

ISSUE 45

SPRING 2021

SEEKER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE GEOCACHING ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

**CREATIVE COAST
GEOTOUR**

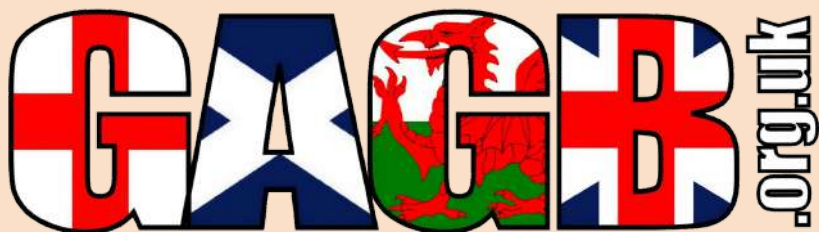
**SWAG WEEKEND
PICTURES**





Cover: Spring caching, nr GC5WE4V. Courtesy of Jennthefunkyranger

Above: Spring caching, nr GC8HDEH. 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.

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Seeker 45 design and layout by Jenn Hill (Jennthefunkyranger)

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Meet the Committee



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Chair's Message



I hope this issue of Seeker finds you well. Spring is here, although it hasn't brought us much warm weather so far, with last month being the coldest April on record since 1922! Hopefully all of that will change in the coming weeks, as the days continue to get longer, and we approach summer - there's a lot to look forward to, and many great caching adventures to be had.

On 29 April, the world's first art GeoTour, England's Creative Coast, launched in the south east (see page 4). You might not know that the GAGB has been involved in developing this GeoTour since early 2018, and I would like to thank Matt Faulkner Collins (maattmoo) for his continued involvement on our behalf. The first six caches and one set of Adventure Labs are now live in Margate, and they're quickly accumulating favourite points and rave reviews. With the next sets of caches going live on 22 May and 29 May, you can spend the rest of spring and/or summer completing the GeoTour, subject to any restrictions.

Since the last issue of Seeker, we have launched a Cache Creation competition, so why not get creative and enter today? You can learn more about the competition on page 30. We have also announced a new initiative, regional representatives, and we would love for you to apply to be a representative for your region. We've got an article about this on page 12.

That's not all - this is a jam-packed issue, also featuring photos from our SWAG Weekend, articles about geoart and geocaching locally in lockdown, the last of the stories sent to us for our competition last year, fun puzzles for you to complete, and more.

Happy geocaching, and stay safe!

Arthur (Griff Grof)



NEWS ROUND-UP

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

Cache publishing has restarted

After the easing of lockdown restrictions across the UK, you will have noticed that the reviewers have restarted publishing new caches.

A big thank you to all of the volunteer reviewers for their hard work in dealing with the big backlog!



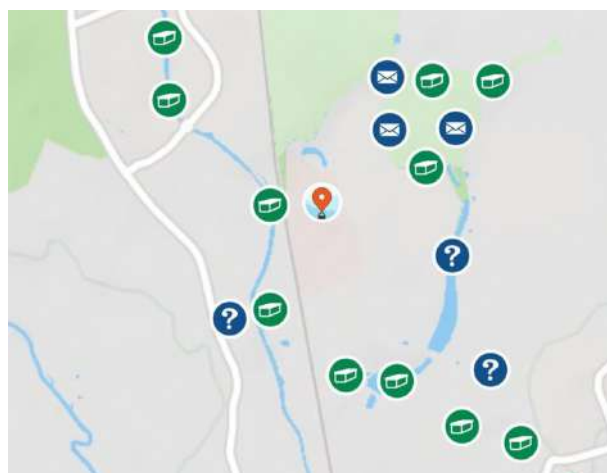
Booking available for Megs

Booking for camping for both Piratemia and the Lincolnshire Mega is now open. Both events lost out on fundraising opportunities after the events last year had to be cancelled, so they need your support. Lincs have confirmed that the money for camping is ringfenced, so if they have to cancel you will be refunded.



Lab Adventures now on app

Groundspeak have made a recent update to the official Geocaching app, meaning that you now see an icon for the start of a Lab Adventure. You still need the separate app to log the answers, but no more missing out on a set of labs are you didn't know they were there!



England's Creative Coast

The world's first art GeoTour

Several years ago, the GAGB were enlisted to help with the Creative Coast GeoTour, combining caching with art work across England's south east coast.

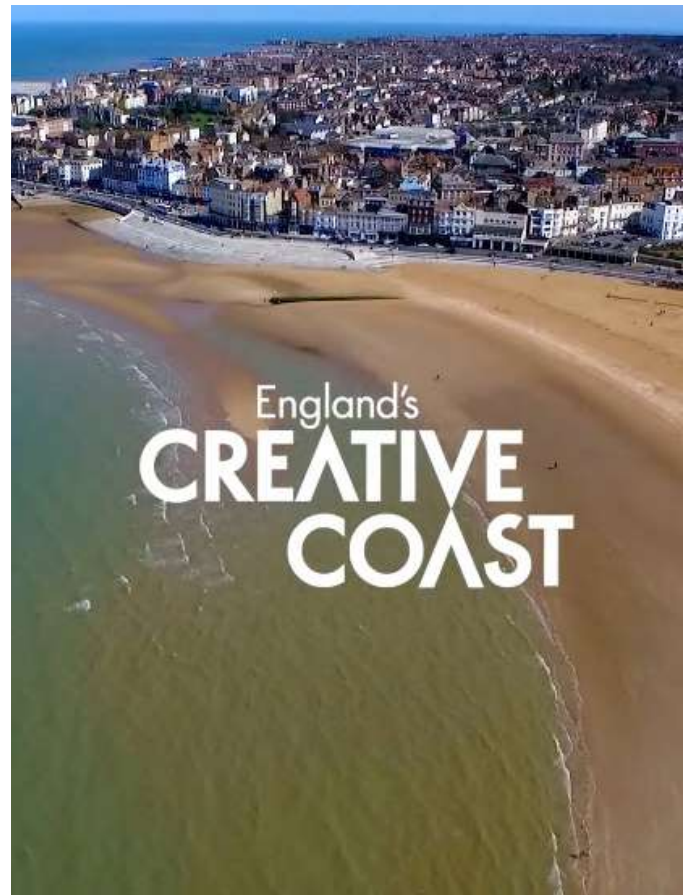
Whilst on the GAGB committee, Matt (Maattmoo) took on the responsibility of the project, and although he chose not to stand again in the last elections he carried on with this as an Appointed Member.

The launch should have been last year, but like many things the launch was delayed because of Covid, but we are delighted to see Matt's hard work finally come to fruition.

This project spans the dramatic Essex, Kent and East Sussex coastlines, offering visitors a new outdoor experience that connects artworks with landscapes, local stories and international perspectives.

From May to November this year, visitors to the region can encounter "Waterfronts", a series of seven site-specific artworks by leading contemporary artists Andreas Angelidakis, Mariana Castillo-Deball, Holly Hendry, Jasleen Kaur, Katrina Palmer, Pilar Quinteros and Michael Rakowitz that take the border between land and sea as their inspiration.

These diverse pieces of art are the starting points for the world's first art Geotour, a trail of art caches made by local communities that will take people off the beaten track to reveal the creative spirit of each town.



England's Creative Coast GeoTour began in Margate and was launched online in a zoom presentation on 29 April. Just as the launch finished the first 6 caches and 10 Adventure Labs were published.

Stages 2 and 3 launch on May 22nd (in Essex and Gravesend) and May 29th (in Folkestone, Hastings, Bexhill-on-Sea and Eastbourne) which is 23 more geocaches and 6 more sets of Adventure Labs to come soon.

The 29 GeoTour caches are unique and hand-crafted by locals and artists, all taking on different shapes and forms. Each geocache has a QR code either nearby or within through which visitors can discover audio, video or text pieces linked to the locations in which the geocaches are hidden.

The GeoTour caches along with the 7 sets of Adventure Labs (one for each location) will introduce visitors to scenic spots and places off the beaten track, and give locals a chance to be tourists in their own town. And finding all 29 caches will also award the finder with an unique digital souvenir.

Key dates - caches will be published on:

29 April = Margate

22 May = Essex (Harwich, Jaywick, Wallasea, Southend-on-Sea) and Gravesend

29 May = Folkestone, Hastings, Bexhill-on-Sea, Eastbourne

More information:

GeoTour number: GT4A5

For more information about the Creative Coast project, [click here](#)

For a sneak preview of some of the sights you will be visiting along the way, [click here](#)



England's
**CREATIVE
COAST**

ESSEX

Harwich

Walton-on-the-Naze

Jaywick

Southend-on-Sea

Katrina Palmer



Shoeburyness



Gravesend

Jasleen Kaur



Chatham

KENT

Margate

Michael Rakowitz



Folkestone

Pilar Quinteros

EAST SUSSEX



Hastings

Andreas Angelidakis

Bexhill-on-Sea

Holly Hendry



Eastbourne

Mariana Castillo Deball



Artworks



Art GeoTour Locations

GAGB SWAG Weekend 2021

An article by Griff Grof

Following its cancellation in 2020 due to the first COVID-19 lockdown, the GAGB's SWAG Weekend returned this year, taking place over Easter (2 April - 5 April).

In case you're not aware, SWAG is an acronym for Stuff We All Get; this refers to the items found within a geocache. These are often for children, but you can sometimes find SWAG for adults as well (such as stationary, books, and DVDs).

Sadly, many caches become empty over time, or filled with tat, as a result of some cachers not trading fairly (if you take something, you must leave something of equal value) or not leaving anything at all!

SWAG Weekend is all about restocking caches with good quality items. In some cases, this may also involve removing the tat and cleaning them more generally.

The next GAGB SWAG Weekend will be in 2022, but you can still stock up caches in need whenever you come across them – take some SWAG with you on every trip just in case!

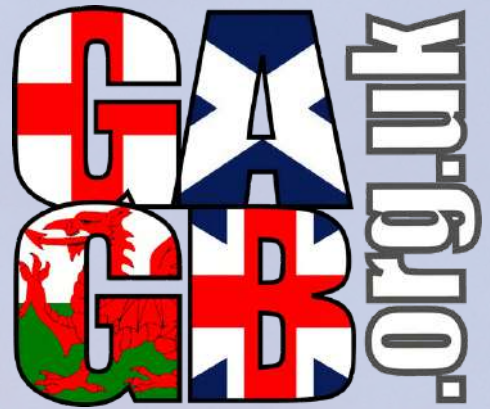
We are pleased to confirm that this year's SWAG Weekend was the biggest yet – we have never had so many participants, and there are probably even more we aren't aware of. Containers of all sizes were restocked with ace SWAG, from 35mm film cannisters, to tupperware boxes and ammo cans.

So many brilliant photos were sent in – the committee loved seeing all of the impressive transformations and swag-tastic additions. We hope that you enjoy looking through the photos too.

All that's left to say is a big THANK YOU to everyone who took part.



Adding SWAG to a cache. Photo taken by Wkdchris78



SWAG



**WEEK
END**

Lots of restocked caches!



CajunAce



TheBookMarkers



KazanDax



escapefromwork3



Arrowrat



Wkdchris78



Even more restocked caches





The final set of restocked caches



GAGB regional representatives

This year, we want to appoint the GAGB's first ever regional representatives - two per geocaching region.

We would love for YOU to become a representative for your region. This will be a great and fun way to give something back to geocaching (and the GAGB), and it won't be as time consuming as being a committee member or a listing site reviewer. So, why not give it a go - you can always step down at any time if it's not for you, but we'd obviously love for everyone to stay on board. Keep reading for more information!

Why does the GAGB need representatives?

Through having representatives as points of contact in all parts of the home nations, more cachers will be 'heard' by the GAGB, helping to ensure that it actually works for them. With representatives in place, the GAGB will also be able to maintain a presence and host events in all parts of Great Britain for the first time in its eighteen year history.

What will being a representative involve?

The main duties will be to serve as a point of contact, be approachable for all cachers in your region, collect regular feedback from local cachers, represent the GAGB at events (as well as organising them when possible), and offer local support where needed for ongoing GAGB initiatives. Representatives can also do other things if they want to, such as negotiate land agreements in their area

More information can be found in the recently approved framework.

How do I become a representative?

Email friends@gagb.org.uk to express your interest. We would love for you to become a representative for your area.

The new regional representative initiative consists of the following stages:

Stage 1: Recruitment - May and July

Initial applications for the initiative opened after the May bank holiday, and there's still time to add your name to the hat. We are looking for a mixture of people, with any relevant experience - or just an enthusiasm to take on the role!

In July, the recruitment campaign will be significantly stepped up and the regions with no volunteers at that time will be offered the chance to help make the GAGB work for them.

Stage 2: Trial period - June to September

Once the selection process has begun, regional representatives, as a working model, will be tested from June until the start of September by running a trial period. Recruitment will continue throughout this period of time. During the trial, the 'test regions' will have their representatives listed on our website and they will be following the newly completed framework that has been

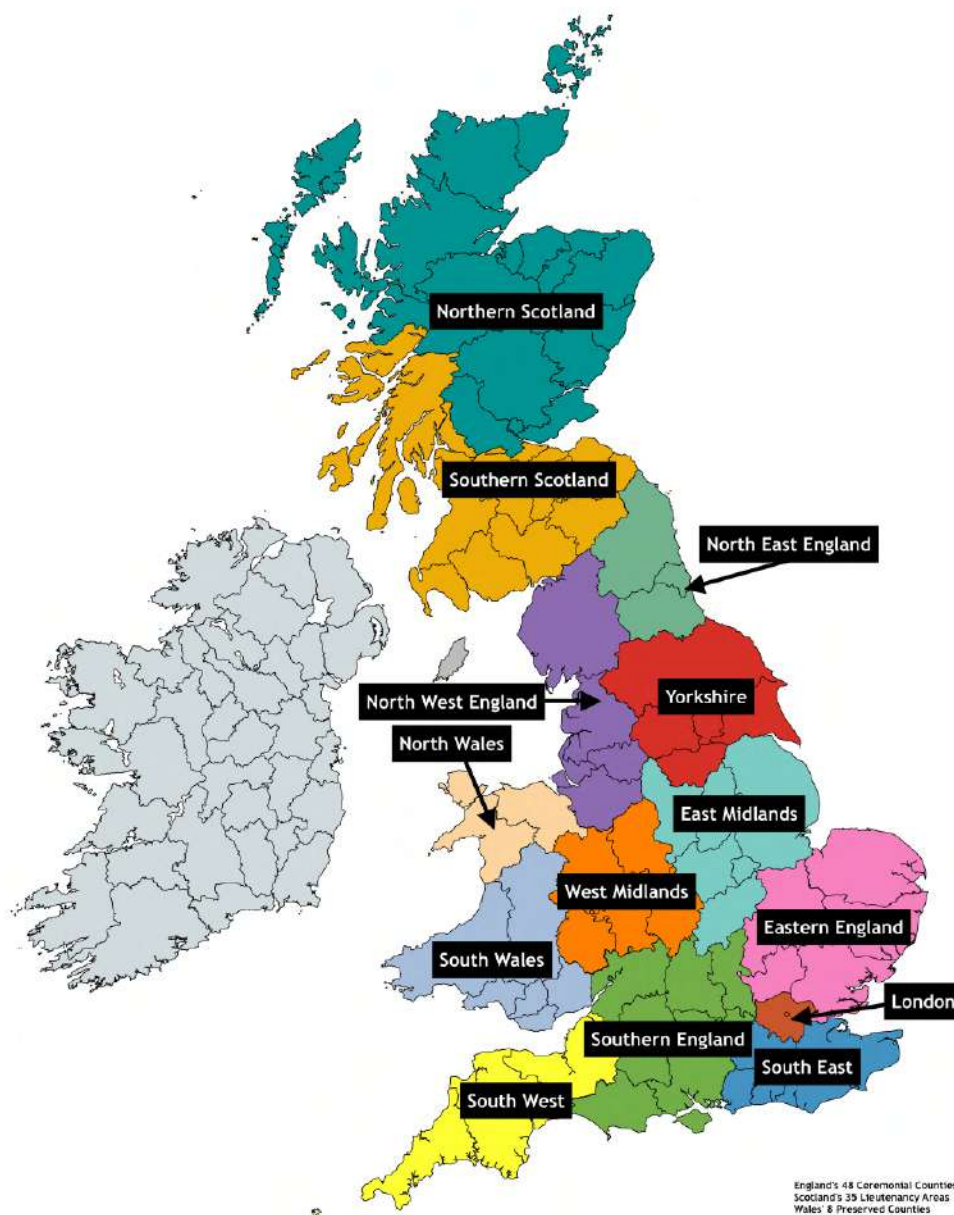
approved for regional representatives. The GAGB Friends and Regional Representatives Coordinator will be available for feedback during this time period to offer additional advice and support.

Stage 3: Official launch - September 2021

By the start of September, we hope to have at least one regional representative for each UK geocaching region and a deputy for the official launch in September. Some changes may have been made to the framework by this point, based on any feedback from those who were representatives during the trial period. All representatives will officially stay in their posts until December, when they will be given the choice to continue for another year or stand down by the newly elected GAGB committee. The next review will then be in December 2022.

We really hope that you are keen to become a representative for your region - we'd love to have you on board!

Please email friends@gagb.org.uk if you aren't already on our list, but want to be!



Mega2021 Merch now Available



www.mega2021.org.uk
info@mega2021.org.uk

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

Visit our website today:
<https://mega2022.org.uk/>

Come and join our gang on
[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ukmega2021) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/ukmega2021)



What is Geoart?

Geoart has become far more popular in the UK over the last few years, and is often mentioned on caching Facebook pages, but what is it?

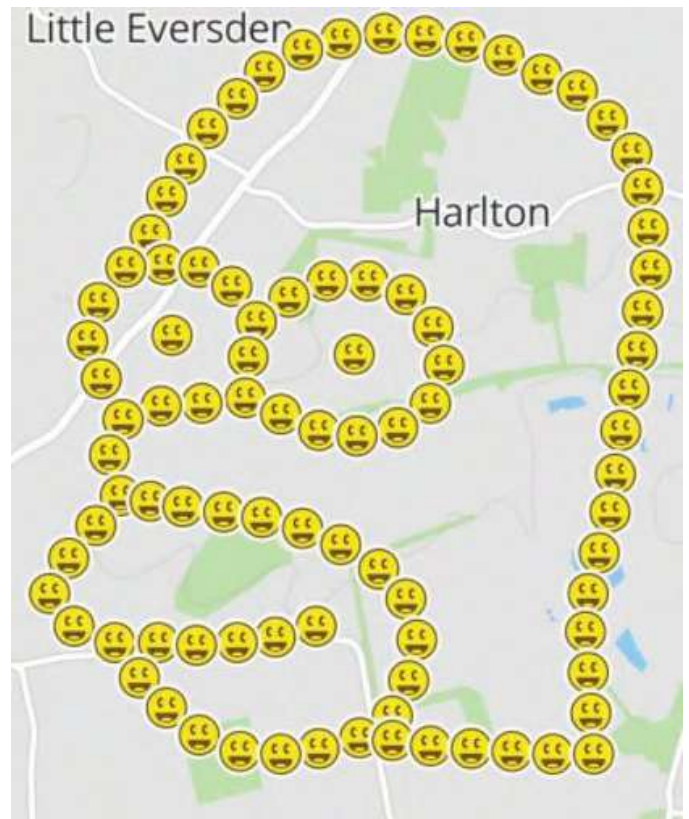
Geoart is a series of caches where the shape of the series forms an image. Because of their nature they are rarely traditional caches. Puzzle caches are the most common, as well as letterbox caches as these often have a puzzle element to them.

Some geoart trails are simple, for example forming a question mark, however some are very elaborate, for example the D'Oh (<https://coord.info/GC8X62C>) and the One in a Minion (<https://coord.info/GC8NAR9>) series, both in Cambridgeshire.

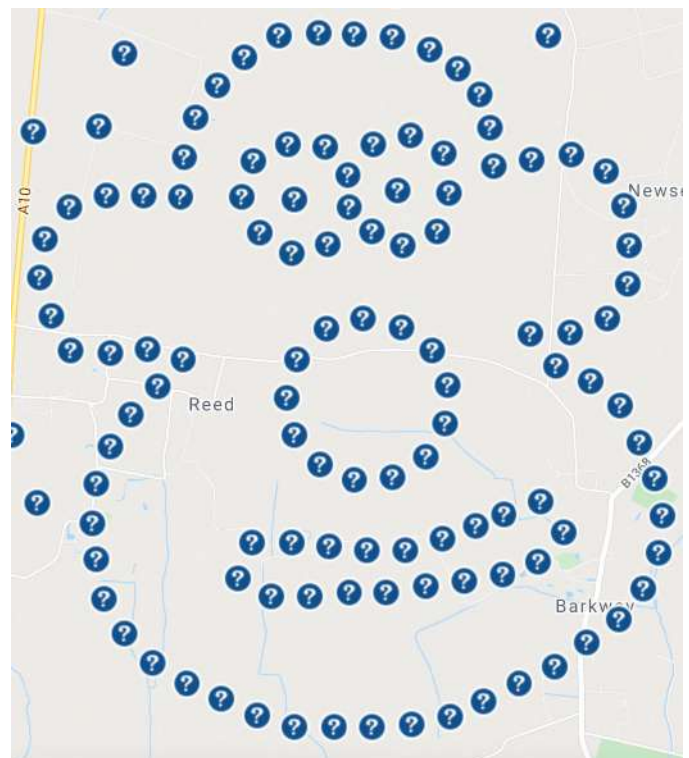
Because these can involve a large amount of puzzles a lot of work is needed at home first, but once you've completed the series then you have a great picture of smiley faces on your map!

Remember that whilst the caches aren't at the published locations, you can use the edit coordinates option on the website to put the corrected coordinates in, which will move the icon to the actual location, allowing you to plan your route. Once you have logged the cache as found then the icon will move back to the published coordinates.

People also ask how to find these. The easiest way is set the map to show only puzzle and letterbox caches, and then zoom out. You will see clusters of caches, and if you zoom back in on that area to get a clearer view you will see if a picture appears.



D'Oh! (GC8X62C)



No Cheese, Gromit (GC991CF)

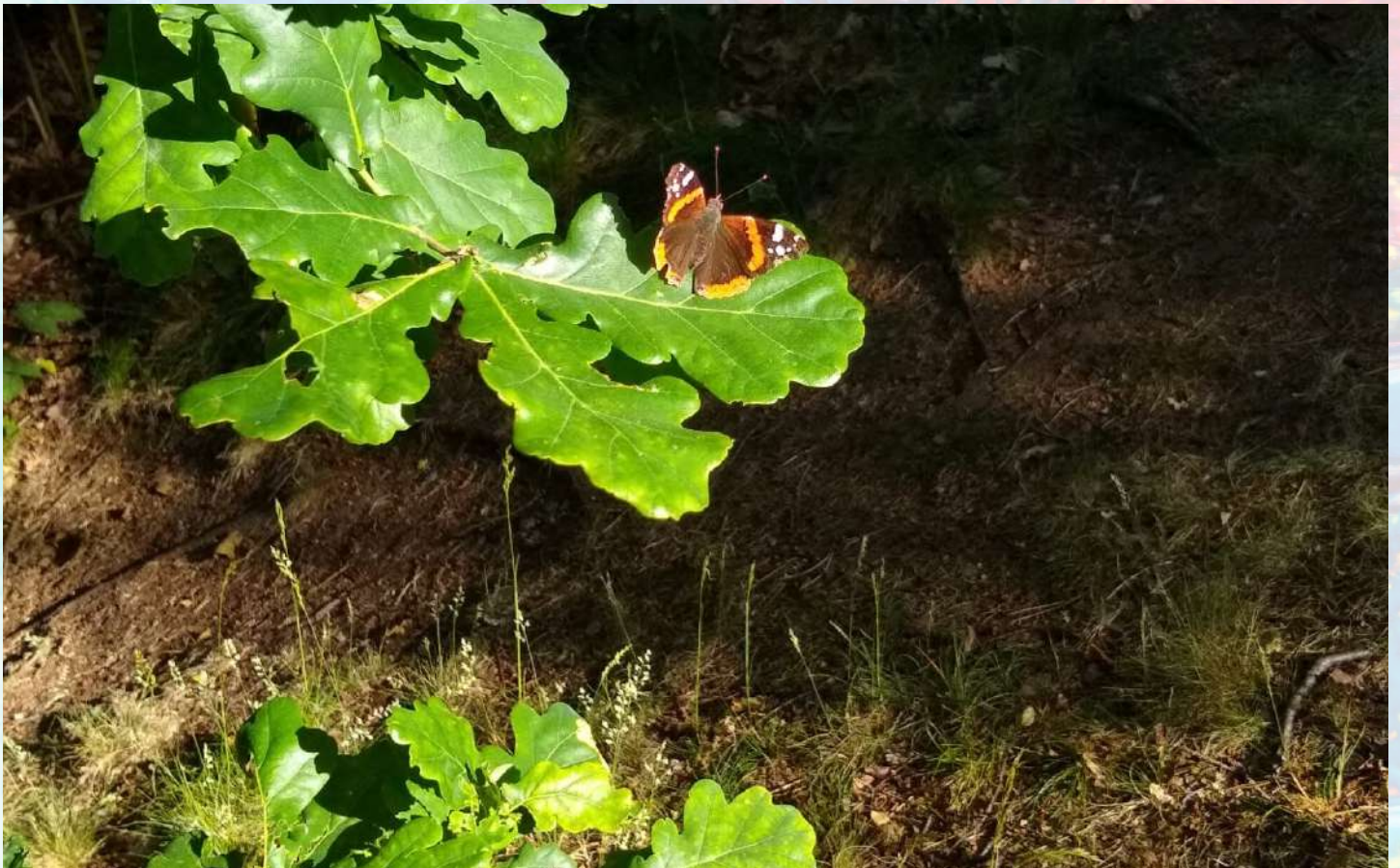
Geocaching in Lockdown

By Anna2030

I am by no means an experienced geocacher, but I have been caching on and off for about 8 years now. During lockdown it has proven to be a real godsend, and given me a reason to get up in the morning because my work has all but dried up during the year. It has also made me get to know my local area better and provided me with a way to keep fit, as well as help me towards my goal of 10,000 steps a day. While gyms and health clubs have been closed, and parks crammed with people during the week and at weekends, I found it an excellent way to de stress and a great way to combine it with other hobbies such as photography.

It has been great to do it on your own, since during the pandemic we have been actively encouraged to do things on our own, without people or crowds and at a distance. I have met and had conversations with complete strangers along the way. Cities have been completely empty and have been ideal places to go and look for caches during 2020/21. I am also a cache owner and there has been no shortage of cachers looking for and finding some of my caches.

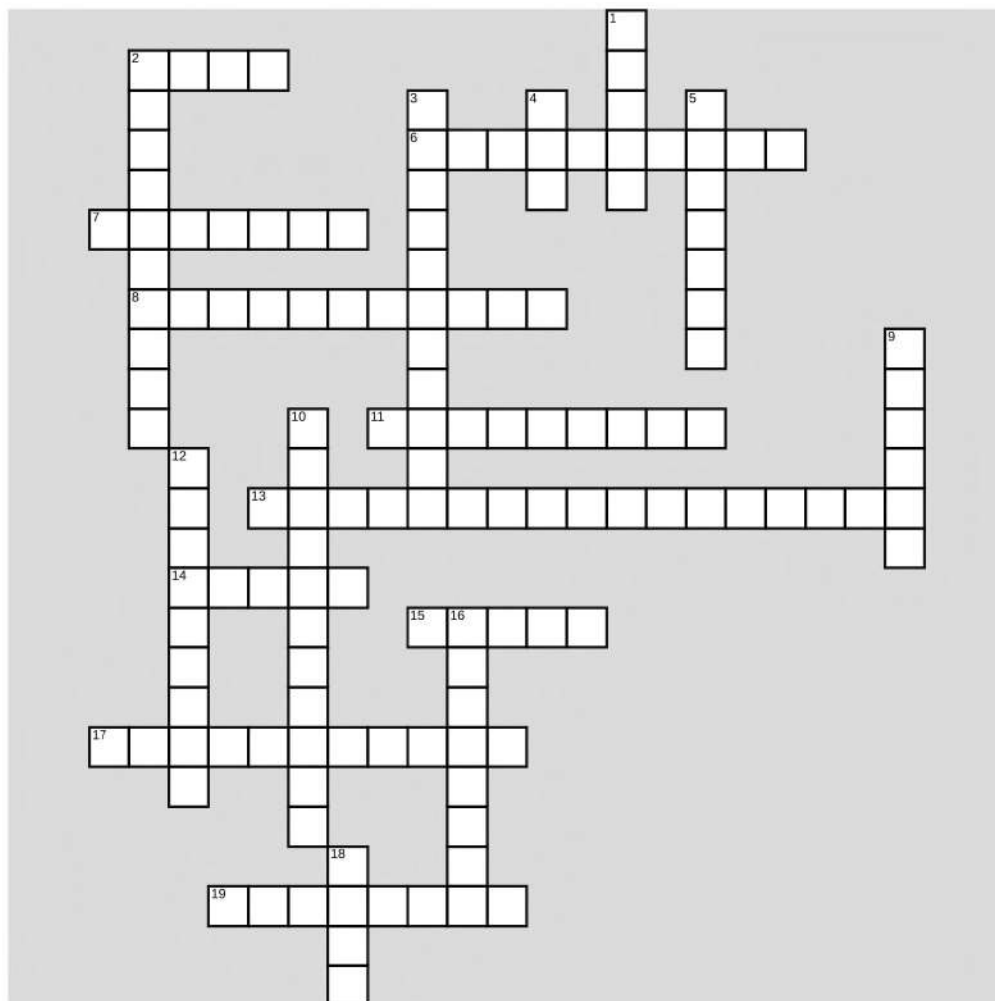
In fact, I can truly say that more people have been going out caching during lockdown in London than at any other time, because they are taking advantage of how empty London is. I have a total of 16 hides most of them in Central London and one or two outside.



Butterfly, taken by Anna on a caching walk

Geocaching crossword

Courtesy of Border Caz



Across

- 2 Booty, trade up or equal.
- 6 Adventurous insects to move to another cache
- 7 Romans' Five scrambled ritual, type of cache
- 8 Customary, most common type of cache
- 11 Route dots to tell you where to go.
- 13 Seven modern and seven ancient, current souvenir
- 14 Good place to meet other enthusiasts
- 15 Temporary log
- 17 Frenetic get together once a year with other filibusters.
- 19 Pirate's loot e.g. gold, silver and jewels.

Down

- 1 Friend of ivy, very prickly.
- 2 Some cachers like to keep an eye on their vital ones
- 3 Twigs or branches, natural cover.
- 4 E-VIL by ROT13 and hated by many cachers.
- 5 Non-magical people who don't cache.
- 9 Popular website for jigsaw puzzles
- 10 Earth talk, owners of largest listing site
- 12 List of trackables in your possession
- 16 Appraiser and publisher of caches
- 18 The UK's national association for geocachers.

1300 miles, 6 old caches and an alien



A story by Pieman

I have a thing about old caches. It started when I heard about the Jasmer Challenge, where the aim is to find at least one cache placed in every month since geocaching began in May 2000. There aren't many caches left that were placed in the early days of geocaching, but as I used to travel regularly with my job, it seemed like something that I might be able to complete. Twelve months later, in October 2013, I completed the challenge. The caches placed in the first year of geocaching were among the best I had ever found, so I decided to carry on seeking them out.

In September 2018, I took the opportunity of a business trip to the US to spend a weekend picking up a few more old caches. The plan was to drive from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City via Tonopah, Nevada. This would mean driving 1300 miles across three states and finding 5 caches placed in 2000. On the way I would also rack up a million miles cumulative distance between my cache finds since I began caching in 2004.

I arrived at Los Angeles International Airport and took the shuttle to car rental. It wasn't my preferred company but they had offered a cheap price. Not a good idea. There was a long queue and everyone in front seemed to be arguing with the agents. When I finally reached the counter, a sour faced woman spent 10 minutes trying to upsell me a more



Santa Barbara One

expensive car and extras I didn't need. When she realised that she wasn't getting anywhere she told me that the car I had booked wasn't ready so it would be better to pay for the upgrade. Now I knew why everyone was arguing. When I still refused to budge, she produced the keys for my car which, of course, had been ready all the time.

I found the car and looked for the cigarette lighter to plug in my satnav which had my whole route plan uploaded. There was no cigarette lighter to charge the satnav. I knew from experience that the battery would only last a couple of hours, which wasn't close to being enough to get me to Salt Lake City.

I couldn't face another encounter with the agent, so with a dubious plan to only switch the satnav on when absolutely necessary, I set off.

I managed to get to my business meeting and then on to my hotel near Santa Barbara before the battery expired and then set off at 5.30am the next day for Santa Barbara One (GC106, placed in December 2000). Getting an early start was good as I had 600 miles to drive to my hotel in Tonopah, but what wasn't so good was driving in the dark on a rough dirt road with boulders in the way and chasms at the edge of the road, so I was very grateful when the sky started to turn lighter and I could see where I was going! After I reached the parking place, I took the short hike up the hill to the cache. The area had only opened up after a wildfire a few months previously and most of the bushes were still showing its effects but the cache was undamaged in its hiding place. This was the cache that took me over the million miles cache to cache distance and what a great view I had to celebrate this, as I looked out over the Pacific at sunrise.

Back on the road, I was relieved to return to tarmac eventually, however within 5 minutes of doing so a light flashed on the dashboard - puncture. I changed the wheel to the space saver spare but there was no way I was driving more than 1000 miles on that. I had no choice but to drive to the nearest rental depot at Santa Barbara airport where this time a very pleasant rental agent exchanged the car for a large SUV (at no charge) and to my relief it also had a cigarette lighter to charge the satnav. However, I was now more than 2 hours behind schedule on what was a

always going to be a long day.

My next cache was 250 miles away on the edge of the Mojave Desert- Azucar Mine Offset (GCC2, placed in November 2000). It's the second oldest puzzle cache in the world and involves visiting the cache coordinates and projecting a bearing of 296 degrees from magnetic north and a distance of 0.4 mile, which takes you to 200ft from the cache. I had decided that I would mess this up on the ground, so I worked it out at home using Google Earth and cache photos - something which is still not straightforward when you are not dealing with true north. I certainly didn't want to be wandering about too much to find the cache, as the cache page states, "WARNING! DANGER! THERE ARE OPEN, UNMARKED MINE SHAFTS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF SNAKES AND OTHER DANGEROUS ANIMALS AND/OR INSECTS IN THE AREA."



Pieman at Azucar Mine Offset

As I drove closer to the cache, the landscape became more and more barren and the road deteriorated into a series of ever larger potholes. With 11 miles still to go, the satnav was taking me in circles and suggesting ever narrower tracks.

Normally, I would have given up but I was determined not to miss this cache. I decided to use common sense, ignore the satnav and just follow the tracks that looked the most promising. This proved effective, and I got to within 0.2 miles of the cache from where I set out on foot in the 40°C heat. Where I ended up looked nothing like the photos on the cache page and I quickly realised that I had followed the original coordinates and not the adjusted ones. I was very hot by the time I got to the proper place but I was pleased that it looked just as I was expecting and despite there being hundreds of hiding places, previous finders photos were etched into my brain and I soon had the old ammo can in hand without plunging into a shaft or being attacked by the wildlife.

I once again ignored the satnav as I remembered from my research the best way back to the main road heading east, which was a good thing as my way knocked 4 hours off the satnav route! There is a harsh beauty to the desert roads as you head out of California and into Nevada, but it's not a place to go low on petrol. As you pass a petrol station heading north away from Las Vegas, you see a sign that says, "Next gas 93 miles". It's also not a place you want to have another problem with the car as a mobile signal is rare, but as the sun set, I noticed a crack in the windscreen. There was no chance to do anything about it, so I watched it steadily grow over the next two days and prayed that I didn't lose the whole windscreen before I returned the car- I'm thankful that didn't happen.

Tonopah is an isolated old silver mining town and it is claimed to have the darkest skies in the USA. I stopped outside of town and looked up at the sky and it is indeed clear, with stars visible all the way to the horizon.



Sunrise from XKD-380 (GCF9)



View from Wah Wah Stash

Nowadays, mining has finished and there's only a couple of nearby military bases to keep it alive, including the infamous Area 51 of alien conspiracy stories fame. I arrived in town late and stayed in the wild west style Mizpah Hotel which, since it was built in 1907, has been bust and reborn several times, including in one incarnation as a house of ill-repute. Fortunately, gambling is the only vice on show there today through the slot machines that seem obligatory in all Nevada hotels.

I left the hotel at 5am for the relatively short drive to XKD-380 (GCF9, Dec 2000). The road near this cache is part of the huge ET Highway power trail which comprises of about 2,400 caches placed every 0.1 mile. I wouldn't normally seek out these types of caches, but as one was right next to where I

parked, I found 1147-ET (GC32D04) which like the rest is a micro by the side of the road. I wonder if anyone else has only found one of the series? I then climbed to the top of a rocky outcrop nearby and found XKD-380. After replacing the cache, I watched the sun rise over the mountains, without another car or person as far as the eye could see.

There was now a long drive ahead to southern Utah for my next old cache.

Foolishly, I ignored my best intentions not to run low on petrol and didn't fill up at Crystal Springs, about 140 miles east of Tonopah. At the time, I didn't realise that the next petrol station was 200 miles away. As it turned out, by driving very conservatively for the final 100 miles, I reached the petrol station with just 20 miles of petrol left!

But before I could fill up, my target was Wah Wah Stash (GCA8, placed in November 2000). This is situated near an old silver, zinc and lead mine in the Wah Wah mountains of Utah. After driving for hours through the desiccated desert, it was extraordinary to enter what looked like an alpine valley that led to the mine. After finding the cache, I sat for a moment by a spring that bubbled to the surface near the mine, had some lunch and admired the peaceful scene before setting off for the drive up to Salt Lake City.

The next cache on the list was Beaver Springs (GC7C, placed in October 2000). This is situated close to 10,000 feet up on the western edge of the Rocky Mountains and was a cache I had been particularly looking forward to finding. It is snowbound from late October to mid-July, so the window to find it in the year is quite small.

As I drove up Route 89 towards the intersection with Route 6, the road that would take me towards the cache, I noticed some ominous black smoke ahead. By the time that I reached the intersection, my concern turned out to be well founded. A traffic officer stopped me as I exited the 89 and told me that Route 6 was closed because of smoke from a wildfire, making driving dangerous. I was disappointed but I now had a choice- go straight for the hotel or re-route to two other caches placed in October 2000 near Salt Lake City, adding another 90 minutes driving.

No contest, of course, I headed for the



Clower Spring Stash

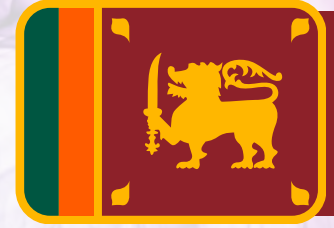
caches! Clower Spring Stash (GC9B) was the first, near Desert Peak Wilderness Area and the second was Pony Express Stash (GC8A) on the old Pony Express Route near Lookout Pass Station. Both turned out to be ammo cans at the top of short steep hills and were simple finds with fine views across the mountains.

By the time I got to my hotel it was 9pm and I was very tired, but I had experienced two brilliant days driving through breath-taking countryside and visiting some outstanding caches.

And I still have a great excuse to return to the area to find Beaver Springs and another that I didn't have time to find called Labyrinth Canyon (GC7E, placed in November 2000), which is a jet-ski ride across Lake Powell on the border of Utah and Arizona. Old caches really are the best.

The Highs and Lows of Geocaching in Sri Lanka

A story by Wriglee



This story goes right back to December 2012. We had only started caching in March that year and as such didn't have a huge number under our belt. It was back in the old days when holidays were holidays with a bit of caching if convenient, rather than now where our holidays (and weekends away...and day trips) are caching centric with a bit of tourism thrown in if convenient!

We had spent several months planning a three week trip around southern Sri Lanka and a brief search before we left revealed there were approximately 80 caches...in the whole country. Luckily there were three traditionals in Haputale where we were staying, a beautiful mountainous tea plantation area where our lodgings were literally above the clouds. Though, as I said we were not quite so caching obsessed, we did

have a spare afternoon free for a circular walk that took us through a woodland nature reserve, passed a little village and back through one of the many trails through the tea plantations... and conveniently near to the three caches.

Cache 1 was in the forest and at GZ we found ourselves by a large boulder with a number of cracks and holes in it, surrounded by lots of bushes and ground cover. Just as Mr Wriglee started searching, it occurred to me that Sri Lanka was home to a number of snakes, spiders and other frankly horrifying (and dangerous) creatures. That was me out! I let Mr Wriglee, who isn't usually spooked by such considerations, search for a short while but I drew the line at him sticking his hand in the nooks and crannies. Perhaps unsurprisingly we did not find the cache!



Hummanaya Blow Hole (GC2YM5X). Photo credit: harogs

Cache 2 and 3 were hidden within the tea plantation, both somewhere in an area completely strewn with rocks and boulders on a steep slope. I being the less agile one stayed closer to the path whilst Mr Wriglee climbed the incline, remaining in eye view but not within easy talking distance. After about 20 minutes I spotted him scaling a particularly large boulder and shortly afterwards he was out of sight. I then heard a rock slide and was worried he had fallen. I started clumsily scrambling towards the boulder until I noticed he was safe and sound messing about with a pile of rocks further up. No sign of any cache though so we moved onto number three.

When we reached cache 3 we noted the hint indicated it was underground and required a shovel. Not sure if the CO had followed the Groundspeak rules but we decided to not attempt a find here. So a lovely walk but zero caches in Sri Lanka.

A few days later we headed out to World's End where there was an Earthcache which we were able to claim. This remained our highest elevation cache for a number of years at 2126m. World's End (GC32TH5) sits within Horton Plains National Park featuring the headwaters of three major Sri Lankan rivers and to reach the view point and earthcache along a 9km trail, we passed waterfalls, many species of birds and some absolutely stunning vistas. There wasn't a cloud in the sky and we could see for miles. Hurrah, our first Sri Lankan cache!

Just over a week later we found our second cache at Hummanaya Blow Hole (GC2YM5X), in Kudawella which is reported to be one of



Near GC423YN. Photo credit: LotsO

the largest blow holes in the world and truly deserving of the Earthcache that caught our attention here. The seas were calm so no spectacular eruptions but interesting nonetheless. Our second Sri Lankan geocache which just so happened to also be our 300th find.

We visited a number of nature reserves and parks in Sri Lanka, having a fantastic time but were still keen to find a traditional and our moment came on our last day when we spotted Little Paradise (GC423YN) a few miles out from our hotel. Not knowing the area, we made the bold decision to hire a Tuk Tuk and driver to take us to GZ, which happened as it turns out, to be in the garden of a private villa.

The driver was very doubtful when we called out to stop at the gate but the GPSr was pointing onwards so off we went with him parked up nearby, watching us. Now I must admit we were feeling quite self-conscious, not least because there were three people on sunbeds near the villa who all appeared to be taking an interest in our arrival. We tentatively approached and hesitantly asked if there was a geocache nearby. Luckily one of the loungers was the villa owner who grinned and gestured for us to start looking. We were reluctant to traipse around his garden too much but did turn over a rock or two. The owner then came over to us and taking pity, gave us a big hint regarding where it was, so we soon had the log book signed.

After thanking him we returned to our Tuk Tuk. The driver had apparently been watching the whole thing unfold and had a look on his face which was a mixture of suspicion, confusion and incredulity. We asked him to take us back to our hotel and we spent the journey answering questions about what he had witnessed. When we explained geocaching, he actually stopped another Tuk Tuk driver to ask him if he had heard of it. Unsurprisingly he hadn't! I am pretty sure our driver went home that night convinced he had witnessed a drug drop or something. So that is the story of our geocaching adventures in Sri Lanka. 3 caches in 3 weeks but lots of great memories and a story that always puts a smile on our faces.



View from World's End (GC32TH5). Photo credit: Zagloba

That Cache: Heaven or Hell?



A story by 1d_is_tall



The dreaded tree...

It's a pain. That green dot on the map. It's not far, just up in the woods, along the muddy bit where we once sat on a log eating our picnic and decided we could just about afford the house. A secretary said "There are good schools nearby" We said "We won't still be there when the baby needs one.". He now has children of his own and lives miles away, while the house still nurtures us and has adapted to our needs with a downstairs loo and raised vegetable beds. There are even thoughts of a stairlift.

It is not fair. If I bring up a local map that cache mocks me. It teases me. In my own living room, when I turn on my GPS device, there it is right at the top of the list. It taunts me. "Here I am. Come and find me". It entices

me. Even with a spoiler photo in the gallery, I've never even caught a glimpse of it. Oh, I have looked and looked and others have found it. Smiling faces in their logs. With their "Thanks for this fun little adventure" and "This is the sort of cache I really enjoy" How hard can it be? For me it's a hell on earth.

When I am out and about, I often pass nearby and then I study GZ. I have searched for the cache from underneath, and from the top of the incline. I have even thought of climbing up to the tree house where the builder nailed each painful rung directly into a nearby trunk, Now, its ladder is about all that is left. The old platform has succumbed to weather, vandals, and beetles. Do you think I could spot it from up there?

There are times though when there are just too many dogs sniffing around. Or after school when the children are littering the woods on their way home having visited the sweet shop at the bottom of the road. Then I just have to bide my time. I don't want to raise suspicions like that time I was accused of being a burglar. Me! I thought I looked outwardly respectable!

Of course, I have read the hint - "Look up... what's that" and I have craned my neck until that familiar pain comes. I have read the description with its emojis. The toothy grins encourage me to think it might be possible. They lie. Oh, then of course there is the D/T rating 2.5/5 and the attributes - dogs

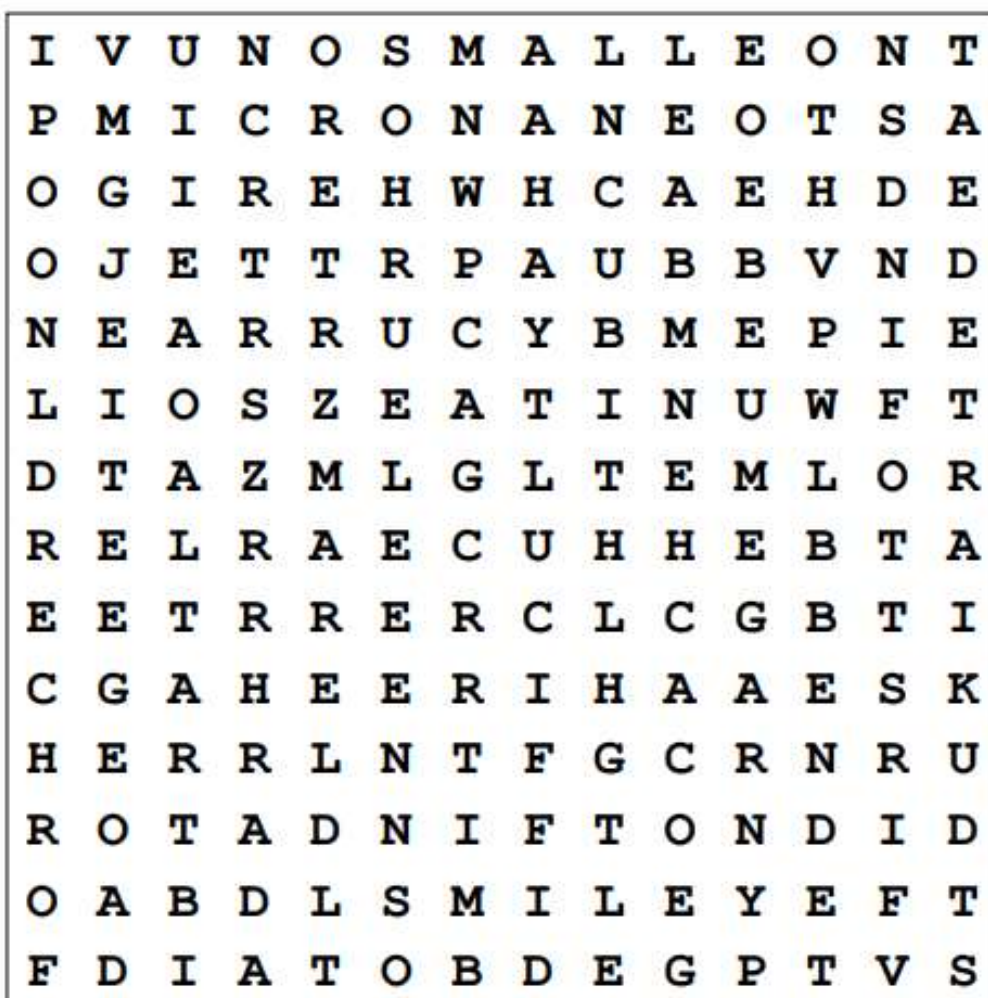
allowed, nearby parking, scenic views all good but then the dreaded tree climb.

I am not even sure what I would do if I could see it. Pine trees are notorious for throwing off their lower branches as if tossing down a treat for a passing dog. At my age do I really want to start climbing trees? I have fantasized about going there on a moonlit night dragging our long ladder and my unwilling

husband. Maybe a cherry picker could be positioned on the precarious slope. A drone might do the trick.

I can hear you say “What use is a cache you are never going to be able to reach? Why not just ignore it”. But it is there, and it is my nearest. Now, where is that phone number? Perhaps the stairlift people could construct a ride to heaven.

WORDSEARCH



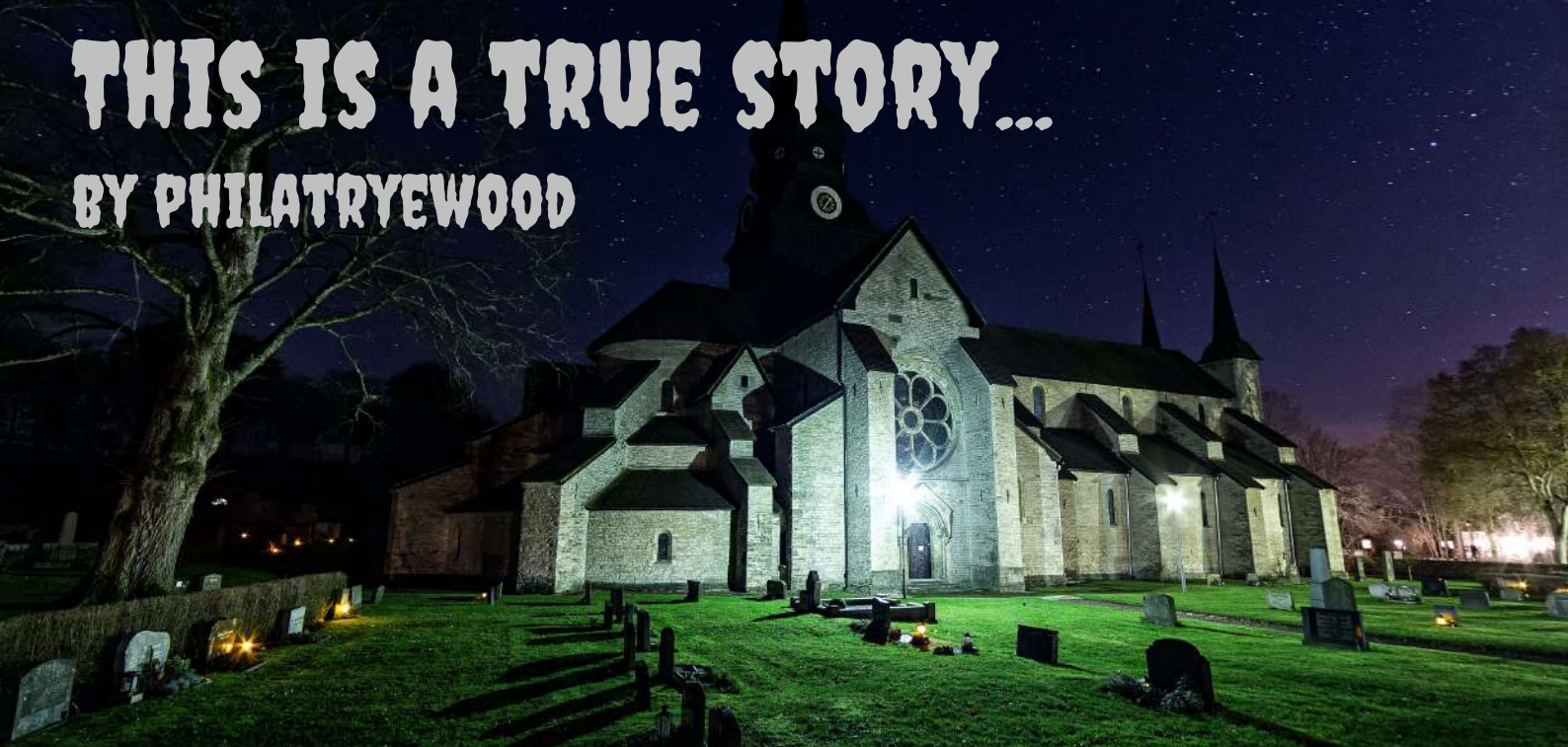
ADVENTURE LAB
DID NOT FIND
DIFFICULTY
FIRST TO FIND
GAGB
GEOCACHE
JASMER
LARGE

MEGA
MICRO
MULTI
NANO
PUZZLE
REGULAR
SMALL

SMILEY
TERRAIN
TREE CLIMB
VIRTUAL
WEBCAM
WHERIGO

THIS IS A TRUE STORY...

BY PHILATRYEWOOD



It all started after I completed my first night cache that the creepy crawlies had set amongst the Well Woods at Coney Hall near West Wickham, this cache could only be searched for in the dark as the route was set out with flash tags amongst the trees. That the torch light picked out, great fun it was too and it gave me an idea to set a similar sort of cache of my own.

I ordered my flash tags and picked my area in Otford back near home, I found a good place for the final cache with in the new Church yard extension, this is a little way from the Church itself so thought a route could be planned from the Church to new grave yard through a field and wooded area.

So it came to setting up the cache. Of course, it was dark so I could see the reflection of the tags with the torch.

I fixed the first flash tag to where the final cache box was and proceeded to walk backwards checking that I could still see the tag with the flash light, this is when the trouble started.

It had been raining for most of the day and the ground was still wet, avoiding puddles and dodging the grave stones and at the same time looking for the reflection I wasn't concentrating on what was directly behind me and found myself stumbling over a large pile of soil and before I could get my footing I found myself falling backwards through an orange netting fence and landing on a thin sheet of wood (I now know why there was a pile of soil that caused my fall). As I landed on the wooden sheet I heard a creak and I kept falling and ended 6 foot under, the sheet was covering an open grave which I was now at the bottom of, and with the rain during the day, I found myself covered in mud. I tried to wipe my self down but the mud just seemed to smear itself over me more, I was covered from head to toe.

Well I thought the worst was over, well for me anyway !

Once I had composed myself I hauled myself out of the grave moaning and groaning as I had a few aches and pains from the fall I managed to get both arms and my head

and shoulders out of the hole only to then look up to see a man's face looking down at me. I was still groaning, and next thing I knew the man let out such a scream and then fell down in a pile on the floor (anyone would think he had just seen a Zombie crawling out of a grave).

I hurried and managed to get out of the open grave and tried in vain to revive him , but had no luck so I then called 999 and an ambulance was sent.

While waiting for the ambulance I found a puddle and washed myself off cleaning my face off the best I could.

When the ambulance crew asked what had happened here I couldn't tell them that he saw a zombie crawling out of a grave and bottled it and said I was walking by and found him.

He was taken away in the ambulance and that's where my story ends.

Did he say there are Zombies? Has he ever returned to the graveyard? One can only wonder.

Needless to say I never did set my night cache up after this little episode. I wonder why I got the nickname Calamity???

Keep reading for more
information about this
year's GAGB
competition!



CACHE CREATION COMPETITION

DESIGN ONE OR BUILD ONE

SUBMIT UP TO TWO ENTRIES BY 1 JULY 2021!



Are you bored at home? Do you fancy designing or building a cool cache? The GAGB are running a competition to find the most creative or unusual cache in the UK! All GAGB members are encouraged to submit an entry showcasing a cache design or the final product itself. You can submit up to two entries between 1 March and 1 July 2021.

There are two categories (see below), and there will be a winner and a runner-up for each one. All remaining entrants will be entered into a prize draw.

DESIGN ONE

Have you got a great idea for an unusual cache, but lack the resources to make it into a reality? If so, this is the category for you - let your creative juices flow, and envision a show-stopping cache that would earn dozens of favourite points in the real world!

For this category, you will need to submit a drawing, plan, or vivid description of your cache design and how you would build it if you were able to do so.

BUILD ONE

Are you able to bring your idea to life using the tools and resources at your disposal? Then why not build your cache to impress us all - get stuck in whilst you're at home. You could even hide it for real once it's finished, to put a smile on the faces of geocachers for many years to come.

For this category, simply send us a high-resolution photo of your cache (ideally several from multiple angles!).

For the rules and information, please see [this page](#). Email all entries to cachecreation@gagb.org.uk. We can't wait to see your creations - good luck!

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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. Here are the answers for the remaining two committee members, the others were featured in the last issue.



Mel
Moira Crackers

Do you prefer to cache with a GPS or phone, and why? I started with GPS but used to get very annoyed that it ate battery life so quickly, changed to Etrex 10, upgraded several times but went back to my phone when I lost my GPS. Brought a new one but still tend to use my phone now as battery life is much better nowadays.

Do you cache with a pet? Do they help or hinder your caching? We usually take our Border Collie Cracker with us (which is where my name stems from). We now have a new caching buddy, Marble, another Border Collie who couldn't understand what my husband was doing climbing the tree the other day.

What is your favourite cache? I have lots of favorites, too many to list. But I do like a devious one that I have to visit several times and it gives great satisfaction when you get it.

What is your favourite cache type? I like most cache types but EarthCaches put me off when the CO constantly tells you it's wrong and deletes logs. I don't bother with them now.

How long have you been caching for? We have been caching since Aug 2014 when a friend at a weight loss group suggested it to get us out and about.

Do you prefer urban or rural caching? I prefer to be out in the countryside so the dogs can run and have fun while I look, not much fun trying to hold onto a lead with the dog pulling you everywhere while trying to find a cache.

Have you done a 5/5 cache? We did our first 5/5 cache for a souvenir not far from home, the puzzle was easy once I worked out what to do with it.

What are your 2021 caching goals? We don't have any caching goals..... I set some for last year and due to Covid we haven't done much because of the job I do, I want to keep my elderly clients safe. It's just nice to be able to get back out there and enjoy.



Craig
Cabbage187

Do you prefer to cache with a GPS or phone, and why? I prefer a GPS if going on long walks as it will help save battery. My phone is great for up-to-date info. When going geocaching, we tend to use my phone for the information and my partner's (SusieTirzah) phone for the compass.

Do you cache with a pet? Do they help or hinder your caching? No, but I am trying the train the cat in helping us.

What is your favourite cache? So many to choose from but local cachers Tim'n'marian have loads in my top 10.

What is your favourite cache type? When I'm in a walking mood, I like a long rural trail. I enjoy running, so I like to do adventure labs as they don't take up time.

How long have you been caching for? If you include my old account, 8 1/2 years. My new account started 31st July 2020, only missed 1 day so far and just hit 1,000 caches.

Do you prefer urban or rural caching? I prefer urban as you have to be so stealthy, adds a bit of excitement. I got the one on the Spanish steps in Rome. Used changing the nappy of the little one in helping to find.

Have you done a 5/5 cache? Unfortunately not yet.

What are your 2021 caching goals? To complete my calendar apart from Feb 29.

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

Watch this space as we'll have some new items in stock soon, including a geocoin which has now entered production! We can't wait for you to see it.

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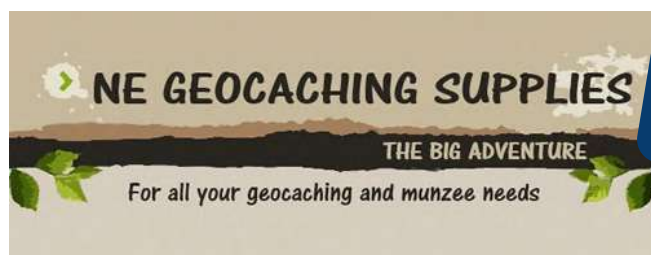
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