

SEEKER

GeocachingNews

The Newsletter of the Geocaching Association of Great Britain



EarthCache GC2D6AM: Elgol honeycomb, Isle of Skye



Issue No. 1: February 2011

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Meet the Committee

So that you know who we are, here's the 2010-2011 Committee:

Dave Edwards
(The Wombles)
Chairman



Jen Harley
(Maple Leaf)
Secretary



Richard Mullans
(DrDick&Vick)
Treasurer



Paul Lapworth
(RuberyBlue)



Terry Marsh
(countrymatters)



Bill Daly
(Bill D (wwh))



Paul Burroughes
(Palujia)



Daryl Stocker
(Jacaru)



Tony Pinnington
(mongoose39uk)



Message from the Chairman



We are pleased to present the new GAGB newsletter to you, complete with the latest UK Geocaching news, events, books, devices and what's going on in the GAGB itself. The new committee are straining at the leash (but they have all had the necessary inoculations) to make GAGB and your geocaching more enjoyable.

In addition to the newsletter, the GAGB website has a new chatroom, there is a mileage competition for 2011, a cache award scheme will be coming soon, and we have discounts available for members on geocaching goods from Geotees and Jacaru, and from Cicerone Press (guidebook publishers).

Work is already in hand to prepare a stand for the MegaWales event in July, two trackable banners, more discounts from companies selling geocaching-related goods, and lots of GAGB-branded things such as Polo shirts, cache stickers, Stash notes, keyrings, badges, and leaflets. We'll announce these as they become ready.

The GAGB Landowner Agreements Database (GLAD) continues to grow positively, having 77 permissions (including the National Trust, Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust and many councils) and only 17 refusals. There are always new permissions in the pipeline and we are happy to help cachers establish new general permissions, just mail me through my GAGB profile.

Please let us have your feedback on the newsletter, the next is planned for two months time. We hope you enjoy it.

Geocaching on FACEBOOK

The UK & Ireland Groundspeak reviewers have recently set up a Facebook group. The aim is to allow dissemination of news to as wide a community as possible and especially to those that don't visit the Groundspeak forums.

You can find it by searching on Facebook under **UK & Ireland GC Reviewers & Community Tea Bar** or by clicking on this linked text.

The GAGB is already represented on Facebook and can be found by searching for **Geocaching Association of Great Britain** or by clicking this linked text.

Have you accepted the GAGB UK Mileage Challenge?

Towards the end of 2010, Jacaru mentioned in the GAGB forums that he was going to record the miles he covers visiting UK caches throughout 2011 and asked if anyone else wanted to join him – just for fun!

It certainly sparked interest and now there are over 40 participants. Many have purchased a GAGB coin to use - which we are grateful for. However, you are welcome to join in with any geocoin or travel bug, just as long as it has zero mileage at the time you activate it, and is listed on the GAGB forums.

Fermentum has kindly offered to keep track of the mileage and each week publishes a graph in the forums. To view the graph go to the website and access the Forums, then select General Geocaching Related Topics, and find UK Caching Mileage 2011 (just for fun).

Many of those taking part are using the special GAGB coin for the purpose. There are still a few available. Price per coin is £6.75 plus p&p to UK addresses as follows: 1 x coin £1.10, 2 x coins £1.60, 3 & 4 coins £2.50, for larger quantities and international deliveries email to ask.

Please send all orders and make PayPal payments to the following email address. Please remember to include your address with the order.

GAGB-geocoin@hotmail.co.uk



So, what's new?????

If you haven't already noticed, Groundspeak have been making changes to the geocaching.com website. Here's a little of what's been going on...we'll report more in future issues.

Statistics

Ever wondered how to figure out your geocaching scores, broken down month by month, and then translated into a D/T grid? No, well, never mind, the latest addition from the Groundspeak stable will have you thinking again.

On 'Your Profile' page, select 'Statistics' from the top menu, and all will be revealed, instantly, efficiently, and attractively.

Superb! No more geostats...just a simple click and you have it all!

What's your Favourite?

We all have favourite caches, something that particularly appealed to us. Maybe it was an ingenious puzzle, or simply a beautiful location with a correctly presented and maintained cache container. Well, why not share your favourite caches with the rest of the community.

On the page on caches you have found, there is now a new icon 'FAVOURITES'.

Geocaching Favorites is a simple way to track and share the caches that you enjoyed the most. For every 10 distinct caches that you have found, you will be able to Favorite 1 exceptional cache in your find history. The Favorites accumulated by a cache are displayed in search results and on the cache page so everyone can see which caches stand above the rest.

Another region

'Staffs Geocachers' appear to have grown into West Midlands Regional Geocaching:

<http://wmcaching.co.uk>

Moderated by Border Caz and Jacaru.

The Geocaching Association of Great Britain (GAGB)

is the leading UK Geocaching body, recognised by and acting on behalf of cachers. The association was established in 2004 to provide a voice for its members in the United Kingdom with the aim of establishing good Geocaching practices, providing a focal point for public liaison and supporting the growth and enjoyment of Geocaching within the UK.

Find us on www.gagb.org.uk

Coming soon...

Mega 2011

The UK's fourth geocaching Mega-Event will be held in Brangwyn Hall, Swansea on Sunday 31st July 2011.

A Mega-Event cache is similar to an Event Cache but it is much larger. In order to qualify as a Mega Event, the event cache must be attended by more than 500 people. Typically, Mega-Events are annual events and attract geocachers from all over the world. Mega Wales will be the fourth event held in the United Kingdom. Being held in Wales you will have access to stunning scenery and hospitality.

Swansea is the second most populous city in Wales and sits on the the coast. Just a few hundred metres from the Brangwyn Hall you will find a sandy beach. Access to Swansea is easy with good road, rail and air links.

The Mega-Event itself takes place on one day, but other events and activities are planned both before and after the main event. We hope that you will be able to explore this lovely corner of Wales and sample everything that it has to offer.

Visit the Mega Wales website (<http://www.megawales.co.uk>) for all the latest news, and contribute to the fundraising by ordering a supporters pack and geocoin.



Mega 2012

There are plans for at least two Mega-Events in the UK in 2012. The **North-West**

Mega-Event will be held at Cartmel Racecourse, Cumbria on Saturday 11th August 2012. Check out the website - <http://www.mega2012.org.uk> - for more information.

A **South-East Mega-Event** will be held on Sunday 22nd July 2012. Location to be confirmed, but is likely to be either Brighton or Oxford.

Check out listed 'Events' by visiting the **GAGB Calendar** on the website.

And keep up to date with events specifically in your area by creating an Instant Notification for 'Events'.





INTERVIEW

The first UK Specific Geocaching Podcast

We put some questions to Collin French, who began the UK podcast and has been broadcasting once a month for the last few months. They are proving to be really popular with the UK caching population.

Full of information regarding what is happening around the UK and the United States, cache recommendations, news about the latest innovations in the caching world, stories from cachers including recorded cache hunts from around the country, geocaching polls and a monthly competition.

The podcast can be found at www.ukgcpodcast.com and can be downloaded to your Ipad or MP3 player to listen to on the go. You can also follow the UK Podcast on Twitter or Facebook.

This is what Collin had to say.

1. How did you first hear about geocaching?

I think it was via a GPS article on wikipedia back in early 2005. You know, those boring lunchtime “what shall I search Google for now” type lunchtimes. We’d been talking about SatNav in the office and it had stuck in my mind.

I joined the site initially so I could get into the forum. I’m very big on user conversation for reviews and the Geocaching.com forum seemed to be the best place for it.

I then completely forgot about Geocaching until the end of 2008. I again came across the website, thought “I joined that”, looked, logged in, got all excited and asked for my first GPS for Christmas. It was (and still is!) a Garmin eTrex Venture HC.

2. What drew you into actually taking up the hobby?

Hobby? Never! Obsession? My wife says so! I’ve always loved being outdoors, Scouting is to blame for that, and the thought of the “hidden box” prompted me to ask for my GPS. Being able to “nerd out” as my esteemed friends call it, and being outside, places I’ve never been to and places I haven’t been for far too long got my interest peaked, and it still does. I haven’t had the time to go as far away caching as I would like but I intend this year (with the permission of my good lady wife) to venture further. A Camping Event and the Mega are on the cards for this year.

3. Do you remember how you felt when you found your first geocache?

Yes, but to put it in perspective I think I need to mention (like many other beginner cachers) that the find followed 3 DNFs. The frustration of not finding those three caches was offset

Above: GCW18D
Gray Mare’s
Cache

Right: GC22E5 A Meeting Place For Martyrs

by the fun of the hunt. Finding the first, over a week after the first DNF, was superb. It's sad that 6 of the 10 caches that I first hunted are archived or disabled. Of course, I own one of those now and should really get it sorted!

4. What are your favourite type of caches?

Well, according to the stats on my Geocaching profile 90.96% of my finds (at the time of writing) are Traditionals, so I think that answers the question. I don't mind multi-caches but need to be in the correct mood to go hunt them. I am certainly not a fan of puzzle caches, they just fry my brain.

5. Do you have a preferred size of cache?

It's always good to find an ammo box, but caching generally on my own I am not too interested in trading swag. This means that I am happy hunting any size cache and as long as the reason for bringing me to a location is good then the size of the container is kind of irrelevant. Something large enough for a TB or geocoin is great though. I'll stop there as this could turn into a multi-page rant!

6. One cache as my favourite?

Wow that's hard! Can I nominate two? The first is GCW18D Gray Mare's Cache (Vampirhummels honeymoon). Simply a beautiful location. We (my wife and I) were on holiday with friends and had escaped on our own for the day. We only stopped here as we saw a cache icon on the GPS. I read the description and it sounded good. It was, the waterfall was fantastic and the cache was in a great location. I almost left my GPS at the cache in my desperation to get back to the waterfall! I had walked away for about 5 minutes before I realised...

The second one is GC22E5 A Meeting Place For Martyrs. A fascinating corner of London that made me very late for bed!

7. Why a podcast?

I had realised that all the podcasts I could find were US based and had very little promoting UK caching. I actually mulled the idea over for a good couple of months before mentioning it in the UK forum. It received a positive response so I went for it.

I've had a few difficulties along the way, including some abuse, lots of technical issues (mostly with bad quality microphones) and crashing computers. That should all be behind us now and the only real difficulty is gathering relevant and unique information that I think listeners will be interested to listen to. Of course, there's always the competition too...

8. If you could give one bit of advice to new geocachers, what would it be?

Really? Only one..... Enjoy!

More seriously, when you stop enjoying the hunt, stop hunting. Even if it's that one cache or one day. Stick the cache on your ignore list, go and do another cache or something completely different for a bit and come back to it later.



Cache In Trash Out (CITO)

RuberyBlue reports...



Back in 2010, I undertook a task to try to raise the profile of CITO events within the UK, gaining an overview of the hard work put in by cachers to run these events and the benefit they bring to local communities.

The overall figures identified were fifteen (15) 'CITO' events held across the UK by the Geocaching community.

545 – Participants involved in litter collections

595 – Bags of litter collected

30m² – Himalayan Balsam cleared

and numerous bulky items (tyres, bikes etc.) removed.

The aim for 2011 is to continue to raise the profile and numbers of CITO events across the UK .

UK Region	Events
Southern Scotland	 
Southern England	 
East Midlands	 
West Midlands	 
Northern Scotland	
South-East England	
Yorkshire & Humberside	
North-West England	
South-West England	
Eastern England	
London	

Lets Tidy up a little bit of Rhyl (GC2HP1V)

15th January 2011 ~ CITO #1

Working hand in hand with the local Countryside Warden (Adrian Hibbert) and the Keep Wales Tidy team (Gareth Jones) the CITO event was held on Saturday 15th January 2011.

Considering the weather conditions – blustery winds and intermittent drizzle - the event went really well. Following a welcome and general safety talk from Adrian we spent a solid two hours working at litter picking, cutting (pruning) back and dead hedging (fence weaving), rotating our time between each of the 3 activities. Everyone enjoyed the option to change activities and thought that the time flew by with no break.

We had a turnout of 36 adults and 7 children, with cachers travelling from as far away as Stoke-on-Trent, Warrington, Preston and Porthmadog. Everyone ended the event damp but satisfied with their morning's efforts, with 18 bags of rubbish successfully collected.

We have plans to do another CITO event in the summer, probably in the same area in conjunction with the Denbighshire Countryside Rangers and Tidy-Up Wales again. We will let you know when we have confirmed a date.

Mike and Gail (Team Marzipan)



What is Trigpointing?



Above: Crown Beacon, Cornwall

You may have noticed a sub-forum on the GAGB website dedicated to 'Trigpointing & Related Matters'. But what exactly is trigpointing, and what has it got to do with geocaching?

Agentmancuso explains

Many people recognise the concrete pillars that typically sit on hilltops as 'trigpoints', and are maybe even familiar with the little blue triangle that marks them on Ordnance Survey maps. But few geocachers seem aware of the

purpose of these pillars, or of the fundamental importance they once had in establishing the technology that geocaching relies on – GPS coordinates.

Trigpoints are more correctly known as triangulation stations. They were built between 1936 and 1962, as part of what is known as the 'Retriangulation of Great Britain', the hugely complex task of measuring and mapping the whole island of Britain, carried out by Ordnance Survey.

How does it work?

Basically, if you can measure the angle between three points, you can tell how far away they are from each other. Originally some 20,000 stations were used, but many of these were simple landmarks like church spires and factory chimneys, which are of little interest. About 6,500 concrete pillars were specially built, and searching for these is the basis of trigpointing.

In many ways, it's a very similar pastime to geocaching: you load the coordinates in your GPSr, put on a pair of walking boots, follow the arrow till you get there, and log your find on a website when you get home. But there are also some significant differences. Unlike geocachers, trigpointers deliberately record details to make finding the trig easier for everyone else. A fair bit of attention is paid to the physical type and condition of the pillar too. And of course, access issues are treated quite differently: for dedicated trigpointers, it's strictly a matter of pragmatism, not permission!

Next time: Different types of trigpoint.

Right: Kithurst Hill, West Sussex



Books...

Geocaching in the UK

Terry Marsh

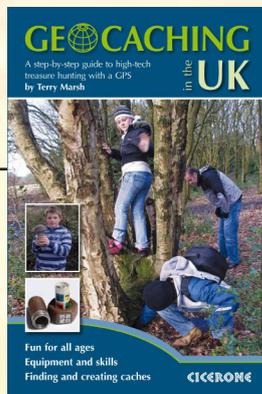
Published 15 January 2011

ISBN 978 1 85284 609 1

Cicerone Press

www.cicerone.co.uk

Geocaching is high-tech treasure hunting using a GPS, and this is the first UK-oriented guide to this most addictive of outdoor pursuits. For first-timers and for experienced geocachers, this step-by-step guide tells you everything you need to know to enjoy this accessible, family-friendly activity to the full.



Cicerone Press are pleased to offer GAGB

members a discount of 20% on this, and **all** Cicerone titles purchased online at www.cicerone.co.uk.

All members need to do to claim the discount is to add the voucher code 'GAGB' on the shopping basket page of the Cicerone website.

GPS for Walkers

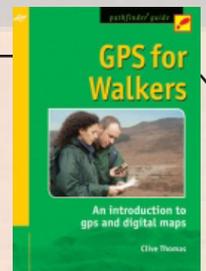
Clive Thomas

Published 31 May 2006

ISBN 978 0 71174 445 5

Crimson Publishing

www.crimsonpublishing.co.uk



This easy-to-use guide, written by experienced mountain leader and navigation trainer Clive Thomas, uses non-technical language to introduce you to choosing and using a GPS receiver to enhance leisure walking and make it safer. It includes everything you need to know, with expert tips, reliable advice, valuable information and practical guidance.

Jacaru
Geocoins
www.jacaru.blogspot.com

Jacaru sells coins through his Ebay shop. He not only stocks geocoins from other manufacturers, but also coins that he has designed himself. He also supplies caches, personalised cache-calling cards, self-inking stamps and more. If you see anything that you like in his listings. **Jacaru offers a 10% discount on sales to GAGB members.**

The address for the shop is
<http://stores.ebay.co.uk/Jacaru-Geocoins>
To obtain a discount, please contact him directly at daryl@jacaru.co.uk.



Geotees: For geocoins, travel bugs, caches and more. We can also have your own coins or tags made for you to your design. Please visit us at www.geotees.co.uk where GAGB members enjoy a 5% discount. To get your discount, open an account, then PM or email me (Mongoose39uk) through the GAGB website before you place your order. This only needs to be done once, the discount will then be applied to all future orders.