magazine, and temporarily stepped into the editor's chair for the last couple of issues of the OWPG's member magazine *Outdoor Focus*.

John recently took part in his ninth TGO Challenge event, backpacking 200 coast-to-coast miles across Scotland from Glen Shiel in the west to Dunnottar Castle in the east, and can supply words and pictures on that unique backpacking event to any interested editor.

He has virtually concluded his stint as organiser of this year's South Pennines Walk & Ride Festival (September 13-18, [www.pennineprospects.co.uk](http://www.pennineprospects.co.uk)) and is subsequently flitting around Britain and Ireland as he works on outdoor equipment and backpacking route commissions for various outdoors titles.

In July he takes time out to visit the OutDoor trade show at Friedrichshafen. Closer to home, he is continuing to work on a book of Yorkshire challenge walks.

Editors interested in commissioning pieces about trails, hill walks, wild camping routes and hiking gear can contact John on:

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### Wandering Lloyd

By the time this missive arrives out of the ether, **John Lloyd** will be meandering down through France en route for northern Spain, gathering material and photographs (both film and digital) for travel articles en route. By around July 5, John will be wandering along the Lot Valley, from Villeneuve via Cahors and Figeac to Conques. From there, it's down to Gascony to visit Auch and some of the bastides before heading for the western Pyrenees for some high level walking and maybe catching a couple of mountain sections of the Tour de France. Then it's into Spain to visit some of the northern coastal resorts like San Sebastian, Castro Urdiales, Comillas and Llanes, followed by a few days in the Picos de Europa before returning home by ferry from Bilbao. You can catch John while he's away on:

07776 441545

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### **Wheels to skis**

Cycling addict **Fergal MacErlean** is taking the family to Holland this July for a cycle tour and assesment of the country's cycle provision. All going well the Ardeches and Chamonix will also be visited.

On his return he'll be seeking commissions for a Chamonix based family ski winter08 feature. Often overlooked by families, Chamonix offers great skiing and instruction as well as many unique attractions. The French resort celebrates the centenary of its Montanvers train this year, which ascends to La Mer de Glace and an ice-grotto in the glacier.

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### **Arctic chill beats Highland humidity**

**Felicity Martin** proved that it is possible to take photographs and drink tea while wearing a midge net when she covered the Lowe Alpine Mountain Marathon in June. She followed competitors through the northwest Highlands of Scotland from the Glenfinnan Viaduct (of Hogwarts Express fame) to a wild camp at Loch Arkaig – see [www.lamm.co.uk](http://www.lamm.co.uk) for her galleries and web reports.

Less effort was required in May, when Felicity was seen reclining on reindeer skins while gliding through hills sparkling with sunlit snow. She was dogsledding near Tromso, 'The Gateway to the Arctic' and had just met 240 enthusiastic Alaskan huskies. Her camera approached meltdown as she tried to capture this and other awe-inspiring scenes experienced while travelling up Norway on the Hurtigruten Coastal Express.

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### **That other Eden**

Last September's cycling across France and cruising down the Nile seem a long way away now for **David Ramshaw**. Since Christmas it has been 'nose to the grindstone' or rather fingers to the keyboard producing two local books for clients, whilst working on his latest book featuring the villages of Wetheral and Great Corby in the lovely Eden Valley, near Carlisle. This has required many trips out, often in inclement weather, to attempt to get decent photographs, interviewing locals etc.. Relief came in his annual trip to Majorca with six glorious days of hill walking with friends in dawn to dusk sunshine. This was followed, believe it or not, with six more days of sunshine walking in the Mamores, the Grey Corries, the Aonachs and Knoydart in Scotland. Now it's back to the keyboard again if David and co-author Denis Perriam are to meet their August publication target. This will be difficult to achieve as July involves ten days DOE expedition monitoring in the Lake District followed by four days cycling (Edinburgh to Carlisle) using three different Sustrans routes.  
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### Shooting Cumbria's "Year of Adventure".

Cumbria Tourism looked no further than Lakeland's own mountain sport photographer, **Dave Willis** to shoot their latest outdoor project. Walking, scrambling, climbing and mountain biking images are all on the menu as Cumbria promotes a feast of adventure sports and outdoor activities on offer in the region, presenting Cumbria as the "Adventure Capital of England". Dave Willis was the natural choice to photograph adventure sports, particularly after his inclusion in a new book published this year by Rotovision; *The World's Top Photographers – Sport and Action*.

This is the fourth successive, major photography project that Dave has undertaken for Cumbria Tourism and partners in the last 18 months. Dave Willis is now one of the more experienced project photographers in the region. Enquires for future commissions or stock images are always welcome: [mountainsport@btinternet.com](mailto:mountainsport@btinternet.com)  
[www.mountainsportphoto.com](http://www.mountainsportphoto.com)

### Clive Wire

**Clive Allen** has been busy contributing to both trade and consumer outdoor magazines, either under his own name or for clients. The August issue of TGO Magazine carries an article by Clive about his experiences competing on mountain marathons, and he is also working behind the scenes with BBC *Countryfile* magazine advising and writing material about outdoor gear.

Clive's company Ascent Marketing Communications has just completed a 44-page brochure for Cumbria Tourism publicising the Lake District's 2008 Year of Adventure, and later this year will mastermind their Adventure Capital print and online material.

The latest Update newsletter for premier Keswick outdoor retailer George Fisher is now out – edited by Clive, the 16-page newsletter is distributed to 10,000 readers quarterly.

Recent PR successes include wide coverage – newspapers, BBC TV, Reuters etc – for client Hannah McKeand's solo, unsupported attempt on the North Pole, and the launch of the Fabric4Life garment-recycling initiative with Oxfam and Granger's.

Meanwhile Clive's role in publicising the Kendal Mountain Festival kicks off in earnest this summer.  
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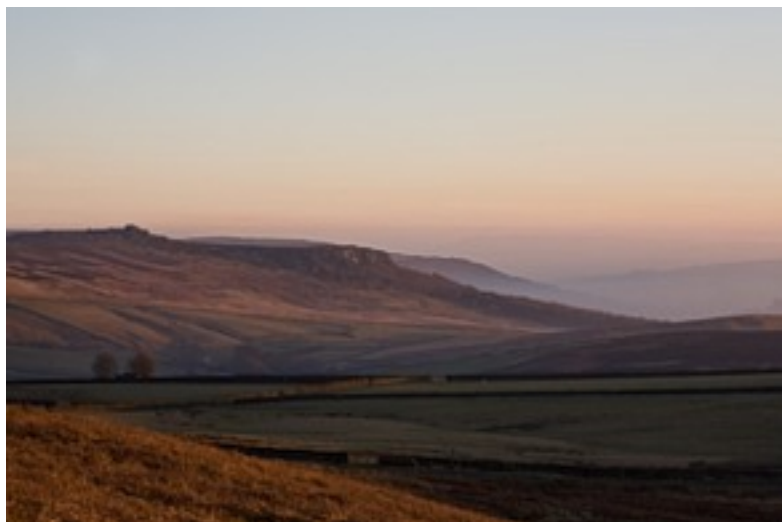
### Globetrotting Chiz

Having returned from exploring the coasts and mountains of North-west Ireland, **Chiz Dakin** is setting off (with camera of course!) to explore the coasts and national parks of the Top End of Oz. She arrives just in time for the Darwin Beer Can festival, and then will be exploring Kakadu, Litchfield and Katherine National Parks. A return visit to Oz, including the Red Centre, East coast and the Kimberleys is also planned for October. In the meantime she is writing a pocket-sized and wallet-friendly guidebook to easy walks in her home territory of the Peak District National Park.

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### **Reid's Rants**

**Carlton Reid** managed to sneak in a bike ride of his own when the Tour de France started in Brittany at the beginning of July. He's also started writing a cycling column for The Guardian. His first was a tirade about UK cycle planners being fixated on workplace showers. When not ranting, he's passing on vital life skills. He's teaching tots on Tyneside how to throw away their stabilisers. His record for getting wobbly four year olds on two wheels is down to 35 minutes.

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### **Austria Calling**

Over the next few months **Allan Hartley** will finish his guidebook for the Hohe Tauern in Austria covering the Reichen Group, Venediger and Gross Glockner. In July he will be guiding in the Zillertal and Venediger; August he will be climbing in the Swiss Bernese Oberland; September he will be guiding the Glockner Round.

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### **Burning Money**

**Alf Alderson** is burning money and fuel this summer (oh, the carbon footprint...!) with a motorhome tour of the Alps and Pyrenees in his 'demountable'. "I'm heading for the hills whilst I can still afford it," says Alf.

He'll mainly be mountain walking (with dog) in both ranges as well as hitting the Atlantic surf when he comes down from the hills, so if you're after copy on where to take your dog on a REAL walk, or where to become a hot dog in the surf, give him a shout:

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More information on the Guild and all its members at [www.owg.org.uk](http://www.owg.org.uk)