

The magazine of the Geocaching Association of Great Britain

SEEKER



21
July 2014

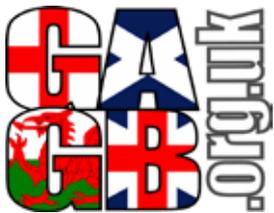


SEEKER

ISSUE 21 JULY 2014

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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 2003 to provide a national organisation that represented geocaching, and serve as a UK point of contact for geocachers, landowners, the media and others with an interest in geocaching.

Find us on www.gagb.org.uk

Contributions to Seeker are welcome; please contact the editor (editor@gagb.org.uk), but the Association is unable, at the present time, to pay for submissions. Copyright in all such contributions will revert to the author on publication of the subsequent issue; pictures are published on a single use, non-exclusive UK editorial rights basis under which copyright remains with the photographer.



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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 21st edition of *Seeker*, another bumper issue just in time for the summer holidays and the next two Mega events – *Piratemanía (Cumbria)* and the annual UK Mega event (*Ayrshire & Arran*).

In this issue, Richlay tells us how he filled in a couple more squares on his Jasmer grid. Fingers crossed that the weather and views are as good when I get to finally fill in that remote July 2001 square. If you are interested in filling in your own Jasmer grid, then you may want to attend one of the UK Mega side events that visits the UK's oldest active geocache.

It is always nice to see contributions to *Seeker* and I've really enjoyed reading the article from HerefordAnn in which she explains how geocaching has helped her explore her new home town. If you have something you would like to share, then please contact the editor (editor@gagb.org.uk).

A reminder about the GAGB annual weekend on 13th & 14th September. This year we are promoting the conservational side of CITO – similar to the Linedancers event mentioned in this magazine. So please organise your own CITO event for that weekend – if you need any help or advice, then please let us know.

As many of you will have now heard, Deceangi – the longest serving UK reviewer for *Groundspeak*, resigned in the middle of June. I would like to thank Dave for his hard work and contributions to geocaching in the UK over the last 8 years as a reviewer and as a supporter of GAGB since it was first formed in 2003. We will all need to get used to him being Mancunian Pyrocacher again ... although I am sure he will always be 'Deci' to so many of us.



nanos

A game of thorns

There may be someone out there who loves caches concealed in ivy; possibly a minority of one. We all hate them; yet we still place them. But there's something worse than ivy, and it's nothing to do with actual caches, it's to do with what we encounter in finding them – barbed wire, rusted nails, sharp-edged scrap metal, old farm machinery and...nettles! Acceptable and familiar hazards, of course, but, just as a safeguard, unless there's some medical reason not to, isn't it wise to ensure that everyone has a tetanus jab? Most GP's surgeries offer this as a free service.

And what about our poochy friends, too? Do they suffer from ticks after a day out? If you look at a 'Tick infestation map' for Europe, you hardly see anything for the UK. Don't you believe it; they can be rampant as far north as Scotland at certain times of the year. Do you know how to search for and remove ticks from animals, safely? Here's a website that tells you how:
www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing_a_tick.html.

What started you off?

On page 10 of this issue, we have the beginner's story of HerefordAnn...interesting and information. But what started you off? Is it anything you would like to contribute to Seeker... the pros, the cons, the likes, the dislikes. If so, contact the editor@gagb.org.uk.

Here comes the sun

The sun's rays may have a pleasing effect on the hue of your skin or the shade of your hair, but don't make that a reason to forget the sunscreen on your geocaching adventure. Even if in the end you DNF, always protect yourself with SPF, preferably 15 or higher.

Want to print your own log books? Download logs you can print out for yourself from the GAGB website, [here](#).



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

★Morecambe Bay Walk: 19 July 2014

11am prompt from Arnside (GC4X920)

★Piratemanía 7: 25-26-27 July 2014

Cartmel Racecourse, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria LA11 6QF

Main Event Day Saturday 26th July (GC4NCX1)

★UK Mega Event: Ayrshire and Arran: 2 August 2014

Ayr Racecourse, 2-6 Whitletts Road, Ayr KA8 0JE (GC4HBG4)

★Halloween Mega: 25 October 2014

Fineshade Wood, near Corby (GC4YCAV)

★Kent Mega: 2 May 2015

Kent Hop Farm, Paddock Wood, Kent (GC53QJ1)

GAGB Annual weekend 13th-14th September 2014

Following last year's successful GAGB10 CITO weekend we decided that the GAGB should have an annual CITO weekend – which this year will be on the second weekend of September.

We are encouraging geocachers to work on the conservational side of CITO – rather than just litter removal. There are plenty of places that could do with volunteers to help with the removal of invasive species, clearing shrubs or even building new woodland trails.

All we ask is that you prefix the name of your CITO event page with GAGB2014: and put the GAGB logo on your event page.

There were nearly 40 events held in the UK for the International CITO weekend in April – it would be great to see if we can beat that figure.

If you haven't held a CITO event before and want some advice, then please get in touch with one of us:
gagbcommittee@gagb.org.uk.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE LANDOWNER UPDATE

On behalf of the reviewing team, Graculus has attempted on numerous occasions to try and establish the areas in which geocaches listed on geocaching.com will not be permitted to be placed, following the ban on MOD land.

The MOD up to this point have been unwilling or unable to provide the team with this detail and so the team have agreed on these steps.

The only mapping the reviewers have with MOD land marked are OS maps. The reviewers WILL NOT refuse caches placed in these areas; HOWEVER the prospective CO will have had to have communicated with the MOD and provide clear written proof (letter or email) that the cache is permitted, making it similar to other sensitive areas.

Where the land is leased to the MOD, the CO will still need to show the proof of permission from the land owner and/or the MOD.

There is a little more information/clarification available in the landowner wiki page <https://wiki.groundspeak.com/display/GEO/United+Kingdom+Landowner+Agreements>.



visit us | www.mega2015.org.uk
mail us | committee@mega2015.org.uk
poke us | www.mega2015.org.uk/fb
tweet us | [@GeoUKMega2015](https://twitter.com/GeoUKMega2015)

Why I love Jasmers

Richard Lay explains



As much as I am looking forward to the UK Mega event for meeting several of the committee again, doing my stint on our stall and exploring what Ayrshire has to offer a cacher, there is one thing that draws me more than anything else. The side event “UK Mega Lunch on Scotland’s First” (GC53WPZ) is the big attraction for me of this festival for cachers.

You see, the cache site for the picnic (GCF0) is the oldest cache in the UK, placed in December 2000 when our game was still in its infancy and is the last remaining gap to fill on my UK Jasmer grid. The Jasmer game is a side project where the finder is required to find a cache placed in every month since the game began. Within the UK we have every month available from December 2000, except for March 2001 and a short, cheap flight to Ireland can get you Europe’s First (GC43), placed in June 2000.

At the end of May, along with three great pals (RebekahMarie73, DesertfoxUK and Supertrampz) I spent a couple of nights on the Scottish border with the intent of gaining two of the months I needed to fill, May and July 2001 finding caches GCAA2 - Percy’s Cross, GC1330 - Where’s George’s Kidney Stone and GC132F - Reivers Revenge. The latter two caches are on a spectacular ridge forming the border between England and Scotland, about as far from anywhere as you could imagine being.

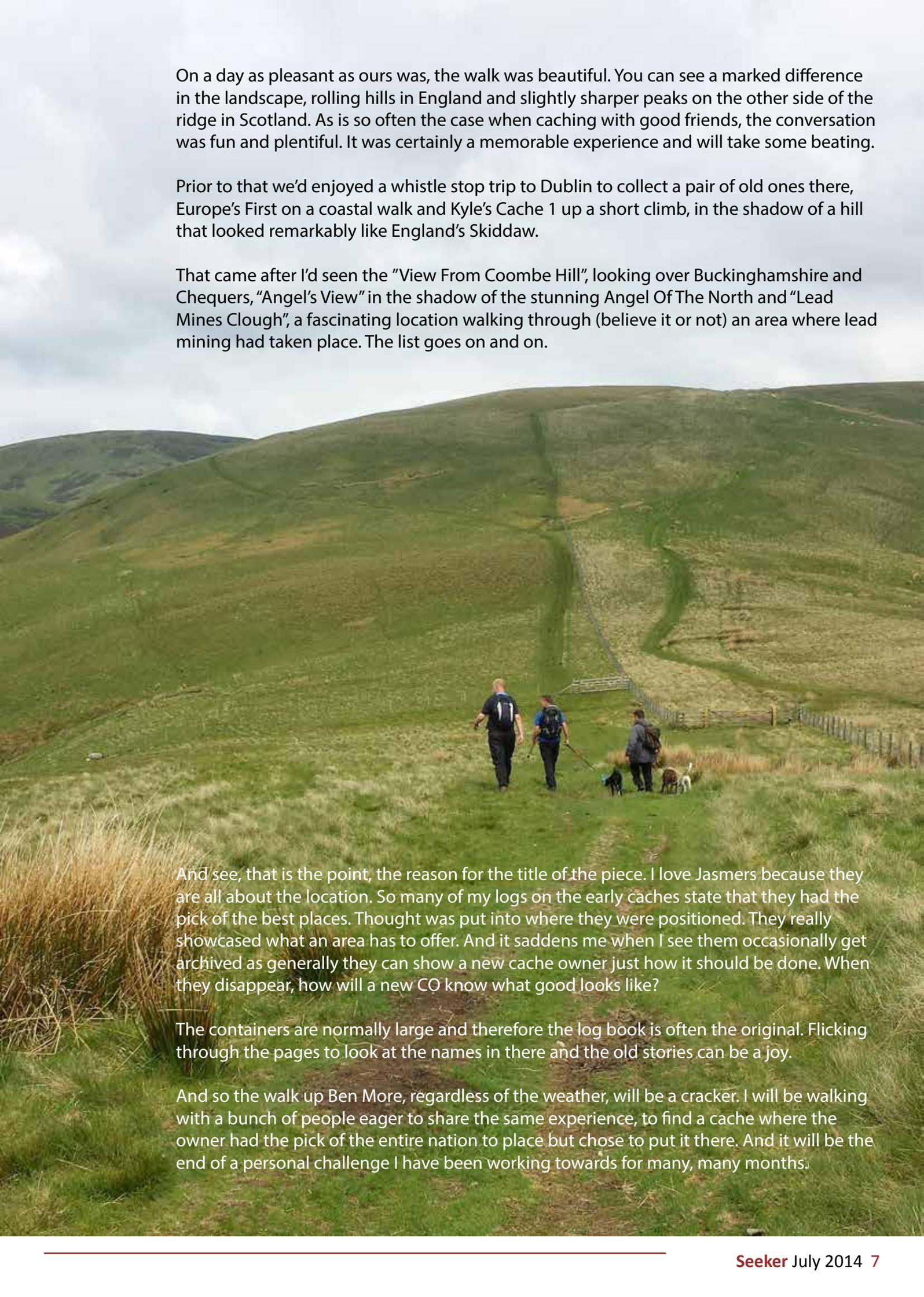
Drive-bys they are not. They are a good 2½-mile walk up an ancient route known as “The Street” (formerly Dere Street, which was a Roman route from York to Bo’ness) before meeting the Pennine Way on the border ridge. At the crossroads is the first of the oldies, the Virtual “Where’s Georges Kidney Stone” where the Cache Owner simply wants the wording on a sign located at the coordinates to log the cache. Kindly, Northumbria Biker has recently placed a handful of extra caches on the ridge for us to find, which broke the walk up nicely, allowed us time to take in the scenery and catch our breath and bolstered our find total for the day.

A couple of kilometres to the east is “Russell’s Cairn” on Windy Gyle, the starting location for Reivers Revenge. As is often the case with old caches that were placed before the guidelines we know today, there is a quirk to the listing where the cache is actually an offset and now would probably be listed as an unknown cache type. When looking through the logs you can see that this has caught a few people out and they’ve tried looking for the prize at the published coordinates, rather than the further 450 metres away it is actually hidden at. That even confused two of our party that had marched on up front, much to Rebekah’s and my amusement!

On a day as pleasant as ours was, the walk was beautiful. You can see a marked difference in the landscape, rolling hills in England and slightly sharper peaks on the other side of the ridge in Scotland. As is so often the case when caching with good friends, the conversation was fun and plentiful. It was certainly a memorable experience and will take some beating.

Prior to that we'd enjoyed a whistle stop trip to Dublin to collect a pair of old ones there, Europe's First on a coastal walk and Kyle's Cache 1 up a short climb, in the shadow of a hill that looked remarkably like England's Skiddaw.

That came after I'd seen the "View From Coombe Hill", looking over Buckinghamshire and Chequers, "Angel's View" in the shadow of the stunning Angel Of The North and "Lead Mines Clough", a fascinating location walking through (believe it or not) an area where lead mining had taken place. The list goes on and on.

A wide-angle photograph of a grassy hillside under a cloudy sky. In the foreground, three hikers are walking away from the camera along a path. They are wearing backpacks and casual hiking attire. Two dogs are walking with them. The landscape is rolling and green, with a fence line visible in the distance. The overall mood is peaceful and scenic.

And see, that is the point, the reason for the title of the piece. I love Jasmers because they are all about the location. So many of my logs on the early caches state that they had the pick of the best places. Thought was put into where they were positioned. They really showcased what an area has to offer. And it saddens me when I see them occasionally get archived as generally they can show a new cache owner just how it should be done. When they disappear, how will a new CO know what good looks like?

The containers are normally large and therefore the log book is often the original. Flicking through the pages to look at the names in there and the old stories can be a joy.

And so the walk up Ben More, regardless of the weather, will be a cracker. I will be walking with a bunch of people eager to share the same experience, to find a cache where the owner had the pick of the entire nation to place but chose to put it there. And it will be the end of a personal challenge I have been working towards for many, many months.

GEOCACHING IN

Freelance writer and photographer, Terry Marsh (Countrymatters) explains how geocaching helps to improve the books he writes...what can it do for you?

It was a dark and stormy night; rain lashing at the window, wind howling down the chimney, our dog snoring gently at our feet, and the Highland Park 12-year old going down a treat. Note to self: must go back to Orkney, soon...home of Highland Park.

We were on Skye; Borve to be precise, just outside Portree, and planning a walk from Orbst to Macleod's Maidens – not that it needs much planning. Anyway, No. 1 son had spent the last year or so raving on about something called geocaching. Apparently, he said, you download thingies (co-ordinates) from some website to a different thingy (GPS device), and then go off in search of a box at said thingies, somewhere, out there, in the cold and wet. Sign a log – a log? inside the box? – go home and record your visit on the parent website, and earn a Brownie point.

It didn't leap out and spark my imagination; at least, not until he threw down the challenge: 'Why not write a book about geocaching?' Now, ever on the lookout for new book ideas, that, I recognised, had the makings of a plan. But there was a technical hitch: I had no idea what geocaching was.

So, I needed to find out; to discover geocaching for myself. Had I realised that I would come to bore for Britain on the subject of geocaching, I might never have started. But what happened over the next year provided a salutary lesson in how to turn what became an enjoyable hobby into a cash cow...well, a cash cowlette.

What I was not to realise at the time was the way geocaching not only added a new dimension to every walk I did in the next five years, but how it influenced the way I devised walks, and, even how I came to explore the Azores and Venice in a way no guidebook could show me.

The basics

Where geocaching plays a real part in my guidebook writing is in the way it achieves a number of things that

are not instantly obvious:

- it invariably takes me to places I have never visited
- because the caches have been placed by people with local knowledge, they are often off the beaten track, and, I've found, provide me with clues to possible walkways that are not evident on OS mapping. Of course, most outdoor writers are adept at finding alternative routes once 'on site', but equally, we miss quite a few. Geocaches invite you to consider alternatives
- although many caches are placed in fairly ordinary locations, some form part of a themed series that visit settings of historical significance, or impart knowledge that can be used as part of your walk description, and that just improves the quality of your work. You still have to check the facts they offer – some are decidedly Wikidodgy – but often there is a nugget of information in there you might otherwise overlook

Writers working often in isolation, all need 'away-from-computer-time'. For me, geocaching fills the role admirably. I actually get to see more of my wife; we go walking together more frequently, often in the company of new friends we have made through geocaching, and our (recently departed) dog just loved it, especially the water caches.

Meanwhile, I learned a lot about the intricacies of geocaching, and about qualities of human nature that prompt people to throw bags of dog poo into trees and bushes – presumably in the expectation that in a million years or so they will have disappeared. But gradually, people's disgusting habits aside – and they have nothing to do with geocaching – I learned a lot, like how to spot a cache in the form of an acorn attached to a pine tree, how to recognise fake mushrooms, how to pick out an unusual lump of rock from a slope of scree...all because the thing I was looking for was camouflaged in some way.

So, why is this important for writers?

Well, it isn't. We can all live without geocaching. We can still write our books; still go our merry ways. I don't watch football; I don't fish; it's not a problem.

But geocaching gives me an added dimension to work with, a bit like a filter on a camera, that gives you a slightly different view of things. I still do my walks, and, more or less, follow my intended route. But trotting off in search of a nearby cache while doing so, almost always improves what I'm working on. Not without good reason have the National Trust (and other organisations) taken geocaching to heart as a means of teaching about the countryside, its buildings and landscapes. As a committee member of GAGB I know that not a week goes by without some enquiry, usually from a journalist or TV scriptwriter, making contact to ask for advice to help them write a feature about geocaching. In the last five years, the number of geocaches placed in the UK, has risen from 60,000 to 160,000, and still going up by over 100 every week: it's a developing pursuit.

On top of everything else, geocaching teaches respect for the countryside, and encourages young people (er, read... future purchasers of my books) to accept the countryside and walking as a natural thing to do. One small cache for Tommy today, one new Richard Mabey for tomorrow's child.

And so to the book, and more

Eventually, I felt ready to write a book, and I like to think

that maybe my publishers, Cicerone Press, saw the light I was looking at when they agreed to publish it. The rest may not yet have made it into the annals of significant history, but a second edition is already in production, and sales ticking along nicely...more than amply paying for more Highland Park.

But then things started to move along somewhat. While writing a walker's guidebook to the Isle of Mull, I met a nice young lady from the Mull and Iona Community Trust, who also happened to work for the Forestry Commission on Mull. My explanation of the benefits of geocaching brought a distant and glazed expression to her face, but imprinted enough on her memory for her to pass on my name as a contact when geocaching as a means to commercial development hit the fan of Mull tourism.

I've no idea where things will go from here. But my improving knowledge of Mull has turned me to creating a new smartphone app for the island – something I had already done elsewhere – and that brings in yet more income, in small amounts. More visits to Mull are waiting to be slotted into my 2014-15 schedule. I promote Mull; they promote my book. Quid pro quo...and all because I started geocaching. For me, it's good PR, and I also get to write magazine articles about geocaching in France, the Faroe Islands, the Isle of Man, the Azores...and even star in a Cicerone video on the subject.

What does geocaching do for you?





New to the game... – and Herefordshire!



HerefordAnn provides a beginner's view of geocaching

Perhaps I should explain a bit about myself first. I am not exactly in my youth, but I don't like to think of myself as old, even though I have just reached the grand age of sixty nine. Due to health problems I am unable to drive; so everything I do has to be by public transport or on foot.

Last year, having lived for the previous six years in a rural part of Wales, I decided to move to a new area, because I realised that rural life was not for me; I was feeling very isolated. And that's how Herefordshire became my new home. I settled in fairly quickly, but realised that I wanted a hobby, apart from photography, which would take me out and about to explore my new surroundings. Being single, and with no partner to accompany me, I needed something that would be suitable for a solitary person.

Herefordshire is beautiful and I live in its only city – Hereford – about a five-minute walk from the lovely cathedral, which was built in the 11th century (although it has been added to over time, especially when the west transept collapsed

in 1786). The cathedral also has a chained library, which dates back to the 17th century and is the largest to survive with all of its chains, rods and locks intact. Also, within the cathedral, is the Mappa Mundi, a 13th-century map showing how scholars interpreted the world in spiritual, as well as geographical, terms. For anyone who has never visited the county – it lies on the border with Wales, and a great deal of the area is rural, with fields of oilseed rape and other arable crops, as well as the famous Hereford Cattle. Many of the towns and villages have black-and-white timbered buildings, important church architecture and, of course, numerous village pubs. So, for anyone interested in history, this is a wonderful capsule of antiquity to visit or live in.

During my time in Wales, a photographer friend from Norway came to see me, and he told me that there was a geocache on one of the hills nearby; would I like to go with him to find it? After he had explained geocaching to me, I thought the challenge sounded interesting so I agreed and we set off in his car and found somewhere nearby to park.

Foolishly I had forgotten that he is twenty years younger than me and over a foot taller, so

he could stride along compared to my pace. Part of the way up the hill I had to admit defeat and let him continue on his way. A while later, he returned having found the cache. At that time, I thought that I would never become interested in such a seemingly bizarre hobby.

But, as I explained earlier I was trying to think of something to get me out, and also I need a purpose to go out walking; I am not one of those people that can just go for a walk.

I remembered the geocaching and wondered if there was anything around where I lived, rather than in the countryside. Logging on to geocaching.com I registered with the caching website and did a preliminary search. I was amazed at how many caches there were surrounding me. By a stroke of luck there was one in Abbey Dore, where I was heading the following weekend. So I made a note of where it was.

They say that 'pride comes before a fall' and that was certainly true, I found that cache within minutes and thought to myself that it was going to be so easy. Silly me!

Two of my greatest faults are not reading things thoroughly and a lack of patience. So I assumed that the next cache would be the same size as the first one. Off I went through Bishop's Meadow, which is close to where I live. Could I find it – no! I knew where it should be, due to the clues. In desperation I emailed my friend in Norway and he explained about the different sizes of cache, so I set off again. Success! Not only did I find that one but I found three more on the same day.

Now I thought that it was time to tackle something a bit more difficult, so I tried one of the puzzle caches, worked out the co-ordinates and set off to trek up to the other side of the city. This was a great one to find as it was disguised as a stone, another one to tick off from the list!

My last cache of the year took me over the border into Wales, as I was visiting Monmouth for the day. Unfortunately my patience ran out when I was unable to find a cache back in Hereford, and I just gave up.

Sitting here a couple of months ago (it must be something to do with the time of year) I realised that I spend far too much time on the computer and not enough time out and about, so I have started caching again.

I attended the CITO event in Ross on Wye, met some nice people, found a cache in the town centre and my enthusiasm was reignited. After three



attempts I found one near to where I live (I must remember to look properly the first time!).

My most embarrassing moment was a few days later, having solved the puzzle, heading to the cache location, and then knocking it down to where I couldn't reach it. I had to wait for someone to walk by; luckily a nice couple helped me although the man did think that I was joking. They were fascinated with the cache and my explanation so, perhaps, I have recruited some new members.

I go out on my own as I have no friends living locally, so it is a bit difficult at times not to look suspicious. However, I did read that someone tells curious passers-by that they are looking for an earring. So, I have an answer ready should anyone ask.

Recently I joined Facebook and, although a lot of the terminology that everyone uses goes over my head completely, I began to realise that I really should invest in a GPS device. This has proved really useful, although I am still on a learning curve with it, but practice will make perfect, so I'm told.

A two-mile walk earlier this month took me to a new bridge that was completed on the River Wye as part of the city's cycle track. Sitting there, with the sun shining, logging the cache and drinking coffee I thought that life really doesn't get any better than this.

Now I am looking at the site for caches in Kent, as I am visiting there in August.

Yes, I am new to all of this and I have a lot to learn, but I hope that over the coming months and years I will get better and push myself more and improve my confidence.

There is life after 60; especially in the world of geocaching.



SOUTHPORT CITO SUCCESS



Clare Kitching
one half of
linedancers
reports

Following on from last year's very successful CITO (Let's Get Ready for Southport In Bloom GC2TJV3), which we held in the Botanic Gardens on 12-06-13, the Park Rangers got in touch earlier this year, to ask if we would be willing to do it again.

Being keen on giving something back to the community, we naturally jumped at the chance.

For this year, we were asked to help out in Hesketh Park. Very similar to the previous year, border clearing, lopping, mulching, bench painting and the usual litter pick, although there wasn't that much to pick up.

All involved seemed to have a wonderful time and the Park Rangers were more than impressed with what we managed to achieve in a space of two hours. Even the pooches enjoyed themselves.

We would also like to pay a special thank you to Dawn of Browni, who, along with hubby Ian, took the time and trouble to attend the event, on her birthday.

LIFE WITHOUT GSAK

Maple Leaf (Jen Harley) tells you how

It seems that whenever anyone asks how to do something – the answer is always use GSAK. As I have never used GSAK, I thought I would tell you how I manage without it.

Because I am not a 'numbers person' and with so many geocaches to choose from, I normally read the cache pages in advance and choose the ones I want to do – rather than just run a PQ (pocket query) with 500 or 1000 caches.

Planning

My starting point is normally the 'Map view'. Click on the 'map icon' on your profile page and type in a town, followed by UK. e.g. Bristol, UK. From here, it is very easy to get a visual overview of the area.

I also use the GreaseMonkey Map Enhancements so can quickly switch between street, satellite or Ordnance Survey views – which is useful to see where the footpaths are.

If I only want a handful of caches to load straight away, I use the 'Send to my GPS' button from the information pop up bubble.

However, most of the time I am planning for a forthcoming trip so I create a bookmark in advance and then add the individual caches to that bookmark (again from the information bubble on the map view).

Bookmarks

By adding the geocaches into a bookmark, I can write additional information that may be useful when out caching. These may be that it is just off a certain motorway junction or near a tourist attraction or some other interesting fact from the cache page that I want to remember to look out for.

The bookmark can then be added to over several days/weeks – especially useful when planning for a holiday.

Tip – When creating your bookmark, don't 'Share it' – otherwise everyone will be able to read your notes and puzzle answers!

Pocket Query – from bookmark

At anytime during the creation of your bookmark, you can create a Pocket Query of it. Give it a meaningful name, but don't tick the run day yet.

The PQ will appear in your Active Pocket Queries, but won't use your daily allowance.

To get a visual preview of all the geocaches in the PQ, click on the map icon to the left hand side of the PQ (in the list).

You can continue to add more caches to the bookmark without having to recreate a new PQ – the current one will always be up to date.

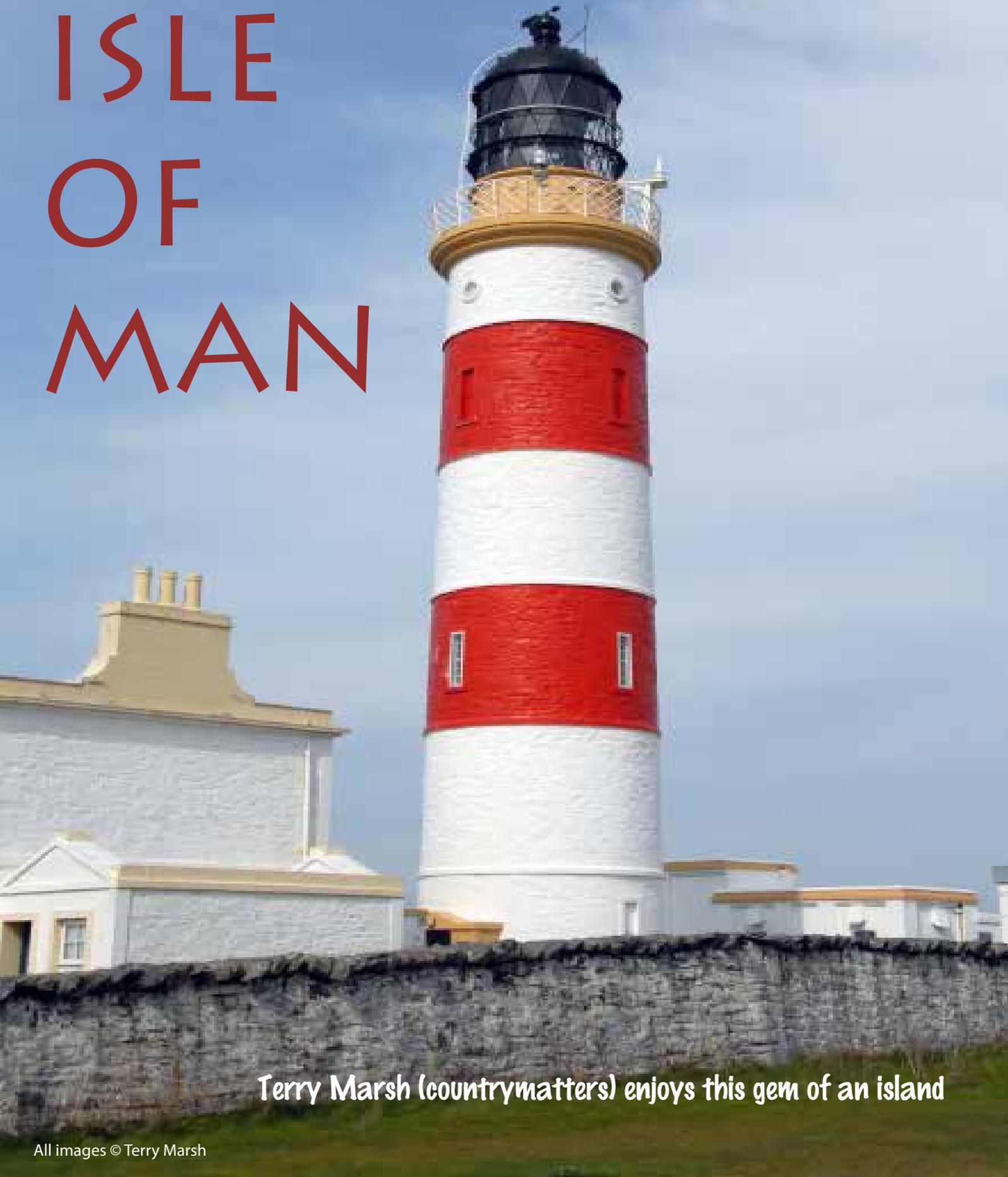
Before your trip

Tick the day/s you want your PQ to run. If you have written additional notes on your bookmark – then print that out.

Tip – check all pages have printed as I have been caught out by this a couple of times.

Geocaching on the

ISLE
OF
MAN



Terry Marsh (countrymatters) enjoys this gem of an island

Held to ransom...

Why 'Held to ransom'?

Visit in May and you'll be assaulted at every turn by the heady scent of wild garlic. There's even one long lane (part of the Millennium Way), with a number of drive-by caches, where the trees form a canopy above your head, and the roadsides are deep in wild garlic - Old Church Road, Crosby, it's called.

We called it Garlic Alley, and went out of our way to come back to our cottage the same way each day. Brilliant.

Any, if it's not garlic, it's gorse, and bluebells, blue, white and pink bluebells to be precise... and primroses, and fuchsia, and... well, an awful lot of flowers. And birdlife, too, if, like me, you're also a birder.

I first visited the Isle of Man in 1947; a time of post-war austerity, no television, no telephones for 'umble folk like us, and certainly no geocaching. How things have

changed. With an area of around 572 sq kilometres (221 sq miles), and measuring little more than 30 miles top to toe, and about 14 miles across, at best, this modest island, set in the Irish Sea, today hosts over 700 caches.

Alas, geocaching wasn't my priority – I had the second edition of a book to write, but I still managed to gather in more than 230 caches, picking away at a few each day as I wandered back and forth to and from walk starts and finishes. Now a dedicated cacher could probably do the lot in a week, but would be feeling rather jaded at the end of it...and ready for a holiday.

Within a few days of arriving I attended an event at the Laxey Wheel organised by twoofnine (Alan and Angie). It was really intended as a beginner's event, encouraging new starters into the cult of geocaching. It was great to meet up with them, and Stillroaming (Stella and Roy), whom I'd met previously. Between them, these two, two-person teams own and/or maintain a large number of the caches on the island, including a splendid 10-mile power trail of 80 caches that follows a disused railway trackbed – the





Heritage Trail – across the island from Peel to Douglas; easily do-able in a day, as spottydotty59 demonstrated when we caught up with them at a local pub.

Elsewhere it was a question of picking up caches wherever we could. Some were part of mini-series, like that round Port Grenaugh in the south of the island, on the Parish Walk series, or along other trails, such as the Millennium Way, which runs up the centre of the island. One particularly

agreeable group of caches is anything but a group, as it needs you to visit a cache at each of the extremities of the island, north, south, east and west, and retrieve part co-ordinate information to enable you to go for a final cache in the centre of the island...and what a delight that was. A superb walk onto the lovely moors to the south of Snaefell – yes, there's a cache up there – onto a hill little visited by outsiders, being a bit off the beaten track. As we signed the log, we could see a mountain hare trying to make its mind up whether to scarper or pretend to be a rock...it scarpered...wish I could run like that!

Apart from the Heritage Trail, there is no particular heavy density grouping of caches; they tend to be widely spread across the whole island, including some, like that on the Derbyhaven breakwater, accessible only at low tide. Come armed with a car or a bike, and you can have a great time exploring this glorious place. We stayed at a lovely self-catering cottage at Crosby, which happened to be just 200m from the Heritage Trail - evening walks sorted, then (if anyone wants the cottage details, let me know, I can really recommend it).

But there was one thing that we both noticed – although having spent many years visiting



the island when I used to organise a walking festival there, we already knew this – the Manx people are incredibly friendly and courteous. Never, except in the bustle and bustle of Douglas, did we pass anyone who didn't say a friendly 'Hello', or encounter anything other than considerate motorists happy to wave pedestrians across the road, or give way to other motorists.

Geocaching on the Isle of Man



As for getting around, if you don't bring your own car, you'll find the public transport network absolutely amazing, whether it's buses that trundle round all the remote corners of the island, or the various railways and trams, you won't have any difficulty getting around, and you may not



GETTING TO THE ISLE OF MAN

By air

Frequent flights are provided to and from London (Gatwick, Heathrow and Southend), Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Blackpool, Birmingham, Glasgow, Gloucester, Leeds/Bradford, Jersey and Dublin. There are also daily connecting flights linking the island to Newcastle, Edinburgh, East Midlands and Southampton and to many international destinations.

By sea

The island's main sea routes are between Douglas and Liverpool, and Douglas and Heysham, in the north-west of England closely linked to Britain's motorway and intercity rail networks. The Isle of Man Steam Packet Company operates twice-daily services throughout the year. The Steam Packet Company also has twice-daily fast craft services to Liverpool from April to October and conventional weekend services during the winter.

In the summer months the Steam Packet operates additional fast craft routes for holiday traffic to Dublin and Belfast as well as extra sailings to Heysham and Liverpool with SeaCat and SuperSeaCat fast craft.

PRODUCT REVIEW

Garmin's Backpack tether Maple Leaf reports

When I am out geocaching I tend to clip my Garmin Oregon onto the accessory D-ring on my rucksack using the karabiner that is attached to it (as I am sure many of you do).

However, my small rucksack doesn't have an accessory D-ring, so I end up carrying the GPSr in my hand, which is not always convenient. So, I was very pleased when I saw what appeared to be a solution ... the Garmin backpack tether.

What is it?

The backpack tether comes as two parts – which are connected to each other by hook-n-loop material and an adjustable 35cm cord.

The first part slides onto the back of your Garmin device (replaces the karabiner) and the second part has two hook-n-loop straps that wrap around your rucksack strap.

Each part also has a piece of hook-n-loop material, which connect together and therefore keep your GPSr attached to your rucksack.

How do you use it?

Once it is attached to your rucksack, it is very easy to grab and pull your GPS off the hook-n-loops to use it, then just slap it back on. It seems very secure, but if it did slip, the cord works as a safety cord as well.



Any downsides?

Only the noise of pulling it off the hook-n-loops!

What devices is it compatible with?

Any Garmin device that has the standard 'slide on/slide off' karabiner fitting e.g. Colorado, Oregon, Dakota, GPSMAP62

How much?

Around £20

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

**KENT
MEGA
2014**
www.kentmega.co.uk



Sharon Reid (sharant) and Richard Lay (Richlay) report back on this year's Kent Mega

SHARON REID: The Mega started for us on the Saturday with the Harthorns canal caches on the River Meadway. We had a fantastic time canoeing down the river, but it was much harder coming back against the flow. That evening we really enjoyed the night cache and loved solving the puzzle and following the trail of torchlights.

The next day Sunday was the Mega itself and the highlight of the day was the new lab caches. Lab caches are a new and rare geocache type. At the Mega there were 10 different caches all close together in a small wood on site. The ladies Sandra, Kath and Maria excelled themselves with some fantastic ideas. We could not believe our eyes when we entered the woods: a disaster has happened there was a crashed plane with an unfortunate parachutist. Another one of our favourites was jumping into the ball pit to find the secret code on one of the silver balls, and searching for the code from letter inside of socks hanging on the washing line. There were some imaginative ideas and a fantastic way to celebrate a Mega by releasing these caches that were only live for the Mega itself.

RICHARD LAY: Since Christmas, I had really been looking forward to Spring and the clocks going forward, nights get longer and I could get the tent out, but also a brand new Mega event in the UK would be happening.

I managed to get myself booked into camp for 4 nights, hoping to get a good flavour of the area and enjoy the day itself. Having my kids with me would mean I'd have to do things a little differently, I couldn't spend all my available time with GPSr in hand, but there were things I really wanted to do. The Kent LQ was a must and I really wanted to have another crack at the icon challenge, I had previously done 9 when I got my 2000th milestone. Unfortunately with the children being a little young I

didn't really feel able to join in the canoe event, but if it's run again next year I'll definitely be trying!

The icon challenge gave us a good opportunity to see some of Kent that I'd not planned to. The EarthCache at Bluebell Hill and the YOSM at Holly Hill gave excellent views at heights that I really wasn't expecting. The Farmer's Conundrum Whereigo was in a stunning village and utterly hilarious, it must have given the customers in the pub a right laugh!

The venue for the mega itself was great. Lots to do for the kids and plenty of space for everyone to spread out. It was really nice to catch up with people I'd not seen for some time and to speak to some of the committee. By the time it came to the barn dance, we were all pretty tired but really enjoyed watching everyone having fun.



In summary, Kent was **awesome** but we barely scratched the surface.

Hop Farm was **amazing**, the camping was good and the venue excellent.

The mega was **superb**. A terrific addition to our mega calendar and we can't wait for next year!



Cass Flowers *geocass* continues her Master Class



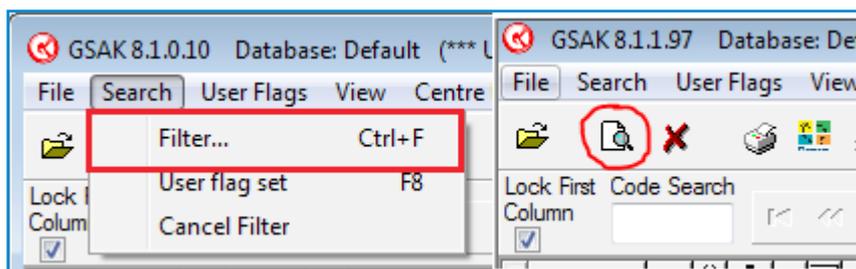
Sorting and Filtering

Sorting

Sorting is as simple as clicking the column header of the column you want to sort by. To find the oldest cache in your database, click the 'Placed' column

Waypoint Name	Miles	Brg	Placed By	Placed	Last GPX	Last Found	Container	Diff	Tern	↑ Fav P...
CBN 110 - Jaywick Martello Tower	7.02	NE	Mel & Ray	03/03/2007	30/07/2012	28/07/2012	Micro	1.0	1.5	33
CBN 065 - Chelmer and Blackwa	10.30	NE	Junior J	11/11/2011	30/07/2012	28/07/2012	Micro	1.0	1.5	32
#6 Thundersley Stableyards	8.05	SE	a1nnie	23/10/2011	30/07/2012	08/07/2012	Small	1.5	1.5	31
Langdon Plotlands - IAN'S GARDEN	5.35	S	Essex Wildlife Trust	07/06/2011	30/07/2012	21/07/2012	Micro	1.5	1.0	30
16 - Claire's Walk - Archway to Heaven	4.01	NW	HollynCharlie	14/01/2012	30/07/2012	01/07/2012	Regular	1.5	1.5	30
SCARECROWS REVENGE	10.54	SE	scarecrow rog	23/04/2011	30/07/2012	09/06/2012	Micro	5.0	2.5	27
Rio's Ramble # 17 - Bonus	4.22	N	rachelbarford	13/01/2012	30/07/2012	23/05/2012	Regular	2.0	3.0	24
Bewyched Elm	9.75	SE	alfarow	25/12/2007	30/07/2012	19/05/2012	Small	2.5	2.5	21
Beamflote Beast	9.01	SE	alfarow	14/12/2009	30/07/2012	25/10/2011	Micro	4.5	4.0	21
Huey Dewey and Louie go Geoc	7.08	N	hellenbrian	16/12/2009	30/07/2012	29/05/2012	Regular	2.0	1.0	21
Stock Loop 7 - The Climb	1.96	NE	The Kitty Cachers	06/09/2010	30/07/2012	15/07/2012	Other	2.0	1.5	18
Mamma Mia, Here I Go Again #	1.50	W	The Kitty Cachers	01/02/2011	30/07/2012	22/07/2012	Regular	1.5	2.0	17
The Cunning Cache of Hadleigh	10.06	SE	Scarecrow Rog	20/11/2008	30/07/2012	28/04/2012	Small	2.0	1.5	15

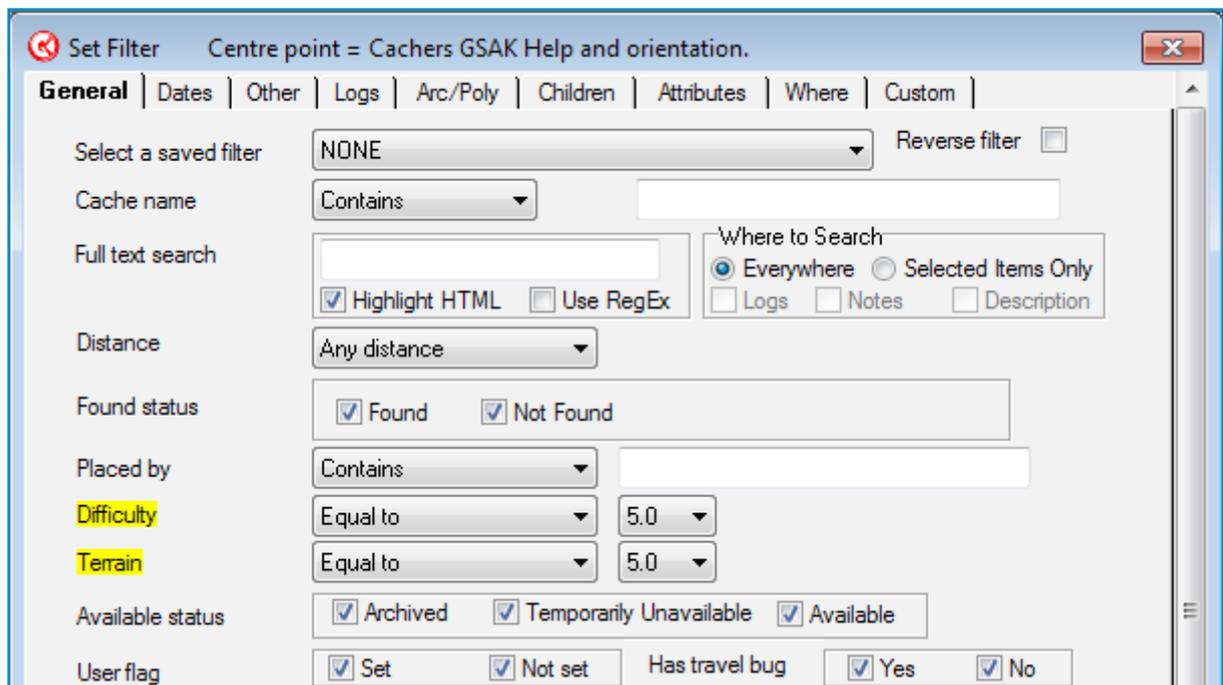
and it'll appear at the top, or click the 'Fav Points' column header to sort by caches with the highest favourite points in your database.



Basic Filtering

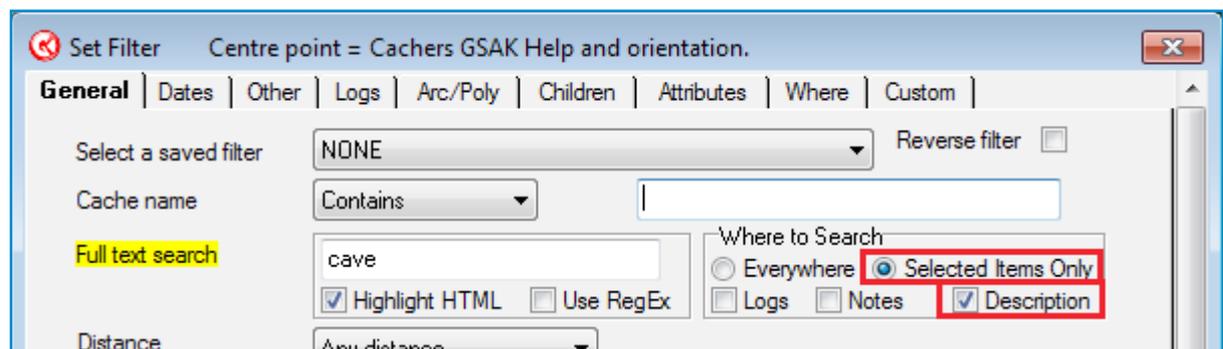
Filtering is an enormously powerful feature of GSAK and something that every GSAK user should explore and familiarise themselves with. You can use it to filter the caches in your database so that only certain ones are displayed depending on the criteria that you set. To filter caches, click the 'Search' menu and then 'Filter' or click the magnifying glass icon along the top.

You can use the GSAK filters to act as the filters do when you run a pocket query. So one of the most basic filters you might run is for Difficulty and Terrain. To do this, in the filter area you could (for example) set Difficulty Equal to 5.0 and Terrain Equal to 5.0 to show only the hardest caches in your database. To cancel/clear the filter, click the red X icon along the top.



More advanced Filtering

If we want to search for something in the cache description, open the filter dialog and then under 'Where to Search' select 'Selected Items Only' and tick 'Description' and enter the search term in 'Full Text Search'.



Instead of searching the Description you could also search through logs in your database by running the previous filter again, but specifying 'Logs' under 'Where to search'. For example, you could search the logs for for "Best Cache Ever"

GSAK filters also allow you to show only caches which were placed by a certain user, caches with certain words in the title, only caches that were placed on a certain date (for Jasmer challenges), caches that haven't been found for a year or more (for Resuscitator challenges), caches with certain attributes, caches along a defined route, caches that haven't been found by a certain cacher (e.g. if you are planning a caching trip with a friend and only want to find caches that neither of you have found before), and much more.

The best advice for getting to grips with GSAK filters is to play with them. You will soon get the hang of them after spending a bit of time experimenting.

Members discounts...



www.ukgeocachers.co.uk

UK geocachers are happy to offer GAGB members a **5% discount** on their products. In order to obtain your discount, you need to email UKgeocachers and set up an account, so that the discount is applied to each order.



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.



Cicerone

Press are pleased to offer GAGB members a **discount**

of 20% on **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.



NE GEOCACHING SUPPLIES are happy to offer GAGB members a 5% discount on their wide range of geocaching products – see www.negeocachingsupplies.co.uk.

The relevant discount code is available from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB forums.



Cotswold Outdoor offer GAGB members a **15% discount**. More detail and the discount code are available from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB forums.

Pulse72Geocaching are happy to offer GAGB members a 10% discount on their wide range of geocaching products – see www.pulse72geocaching.co.uk.

The relevant discount code is available from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB forums.



GeocacheKit are pleased to be able to offer all GAGB members a **5% discount** on all items on the website www.geocachekit.co.uk. Including geocoins, trackables, readymade caches and much more.

The discount code is available from the Members' Chat section of the GAGB forums.



Base of Tree geocaching supplies are happy to offer GAGB members a 5% discount on all geocaching supplies.

Visit their website for details, and obtain the relevant code from the Members' Chat Section of the GAGB Forum. <http://baseoftree.com>.