

Newport Outdoor Group (YHA)



Editors

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Web Site

<http://walk.to/nogs>

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**Get
The
Outdoor
Habit!**

NOGS TRY GEOCACHING

2nd August 2010

by Mags

Yes, I've got the bug for **Geocaching** after my friend Alison introduced me to this fun hobby on holiday in 2008. When I got back Jeremy didn't have a chance and Little Redwing was born (our user name). To date we have done 225 caches all over the world -Nepal being our furthest so far!

Geocaching started in 2002 when restrictions on the satellites were lifted resulting in the accuracy of GPS (global positioning system) technology improving tenfold. By now if you were not at this NOGs event your wondering what on earth am I talking about. Geocaching is treasure hunting using a GPS. There is an official web site at www.geocaching.com.

Here you can register free of charge and give yourself, or a group of you, a user name. Then look at the geomap dab on a cache which will then give information and co-ordinates to find the cache.

The geo evening started at St. John the Baptist Church, Rogerstone. The weather was very kind to us. This was a multi-cache (i.e. this is a cache which gives one or more clues before getting to the final cache). Jo led the way with her team and the cache was soon found. Here we dropped off a TB (travel bug). TBs have a unique number and their geo owners will set missions for them to travel from cache to cache. The TB was one that Little Redwing created to celebrate the Nogs 50th anniversary, and we set it off that evening with a mission to visit every county in Britain and to have it's photo taken at as many YHA hostels as possible.



The NOGS Travel Bug celebrating our 50th anniversary!

There were six caches in all, three micros (an old film canister, a magnetic credit card sized one and one moulded to look like a stone), one regular which was a small plastic container (which Norman left a NOGs programme in!) and the multi cache.

OK - that adds up to five I hear you say. One of the caches we planned to do had been mugged (this is when a non geocacher finds the cache and destroys it). The owner of this cache has archived it and going to relocate it soon.

The Geocache evening ended at the Rising Sun public house where Jeremy was able to show us the Geocache website on his laptop and drop off the TB. At the time of writing, the TB has not moved but my watch list will update me as soon as there's movement! Here I go again, more jargon. Happy Geocaching!!!!

LATEST TRAVEL BUG UPDATE

The NOGs TBg (officially called NOGS-50) has now moved from its starting geocache at St. John the Baptist Church in Newport on 17th August, and placed in Oareborough Sany Lane (which is just off the Wantage junction on the M4) on the 23rd. A total distance covered of 76.5 miles! From here it was picked up on 29th August and taken to a geocache at Shardeloes, a large country mansion in Buckinghamshire. NOGS-50 has so far travelled a total distance of 107 miles. We know it was picked up from here on the 4th September, and is currently sitting in Middlesex ready to move on somewhere else soon. You will be kept informed of its travels!

REPORTER OF THE YEAR 2007-08

Well done and congratulations to **David Djunisijevic**, who has been awarded the above prestigious title for penning the article on the Dartmoor trip that appeared in *Nogs News No. 107*. The certificate was recently presented to Dai in a secret ceremony in Malpas, and is the first time that an individual has won the award twice. The editors will now thrash themselves within an inch of their lives for serious dawdling on giving out this prize, which should have been presented at an AGM some time ago! Our humblest apologies are tendered. But who will win the title for 2008-9 & 2009-10? Find out at the AGM on October 25th.

MY FIRST NOG WEEKEND – EASTBOURNE YH

by Dale Bradford

What's that? Do I fancy joining you and the NOGs for a walking weekend? Yeah, sounds fun, when is it? Oh, I can't do it then because I've got plans, sorry. I can't come then either. Nor then. Nor then or then or then or then... Eventually I ran out of excuses and did indeed join Joanne and the NOGs for a walking weekend at Beachy Head and Eastbourne in July. This, very briefly, is my story.

We arrived at our liaison point, the Eastbourne Youth Hostel, late on the Friday evening. The young chap who let us in was desperate to clock off and get into his own Friday night groove so it would be an exaggeration to say he showed us round, more like he gestured; that's the kitchen, this is where you eat, that's where you're sleeping... any questions? If we'd had the luxury of more time I might have gone into a 'what number do I dial for room service?' routine but hey, know your audience...

I had stayed at a Youth Hostel once before and loved it, but I was only 10 at the time and, like the vast majority of my primary school contemporaries in 1970, it was my first time away from home so absolutely everything was exciting in those days. Back then, in the Talybont Youth Hostel, we'd made our own entertainment around a piano (mainly trying to slam the lid down on each other's fingers) but here the dining/lounge area had a flatscreen TV fixed to the wall showing Big Brother. Several groups of teens were dotted around the sofas, their eyes flicking between the TV and the mobiles they were texting on. Bloody teenagers...

I was then directed to a top bunk in the men's sleeping quarters. Wow, top bunk! Get me! That was a privilege 40 years ago but the passage of time had done much to diminish its appeal, particularly the prospect of hauling my portly frame up and down that spindly little metal ladder. It was the only bed available though, so I threw my things onto it, trying not to disturb the already sleeping forms that surrounded me. After performing my ablutions I too settled down for the night, or at least I tried to – the dorm was oppressively hot and at least one of my fellow sleeping partners was a snorer. Another (it could have been the same one) was a farter, and with the addition of the sound of late night cars roaring in through the open window, this meant I slept only intermittently.



As Saturday morning dawned on me I left the still snoring dorm for the peace of the dining/lounge area and managed to knock out a sneaky little kip there before the NOGs joined me for breakfast and prepared themselves for the day's walk. I was a little surprised at just how much preparing they were doing – thick socks were being slowly rolled on, then chunky boots were being intricately laced... I just had my sandals, with no socks. I did have a hat though, and as we set off into the baking July sun I was grateful that it had a pretty wide brim.

What I remember most about the walk itself was the edges of the cliffs at Beachy Head, where a number of floral mementos poignantly reminded us of what the area is most famous for. We walked around eight miles and, as an absolute beginner, I found myself getting more and more 'off the pace' as the day wore on. What finished me off was a prolonged stop at a busy country pub – after enjoying cold drinks and hot chips my legs stubbornly refused to return to their previous efficiency and I simply could not keep up with the experts leading the way back to the Hostel. I would probably still be wandering around there now if it hadn't been for the kindness of some of my companions, who slackened off their own pace to ensure I didn't get completely left behind.

Eventually we made it back to the Youth Hostel, and while I waited for the shower to be free I was joined in the lounge and dining area by some of the bloody teenagers I'd seen the night before. They turned out to be very pleasant actually, and even shared their pizza with me. Another pre-conception was shattered when we walked around the centre and sea front of Eastbourne later that evening. The town is renowned for its dodderly old fogies (with some justification - just over a quarter of its 94,000+ population are of pensionable age, compared to the national average of 18.4%) but it had a whopping branch of Ann Summers. And the Wetherspoon's we pitched up in seemed to be as rowdy as any (well, it was Saturday night).

It's fair to say that I slept very well that night (it was the day's walk I tell you, nothing to do with the ridiculously cheap red wine in Wetherspoon's at all).

Sunday morning dawned and once again the NOGs were up preparing to do more walking. I can't comment on the Sunday walk unfortunately as I was too much of a (hungover) wimp to take part, but I'm sure it was at least as enjoyable as the Saturday one – especially as there was no 'first timer' slowing everyone down.

In closing, I would like to publicly thank (in alphabetical order) Anne, Brian, Dave, Jackie, Joanne, Norman, Pat, Richard and Sue for making me feel so welcome in their company.