

January

08

Trips this  
Year14<sup>th</sup> March – 16<sup>th</sup>  
March, Trough of  
Bowland20<sup>th</sup> June – 22<sup>nd</sup>  
June, Langdale.  
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2007Krakow, Dec  
2007

## Other News

SHOT'S YHA  
Card

Happy New Year to you all, hope you all had a good Christmas with not too many Mince Pies and chocolates. There are some great trips planned for the year find out all the details below. Also don't forget those Shot subs for those that haven't paid for the year, it's £4 a year

Thanks  
[Nigel Venables](#)

## Friday 14th March - Sunday 16th March, Trough of Bowland

Centre of the Kingdom All those people with wide-awake eyes will have noticed that the venue for the springtime trip is not the same as the one they signed up for on the last SHOT weekend. We are NOT going to Sedbergh, but to a new location further south. Of course anybody who has paid a quid or five and is not too happy with the new destination is entitled to a full refund.



So where is the Trough of Bowland? I hear some folk ask. Most people travelling up the M6 will have noticed a rising area of fells (eventually reaching almost 1 800ft) quite close to the east side of the motorway between Preston and Lancaster. This is called the Forest of Bowland with barely a plantation to its name. Most of it is owned by the Duke of Westminster as a shooting estate with a large chunk also owned by United Utilities as a water gathering ground. The Trough of Bowland is itself a name given to a low natural crossing point used by a road coming up from Abbeystead in the west and Dunsop Bridge in the south which splits off the south-west fells from the main massif. Tucked away in this massif lies 'the Geographical Centre of Great Britain'.

We shall be staying at The Smelt Mill. This is a fully equipped bunkbarn used by the Bowland Pennine Mountain Rescue Team as their HQ graciously offered to SHOT by an elder Gilder. There are 10 bedrooms (bring a sleeping bag) - 1 x8, 3x4 1 x6, 3x2 1x 1 - totaling 35 beds. There is a lounge with an open fire, a drying room, kitchen, an indoor climbing wall (ideal for Shotlets), audio visual facilities and central heating throughout. Their website illustrates the luxuries on offer :- [www.bowlandpenninemrt.org/smeltmill.htm](http://www.bowlandpenninemrt.org/smeltmill.htm)

Because of the somewhat isolated but easily accessible position the current plan is to spend Saturday evening at the Smelt Mill. The nearest pubs are both about 5 miles away at Newton and the rather bumptious Inn at Whitewell. Gilder Senior will be able to provide us with a barrel of beer (brewed locally) to supplement all our culinary creations. So bring ALL your food with a bottle or two for emergencies.

Getting to the Smelt Mill isn't difficult. but it is not too easy either. Approaches from the M6 junction 33 via Dolphinholme and Abbeystead or from the M6 junction 32) via the M55 junction 1 Longridge and Dunsop Bridge both have advantages and disadvantages. The



Grit Fell, Ward's Stone and Wolfhole Crag at sunset

Mill (GR 638509) which is located on the right hand side. It is about the same distance from the road junction at Dunsop Bridge but with the Smelt Mill now on the left side.

As most people except Julian know, BT's 100,000 public phone box on the village green at Dunsop Bridge proudly states that according to the OS 'the Geographical Centre of Great Britain and its 401 associated islands' is found at GR 63770 56550. This is on an open fellsite south of Wolfhole Crag. Surprisingly, just 384m to the east lays another one! According to [Wikipedia](#) and a local guidebook to the Hodder Valley the Centre of Great Britain can also be found at GR 64 1 88 56541. This time it is in a bright green bog.

Just to confuse things further there are three more genuine contenders ! !

1. Great Britain - Mainland only is GR 72322 3667 . This involves a trespass into a field near Whalley.
2. Great Britain - Mainland plus 7 major islands is GR 68 1 24 41406 which needs tree felling on Longridge Fell
3. Great Britain - Mainland only from the furthest pubs is GR ..... which needs further dedicated research

Most of the Forest of Bowland is now Open Access Land. It is now possible to walk virtually anywhere, but a word of caution. The open fells can be rather boggy and uncompromising so best stick to recognized access paths. Having a GPS that works could be useful in finding Geographical Centres. Dunsop Bridge has a pleasant teashop, a famous phone box and fat ducks waddling across the village green.

Please send the usual £5 deposit to Gustav to book a place.

## Friday 20<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, Langdale, Lake District

Shot once again visit the Barclays Hut at the head of the Langdale Valley behind the Old Dungeon Ghyll pub. This is a regular one for Shot and thanks to Tim for booking it again. For further details on the room layout then speak to either Gus or Tim. If the bunkhouse becomes full or if you fancy a change the [Langdale Valley National Trust campsite](#) is only 5 minutes walk away.

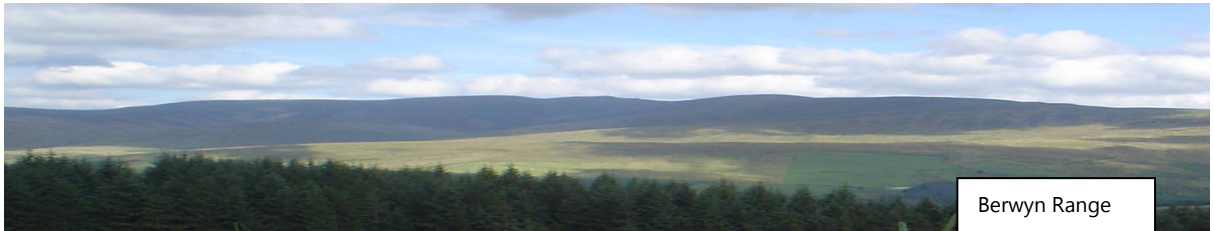


I heard from Tim that he was planning a BBQ for the Saturday night rather than everyone try to crowd into the usually full New and Old Dungeon Ghyll Inns. Details of this to follow nearer the time.

The last time Shot visited here Gus finished his last Wainwright with cherry brandy and a mountain top football match with his nephew. As could be guessed the ball was lost down the Mountain side maybe it will be rediscovered this on this trip. If lost football hunting isn't your thing the walks straight from the front door of the hut are exceptional. You can head over to the Crinkle Craggs or onto the Langdale Fells or maybe even a scramble up Jake's Rake. Please send the usual £5 deposit to Gustav to secure a bed or two.

## Ceriog Valley (19th-21st October 2007)

After an uneventful journey down from Manchester Gustav & I arrived in time to order food at the pub in Glyn Ceriog, an event which caused a number of SHOT members to check that their watches were still working. We then went and found, after only one navigational incident, our accommodation at Springhill Farm. This was clean & comfortable but the excess number of SHOT members & Shotlets did mean making use of all the available space, including the sofa bed in the lounge, which your correspondent figured out how to work properly on Sunday morning as he was folding away his sleeping bag.



Berwyn Range

Saturday morning dawned bright, if a little misty, and we set off for our various activities. Anna went horseriding, as the farm had a stables, Nigel and the largest group of walkers went to do a full traverse of the Berwyns, the Shotlets (I am told) went with their parents to Pistyll Rhaeadr waterfalls and I decided to follow Gus on an 'easy' 23-miler. The routing of this walk makes me suspect that it's another one he's got from a book of mountain bike routes as most of it was along tracks and bridleways. Shortly after meeting a group of 4x4's struggling to get round a junction in one go we met a group of about 100 sheep coming down the road at us, led by a Land-Rover with a shepherd and dog on a quad bike behind. After we'd



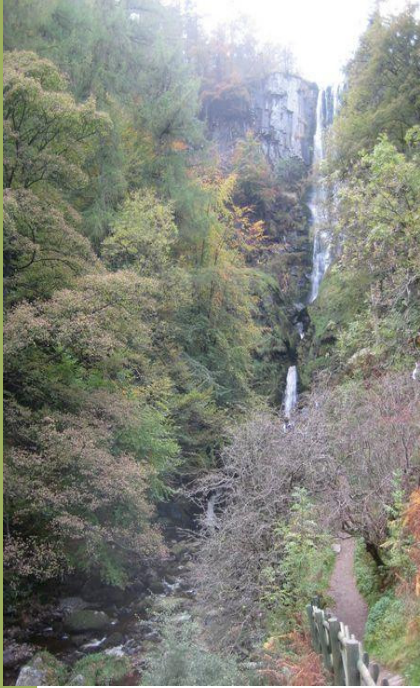
walked past the Land-Rover the sheep took one look at the two of us and turned tail (not that anyone would find that surprising). We stopped walking, more than a little embarrassed, whilst the chap on the quad bike pipped his horn. A bag of feed was then produced from the window of the Land-Rover, which overcame whatever fear the sheep had, and order was restored. Later on we walked past a small group of caravans complete with a loose Doberman, 'I think these might be Gypsies', commented Gus unnecessarily. Given my dislike of dogs the one Gus has developed since his encounter with the Rhodesian Ridgeback, it's fair to say we walked past the scene somewhat rapidly, but

unscathed. Close to the end of the walk I exercised my option to chop 3 miles off the route as my feet were hurting. I arrived back at about 5:15 to find Nessie had solved the accommodation shortage by bringing her own with her and that everyone else had got back from successful days (including the Shotlets sliding down the side of a mountain if the Whelan's Christmas Letter is to be believed!). Some had already started to take advantage of the Hot Tub. I had a cup of tea and a bath and started to wonder where GKD had got too. He eventually arrived at 6:45. Asked why he'd taken an hour and a half to cover three miles he muttered something about 'blisters' and 'difficulty routefinding'. This could be summarised as 'I got lost'.

As the Saturday was the occasion of the Rugby World Cup final we cut short our trips to the pub in order to watch the game in the somewhat cramped conditions of the lounge. As Gus's late arrival back had delayed us getting to the pub we spent the first half in the pub watching a large number of people in Springbok shirts going through into the next room to watch the game. How many of these were genuine South Africans or how many were Welsh I couldn't determine (we were at least 2 miles from the border, after all). A

loud roar when we were leaving caused me to look through the door to see an England player having apparently scored a try. We left the pub happy. When we got back Andy Tech, who'd escaped from the cramped conditions in the lounge, told us a score. 'Yes, but England have scored a try' - 'No they haven't - it was disallowed'; another glorious failure.

On Sunday Gus decided to do a linear walk down the Ceirog valley so I dropped him off and followed those who hadn't already gone home to Pistyll Rhaeadr. The place was surprisingly packed for somewhere so out



of the way and the off-road parking was at a premium. I spotted what I thought was an empty slot between two cars and reversed in. I then discovered why the space had been left vacant, the 3 foot drop from the car park level to the bank of the river. I was left with one of my rear wheels hanging over the drop and the other precariously positioned at the edge and unable to move. Fortunately Nigel and the bloke in the next car were able to assist me in getting back to safety with the car undamaged.

A short sharp climb to the top of the waterfall was then undertaken by all except perpetual student Mr Millard who was left at the bottom studying some notes. Myself and Donna wandered over to the edge of the waterfall to look down before realising that down in this case really did mean straight down. We moved back rapidly but gingerly. A pleasant lunch followed before I returned to Chirk to spend a less-than-inspiring two hours waiting for Gus. On his return he told me that his walk had passed the gypsy camp again and this time two of the younger inhabitants had approached him with a bucket with the words 'penny for the poor mister' before running off laughing.

## Krakow, December 2007

The choice of the 2007 Christmas trip was to Krakow in southern Poland.

The trip began for a change with a rather respectable flight time from Luton. Our contingent arrived to a snow covered Krakow mid afternoon on the Friday, where we then made our way fairly event free, if not fare free! into Krakow to find our hotel.

On Friday evening we all ate in a great restaurant that seemed to specialise in traditional Polish food, that served delicacies such as smoked sausage, dumplings filled with meat, and various minced meat concoctions. We sampled a wide array of the dishes between us, certainly helping to soak up the numerous beverages ordered.

On Saturday there were various trips planned from visiting the Salt Mines just outside Krakow, to Auschwitz and various walking tours of Krakow itself. I opted for the latter option and took in varying sites of Krakow such as the remains of the walls to the Jewish Ghetto, and the site of the factory from the infamous Schindler's List, both chilling reminders of Krakow's recent history. We also visited other sites such as Wawel castle and not forgetting the highlight of the day's walk to see the singing frog! There was also the discovery of the delights of warm beer and not forgetting Matt's discovery of the explosive properties of the aforementioned aperitif, along with the Cherry Vodka, these were definitely the highlights of the liquid variety!

The Christmas meal on Saturday night booked on a recommendation was a great choice, if perhaps a little drawn out.....arriving at 8pm and leaving well after midnight, we certainly had time to enjoy and digest the meal though. Big thanks to Justine's friend for that one!

After the meal most of the group went onto one of the underground bars that surrounded the main square for a cheeky beer or two before bed time!!! Bernie decided that we (and 4 others that we managed to convince) needed to partake in the 'Vodka Challenge' this consisted of 6 of the local specialities although we cheated and went for two Cherry Vodkas, as well as herbal vodkas, vodka with grass (the type that cows eat!!) and last but not least the Plum vodka, which at 70% proof, did much to improve the status of the cold I had acquired!!!

On Sunday there were further visits made to the castle, salt mines etc before all meeting up in the evening to eat together in a rather interesting choice of restaurant where everything came with the special dressing of Georgian chicken, this turned out to consist of garlic with a bit more garlic! We then went on to find a rather salubrious English themed pub where baby Oscar managed to out do most of the party in the staying out/awake stakes!

As we flew out mid afternoon on Monday this left us enough time for a spot of Christmas shopping and final sightseeing on Monday morning before catching the train back to the airport to catch our flight home.

The last trip I made to Krakow was 10 years ago so it was interesting to see the changes; I think the fact that English was now so widely spoken was the biggest change, as well as the amount of English tourists and the number of English accents that could be heard. Not sure changing money was any easier though!!

As usual our thanks go to Tim and Mark for organising another fabulous weekend, and look forward to the next Christmas trip.....

## SHOT News

Finally SHOT has purchased a YHA card that can be used by individuals, so if you wish to book YHA accommodation then speak to Donna who will happy to supply you with card.

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Or of course you can visit the web site

<http://www.shot.org.uk/>

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