

*ISSUE 44*

*WINTER 2020/21*

# SEEKER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE GEOCACHING ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

**10 YEARS OF  
SEEKER**

**WE ASKED, YOU  
SAID: SURVEY  
RESULTS**



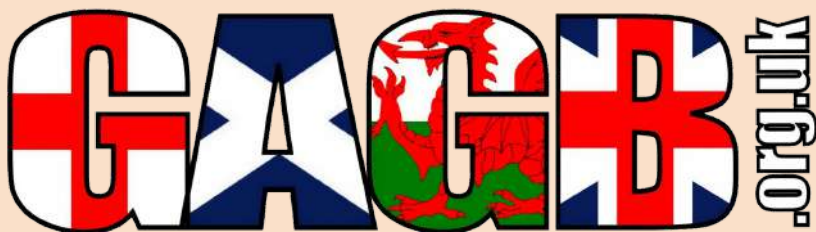


# SEEKER 44

## IN THIS ISSUE...

**Cover:** Winter caching, near GC6ARZR. Courtesy of Griff Grof

**Above:** Winter caching, near GC8MHDK. Courtesy of Jennthefunkyranger



The **Geocaching Association of Great Britain** is the leading UK Geocaching body, recognised by and acting on behalf of geocachers. The Association was established in 2003 to provide a national organisation that represented geocaching, and to serve as a UK point of contact for geocachers, landowners, the media and others with an interest in geocaching. Find us online at [www.gagb.org.uk](http://www.gagb.org.uk).

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Seeker 44 design and layout by Jenn Hill (Jennthefunkyranger) and Arthur Griffiths (Griff Grof)

- 2 CHAIR'S MESSAGE
- 3 NEWS ROUND-UP
- 4 HAPPY 10TH BIRTHDAY, SEEKER
- 6 SEEKER THROUGH THE AGES
- 8 VILLAGE HALL CACHING
- 10 GALLIVANTING AROUND GLASGOW
- 15 MY WAY TO 81
- 17 WE ASKED, YOU SAID
- 20 WHAT3WORDS?
- 21 KIWI CAPERS
- 24 MADAGASCAR
- 26 MEET THE 2021 COMMITTEE
- 31 GAGB FINANCIAL REPORT
- 33 MEMBER DISCOUNTS



# Meet the Committee



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*Griff Grof*  
Chair



**Sharon Reid**  
*sharant*  
Secretary



**Caz Turver**  
*Border Caz*  
Treasurer



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Committee Member

# Chair's Message



Hello! I'm Arthur, the GAGB's new Chair for 2021. I hope this issue of Seeker finds you and your family well.

I'd just like to begin by thanking Sharon Reid (sharant) for all of her hard work as Chair over the past five years. During that time, we've established GAGB roving events, created a new membership tier ('GAGB Friends'), supported the Mega events like never before, and so much more. I must also thank Richard Tucker (richt2000) and Matt Faulkner Collins (maattmoo), who both chose to step down in November, for their outstanding efforts as committee members.

This year, we have a dynamic and energetic committee in place. We've got lots of new ideas in the pipeline, and we will also be acting on the feedback from our recent survey - thanks to everyone who completed it (see page 17).

This is a very special edition of Seeker - the tenth anniversary issue. Seeker would not exist today without contributions from our members, so thank you to everyone who has sent something in over the years or helped out in some other way (as an editor, publisher or proofreader). Check out page 6 for a piece on Seeker through the ages.

This issue also features some more of the brilliant stories sent to us for our competition last year, an article about hiding the Isle of Man's first Village Hall cache, a Q&A section to get to know the 2021 committee, the GAGB's financial report, and lots more.

Happy geocaching, and stay safe!

*Arthur (Griff Grof)*



# ***NEWS ROUND-UP***

## ***IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...***

### **New member discounts**

We are pleased to announce that we have two new discounts available for GAGB members:

- 10% discount at Kit Stores
- 5% discount at Rainbow Caching

For more information (including the discount codes), visit our [Member Discounts](#) page.



### **GAGB SWAG and CITO 2021**

GAGB SWAG Weekend and CITO Week are (hopefully) returning in 2021.

SWAG Weekend is scheduled to take place this Easter weekend (2-5 April), whilst CITO Week will run from 18-26 September. If these can't take place due to government restrictions, new dates will be announced nearer the time.



### **Landowner agreements renewed**

Following negotiations, we are pleased to announce that two Forestry England agreements have been renewed:

- [Forestry England - South England Forest District](#)
- [Forestry England - New Forest and Dorset](#)

Remember, you can view all of the 191 agreements in our database [here](#).



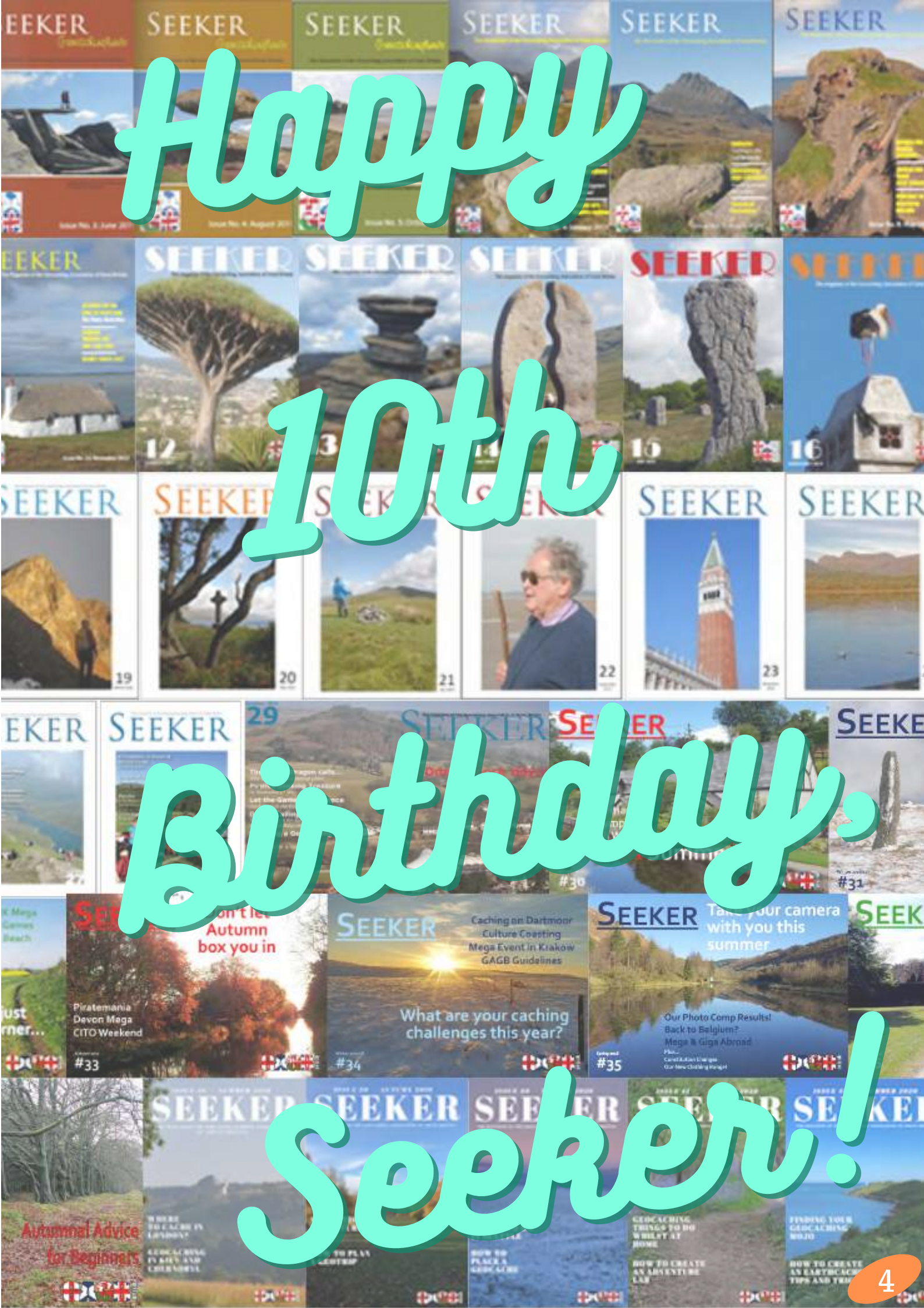


# Happy

# 10th

# Birthday.

# Seeker!





**In February 2011, the first issue of Seeker was published and 10 years later we are still going strong. Most of these issues have remained in a digital format, however one limited edition printed issue was produced for the Devon Mega supporter pack. You can read about Seeker through the ages on the next page.**

**Have a look at a few Seeker facts and figures below...**

**44**

**Issues**



**3000**

**Main Articles**

**13000**

**Subscribers**



**5**

**Editors**



**Seeker has had many contributors - thank you to everyone who has sent in content, including photos, articles, ideas, and replies to social media posts that have led to articles.**

# Seeker through the ages

By Arthur Griffiths (Griff Grof)

In 2010, the GAGB was sending a regular newsletter to its members – each one was a PDF (no more than two pages in length) featuring the latest GAGB news and competition details. Eventually, a suggestion was made to transform this into a longer newsletter that looked more like a magazine. It was decided that there would be a digital book version as well as a PDF, and countrymatters (Terry Marsh) was keen to be its editor. This month marks ten years since the release of the first issue of that newsletter (Seeker Issue 1)

Some of you might not know that several names for the newsletter were considered.

These included Waypoint, Geozine, GeoTimes, Satellite, Cacher and Seeker. A poll was held, and Seeker was soon confirmed as the winning option (with 44% of the vote).

The first issue was released in February 2011 to much acclaim, and GAGB members were then treated with a new issue every other month. There were some gems in the early issues, ranging from an interview with then-Groundspeak CEO Jeremy Irish, to geocaching poetry, and stunning photo portraits of Great Britain. Seeker also quickly established itself as a useful resource, sharing tips for new cachers, product reviews, and lots more ever since (see this page).





Over the years, many highlights (now part of geocaching and GAGB history) have been covered within the magazine, including UK Mega events, the first Giga in 2014, the last Block Party, the introduction of Adventure Labs, and the GAGB's original CITO weekend. Re-reading previous issues is a great way to look back on everything that's happened in the geocaching world since 2011.

In addition to all of this, some amazing caching trips and adventures have been shared with Seeker readers. We've read about caching trips to Scotland, Portugal, Ireland, the Faroe Islands, the Azores, Alaska, Chernobyl, Denmark and Sweden, Alicante, and more. These trip reports are always fun to read, so thanks to those of you who have taken the time to send one to us!

Seeker has changed and evolved since the release of Issue 1, particularly following the

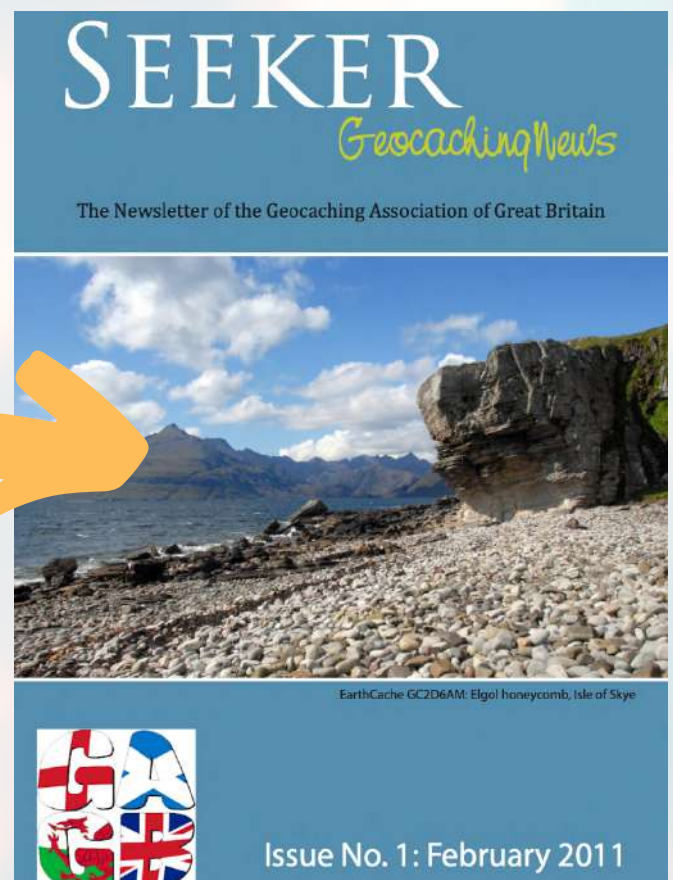
resignation of countrymatters in March 2015. There have been four editors since then (Ant of sharant, abiherts, Griff Grof and Jennthefunkyranger) and three additional publishers (geotrowel, Paperballpark and Sharon of sharant). Whilst Seeker has always been an e-magazine, an exclusive printed edition was included in the Devon Mega supporter pack – did you get your hands on one of the 240 copies?

Today, four issues are released per year and Seeker remains as popular as ever. Our recent survey results indicate that many members feel that Seeker is one of the best things we do, so we will continue to pour our energy into making it the greatest publication it can be. Thanks to all of our contributors, and to every single reader – Seeker wouldn't exist without your support. Here's to the next 10 years!

***You can read all previous Seeker issues here.***



*The last GAGB newsletter (Jan 2011)*



*The first issue of Seeker (Feb 2011)*



# *Village Hall caching*

## *An article by Angie from twoofnine*

These are challenging times. It feels like it's barely safe to go out. Yet complaining we can't go geocaching as normal feels trivial compared to people losing loved ones and livelihoods. But geocaching is a lifeline for many. It's our exercise, it's our mental stimulus, it's our contact with friends. So any new ways to achieve geocaching goals or to simply enjoy the hobby are more welcome than ever just now.

Enter the 2021 Village Hall Series souvenir at the end of January. We didn't have a Village Hall cache here on the Isle of Man but the requirements this year were for a selfie (or pic of something caching related) at a village hall even if it didn't have a cache. Well, that was too good a chance to miss! Even if we couldn't gain a smiley for a find, we could gain a souvenir. And we now had inspiration for a new cache, which would be a first for the island.

So off we set to take a look at prospective locations within walking distance. It's worth mentioning at this point that our island has not been in continuous lockdown. We have been Covid-19 free in our community since May 2020 and free of most restrictions since June. The big exception has been our borders, which have been closed to all but essential travel since the start of the pandemic. However, it was almost inevitable that even though we have had a strict isolation policy for anyone allowed in, there was still a small risk of community spread and by January 2021, we had a small cluster of cases. So a short "circuit breaker" lockdown was introduced and this was the case during Village Hall week.



*Location of Onchan on the Isle of Man*

Our walk first took us past Onchan Youth and Community Centre, known as "The Hub". It's a great facility but an architectural gem it isn't. Even by the standards of the 1960s and 70s, one could easily imagine "could do better" being stamped on the original plans. It's also surrounded by a large expanse of mown grass, some car parking, houses and a children's play area. And it's used by young people with time on their hands. So not an ideal choice even for a selfie and certainly not a great place to hide a geocache.

We continued our walk to one of the smaller jewels in the Manx crown. Not as famous as the Great Laxey Wheel or Tynwald Hill, the attractive location of the oldest continuous parliament in the world (Iceland had a break from 1800 – 1843) but a hidden gem nonetheless, Onchan Village Hall, designed by the Scottish architect Baillie Scott. You can

read about it on the cache page and there's more in Wikipedia.

Our selfie was duly taken, to be submitted to gain the souvenir when we arrived home. But what about placing a cache? There already is one just across the road. Undeterred, we began doing a little research in order to place a multi-cache.

Stage 1 would have to be at the posted co-ordinates at the hall and the attractive leaded windows, still the originals from 1898 as far as we know, gave us our first idea for a number. So far, so good. We then remembered something we had noticed nearby a couple of years ago and thought we could use for a cache, but until now had not come up with a way.

There's a war memorial, the main feature of which was designed by a contemporary of Baillie Scott, the Manx designer Archibald Knox, and running along the top of a low wall, etched in polished granite, is an inscription. We won't say more about it here as we'd like cachers to visit rather than simply Google it.

So that was chosen for the second stage of the multi. We now just needed a hiding place.

Our first choice might have been the Onchan Wetlands, a somewhat unexpected little oasis in the heart of the village. But once again we were thwarted by proximity issues. No problem, we had an alternative in mind. Somewhere that has a strong connection to stage 2 of our cache but once again, we can't be specific or we will give too much away.

The cache page was soon put together and we waited for our lock down to end so that we could submit it for publication.

Luckily, that was able to happen on the hoped-for date of February 1st. and our wonderful reviewer published it the same day (GC95EJE).

We are now waiting for the international situation to improve so that we can share this and other interesting geocaches and Manx treasures with a wider audience and also begin working towards the Village Hall Series Award Badges ourselves.



*Onchan Village Hall*



# Gallivanting Around Glasgow

## A story by LinguJosh



It was 3rd February 2020, a day I'd been looking forward to for a while. I had a concert in the evening at the Royal Concert Hall. I'd bought my Off-Peak train ticket from Edinburgh Waverley to Glasgow and had a plethora of caches loaded onto my simple but practical GPS device. I'd checked with some friends from Glasgow that, yes, it is possible to get a completely unlimited All-Day ticket, and, yes, it is an efficient way to travel around Scotland's Dear Green Place. This ticket alone, a paper power giving me free roam of the city, would be paramount from the minute I arrived to the minute I left.

Yes, THIS is the real reason I woke up early on a cold winter Monday. Not to catch up on lecture material, or to get prepared for a long day of work. Nope. I was going gallivanting around Glasgow.

For someone who'd only been thrice before, for quizzing tournaments, this was a completely different kettle of fish. Several hours of sprinting around a busy city just to retrieve little boxes using multi-billion pound satellites? Fantastic! (As with all good

Geocaching days out, this exact source of enjoyment was replicated in Stirling and, for a very spontaneous 2 hours, North Berwick).

It's 6am. My alarm's gone off. Quick shower, grab my clothes (laid out beforehand – preparation is key!), my lucky university hoodie (lucky because it always just provides a magical pen when I can never find one), run to the door, and... realise I need to go to Argos because I need to get the portable charger I ordered. OK, sure, some last-minute preparations in the meantime whilst I wait for Argos to open. Input those coordinates, run through these logs, check puzzles are all correct, and, oh yeah, make sure my phone's on charge. 97%. Hmm, a little more juice and we'll be good to go.

8:30am. 'Right!', I say to no one in particular, 'time to go to Argos, grab that charger, come back, and then head off'. 9:02am and I was the first customer in. Charger, yep, scan card, brilliant, collect, thank you, leave the shop and RUN. As soon as I reached Calton Road, I realised that there is no way I'm going to have enough time to get back home. Skip breakfast



Maybe I'll grab something on the way. (I didn't). Check the train times, Platform 9E, okay, here we go! Jump onto the train, find a seat. Yes, it looked suspicious. But who cares? I've got caches to catch!

Just under an hour later and we're into Glasgow Queen Street. Now, relax a little. Let's take a little wander to Atrium Court, first cache of the day. It's incredibly busy. Fantastic. Well, Anon, it's a Monday morning in Scotland's most populous city. What do you expect? I sat down for a little while, just waiting for people to, essentially, not be where I am. Nope, that's not going to happen. Stealth time! Feel around for the cache, take it away – wow, that's very sneaky! –, sign the log without dropping it in the rain that had, typically, just begun (yay Scottish weather!), and replace. Quick draft 'found it' on the Geocaching app and see what other ones are in the area. 'The World's Most Economical Taxi'. Now, this sounds interesting. Look for the cache on my phone, walk the wrong way once, then down another wrong road, then nearly walk into a parked taxi – how apt –

and finally end up at, wow, now I can see why it's called that! Nice and simple find, even though I had to wait for a massive lorry to go past! Come out of the rain for a little while, and there we have it. Only 20 minutes in, and I've already found 2 caches. This is going to be a fantastic day, that's for sure.

I decided at this point that if I wanted to get caches from all around Glasgow, I should probably begin using the subway. So, with my phone turned off and back in my pocket, I ran to the nearest station, Buchanan Street, quickly grabbed the Clockwork Orange cache there, bought the ticket, went through the gate, and just went to a platform. Any platform! Outer or inner, it didn't matter. This very quickly became my *modus operandi* for the entire day. I travelled a couple stations to Bridge Street (why not?!) and found myself at a seemingly random road in the middle of nowhere. There were lots of green box icons on the map, so I looked around for some of the caches around here, but to no avail. No harm done; I've still got several hours to travel around. Back on the subway,



*The rainbow*



the kiosk attendant looking at me rather strangely in the process, and off I travelled to a completely random choice of station: Govan. Only when I was on the subway did I remember that this was the main area I'd intended to travel to. There were quite a few caches here, and so it was time to get out the GPS device. That also means I can pop my phone on charge for the moment. Step off the subway and out into the open. The rain had cleared up somewhat now, and on my way walking towards the river Clyde, I saw the most beautiful, visceral, and vivid rainbow that I think I've ever seen. It was stunning, its colourful arches spanning right across the river. It was around 11am, it was quiet, peaceful, and I had a lot of time to spare. Time to relax a little. Grab the Clockwork Orange cache, and just stroll to the river. Absolutely beautiful! This is what it really is all about. Instead of taking the subway, I thought now would be a nice time to go for a stroll. I checked the GPS and decided that I should head towards some of the nearby caches listed. After all, I had plenty of time. So off I went, reasonably quickly, into what seemed like much too residential an area to be anywhere near where I wanted to be. I walked on a little further, and it started chucking it down. Perfect. Great. Thank you, precipitation, just what I wanted. Laughing it off as 'just one of those things', I walked on and ended up at Ibrox Library, where, though I didn't find the cache there, I had a lovely little wander up to Cessnock. Never had I been in this area, and I wonder why; it seems like a great little community around here. I grabbed the Clockwork Orange cache here and walked to what is possibly my favourite Glasgow subway station, until noticing, out the corner of my eye, a path on the app that

seemed to lead to a whole bunch of caches. A quick detour shouldn't be an issue. It certainly wasn't. Whilst it took me a good half an hour to walk around the perimeter of what seemed to be an industrial estate of some sort, I ended up at this lovely little park, home of 'Grianmhor Baile a' Ghobhainn'. I'd noticed this one on the way to Glasgow and given that I'd been doing a Gaelic course at university, I just HAD to find this one. Thankfully, such a thing was very easy to do (even if I ended up with muddy trousers in the process), and, in true Anon style, I logged it there and then – in both Gaelic and English. After just strolling along the lake a little more, I left the park, and marvelled at the beauty of the Clyde as I walked up towards it, the SSE Hydro across the water. Strolling back to Cessnock station, I realised that, actually, it would make more sense to walk to Ibrox (which was only down the road – literally), find any caches there, and then head back up north of the Clyde via Ibrox station. I found some caches by Ibrox, entered Ibrox Station – at the same time as a whole gaggle of schoolchildren, defining absolutely that it was about 3pm at the time, and a perfect time to start getting ready to be near to the Royal Concert Hall.

So, I did exactly that, travelled under the river, one whole station, to Partick. I'd always liked Partick, for the strange reason that Partick Thistle is the first Scottish football club I'd ever heard of. I had to go there then whilst I was in Glasgow. This wasn't anywhere near where I needed to be, and so, in true geocaching spirit, I slowly wandered around Partick, even picking up some chips from the nearby chip shop, and ambled towards the Riverside Museum, meaning I could take yet another picture of the Clyde



from another angle. Though I had no intentions at the time to go into the museum, I'd wanted to visit it generally for quite a while, and by doing so, at least I would know where it is for the future. After all, what is geocaching without the very possibility that you'll end up lost (which I did - multiple times) and with no phone battery? Thankfully, my battery had risen to full charge so I could afford to loiter a bit without worrying too much.

Partick had been a lovely area, and I came upon Kelvinhall, the subway next to Subway (a source of much amusement for me at the time), and I decided, from this point on, it really was sprint and grab. It was starting to get darker, but there were still so many caches I wanted to grab. I headed to St Enoch, and, in what is possibly the weirdest means of travelling around Glasgow, sprinted in a very haphazard way to Cowcaddens Fire Station, collecting both the nearby 'Commonwealth Legacy - The Podium' cache and 'Herbie Goes Bananas!' (which made me chortle heartily to myself, its fantastic placement in every sense a key demonstration of the creativity of this city's caching community), then walking all

the way to Glasgow School of Art, round to Glasgow Necropolis' 'Bridge of Sighs' - THAT was a surreal one to get on a cold, dark February evening - and, eventually, 1.3 miles away (though it had previously been just 0.4 miles away from me an hour prior), and detouring massively via Glasgow Caledonian University, arriving at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, still an hour early, ready to enjoy a splendid Boyzlife concert before heading back to Edinburgh at 11pm, on the final train of the day, with 1% battery left on my phone, and a whole assortment of new caches logged.

So, after all this traipsing around Glasgow, dashing from area to area, with not a care in the world as onlookers wonder who this overly enthusiastic young student wearing a university hoodie is, there's one aspect of this that was better than any singular moment of the day.

This was an adventure. My adventure. And now I've shared it with you. Glasgow, Scotland. 24 trips on the Glasgow subway. Altogether, over 100 miles travelled. Only £7 spent on the actual day. I remember it well. Gallivanting Around Glasgow.



*The riverside museum*



# Mega2021 Merch now Available



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[@ukmega2021](https://www.facebook.com/ukmega2021)



## Help us make a Mega!

Life's a bit rubbish at the moment, isn't it? But hopefully things will be a lot better by 2022, which is when we are planning to run our UK Mega. To make this happen, you can help us ... and we can help you!

### How we can help you:

We are running almost monthly online events. Life may very well be rather lonely and boring at the moment, so come and play with us via the internet, completely covid-safe, and you don't even have to get out of bed! Details for the next one are on our [website](http://www.mega2022.org.uk/).

### How you can help us:

Buy stuff in our [shop](http://www.mega2022.org.uk/shop) and support us on [easyfundraising](http://www.mega2022.org.uk/easyfundraising). It will cost you nothing!! If everyone who has been working from home since last March [donated](http://www.mega2022.org.uk/donated) just one day's worth of their daily commuting costs, we would have this thing funded already!

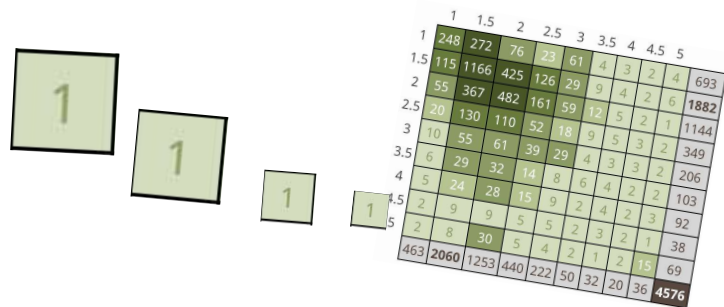
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# My way to 81

A story by Ev1l 81tch



My caching journey began in June 2012 when my son told me about it, his friend at school was caching with his dad and showed him a local one. Within 10 days I had my first 10 D/Ts done although at the time I had no idea about the statistics side of our obsession!

Fast forward to 2017 and I had ventured into local events, made loads of new friends and had my eyes opened to the numbers! I'd been underground and experienced some 5/5s in the Below above caches, I hosted a CITO "chalking the horse" in April (GC72ZHQ) after which I only needed 10 grid fillers. The possibility of tackling some water based caches was soon on my agenda. A series very close to home the "cache by kayak" series (now archived but started with GC542BG) a

total of 12 caches covering D1/T5 to D4.5/T5 some of the numbers I was getting desperate for! An event was scheduled for 3rd of September 2017 to be followed by the trip down the river. I was desperate to join in but work had other plans and I couldn't get the day off...gutted!

8 months later a similar event was arranged by Fonzie who also had missed out on the first event, this one was just 2 days before my birthday so holiday was booked and my will attend most definitely logged!

But fate had other ideas, the day before the event my husband was admitted to Swindon



*Underground birthday party*



hospital with meningitis, so the day of the event I was sat on the ward with him watching the thunder and lightning through the window hoping Fonzie had better weather!

A couple of day trips in the following months had knocked a few more D/Ts off my to do list, but those kayak caches still haunted me. So I bit the bullet and organised my own event “3rd time lucky” a splash mob prior to tackling the series...but there were a few more things I needed to arrange as I don’t actually have a boat of any kind! That was soon offered by LPLadle...then transportation of it to the river...thanks Beinn Eighe...one more thing...my crew! Stephhughes88 as I now have osteoarthritis in my spine and wouldn't be able to paddle the whole way solo.

On 8th of July 2018 “3rd time lucky” took to the water in a variety of 11 different craft (with a pair of rather large trackable ducks as stowaways) and the intrepid bunch successfully conquered the river avon paddling about 5 miles from Reybridge to Melksham collecting all 12 of the caches in fantastic weather.

That left just one elusive D/T 4.5/3.5 of which there are not too many around, and 98 days later I took a trip with HellieMW to “28 days later” and finally celebrated a full D/T with a G&T in a very large dark tunnel!

Some of my favourites along the way were “power shower” (GC20MGQ), Little Bridges #314 message in a bottle (a FTF), if you go



*Kayak fun*

down to the woods tonight (GC636YC) and ogof clogwyn (GC6K8BF). But with over 4300 finds now there have been so many fantastic adventures on my own with my geohound Digby and with friends or groups exploring our wonderful world, and now I’m only 3 away from completing my D/T for the second time. I was hoping to complete it again this year but Covid 19 may have a hand controlling this years adventures so we'll see what the future holds....

# We asked, you said

## GAGB 2021 Survey Results

## By Arthur (Chair)

At the end of January, all of our members were sent a link to a GAGB survey. Many thanks to everyone who completed it, and congratulations to chumleydavey165, who was randomly selected as the winner of the £15 GAGB Shop voucher. Some of the key results are discussed below, and a more detailed summary is also available to view if you wish.

## Membership

The main question in this part asked what members want and expect from the GAGB. A large number of respondents felt that the GAGB should be the voice of geocaching in the UK, and a body that represents the game and the interests of UK-based geocachers. Others emphasised that the GAGB should promote geocaching in a positive light, encourage good geocaching and countryside

etiquette, and work with landowners to negotiate blanket permission agreements. It is clear that many of you also want the GAGB to be a source of help, guidance and information. There was also a desire for us to offer fun stuff too – from regular events, to competitions, and lots more. We will try our best to make sure that the GAGB does all of this in the year ahead.

Several new ideas were also proposed in response to this question, and we will spend time looking into the feasibility of each one of them. It was interesting to see a request for an annual GAGB conference/exhibition, as we were actually thinking about doing something like this back in 2018. It never happened, but perhaps this is something we can consider for a future year.



Figure 1: word cloud for question 2



One of my personal goals is to improve membership engagement and increase our number of active members, following several years of decline. To help work towards this end, two questions were related to membership benefits. I was surprised to see that the discount codes are our least popular benefit – check out this page for a list of all the retailers offering discounts to GAGB members. A lot of you asked for a discount on Geocaching.com Premium membership, and there were also requests for membership badges, competitions, and regular give-aways. We'll see what we can do to make membership even more worthwhile in 2021.

as widely used in general. We will do all that we can to continue to increase our online presence this year, so that we can raise the GAGB's profile even further.

Our website was updated in 2020, so it was great to read some of the positive feedback. However, there's always more that can be done to improve it, so we were keen to ask for your ideas. These included less text on some pages, a more user-friendly GLAD interface, a section on puzzle caches, and a variety of how-to video clips. All of your suggestions will be considered.

## Website and social media

The first question in this part asked how often members view or interact with our online platforms (Figure 2). I was pleased to see that the website is commonly visited, along with our Facebook pages. Our Twitter and Instagram accounts are never viewed by an extremely high proportion of respondents, but this could be because these they are not

## Seeker

We received a plethora of ideas for Seeker in this part. The most popular one was a regular section with tips on how to solve puzzle caches. A lot of respondents are also keen for us to have more articles covering different areas of the UK, with recommended caches and series, to help them decide where to go. Resources for beginners, a regular competition, and kit reviews were also

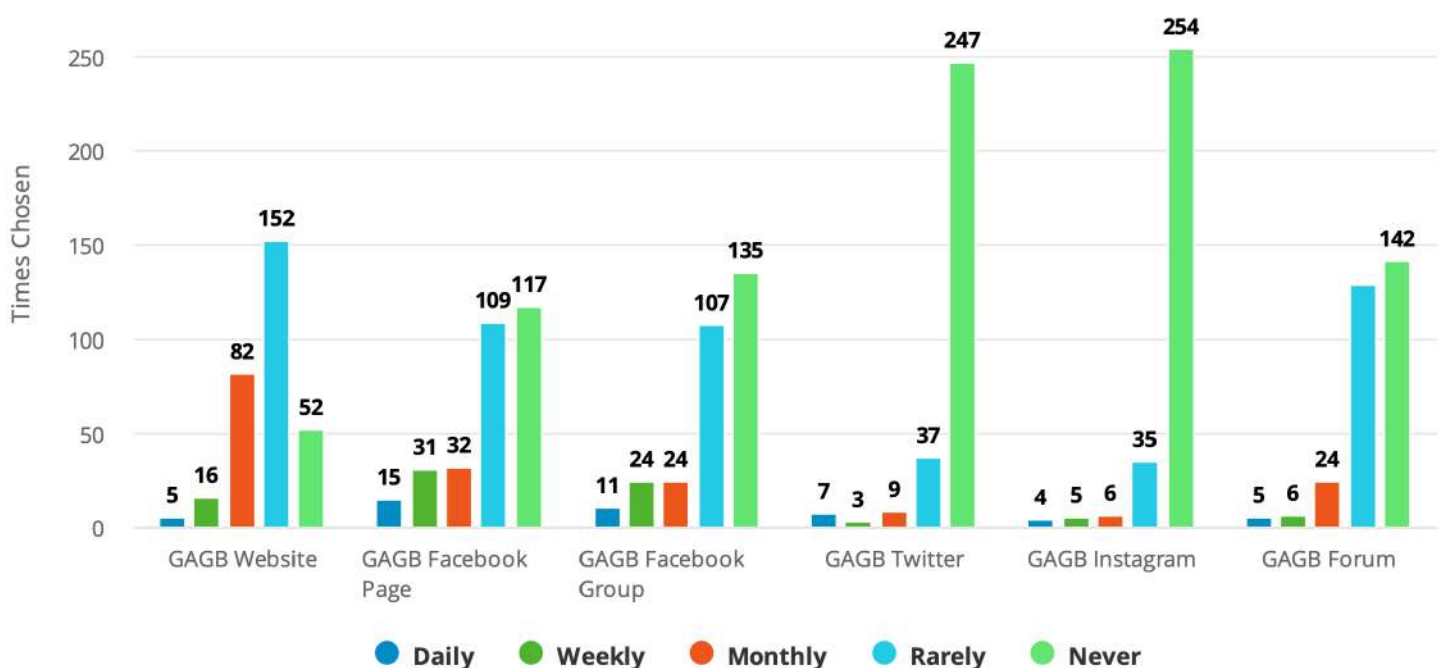
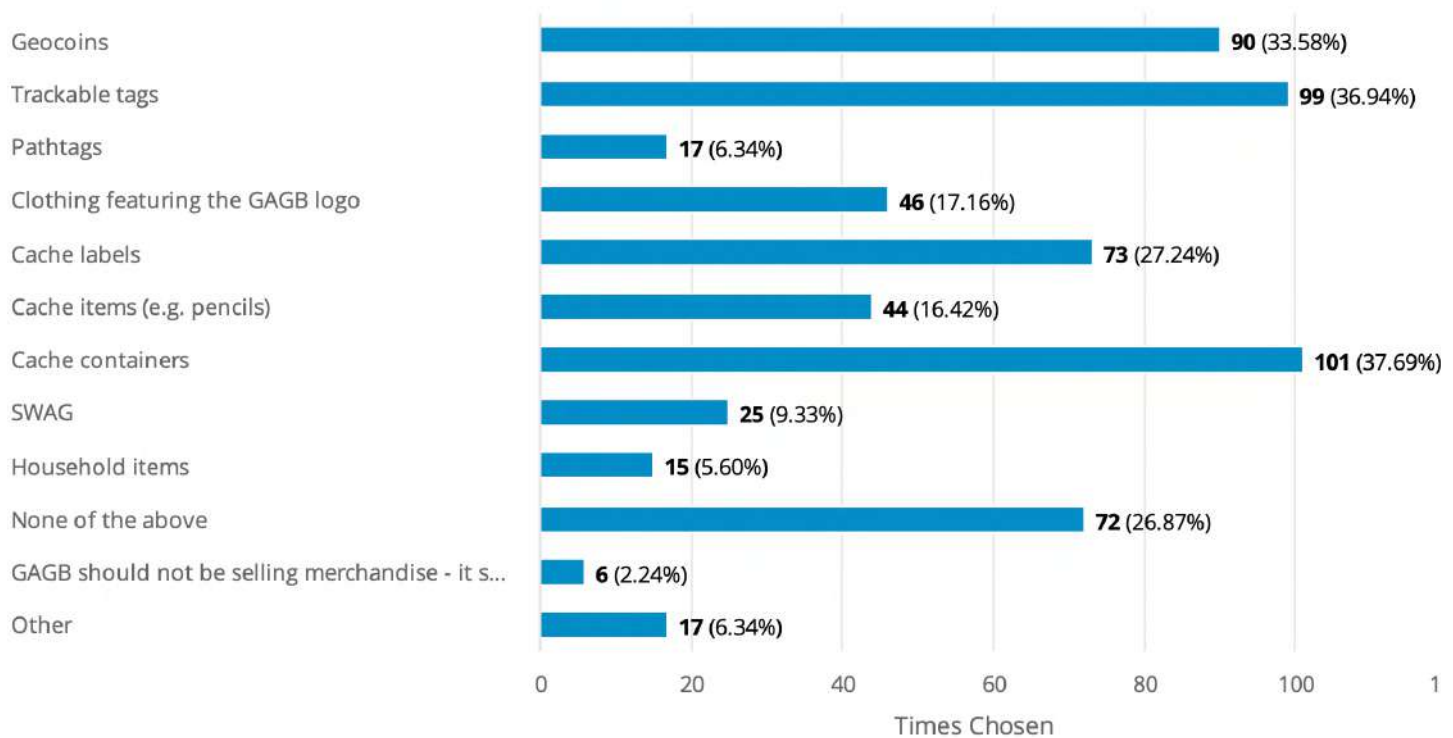


Figure 2: how often respondents view or interact with our platforms



*Figure 3: items respondents would buy from the GAGB shop*

frequently mentioned. We will keep all of your suggestions in mind for future issues.

## GLAD

It was great to see that 81% of respondents are aware of GLAD, and over a third of them have used an agreement before. We hope to add some more agreements when the time is right, so that it's a resource that can be used by even more people in every part of the UK.

## Shop

In this part, we asked what GAGB merchandise you'd be interested in purchasing this year (Figure 3). As expected, geocoins were a popular choice. Our next national park geocoin is currently in the works, so watch this space! However, there were even more votes for trackable tags and cache containers, so we'll consider introducing these at some point. In the meantime, you might want to order some of our [Racing Hound tags](#) before they sell out for good - they're only £5.50 each.

## The future

In the final part of the survey, members were given the opportunity to tell us what the GAGB should be doing going forward. The most common response was that it must promote itself to a greater degree, so that more people are aware of its existence and the work carried out by the committee. Several respondents felt that the GAGB should make more of an effort to engage with geocachers in every country in the UK. We are currently working to address this, and I am really looking forward to announcing our new initiative later this year.

Other suggestions include providing an area to hold information and advice for Mega committees, establishing a mentoring programme for newbies, and lots more. In fact, we received dozens of new ideas, which we will carefully consider.

Thanks again to everyone who completed our survey. We can't wait to act on your feedback!



# what3words?

By Dominic Murray (Geocaching Womble)

You might have heard of what3words in the past - perhaps you've seen it mentioned online or on television. But do you actually know what this is, and how it could be of use to geocachers? Read on to find it!

To begin with, what3words is a free app that's available on both the App Store and Google Play store. You can also access the what3words [website](#) in any browser. what3words has divided the globe into 3 metre squares and given each one a unique 3 word address.

This can enable emergency services to find you in the event of an accident. If a geocacher gets injured whilst geocaching in remote areas, such as Snowdonia, they can use the what3words app (which works offline)



## what3words

to find their three word address and share this with Mountain Rescue over the phone. This would make it easier for them to locate the injured geocacher with speed and precision.

Therefore, this app is extremely useful for cachers who are planning to visit remote areas with low foot traffic. Who knows, one day what3words may even save your life. Happy caching.

*Write an article or send a photo for*

# SEEKER

**Email all articles and photos to:**  
**[editor@gagb.org.uk](mailto:editor@gagb.org.uk)**

# Kiwi Capers

## A story by Wriglee



In December 2015 we were very lucky to spend the month travelling around New Zealand. Having arrived in the early afternoon in Auckland and finding we had much more energy than expected after the 27 hour flight(s) we decided to have a walk around Otuataua Stonefields. Otuataua is a site of ancient volcanic activity which just so happened to be near to our hotel.

Our plan had been to get a taxi there with the idea of walking through the Historic Reserve and back to the hotel but once the concierge received the taxi quote on our behalf, he insisted on dropping us off himself on his way home from work at no cost.

The Reserve itself was wonderful. Even now,

more than four years later, I can remember the sound and scent of the wind blowing gently through the long grass meadows and staring in awe at the abundant wildlife.

Our first cache was entitled “Free Avo’s” (GC4T8VB), an avocado orchard which we approached with much anticipation, having read the sign instructing us to limit ourselves to taking 5 fruits. Alas, we only spotted two of the devils and they were far too high up- we had no equipment for a T5 today! Luckily the cache itself was easily spotted and reached.

Our next cache was at Puketapapa, Auckland’s smallest volcano. At 30m elevation it barely earned its T2 rating (GC5F272), though despite a D1.5, it kept us busy for a while!



*Near Puketapapa (GC5F272)*





*Another view in the area of GC5F272)*

Following the trails, we did find two more caches as well as a DNF and had a most enjoyable stroll. It was truly a great way to beat the jet lag but by the end, we felt time was catching up on us and we started looking forward to an early night.

On our way back to the hotel, we stopped at a handy bar for a swift beer and then continued along the road. We reached the highway which we had to cross to reach the hotel but to our dismay, the whole carriageway as far as we could see in both directions was fenced off for road works. Checking the GPSr we were just 300m away from our lodgings and could clearly see the building; we were so close yet so far.

As we stood on the corner pondering whether we needed to turn around and walk the 3 miles back from whence we came, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a police car approaching. We were aghast when the policeman pulled over and rolled down the window. Had we made some major Kiwi faux pas and about to be thrown in the slammer?

He brightly asked us if we needed directions so we explained our predicament and asked for some advice about the best route to take. Rather astonishingly he told us to hop in and he'd give us a lift! On the journey back (about 10 minutes as he of course had to take the long way around too), he chatted about all sorts and having realised very early on that we were real newbies to NZ he wanted to know our first impressions and why we had selected the Reserve. We didn't have the nerve to explain geocaching as he almost certainly must have thought we were mad enough!

As we pulled into the hotel yard, the look on the doorman and guests faces were absolutely priceless, particularly with the policeman waving us goodbye.

We visited countless gorgeous places in New Zealand and found some great caches but it was this first day, these memories, that really summed up our trip for me. Memories of the natural beauty, the peacefulness combined with the lovely helpful Kiwis who made us feel so welcome.

# LONDON CALLING 2021

**London's first Mega!  
Coming 28 August 2021**

**Announcing our London Bus Geocoins!  
Only available to collect at the event**

**Bronze edition - London Bus: £12.50**

**Silver edition - Knight Bus: £12.50**

**Supporters edition - Ghost Bus  
(glow in the dark): £20**

**Bronze/Silver editions also available  
in supporters packs!**

**[www.londoncallingnow.co.uk](http://www.londoncallingnow.co.uk)**



**[www.facebook.com/londoncalling2021](http://www.facebook.com/londoncalling2021)**



**Piratemanía 12 Geocoin  
NOW ONLY £11.50 English pounds!**



**Piratemanía 12 T Shirt  
NOW £10.00**



**Pens  
£0.99 each**

**Identify as a Pirate with a  
fabulous Piratemanía ID card  
& lanyard (Trackable)**

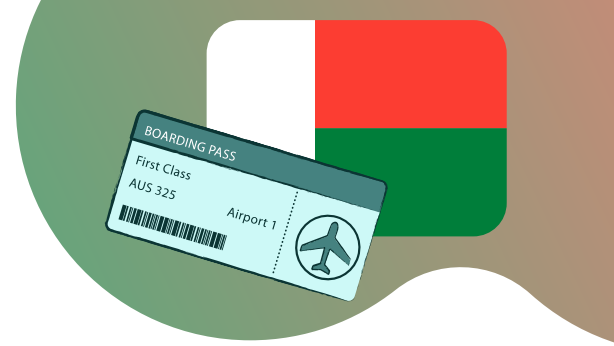
**NOW ONLY £7.50 for your Pirate GOLD**

**Available only from your Pirate Quartermaster at  
[www.piratemanía.org/store](http://www.piratemanía.org/store)**



# Madagascar

## A story by Zarbibird



Our son William and his new wife were just starting to get into geocaching, much to our delight. To encourage them, we decided we should all do a small series of caches together to help them on their way. We told them where the series we had chosen was and that we would meet them at the start. All went according to plan and we met up on a lovely Spring morning. The first couple of caches were micros, so not the easiest for the newbies to find. We stood back and let them hunt before offering a couple of hints. We continued on the walk, laughing and chatting. The next one was a small, which always pleases us because, apart from being easier to spot, it gives us a chance to put in some of the swag that zarbibird always carries in her special caching bag. BOT was the hint. Nice and easy for the newbies, once we had explained what the abbreviation meant. Zarbi and I were getting on with bird watching to give them a chance but they called us over

to say they couldn't find it. I was a little puzzled and using my caching experience, I went straight to it. I handed the clip lock box to them to open but our son said I should open it as I'd found it. So I did. Inside was a couple of folded pieces of paper. I undid the paper and found it was a holiday itinerary. And not any old holiday, a holiday to Madagascar!

It made me a bit cross, "Who would put this in?" I exclaimed. "We don't care about their blinking holiday! Why can't people put nice things in as swag!" My son calmly said "What does the other piece of paper say?" Still being grumpy because Madagascar was the one place in the whole world that I would have liked to visit, I opened the other piece of paper. It read "Congratulations zarbi and zarbibird "Now it is not often that I am lost for words. I read the paper over again. "What does it mean? How did they know we were



*Madagascar holiday*

coming to find this cache? Why does it say congratulations?" I hadn't tied up the two pieces of paper at all. I was so very, very puzzled. Everyone was just smiling at me. Eventually, zarbi (who had been in on it all the time) said "It's nothing to do with me, ask Will." My lovely son just grinned at me and said "You're going to Madagascar on holiday" "What? How? Why?" I exclaimed. Then he said that because I had always wanted to go there and had been the 'best mum in the

world', he and his wife had decided they would buy this very, very special holiday for us. They had found the cache quickly and put the paper in while we had been looking the other way through our binoculars!

Now, we have been caching for over 12 years now and have found more than 11,000 caches but that cache is the very best one we have ever found!

## GAGB geocaching taster session success

Eccleshall, a town in Staffordshire, is home to a 'Health and Wellbeing' group, started by the doctors and staff at the Crown Surgery. This is dedicated to building an interest in healthy activity and mental health.

As part of this, a socially distanced GAGB geocaching taster session took place back in early December (before the introduction of stricter COVID-19 restrictions), run by sharant aka Sharon and Ant Reid, a GAGB committee member and GAGB Friend respectively. Everyone had fun, despite the weather!

The GAGB looks forward to hosting more introductory sessions like this one as soon as it is safe to do so! In fact, we are currently putting together some new banners and resources to use at these events.

Have you ever introduced someone to geocaching? Are they still geocaching today? We'd love to know!





# MEET THE 2021 COMMITTEE

In November 2020, the nominations were held for the new GAGB committee, resulting in a new committee being formed with a good mix of returning members and new members to bring in fresh ideas. For part 1, we asked seven committee members a series of questions, so read on to find out more about them. Part 2 will feature the remaining committee members.



**Arthur  
Griff Grof**

**Do you prefer to cache with a GPS or phone, and why?** I use a GPS for proper outings, and a phone for spontaneous caching. My GPS is rugged, accurate, and I can write draft logs on it, so that's why it's my device of choice.

**Do you cache with a pet? Do they help or hinder your caching?** I have a sprocker spaniel, who only joins me some of the time. She has never helped when it comes to locating caches (yet - I still have hope that she'll miraculously find one just as I'm about to DNF it!)

**What is your favourite cache?** TIBI DABO CLAVES (GC2BVY7) in Cambridge. A tough puzzle had to be solved in order to obtain the coordinates, and reaching Ground Zero was a fun, and very memorable, challenge. All I'll say is that I'm glad I didn't get wet!

**What is your favourite cache type?** Traditionals - they're all about the cache and the location, with no added complications.

**How long have you been caching for?** I found my first cache in almost 11 years ago. Time flies!

**Do you prefer urban or rural caching?** Rural - there's nothing better than a good series of

caches set along a pleasant route in the countryside. However, I don't mind finding Virtuals, Webcams and Adventure Labs in urban areas.

**Have you done a 5/5 cache?** Yes. In fact, I once found five 5/5s in one day (several of the Below Above caches near Bath).

**What are your 2021 caching goals?** With everything that's going on, I've only set myself one goal this year: to find my first Locationless cache. I have two options, GC8NEAT and GC8FR0G, and I might have logged the former by the time you read this.



**Sharon  
sharant**

**Do you prefer to cache with a GPS or phone, and why?** I prefer to use a GPS as it's more rugged and the batteries last longer.

**Do you cache with a pet? Do they help or hinder your caching?** Sorry we do not have a pet.

**What is your favourite cache?** My favourite cache is the Above Below caches in the mines near Bath. Some are now not accessible but a fantastic location, somewhere where I wouldn't have visited if it wasn't for caching.



**What is your favourite cache type?** I enjoy EarthCaches as you learn so much. I now view the countryside in a different light looking at the landscape for contours, rock types and seeing much more.

**How long have you been caching for?** I have been caching since 2009 along with my family.

**Do you prefer urban or rural caching?** I prefer rural caching, a nice 5-7 mile walk in the countryside.

**Have you done a 5/5 cache?** Yes many 5/5 caches sometimes lots in 1 day, they are always memorable and challenging.

**What are your 2021 caching goals?** I was hoping to visit Seattle and visit Geocaching HQ and find the APE cache, it's not looking hopeful again for this summer but I will get there sometime. But another goal is to find a locationless cache which is another geocaching type I haven't yet found.



**Caz**  
**Border Caz**

**Do you prefer to cache with a GPS or phone, and why?** GPS. I worry that I might damage my phone, or flatten the battery, and then it wouldn't be any use if there was an emergency. The GPS is much more robust and has a long battery life. I do occasionally use my phone as I have to for wherigos and adventure lab caches but I don't like doing so.

**Do you cache with a pet? Do they help or hinder your caching?** My dogs were the reason I started caching - to find different walks and add interest to them, and over the years I have had some memorable trips out

caching with them. Sadly my current pooch Reg is arthritic and won't go further than the garden gate. None of them have ever helped me find a cache apart from one that had a dead rabbit on top of it.

**What is your favourite cache?** So many to choose from. One that stands out was the multi at Chester Cathedral. My favourite series was the Behind Enemy Lines one in Shropshire, which I have since adopted.

**What is your favourite cache type?** History based ones, so usually multis, and the Adventure Lab ones which are similar but you get more smilies!

**How long have you been caching for?** I found my first cache in 2009.

**Do you prefer urban or rural caching?** Probably urban, especially if caching solo. Cows and swampy fields worry me after a few scary experiences whilst caching in the countryside and I hate mud. Also, Cities and towns tend to have more interesting history based caches.

**Have you done a 5/5 cache?** A dozen. My first was a local night cache where I arranged to meet others and it turned out there was just me and a chap I'd never met before. His wife and mother in law were with him which reassured me - but then they went off to wait in the pub.

**What are your 2021 caching goals?** I don't have any, I spent much of my working life ruled by targets & quotas and found them very discouraging so now I go with the flow.

*Q&A continues on the next page...*





**Jenn**  
**Jennthefunkyranger**

**Do you prefer to cache with a GPS or phone, and why?** A phone is handy for those unplanned caching trips, and for being more discreet in urban settings, but my GPS will always win out.

**Do you cache with a pet? Do they help or hinder your caching?** No pets for me, other than the spiders that have claimed squatters rights in my house. They definitely don't help finding caches.

**What is your favourite cache?** There have been lots of memorable caches, so it's really hard to think of one. But GC40 stands out. Belgium is one of my favourite countries, and as we got there there as the sun was setting, with snow on the ground, so a great setting.

**What is your favourite cache type?** I am rather partial to Wherigos, it's a good way of seeing a new place, as they can work as a tour guide taking you to places you'd have missed, and I also like the interactive nature of them.

**How long have you been caching for?** Since February 2012.

**Do you prefer urban or rural caching?** Rural. I've always lived in urban areas, so enjoy getting out into the countryside.

**Have you done a 5/5 cache?** Quite a few, I like a challenge.

**What are your 2021 caching goals?** To go to the Prague Giga, and get the maze and the locationless Signal cache. I had flights to the original date, and the rearranged date last year. Will Covid restrictions allow it this year?



**Dominic**  
**Geocaching Womble**

**Do you prefer to cache with a GPS or phone, and why?** Although I prefer to cache old school with a GPS, I have recently taken to using mobile phones in urban environments.

**Do you cache with a pet? Do they help or hinder your caching?** I don't have any pets so none come caching with me.

**What is your favourite cache?** My favourite ever cache was a cache that has long since been archived. It was an early find in my career. It was Church 1 by condoverman890.

**What is your favourite cache type?** My favourite cache type is a traditional series that are part of a loop.

**How long have you been caching for?** I started caching in 2008 as a way of getting fit it was introduced to me by the then head of education at my college.

**Do you prefer urban or rural caching?** I'm very much a rural cacher.

**Have you done a 5/5 cache?** I have completed a 5/5, it was the cold war cache in Nottinghamshire.

**What are your 2021 caching goals?** My only caching goal for 2021 is to be able to go caching again without fearing covid-19.

*Q&A continues on the next page...*





**Alexander  
mmmPIZZA**

**Do you prefer to cache with a GPS or phone, and why?** I prefer to cache with my phone nowadays as I find it easier to use than a GPS. However, I do always carry my GPS too as a handy backup.

**Do you cache with a pet? Do they help or hinder your caching?** Only once in the past, as we took my girlfriends dog with us. I, however, do not own a dog but two cats. And I think they'd get lost if I took them with me!

**What is your favourite cache?** A tough question. A personal favourite for me was finding my first cache on the Caribbean island of Anguilla. I went over there with the Scouts in 2015 at the age of 17. It was a simple plastic box by the beach but the memories of finding that cache in what is one of the more remote islands of the Caribbean will stick with me forever.

**What is your favourite cache type?** I do love a good multi, but I also love a good virtual as well. The best cache type for me though is events. I love seeing people, old friends and new cachers. It's fun to socialise and that's one of the reasons why the last year has been so tough on me personally, not to mention millions of others.

**How long have you been caching for?** In March this year (2021), I'll have been caching for nine years. Started on the 26th March 2012 with my Mum (Skybluesam87) after a school day. And the rest is history.

**Do you prefer urban or rural caching?** I'll always prefer rural as I love the countryside and long walks. But I also love a good and

clever urban cache if it's done correctly.

**Have you done a 5/5 cache?** I have. Just one. And I hated it. But not for the reason you might think. I was in Tenerife and there was two caches by the pier. One was a 1.5/1.5 and it was on top of a tall green pole with sharp rocks around the age of the pier. It took four of us to get it. The next cache down was a small cache in a hole in the wall. And that was the 5/5. So yes, I've done a 5/5 but not a 'proper' one. I do intend of finding a good, decent 5/5 one day.

**What are your 2021 caching goals?** My main goal is to just attend an event. I miss the social aspect of it and I hope things get better enough to allow events to return. As for physical caching, I'd like to fill my 366 grid and hit 4,000 finds.



**Jonathan  
Flowerpot\_man**

**Do you prefer to cache with a GPS or phone, and why?** I have never used a GPS, I have Geocached only using the official Geocaching App on my Samsung smart phone. When at GZ I like using the Satellite mode to help me locate the cache because you can zoom in a little bit more and if the coordinates are good, you can use it to help triangulate your position with your surroundings.

**Do you cache with a pet? Do they help or hinder your caching?** I've only recently acquired a Borador puppy named Loki (Big Marvel fan). At the time of writing, he is just over 3 months old. He has only been out with me hiding geocaches during the Jan/Feb 2021 Lockdown, so far he has been behaving



himself. Hopefully I can start taking him on longer caching trips.

**What is your favourite cache?** My favourite cache that I have done so far has to be a Mystery cache GC10YGF - Spirit of the teine sith 5D/4T, which is a night cache that I found while at the 2018 Geoylimpix Mega on the Ashridge estate. First of all you had to work out the starting coordinates, this can be done from home and then from GZ you walk through rough terrain following little reflectors amongst the trees for roughly about 2hrs and then you are rewarded with a large packed out cache. I did this in October and it rained all night and then when we found the cache the rain turned to snow. It was a great cache that ended a great day plus I was with great company. What more can you ask for?

**What is your favourite cache type?** To be honest with you I haven't got a favourite cache type that stands out from the rest but I do like a good multi, such as 1 of the national series: Church micros, FYI, Village Hall series, etc. I also like Mystery caches (only the ones I can solve ) that you can work out from home, like a good Jigidi jigsaw puzzle or a favourite mystery series is the Big G down GC6KWGW) on the NT Ashridge estate. There are 15 puzzles. I printed them off and worked on them while on a caravan holiday.

**Do you prefer urban or rural caching?** Definitely rural. I hate the way urban caches make me feel.

**Have you done a 5/5 cache?** I have only found two 5/5 caches. GC64M9C - Ynys yn Llyn yr Adar. You had a trek up the side of Cnicht in the heart of Snowdonia followed by a lake crossing to a little island. I did this with my son and I carried up a childs rubber dingy for

for the crossing, a lot of fun.

The other 5/5 was GC63V5A - ZEKE's no jOAK which was a tree climb using climbing gear which was also a lot of fun. I'm hoping to do a lot more 5/5 this year.

**What are your 2021 caching goals?** Because I'm relatively new compared to the other committee members I still have plenty of goals. I would like to complete my Fizzy grid and my finds by find date calendar this year. I have been checking out my friends list on the main geocaching website and looking at what geocaches they have completed. I have made a personal list of what I think are interesting and hopefully I can go out and find them myself.



**Next time...  
Part 2**

The second part of this feature will be included in the spring issue of Seeker.

Part 1 has introduced you to seven of the nine committee members. In Part 2, Mel Read (Moiria Crackers) and Craig Davidge (Cabbage187) will be sitting in the hot seat, answering the same eight questions.

In the meantime, you can find out more about Mel and Craig (as well as the rest of the committee) by reading their new bios on [this page](#).

The whole committee are looking forward to seeing what we can achieve for the GAGB and geocaching in 2021. As always, feel free to get in touch ([contact@gagb.org.uk](mailto:contact@gagb.org.uk)) if you ever have any comments or suggestions - feedback is always welcome.

# GAGB Financial Report



We run our accounting year from September-September. The formal accounts for the financial year ending 30.09.20 were posted on our forum in October 2020. Here are some highlights from our Treasurer, Border Caz.

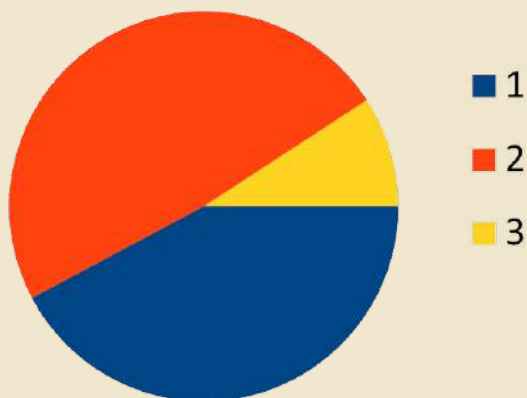
The year started off well with a GAGB Roving Event in the Cotswolds, attendance at the Yorkshire Christmas Fayre and our GAGB Start the Year Event at Yarnfield in January. However, our next planned event in Ellesmere in March had to be cancelled due to the Covid lockdown and that was it. Most of our fundraising and sales take place at events, particularly the Mega events, and of course these sadly did not happen.

In view of that we decided not to issue a new geocoin in 2020 but we were committed to helping future Mega events and consequently we spent rather more than we received.

## INCOME

Total Income for the year was £713.95, broken down as follows:

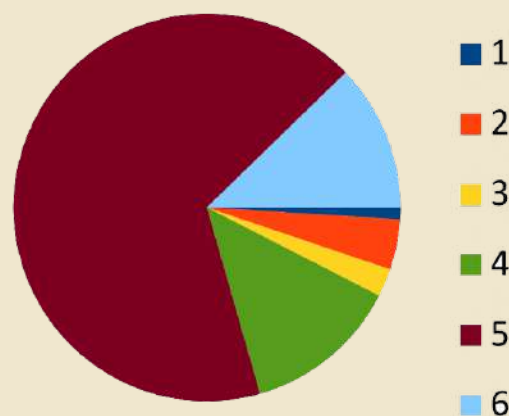
- (1) Donations - donations received from members via our website, amounts paid to us by outside organisations for assisting with training, cache placement, etc, and contributions from attendees at events for refreshments and materials for making caches and trade items.
- (2) Sales, in our online shop and at events, of geocoins, clothing, tags, pens, badges, labels etc.
- (3) Fundraising - raffles etc at events.



## EXPENDITURE

Total Expenditure in the period was £1,710.19, made up as follows:

- (1) Paypal and card machine fees
- (2) Telephone line costs
- (3) Equipment Purchase
- (4) Website & Survey costs
- (5) Donations to Megs
- (6) Purchase of supplies for the shop.



Please do not worry, we are still financially healthy and plan to release a new Geocoin in our National Parks series this year. We are now ahead of the game in our Mega sponsorship and will keep our fingers crossed that those and other events can soon start happening again.



**GAGB Shop** [Click here to visit the Shop](#)

**Badge** 50p

**Geocoins** £14-15

**Pencils** £1 for 6

**Pen** 50p

**Sew on patch** £2.50

**Maintenance kit** 50p

**Labels** 60p - £2

**Trackable tags** £5.50

**Official Geocache Contents Harmless**

PLEASE REPLACE WHERE FOUND

Cache Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cache Number: \_\_\_\_\_

In case of problems contact GAGB on 023 3340 4249

Boxer

Pointer

Retriever

Setter

We currently have a wide range of products in stock, including some new GAGB labels! Please consider placing an order, as every penny supports the work of the GAGB - visit the shop by clicking [here](#). Thank you!

## COMING SOON...

**'1300 Miles, 6 Old Caches and an Alien' by Pieman**

**'Geocaching in Sri Lanka' by Wriglee**

**'That cache: Heaven or hell' by 1d\_is\_tall**

**'This is a true story' by philatryewood**

**Plus lots more!**

**NEXT SEEKER OUT IN SPRING 2021**

# MEMBER DISCOUNTS

10%  
off

CICERONE

20%  
off

**COTSWOLD**  
outdoor

15%  
off



5%  
off

**BASE OF TREE**.COM  
GEOCACHING SUPPLIES

10%  
off



5%  
off



10%  
off

**Kit Stores**  
Outdoor | Camping | Geocaching

5%  
off

**RAINBOW  
CACHING**

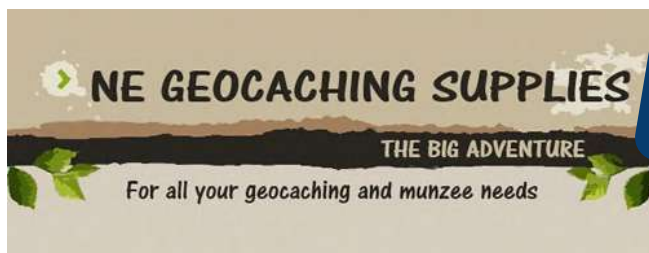
RAINBOWCACHING.CO.UK

5%  
off



**UKgeocachers**  
Quality, Value & Choice

5%  
off



10%  
off

All codes are available to GAGB members at:  
[www.gagb.org.uk/member-discounts.php](http://www.gagb.org.uk/member-discounts.php)