

August 2003

Well what can I say this is the much delayed (on my part, sorry) Summer SHOT newsletter. Again thanks to all those that contributed articles photos, and future events. Hope you are all having a good summer and see you on a trip soon.

New Logo

Time for SHOT to be rebranded, no we are not looking for a new name by bringing in million pound consultants, just a change of logo for the newsletter. Now 99% of members get the newsletter by email we are not limited by costs of printing the newsletter, so maybe something in colour? Not being the arty type I throw open the design to all members, and will let the club decide. Please forward on your ideas, preferably in a format we can import into Word XP. There is no prize except the pride of seeing your design on the top of the newsletter.

Christmas Dinner

As you all should be aware the annual Christmas Dinner/Fly away is in Berlin this year, 5th-8th December, I believe Mark has already booked flights and accommodation, but if you need further info please contact them about the arrangements.

Subs

Its that time of year, the yearly subs, again like last year they are £3 per person, please send cheques to myself, or I will see you in Wales this October.

Subs are normally sent on subbing less popular/more expensive trips to keep costs down, also tea/coffee/biscuits/cakes, and finally a small amount on admin(web hosting/printing/postage).

[Nigel](#)

17th-19th October Rhyd Ddu, Snowdonia

This small village will be turned soon into a mecca for train spotters as the Welsh

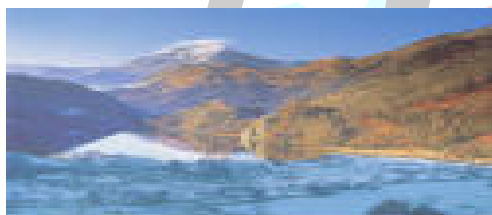


Highland Railway continues to reinstate Britain's longest narrow gauge railway on its coast to coast route from Caernarfon to Portmadoc through the western part of Snowdonia. Anoraks will be jostling with bobble hats for the remaining parking places in the village as

the car park reverts back to its former function as Rhyd Ddu Station.

'Ruff Duff', as some of us have been known to call it in the past, is centrally located for excellent walking on some of Snowdonia's quietest, but not inferior mountains. Indeed, one of the best routes up Snowdon itself starts from here. On the opposite side of the valley a steep pull up Y Garn gains access to the rather fine Nantlle Ridge. Further south above a tide mark of forestry are the rockier summits of Moel Lefn and Moel Hebog. To escape the crowds completely

then Mynydd Mawr is the place to be. Low level alternatives exploring rivers and lakes are a possibility with the honey pots of Beddgelert, Caernarfon and Portmadoc just a short drive away.



We shall be staying at the Cwellyn Arms Bunkhouse. This is a recently refurbished stone barn owned by the Cwellyn Arms in Rhyd Ddu just a few hundred yards away. The accommodation consists of the usual bunk barn amenities. We have booked 18 places comprising of one room with 12 bunk beds and a room in the loft 'decked with good quality mattresses for 6 people'. There is an additional loft room of 4 mattresses which we can also have if our numbers exceed expectation. This has been provisionally reserved for any family with kids. However, if two families are interested then we can put all the little buggers in the same room, lock the door and raffle the key!

Costs will work out at £10 per person per night for bunk beds with a SHOT subsidy (yet to be agreed) of £1 for those on mattresses. Kids have been allowed in at half price by the owners. A deposit of £5 sent to Gustav will definitely secure a bunked and/or mattress.

There is an additional small bunkhouse next door called Bwthyn Bach (could be

a former coal shed or something) which sleeps 3 and has similar prices to that of the bunkhouse. There are also some self catering properties in the village owned by the Cwellyn Arms, and some not particularly cheap Bed and Breakfast rooms in the pub itself. If anyone is interested in these can they please get in touch directly with the Cwellyn Arms to check availability and not Gustav.

Rhyd Ddu is easily accessible 10 miles south east of Caernarfon on the A4085 and 4 miles north of Beddgelert on the same road.

Access the Cwellyn Arms web site on <http://www.snowdoninn.co.uk> for further information and photos including a fine array of hand pumps. Or contact them by phone on 01766 890321



Station Bunkhouse

New Year Trip – 27th December-3rd Jan 2003 Plockton

This year's New Year trip is to Plockton, which is located on the west coast near Kyle of Lochalsh. We will be staying in Plockton Station Bunkhouse, which is unsurprisingly located near the Plockton train station, which is on the Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh line.

The bunkhouse is booked from the 27th December to the 3rd January, and the cost is £9/night assuming all the beds (20) are filled.

Plockton is near Kyle of Lochalsh, which makes it ideally located to get to a number of mountains, such as the Cuillins and Torridon, and others in between.

Plockton ("Britain's Prettiest Village") was founded in the early 1800's as a planned fishery town, is now a thriving village with a number of shops, hotels, restaurants and, of course, pubs. You may have seen it on the TV or the silver screen, as it is where "Hamish MacBeth" and part of "The Wicker Man" were filmed.

Plockton and the surrounding area have a number of activities available (of course not all of these can be guaranteed to be open at New Year so advance checking would be advisable):

- Walking
- Swimming (at Kyle of Lochalsh)
- Sea Trips
- Castles
- Golf
- Riding
- Fishing
- Sailing
- Cycling
- Wildlife watching inc. a rare breeds farm



As far as evening entertainment is concerned, the Plockton Inn and the Plockton Hotel (AA 2002 seafood restaurant of the year) look favourable.

If you want to go, please let me know and send me a £10 deposit.

If you have an internet connection, Plockton's web site has a vast amount of info about the village and surrounding area.

Links:

Plockton: <http://www.plockton.com>

Highlands Tourist Board: <http://www.host.co.uk/welcome2.asp.location-hospor.pagetype-content.category-guide.htm>

Skye & lochalsh Marine Tourism Association: <http://www.slmta.co.uk/pages/home.html>

Plockton Inn: <http://www.plocktoninn.f9.co.uk>

Plockton Hotel: <http://www.plocktonhotel.co.uk>

[Chris](#)

Dates for the Diary

March – family friendly Bunkbarn-this will be Nick and Suzy's 30th as well

June 18th-20th Pembrokeshire – or alternative-see Julian's below

"Come To My Christening!"

said the invitation from Lucas Miles Humphreys, Ness and Dave's baby son.

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Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May saw several SHOT members attending the christening at St Mary's church in Tilston, Cheshire, followed by a hog roast celebration down on the farm!

As every day leading up to and after the Sunday in question had rain, rain and yet more rain, it was noted that Lucas must indeed be a charmed little boy as on the day the sun shone

brightly. Sorry, Ness and Dave, it should be said that the good weather only applied to the time your guests were there, as we know you both got soaked through whilst erecting (and dismantling) the gazebos and TWO bouncy castles. (More of those later!).



St Mary's was extensively restored in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and although the church register began in 1558, there was a church on the site as early as 1216. The church was full for Lucas' christening, with many guests including forty seven children! A real family celebration.

Ness and Dave were every inch the proud parents as you can see in the picture and Lucas behaved beautifully throughout. Carrying on with the tradition of Ness' family, Lucas wore the Wardle christening gown, previously worn by Ness, her sister, aunts and cousins.

The vicar was a superb character, full of life and mirth, and gave an inspiring and thought provoking sermon. The congregation joined in the singing of hymns, and at one point Gus and Julian were so eager they stood up at least 30 seconds before the organist started playing!!! They must have good voices!

A particularly funny moment was when the organist played an extra verse at the end of the last hymn - even though our hymn sheets didn't have the words for it. After a bewildered few seconds, we all joined in by singing the words of previous verse again, and Dave and Ness thought it was hilarious.

Julian was hoping to ring the church bells but sadly this wasn't allowed as the St Mary's bells are only rung on particular occasions throughout the year.

Afterwards we all made our way the short distance to the Humphreys' farm, to a welcoming champagne drink on arrival. The farm lent itself perfectly to the occasion, with plenty of room for the food, a bar, gazebos to keep out the sun, and a band to play for us. After we had enjoyed the mouth watering hog roast, not to mention a few drinks to wash it all down, it was time to relax before the next exciting stage.

You might have wondered why there were two bouncy castles. Well, one was for the toddlers, which Lindsay Gilder, and Emily and Tom Whelan used to the full, and the other was a fifty foot long contraption for us adults...and use it we did – for several hours! Playing volleyball in a bouncy castle is quite amazing, certainly NOT tame, and of course the male members of SHOT were the last to leave. Ness only came off it when it was time for Lucas' tea!

So Lucas, thank you for the invitation, we had a truly excellent day and we wish you a wonderful life. Be warned though that Daddy will be wanting help with the early morning milking before too many years have gone by!!!!

written by Jean Scott

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## Ladies, Gentlemen & others

Those of you who were present on the Helvellyn trip will have noticed me handing out birthday cake on the Friday evening. SHOT members making full use of their University education will have noticed that, since 20/6/03 was my 39th birthday, I will be 40 next year.

This raises the question about whether this occasion should be marked by a special trip. As a quick count up last night revealed, I'm unlikely to be able to tick off my remaining 133 Wainwrights in the next year, unless BAE SYSTEMS choose to dispense with my services, so a Dobrzynski style event featuring a climb of Blencathra isn't really on.

I'm putting forward 4 possibilities to gauge reaction. However the decision on what to do (or, indeed, to do anything at all) will not be a democratic one - It's my party & I'll cry if I want to etc.

1) Pembrokeshire - This is where Gustav was intending to go for a 3 day weekend next June anyway. He has a bunk barn lined up & we would treat this as a normal SHOT trip with a meal on the 19th (Sat) or 20th (Sun). Costs would be presumably be similar to a standard weekend plus the cost of the extra night's accommodation. I presume there are adjacent B&B's for those looking for less spartan accommodation

2) Islay/Jura - There is a 30 bed Youth Hostel at Port Charlotte on Islay & Gus thinks there is an Independent Hostel too. Jura is one of the two offshore Scottish Islands with decent sized mountains (at least 1 Corbett) on we haven't had a SHOT trip to & is a short ferry ride from Islay. There is bird watching, stone circles & distilleries to visit for non-walkers. Again more luxurious accommodation will doubtless be available. The major snag is access: - Kennacraig, the mainland port, is 60 miles from Tarbet on Loch Lomond. From there it's a 2 hour ferry journey (last ferry 6pm) to Islay. The cost is £69 for a car (5 day Saver return) + £12.85 per person (again saver return). There is also the possibility of flying there (cost unknown). To make the effort of getting there worthwhile we are probably looking at a 3 day trip.

The more radical approach would be to go abroad. You will not be surprised to learn where. However it should be pointed out that it is, to coin a phrase, "Scorchio" in Italy in June. The average daytime temperature for Florence is 84 deg F & looking at the Met Office website for the current weather show temperatures 10 deg F higher than this. My immediate thought was to go to my favourite bit, the Aeolian Islands. The logistics of flights trains/buses & hydrofoils mean that this is a non-starter for a weekend. So here are two less adventurous suggestions:-

3) Spoleto: - This is a largish hill town in Umbria with a beautiful Cathedral & aqueduct & any number of first rate restaurants (including my personal favourite). It is close to several other famous & beautiful places - Assisi, Montefalco, Spello, Trevi & Bevagna. The hills & forests that surround the town offer good walking possibilities. Air access can be made via Rome (just over an hour by fast train), Perugia or Ancona (approx two hours by fast train). Accommodation costs (a guess) would be £20-25 per person per night & food similar. The major snag is that Spoleto's famous "Festival dei due Mondi" will probably start on 25/6/04 & even if the hotels are not booked out with punters for the festival they may be filled with rehearsing performers.

4) Montepulciano: - Built 2000ft up on a tufa ridge this is a classic Tuscan hill town. The food is good & the wine (Vino Nobile di Montepulciano) isn't bad either. It is on the southern edge of the Crete Senese - rolling hills, cypress trees & red-roofed farmhouses with good cycling or walking possibilities. For non-walkers there is Montepulciano itself (the unfinished facade of the cathedral features in the film "the English Patient"), Etruscan tombs at Chiusi, Montalcino (another classic hilltown with vineyards) & Pope Pius II's ideal town of Pienza. Access is via Rome (One & a half hours by train to Chiusi & then a bus), Pisa (an unbelievable 3 hours away on the train) or Florence (just over an hour from Chiusi). The big snag here is accommodation as there aren't many hotel rooms. We can probably get round this by

booking early. Costs for accommodation & food would be similar to those for Spoleto - Tuscany & Umbria are NOT cheap.

Your comments, thoughts & preferences are respectfully solicited.

[Julian](#)

### **Cadar Trip, March 2003-** thanks to Lynn for the photographs

Glorious weather, only spoiled by a grotty bunk barn, or maybe we are all getting spoiled in our old age? Most of took a trip up Cadar, but Gus managed to do the longest day(coming home in the dark) by not going up any mountain, in fact he just walked all around the bottom of Cadar! The evening event was a impromptu BBQ organised by the girls and built by Lynne from a old tin sheet and some old drain pipes (lets hope they weren't coated in leaded paint!). Sunday saw the majority of the group head off to the Centre of Alternative Technology, to learn about composting loos and recycling.

Photo at the summit at Cadar



Old School Bunk House

Nigel and Tim on cooking duty



## **Midsummer Lakeland Adventures**

"How beautiful they are, the lordly ones  
Who dwell in the hills, the hollow hills."

FAIRY SONG FORM THE IMMORTAL HOUR  
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

The date for the trip the 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> June was unmistakably the best weekend in the year for us hiking rambler types, as the longest day of the year fell on the Saturday, this meant that extra long walks could be achieved by many, and it would still be daylight walking down to the pub for the evening festivities, which everyone took advantage of in my case I managed

a walk, shopping and the pub before dark, you see how women can be excellent at multi tasking!!

Now Midsummer nights eve or summer solstice if you please conjures up many images for me of magic, fairies, mystery and pagan festivals, I was therefore most unfortunate to miss the druids climbing to the top of Helvellyn in the hazy and hot afternoon in full attire for their evening of pagan worship, no, instead I would be in the Pub worshipping the God off the gooey sticky toffee sponge that seemed to go down very well indeed with all of us who partook in this ritual!!

On Sunday Yvonne and I headed out north towards the A66 to Braithwaite to the new visitors at Whinlatter to catch up with three of it's local residents, a nest off Osprey that had nested in the area, the centre had set up a camera so residents and visitors alike could obtain a birds eye view of the nest (no pun intended)

As I was lucky enough to be sharing a lift with an adoptee of the Lakes (Yvonne) and more specifically Braithwaite we popped into say good day to the folks (rude not to!) and was fed a delicious hearty meal before setting off, but not before being treated to the spectacular sight of a deer and lots of very spectacular and not very often spotted down south, birds, in her parents back garden!!

Fed and watered we began our journey home fully intent to beat our, record time for the journey up to the lakes of 9 hours!!

I'm happy to say that with a few diversions and detours around the Hertfordshire countryside I made it home in time for tea!!

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## The End of an Era – Julian

A few months ago many of us received an envelope containing a folded piece of paper. The picture on the front featured a recumbent Gustav turning towards the camera with a speech bubble saying "What do you mean that you think I should pack it all in?" Inside was an invitation to a "birthday and retirement party" at the Buck Inn at Buckden, Upper Wharfedale in the Yorkshire Dales on the 31st May, exactly 25 years and 235 days after he had first started work at the University of Salford.

Scattered around the invitation were several mice-a reference to the pews in the church of St.Michael's and All Angels at Hubberholme carved with the trademark mice of 'Mousey Thompson' of Kilburn. Gus had selected this venue as his favourite part of Britain or indeed anywhere else, a view also shared by J.B.Priestley whose ashes are buried in the churchyard. He had written that Hubberholme was "one of the smallest and pleasantest places in the world".

Many of the guests had arrived by the time that I rolled into the George Inn in Hubberholme on Friday just in time for last orders. Leaving bell ringing at Todmorden at 9pm and getting lost 3 times between Keighley and Buckden tarnished my image somewhat especially as Darren had arrived from Southampton and Lisa from Cologne with no mishaps. Most of us stayed at the nearby Grange Farm Bunk barn where Gus took custody of his nephew (David 10 years) and niece (Emma 7 years) while his brother Dennis and wife Jenny escaped parental responsibilities for the weekend at the luxurious Kirkgill Manor Guesthouse along with Andy, Bernie, Chris, Jean and Gustav's school friend Terry and wife Margaret. Late bookers Fingers and Rachel secured accommodation in an eye-wateringly expensive suite at the Buck Inn itself.

Pub talk had intimated some interest in next day's annular eclipse. Only Howsey and Anna were keen (or daft) to arise for the 4.50 am event and then have a desperate trip around the Yorkshire countryside to escape the persistent mist. By the time that Jo, Ian and Julie had



arrived from Hull a beautiful day was in the offing. Andy, buoyed up by a hearty breakfast, proposed an ambitious 12 mile, 7 pub walk up and over into Littondale then back via all the pubs in Upper Wharfedale. A large party set off and succumbed to the beers at the halfway stage with only Zoe, Lisa and Timbo completing the walk. Fingers and Darren's run the previous evening perhaps inspired Percy to jog back to Hubberholme.

Given the previous history of SHOT pub walks I decided that Gustav's 6 miler kiddies walk up Buckden Pike and back via the White Lion at Cray would perhaps offer the longest distance. Unfortunately, newly qualified HF Holidays walk leader Dobrzynski got lost in the car park at Buckden. Despite the existence of a sign pointing in the right direction at the northern end Gustav insisted that access to Buckden Beck was only possible at the southern end through what appeared to be someone's back garden. After 5 minutes of confusion Ian and I decided to take charge and take the obvious route turning our leader into a back marker. David and Emma took every opportunity to splash in the beck on the way up and also in the waterfall opposite the pub in Cray as the day turned very warm.

Nessie, baby Lucas, Eagle and Lisa Finnegan completed the party in the early evening in time to savour the contents that had been cluttering the bottom of my wardrobe for the previous two months. A selection of 20 assorted drinks formed the basis of the 'Shooter's Hill Bar' served to the ensemble by David and Emma at 1 Op a drink. Unsurprisingly, the bottles of Highland Park, Cockburn's Port and Lemon vodka ended up emptier than the green substance claimed to be 'Ptarmigan Flavour' (on account of the picture on the bottle I suspect it was a verbenal liqueur). Japanese sake, Breton whisky and other foul tasting medicinal drinks remained largely intact.

An excellent 4 course meal followed at the Buck Inn after which the second longest serving SUHC member there was persuaded to make a presentation and say a few words and selected as his theme "Gustav-someone you can rely on". You can rely on him never to get lost, never to take you up completely the wrong mountain and never to overbook accommodation! Gustav then thanked everyone for coming and revealed that the birthday celebration we'd been invited to was not his (as we had assumed), but Margaret's on that day and also Lisa Finnegan's and Dennis's two and three days earlier respectively. At which point 3 personalised birthday cakes were produced and another surprise one for Gustav brought over from Hull that morning by Jo. Needless to say everyone was suitably stuffed by the end of the evening.

Next day was of course less demanding. A bit of gorge scrambling, a short pub walk and yet more splashing in the river by the kids. Mashy Pea had earlier endeared himself to Emma only to find that her tastes had changed somewhat when she announced that Darren was now Boyfriend number 4 and Neil was boyfriend number 5. Apparently boyfriends 1-3 are still at school. All in all, as the very first SHOT retirement weekend it went perfectly.

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

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