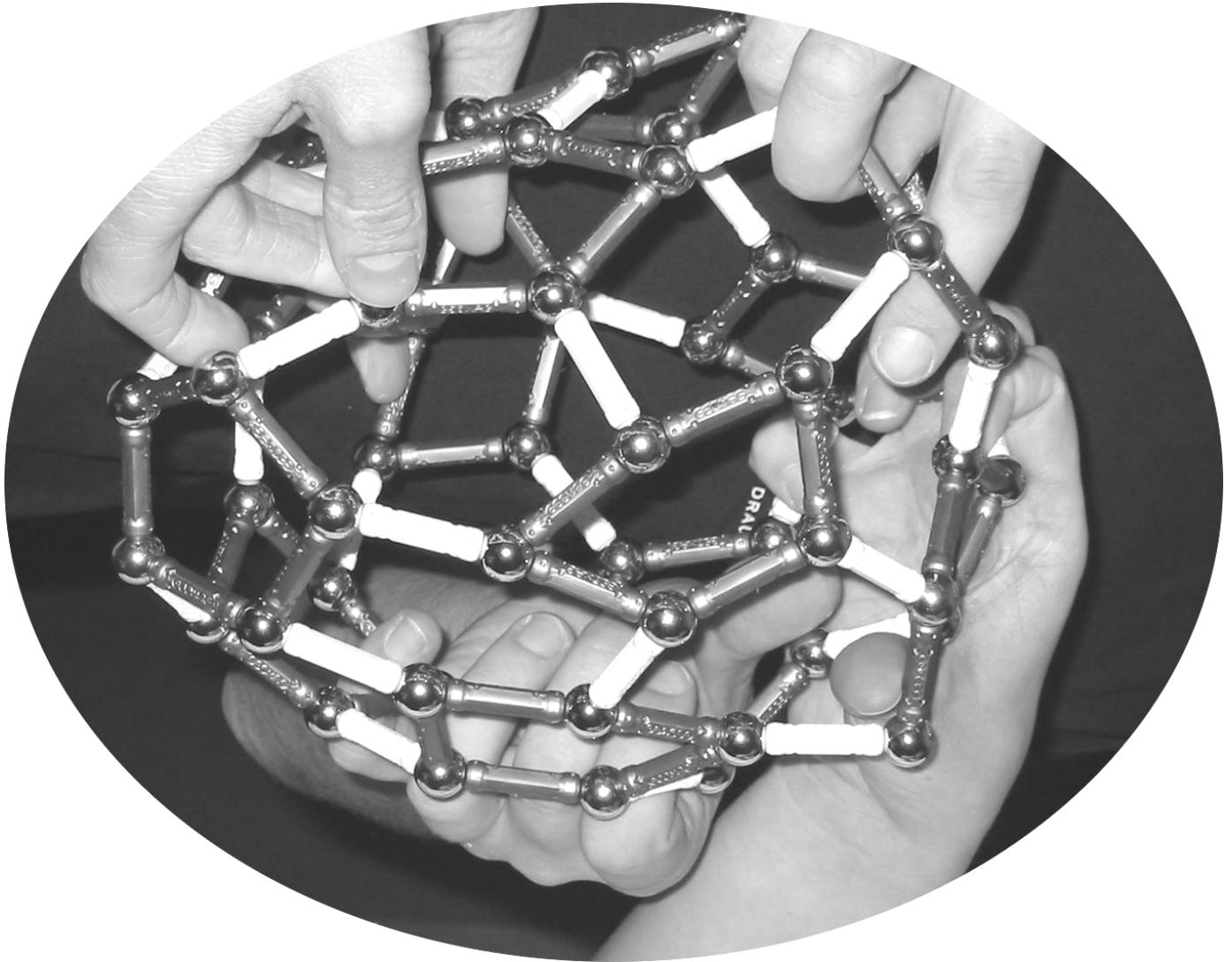


BRAVE NEW WORLD

OUSGG and the electronic frontier



I'M AN OUSGGER – GET ME OUT OF HERE!

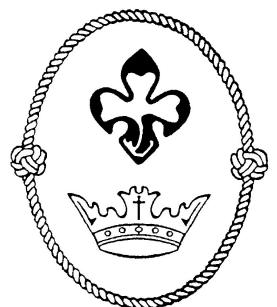
Survival with Ray Mears

I STILL KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER!

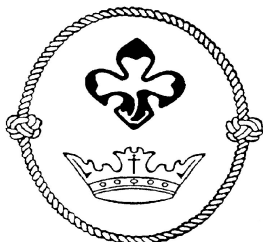
Not much, it appears

CRAP PAGE LAYOUT!

Because my computer is in a foul mood



postscript



Issue 352

First of Hilary 2004

An OUSGG publication

Editor: Phil Alderton

Chair: Sam Snelson

Chair-Elect: Jenny Robertson and Jacqui Bradley

Treasurer: Maddy Bunce

Unobservant: Phil Alderton

SSAGO Rep.: Mark Hawkins

SaGLO: Katherine Butler

Membership: Jenny Roberston

Internet: Caroline Berry

N&N: Catherine Blake

Easter Activity: Michael Ramsden

Summer Activity: Alison Parker

Quartermaster: Michael Ramsden

Ex-members: Chris Seward

Senior Member: Katherine Blundell

All correspondence, pictures, and articles to postscript@ousgg.org.uk or by post/pidge to Phil Alderton, St Peter's College, Oxford.

Deadline for issue 353 – late Friday Fourth Week (13th February)

Any items received will be presumed to be for publication unless otherwise notified. The editor reserves the right to modify contributions. Just humour him.

Views featured in *Postscript* are those of their authors, and might not be those of OUSGG or related bodies. But then you knew that.

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Store in a cool, dry place. If freezing, freeze on day of purchase then fully defrost prior to use. Do not refreeze.

Scout and the City

Modern life, as we know, is rubbish. Sure, we in the West have the comforts of good medicine, generally peaceful existences, and multi-channel television, but this idyll is routinely ruined, either by utterly stupid and petty rules, or by advertising, among other evils.

Just the other day I was browsing through the job adverts pages, when one for the Passport Agency caught my eye. Now, I am sure they are a fine body and all that. However, some advertising bod has obviously decided that “Passport Agency” is not catchy enough. So next to that they've written “Confirming identity – enabling travel”.

Forgive me for being over-educated, but I thought I had a pretty reasonable idea of what the Passport Agency did already. Moreover, I'm not going to read that and then rush out and renew my passport for the hell of it due to the catchy slogan altering my behaviour. No: I'll renew my passport when it runs out. Unless they plan to bring in competition (“UKPass will save you 50% on Passport Agency prices – and we'll bung in a visa to Uruguay ABSOLUTELY FREE”) I'd like to know who thought this up, and why.

Thing is, it gets worse. Railway Stations now allow advertising on their station name signs themselves. Perhaps if a town is uniquely identified with a product then maybe this is acceptable. But I'm not going to go out and buy a widget simply because my train was delayed for six minutes in Ugly-Backwater-by-sea “home of Widgets Inc.”. Especially if I've never even heard of Widgets Inc. in the first place.

So, a solution. When you see people waste money on pointless advertising or hideous rebrandings, pull out your 9mm and shoot them. We'll start with whoever did the vomit-inducing Scout Association logo (then managed to even design 'sub-brands' – ugh! - that were even worse). It's for the best.

Phil Alderton, Editor **PS**

Inside...

Oh, you'll find out soon enough

From the top

Sam Snelson, *Chair*

So it's a new term (they seem to come round very quickly, don't they?) and I appear to be Chair. Now I've tried to live my life to certain adages and one of these is "once bitten, twice shy". So after raising my hand at the wrong point in my first TGM and ending up as secretary for 4 terms, I decided at future TGM's to keep my head down, remain quiet and try not to volunteer for anything. Therefore I'm quite surprised to find myself in my current position, welcoming OUSGG members to a term, which apparently I'm supposed to be organising. Oh well, I suppose I should make the best of it:

So a warm welcome back to everyone, I hope you all had a nice Christmas vacation and that those who went on *Winter Walking* enjoyed it (I know I did). Thank you to Mark for organising a great term last year, although it sets a difficult act to follow.

As for this term, well I'm looking forward to singing in fifth week and salsa in seventh, but the highlight of the term should be Erik's 30th birthday party. Despite recent, ceilidh related, panda-napping incidents, I'm sure Erik will be there and is looking forward to a high OUSGG attendance.

Well I suppose I better sign off now as I've already exceeded the Postscript deadline and I'm sure Phil will be wondering where my report has got to. It just leaves me to say, I hope you all have a great term and I look forward to seeing you at meetings .

PS

Rally

The next rally is at Lancaster, from Friday 27th February to Sunday 29th (Friday 6th Week to Sunday 7th, for those who think in proper time). The theme is *musicals* (wahey!). Money, dietary requirements, and activity choices to Mark Hawkins at Queen's (ssago@ousgg.org.uk), soonish. **PS**

Things we like

Balamory. The perfect representation of the model

society we're trying to build (although PC Plum is somewhat ineffectual).

Things we don't like

Bagpipes. The sound of Satan's flatulence, more like. **PS**

Corrections & Clarifications

The Editor apologies for the numerous mistakes in the last issue. In particular, he warns all word processor users that when running a search and replace all operation, to check the work prior to printing. Otherwise such gems as "OUSGGers form a OUSGGers" might appear, when they really should have formed a "chorus". Sorry Michael.

PS

Words of Wisdom

Mark: It does seem stupid to pay to wear a t-shirt

Hayley: I'm afraid eleven is my maximum

Christina (looking at a motorway road sign): What the bloody hell does that mean?

Christina: Sam, I haven't done you yet. I hope I'm better than the women at Univ

Chris: At the end of the day, it's just pubic hair on your face

Jenny: According to that book, it's only four inches but it makes a heck of a lot of difference

Mark: Barbed wire is actually quite interesting

Noga: But I want to cause World War 3

Christina: Banana always impregnates everything

Caroline: I knew there was something not in my pocket

Jenny: Your shoes?

Keith: Interesting is probably more interesting

Johnathan: Bugger world peace then

Keith: I'm going to save Ferdinand, well, kill him

Mark: Sometimes I don't even bother putting on a shirt or anything...sometimes at the weekend I get caught out

Michael: They have brightly coloured things between their legs

Jonathan (to Sarah): You can yank it from behind

Phil: The problem I had at matriculation was that somebody was sitting on my dangly bits.

PS

Letters

“Jack firmly tattooed”

Dear Sir,

It is with some distress that I write to complain about your recent cookery section (351st issue).

I was delighted to find a recipe for Christmas cake. Having taken ideas for meetings from your esteemed publication before, I did not hesitate to try this recipe with my Guides. Sir, I cannot begin to tell you of the devastation and chaos caused by you and your publication.

Everything was working so well until one of the Guides tried to prise the electric beaters apart with her tongue, not having a screwdriver to hand. Admittedly, she has always been a talkative child and her parents were quite relieved to have a quiet Christmas. The unit Guider, being on the large size, managed to maintain her balance right up until taps, where she keeled over, took the flag pole, panda patrol and three young leaders with her. Sadly, one young leader will never walk again and another has the imprint of the Union Jack firmly tattooed on her forehead. The minister, popping in on a pastoral visit was last seen singing "Tiptoe through the tulips" on the church roof.

Still, all in all it wasn't a bad meeting - A&E gave us a two for the price of one on stomach pumping. Next week should be good though, Ms. Bunce has provided a lovely role play for the Guides to do.

An ex-Guider.

Time was...

From Postscript 147, Trinity Term 1982

Great bores of today – Number 4

“...Ooh is that a pandaburger you're eating I think pandas are very nasty you know what I say kill Eric kill Eric kill Eric Eric wanted dead or alive preferably dead mind you we don't really want Eric at all ha ha ooh look on the hillside over there it's a deformed panda we're writing this book a hundred and one uses of a dead panda mind you have dead pandas got any uses this is what we must ask ourselves or live ones for that matter except for target practise for pea-shooters nuke Eric yes that's right nuke Eric did you hear the one about the aardvark and the panda ...”

From Postscript 199, Michealmas Term 1986

“Only by supporting SSAGO can you maintain your own existence in a Scout and Guide Group. Anybody who has followed SSAGO relations with the Scout Association must know that the latter wished to close it down a year or so ago. Without official backing, the raison d'etre of SSAGO begins to fade. In their protestations against this proposal, LS and co did a good job in making representations at their regular meetings with the authorities. ... It is an asset to have links with other clubs throughout the country, and have the opportunity of attending rallies. Moreover, it is vital we have some form of organisational structure to represent us to the Scout and Guide Associations, for we are in somewhat of an anomalous positions in the hierarchy...As L pointed out, University Scout and Guide clubs are for those living away from home, they are not intended as rivals to local Venture/Ranger units, or as the home for waif and strays from tertiary colleges and the like. Our aim should be co-operation with the local set-up, not full integration into it. Such a plan would be impractical and not what we are about. ” PS



I don't wanna stay a fresher!

cries François Hirsch

I have read somewhere, can't remember where, that I would stay a fresher so long as I hadn't written an article for the Postscript. Since I'm leaving Oxford by the end of March, I took fright that I could stay a fresher for life! Scary, isn't it?

So, here I am, in front of my screen, looking for something not too annoying to write (and I know that some people are thinking that I'm perhaps not going in the right direction...). Right. You're lucky, NTL is down once again, so I won't be distracted by Internet.

Well, about what can report a fresher? About the welcome for sure. OK, I was a bit late and therefore there was nobody left outside to indicate me the direction. But I finally found the room, thanks to this unmistakable Scout's sense of direction. I missed the biggest part of the film, but not Caroline's cakes and that's the most important.

Then the activities followed one another, week after week, each bringing amazement, information, sports release and friendship every time. I'm really amazed by this students' organisation of which I don't know an equivalent in France or in Germany; I mean a Scouts' (and Guides', it's implicit of course) group officially recognized, but nearly totally free of its acts. I came to England with the idea of finding here the roots of Scouting and what I've found is quite different from what I know on the continent. I'm really surprised by the fact that the national Scouting association could stay one where in France there are so many different movements, particularly because of religion, but as well as because of different views of scouting. How did you do that? That's great!

As conclusion, I want to thank everybody for having taken the time to try to understand my poor French accent and having accepted me within the group. I'm looking forward to the activities of this term! See you soon! PS

Oxford in July

Jo Miller *and that lost weekend.*

I was at the Rally, and it was very good. Errr, it was a long time ago now. But we had a couple of hundred of SSAGO in Youlbury last summer, and they all seemed to enjoy themselves. As an Old Member, I wasn't required to organise anything, but just turned up and helped out where needed. Which was a fairly good deal I reckon.

For the wide game they had a photo-hunt round Oxford, and somehow I got out of doing any work at all and spent the morning shopping and meandering round the bases chatting to people. Then there was lunch in Univ, which was interesting, because I'd never been in there before, and everyone seemed to get fed pretty efficiently and not have to hang around. Apparently some people had spent all morning making sandwiches, but I'd got out of that too.

Then I helped take some people punting, which was also very leisurely. That was satisfying, as none of them had punted before and were very nervous to start with, but by the end they'd all been persuaded to have a go and had all enjoyed it. They were a bit stunned by Magdalen ("What, so students actually live *here*? Wow.") Somehow we managed not to lose anyone, and people with phones made sure we all got back to the campsite.

I had to do a little light shopping. Then tea happened, that must have been when we had the BBQ I suppose, though I don't really remember.

More organised people made sure that everyone got to the village hall where we had the barn dance. *Rannygazoo* (the band) were very good, as always. Everyone got very hot and thirsty, and we provided drinks outside. Later they were efficiently taken back to the campsite, whilst we tidied up, and I'm sure picked up more litter in the field than SSAGO had left. The campfire was down in the main circle in the woods - oh yes, on Friday night lots of them got lost wandering round the woods in the dark, because our signs to

the campfire were put up whilst it was still light. Mind you, if they're silly enough to go out without torches what do they expect?

It was a bit better on Saturday. Then we had a big faff about whether to bother with the fireworks we'd bought, as those people who like playing with fireworks were all too exhausted to take charge, and the campfire was going so well. We took all the left-over BBQ stuff down which went down well.

On Sunday morning there was the silly games. I was running the "Extreme Ironing" base, which was probably something to do with it being the Monopoly Rally. Then there were all the presentations and so on, and they all left, and we tidied up. Which didn't take nearly as long as anyone expected, even though most of OUSGG were shattered. Oh yes, and we all sat on the bouncy castle. The only rally I've been to with a bouncy castle. And then we went home.

I might be a *little* bit biased, but I think it was the best rally I've been to. Some other people worked really hard to make it so good, so well done them.

PS



No, I couldn't be bothered to download another picture

OUSGG online

Alistair Green *has far too much time on his hands*

The Internet was one of those inventions that changed the world. Information has become accessible, from anywhere on the planet, for free. E-mail is now the easiest way to keep in touch with friends and relatives. But, most important of all, the web has revolutionised the art of faffing.

Faffing is, of course, the very essence of what it means to be an OUSGGer. And so it was that I recently found myself doing Google searches for OUSGG-related terms, just to see how many matches would turn up. (Well, what else would you do in the middle of the night a few days before a tutorial?)

No less than 477 pages contain the word "OUSGG". They are mostly just what you would expect: www.ousgg.org.uk, the *Postscript* archive and assorted other SSAGO groups. But, of course, something odd had to turn up eventually:

http://www.nationstates.net/cgi-bin/index.cgi/target=display_nation/nation=ousgg

"Spotlight on: The Rogue Nation of Ousgg
"For Christ's sake, be quiet!"

UN Category: Father Knows Best State

Civil Rights: Excellent

Economy: Thriving

Political Freedoms: Few

Location: Hootooers Harbor

The Rogue Nation of Ousgg is a huge, economically powerful nation, remarkable for its barren, inhospitable landscape. Its hard-working, cynical population of 227 million are ruled by a mostly-benevolent dictator, who grants the populace the freedom to live their own lives but watches carefully for anyone to slip up.

The medium-sized government juggles the

competing demands of Education, Law & Order, and Commerce. Citizens pay a flat income tax of 14%. A powerhouse of a private sector is led by the Automobile Manufacturing, Pizza Delivery, and Arms Manufacturing industries.

City sidewalks are crowded with overweight people, anti-government web sites are springing up, the nation's first space rocket -- sponsored by Pepsi and shaped like an enormous soda bottle -- is being developed, and citizens are permitted to carry concealed handguns. Crime is totally unknown, thanks to the all-pervasive police force and progressive social policies in education and welfare. Ousgg's national animal is the oretical and its currency is the raputic.

Ousgg is ranked 31st in the region and 86,222nd in the world for Largest Public Sector. “

I don't suppose there's anything that anyone would like to tell us about the origins of this site?

Actually two things lead me to suspect that maybe, just *maybe*, the name is a co-incidence and nothing to do with us. First, there are no references to pandas; second, the page fails to mention that OUSGG's national drink is *Bailey's* and Orange. Speaking of which, a second search produced a shocking revelation:

Bailey's and Orange is not an OUSGG invention!

Astonishing as it may seem, the query returned 31,900 matches, which must surely indicate that somebody out there actually drinks the stuff. In fact, it seems to be a well-known cocktail whose name is, quite frankly, too rude to be printed in such a respectable academic journal as *Postscript*. Suffice to say that full instructions for making it can be found at all of these pages:

<http://www.mastersschool.com/xrated.html>
<http://rangylil.iwarp.com/xrated.htm>
<http://www.fortunecity.com/tinpan/bonehead/124/drinks.html>
<http://groups.msn.com/DawnofHeaven/xratedrink.msnw>
<http://scs.student.virginia.edu/~trigones/html/drinks.html#c>

The last of these includes a *Bailey's* and

pineapple-based concoction as well.

Alternatively, why not try out the recipe for cookies in *Bailey's* and orange sauce?

<http://www.recipesource.com/desserts/cookies/20/rec2084.html>

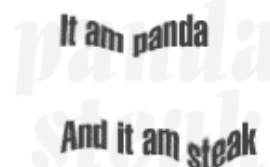
Then, of course, dedicated faffers will want to look at the sites whose content has no connection with OUSGG whatsoever, but which nonetheless have a vaguely related name. A search for NnN, for instance, comes up with 433,000 matches and reveals that all of the following sites exist:

<http://www.nnn.de> (Norddeutsche
Neueste Nachrichten)
<http://www.nnn24.com/> (Nippon News
Network)
<http://www.nnn.se/> (Nordic News
Network)

And, in perhaps the greatest co-incidence of all, someone called Erik maintains a site called:

<http://www.panda-steak.com>

Do not miss out the hyphen, or you get a different site that contains only this:



And you thought OUSGG was eccentric... **PS**

The Sound of OUSGG

*With no warning, the screen blanks. A caption, in fancy swirly writing, reads "End of Act One". The orchestral accompaniment launches into a medley of the show's tunes, and after a chorus of My Favourite Things the caption fades and a slideshow of Oxford landmarks begins. Unfortunately, due to the budget being wasted on unnecessary overhead helicopter shots, there are only five pictures, that loop. Smart members of the audience take this as their cue to dash for the bar, not so smart members sit there, transfixed. 20 minutes later, the screen fades to a caption that reads "Act Two". A few stragglers from the bar dash in front of the screen, blocking your view whilst they try to remember where their seats are. **PS***

Back to Basics!

Jo Miller *gets simple*

So then, the week after the rally, I once more strapped my tent onto my rucksack and set off on a train. This time with more trepidation, because I wasn't going to stay in the familiar surroundings of Oxford, or with anyone I knew. This trip was a week's course in primitive technologies, run by Ray Mears.

I didn't have much idea what to expect. Would I be the only one there who couldn't light a fire when provided with nothing but a heap of damp wood? Would I be mocked for my heavy rucksack and gorgeous big tent? Would we get any dinner without catching it ourselves? Well, I suppose I should have read the paperwork a bit more thoroughly, for this wasn't the *Fundamental Bushcraft* course, where it really is back to basics, largely because I couldn't be bothered with the 2 year waiting list. In fact it was fairly civilised, apart from the toilet facilities, which were about as primitive as it gets short of going at random behind a tree. Only one hardy soul didn't take a tent, and all our meals were provided.

What we were really there to do was to learn about some basic tools and technologies. Quite a lot of the time was dedicated to the tricky task of making bows. They weren't technically longbows, but if you think "longbow" you'll probably be quite close. It's hard to explain why it's so difficult to shape a piece of wood to a perfect curve with just the right amount of flex, but trust me it's easy to get it wrong. I nearly ruined my bow by some over-enthusiastic scraping, but fortunately it was rescuable. Even with this mistake, I produced a weapon that could send a home-made arrow a good 50m. The arrow was bound with nettle-fibre string, and would have been tipped with flint if my flint-working was good enough, which it wasn't.

We also worked some hides, cleaning off the hair and fat ready for preserving. (Any vegetarians still reading might like to skip onto the next

paragraph.) This is a hideously smelly job, and the flies didn't make it any more pleasant. I was pleased to hear that my stinking deer-skin was the best worked, and it went on into the preserving solution. Now this *really* stank, primarily consisting of mashed brains. Apparently it was sheep's brain rather than deer, but it doesn't matter. The quantity is easy to get right; every animal has enough brains to save its hide. Other ingredients were warm water and bizarrely quick-cook porridge oats. The skin soaked overnight, and by the morning felt much softer and more flexible. Rather like the texture of wet lasagne, but much stronger. But apparently it needed longer, and it was still at this very smelly stage when it was time to leave, so I didn't get to take any home. I don't think the other passengers would have appreciated it on the train!

OK, the veggies can come back now. Another interesting morning was spent wandering round the local fields and woodlands being shown some of the foods - and poisons - growing wild. I don't remember all that I saw, but there were nettles, clover, fat-hen, lady's thumb, dandelion, sedge, dock, sloes and wild grass seed. The latter was badly infected with the poisonous ergot, which I'd heard of but couldn't have identified before. It was surprisingly easy to collect a large amount of varied foods, and striking how varied a wild diet could be compared to endless potato and leek from the supermarket. When was the last time you ate more than a dozen different vegetables?

It was strange to come back to the noise and hassle and artificial perfumes of "real life". I can certainly see the attraction of a primitive lifestyle, slow and careful, hard working but relaxed. But I think I'd miss books, and trains, and glasses, and medicines, and the radio, and good shoes and waterproofs, and not worrying about where the next meal was coming from. And of course the infrastructure for all those things requires a modern life. Perhaps I'll settle for occasional glimpses into the world that every other species on this planet lives in. **PS**
