



o u t d o o r

FOCUS

the quarterly journal of the OWPG | autumn 2018



Cover star

David Forster

Enjoying the View South From Hall's Fell Ridge, Blencathra, Lake District, Cumbria

Website | www.bluestoneimages.com

Andrew's new role

OWPG member Andrew McCloy has been elected chair of the Peak District National Park Authority. A Peak District resident for 20 years, Cllr McCloy is a member of Youlgrave Parish Council. He was elected to the Authority in 2011 and re-elected in 2015, holding a number of key roles including, for the last four years, that of chair for the Audit, Resources and Performance Committee.

Speaking of his election to chair, Cllr McCloy said: "We need to reflect on the pioneering spirit that helped set up the Peak District National Park in the first place and approach the challenges ahead with purpose, as well as resolve. The recently announced National Park review should inspire us to look again at how we go about our business and forge a National Park fit for purpose for the next 70 years, in order to stay relevant in an ever-changing world"

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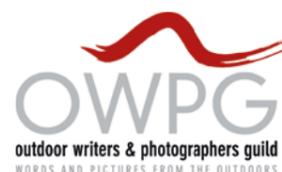
AGM weekend reminder

October's annual awards and AGM weekend promises a great programme of activities to cover a wide range of member interests – everything from an exclusive tasting of a local Exmoor gin, to axe-throwing or a rather more sedate programme of professional development opportunities and a choice of walks and rides.

If you haven't already registered, do it now by downloading the forms from www.bit.ly/OWPG-AGM-2018 and sending the completed version to AGM organiser Stan Abbott, at AGM-Organiser@owpg.org.uk.

This year's venue is the lovely Simonsbath House Hotel, at the heart of Exmoor, from Friday October 12 to Monday morning, October 15. We're delighted to have secured this excellent but affordable hotel for our exclusive use.

Stan Abbott says: "Don't delay your booking as the best accommodation choices area running out fast. I'm also reflecting member's choices of preferred activity and, if you don't flag up what you want to do, there's a risk the activity may disappear from the programme!"

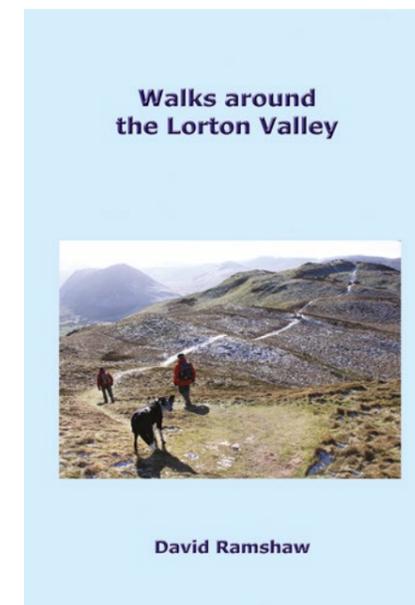


The Outdoor Writers and Photographers Guild is the only UK-based association of media professionals working largely or entirely on outdoor subjects. Our members cover every field of activity and all corners of the globe. They include writers, journalists, film makers, photographers, publishers and editors, all with a passionate interest in the outdoors. For more information visit www.owpg.org.uk.

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Book reviews *Roly Smith*



Walks around the Lorton Valley
David Ramshaw
P3 Publications, £3 (pb)

The 17th century Wheatsheaf Inn at Low Lorton, near the River Cocker near Cockermouth, is a popular hostelry with a caravan park and campsite, commanding panoramic views of the northern Lakeland fells.

This book came about as a result of a conversation between the author and Mark Cockbain, mine host of the Wheatsheaf, and his partner Jackie, when Mark mentioned that many of his visitors asked him about the availability of local walks from the village.

This attractive little 32-page guide is the result. But it is a walking guide with a difference, because every directional change is accompanied by a specially-taken photograph, making it almost impossible for even the non-map reader to get lost. The author points out that even children could have fun finding the next waypoint from the pictures.

Most of the walks follow footpaths in the valley, but the author takes to the hills with easy ascents of Fellbarrow, Low Fell (with its beautiful views south across Crummock Water), The Bield, Kirk Fell and Graystones. Others start from The Green at Boonbeck, in the shadow of the famous Lorton Yew, immortalised by Wordsworth in his 1803 poem, *The Pride of Lorton Vale*.

I'd like to have seen a little more about the history of the area, for example the placename of Lorton, which may come from a mythical Norse lady called Hlóra or from the identical base of the Old English hlōwan, both of which, intriguingly, mean "the roaring one."



The Mourne and Cooley Mountains: A Walking Guide
Adrian Hendroff
The Collins Press, £12.99 (pb)

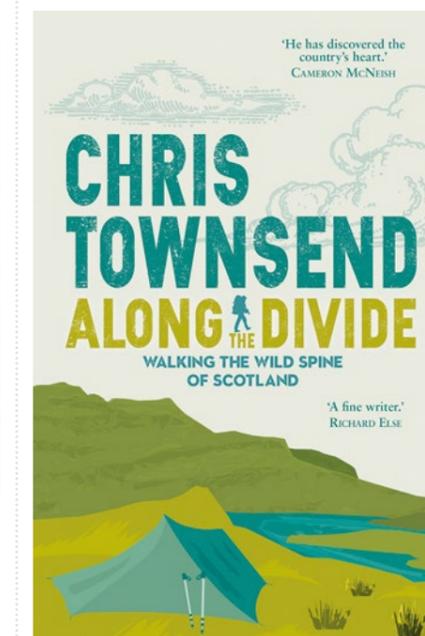
This book could have been sub-titled *The Best of Northern Irish Hill Walks*. Centred on the range which, in the words of William Percy French's famous song "sweep down to the sea," they also include six routes in the little-visited Cooley and Gullion hills.

The Mournes are perhaps most famous for being the site of Northern Ireland's highest peak – Slieve Donard (2,799ft/853m). Other rocky, tor-topped summits included in the book are Slievenagh, Slieve Bearnagh and Slieve Binnian, not forgetting the eponymous Millstone and Rocky Mountains.

But the eastern, higher Mournes are also home to the monumental 22-mile Mourne Wall, constructed between 1904 and 1922 by engineers from the Belfast Water Commissioners to enclose the 9,000-acre catchment area around the Silent Valley Reservoir.

Highlights of the Cooley and Gullion routes are Eagles Rock to Foxes Rock from Greer's Quay and Slieve Gullion (1,880ft/573m) itself, the highest point in County Armagh, which is approached from the Slieve Gullion Forest in an easy, nine-mile circuit.

Illustrated throughout by the author's fine photography and with clear, diagrammatic maps, this book will add to his reputation as Ireland's most trusted and best read mountain guide.



Along the Divide: Walking the Wild Spine of Scotland
Chris Townsend
Sandstone Press, £9.99 (pb)

The author is described in the publisher's blurb as "possibly the world's most experienced long distance walker who also writes." I suspect most long distance walkers are also able to write. But few, I would suggest, have the gift that Townsend has for seeming to take you along every step of the way with him on his marathon wilderness treks around the world, particularly in North America.

His latest offering owes much to his deep-seated love of his adopted country of Scotland, and also to Peter Wright's pioneering *Ribbon of Wildness*, his 2010 exploration of the watershed of Scotland, which he acknowledges throughout. Wright

was generously there to see him off as he set out from Kielder and there again at the end of his walk at Duncansby Head.

The idea of a continuous, 745 mile/1,200 km walk along Scotland's spine seems to have been first accomplished by Dave Hewitt, in his *Walking the Watershed* of 1987. Townsend decided he would follow, as far as was humanly possible, the line generally west of centre, which marks where the rivers flow either west into the Atlantic or east into the North Sea.

Unfortunately, the author was not blessed with ideal weather, especially in the Sothern Uplands and around the Great Glen, and was forced to follow a lower route when high winds, low cloud and illness demanded.

But as with all the author's books, this is much more than a mere diary or route description. Townsend also delves deeply into the politics of the outdoors as he strides along, and his views on the Scottish independence referendum and National Parks are enlightening. He writes that John Muir, the Scots-born father of US National Parks, would have found it "a disgrace" that Scotland didn't already have National Parks, and unlike some other Scottish wilderness lovers, he welcomed wholeheartedly the recent designations of the Cairngorms and Loch Lomond and Trossachs Parks.

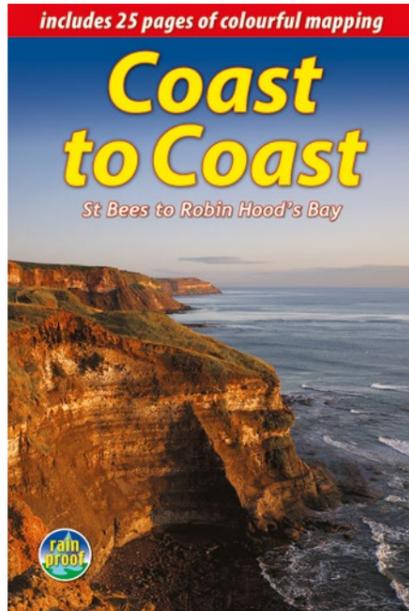
Coast to Coast: St Bees to Robin Hood's Bay

Sandra Bardwell and Jacquetta Megarry
Rucksack Readers, £14.99 (pb)

This is a comprehensively revised and redesigned edition of the authors' 2010 guide, the most outstanding new feature perhaps being over 20 stunning new photographs of the route by award-winning photographer and Guild member Karen Frenkel.

The result is a model of what a practical and enticing guidebook should be. This new edition has revised and updated route directions; support for GPS on your smartphone; several overlaid photographs to help with route-finding, and even some of creator Alfred Wainwright's preferred but unadopted route options.

Claimed by the authors to be Britain's most popular long distance path, the Coast to Coast passes through the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors



National Parks in its sinuous 184-mile route linking the Irish with the North Sea.

Strangely, 45 years after its inception, this most popular of long distance routes still has no official status and therefore it is still not marked on OS maps and there is no consistent waymarking, as with the official National Trails. This is something which surely should be addressed by Environment Secretary Michael Gove sooner rather than later.

The 1:55,000 mapping page-by-page by Lovell Johns Ltd is crystal clear, and the guide benefits from Rucksack's standard rain-proof encapsulation. The preliminary background features on subjects such as geology, the National Parks, Wainwright and history and wildlife are thoroughly researched and well-written.

Anyone contemplating Wainwright's marathon – surely his finest achievement – through some of northern England's finest landscapes need look no further for an attractive, clear, and above all, eminently practical guide.

The Salt Path

Raynor Winn
Michael Joseph, £14.99 (hb)

This new outdoor writer's first book recently hit the *Sunday Times* bestseller list. Raynor Winn was driven to write through desperation. She and her husband Moth were evicted from their idyllic home, lost their livelihood, and Moth was given a terminal diagnosis. What were they to do? Short answer – be homeless and penniless on the South West Coast Path.

Raynor used my SWCP guidebook and was concerned I might find her comments objectionable, so she sent me an early draft. I lost a night's work because I read it in one sitting, laughing heartily at her misconceptions, eg: "Paddy Dillon is probably superhuman. In fact I'm convinced he's ex-SAS, eats raw seaweed for breakfast, runs marathons when there's nothing on TV, and wears camouflage pyjamas. He seems to think this is day nine when it's really day seventeen."

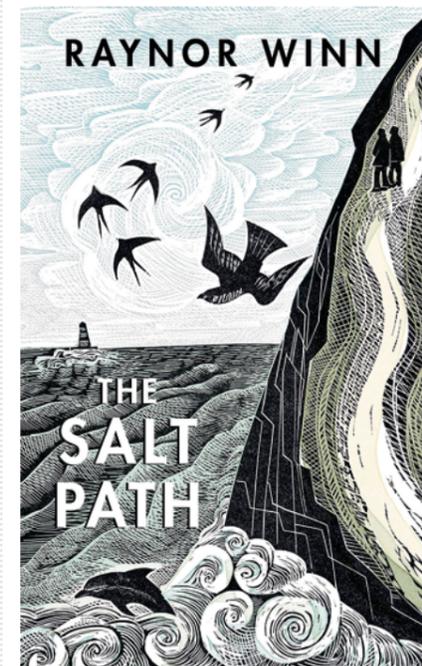
"Paddy Dillon eats spinach for breakfast, wears a hair shirt and sleeps on a bed of nails, obviously, because he walks from Bude to Boscastle in a day."

I'm amused, but what of the 'ordinary' reader? Well, many will read the book in one sitting, because Raynor's writing grabs you and won't let go. There's anger at being evicted, grief at being given a terminal diagnosis, hunger and pain as they tackle a route beyond their means and experience, not to mention them being shunned because of their circumstances.

Raynor appreciates the beauty and splendour of the coastal path, describing it in exquisite prose, but also writes about homelessness from gritty experience, questioning everything from government statistics and strategies to the attitudes of the general public. It's surprising how many 'rural homeless' there are, working in the countryside but unable to buy or rent property.

At the end of their trek... no... I mustn't spoil it for you. Just read the book.

reviewed by Paddy Dillon



Wordsmith

The Man with
the World's Best Job
www.kevreinolds.co.uk

Kev Reynolds meets the Man Who Couldn't Die

Diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour, Franz Müller put his affairs in order, gave the keys to his apartment to a neighbour, and headed for the mountains. It was a decision he'd toyed with for years, but had planned for his retirement. Now he wouldn't live long enough to retire, so he deserted the town in which he'd lived and worked since university, and with a few clothes, toiletries and books in a rucksack, took the train to Interlaken. Three hours later he checked in at the old *berghaus* in which he'd spent some of his happiest days, and gazed out the window at one of the finest views in all the Alps.

The atmosphere was charged with fury which he observed from his window...

That summer the numbing pain in his head was kept under control, thanks to medication and lots of fresh air. And that view, of which he could never grow tired. That was a major part of his pain control – the view of Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau; it was as powerful as any drug. It was rejuvenating, and enabled him to think of life, not death.

He'd first seen those iconic mountains as a boy when he'd gone skiing with his parents. They were beautiful when lacquered with snow, but he reckoned they were even better in summer, when the great limestone cliffs and snow-domed summits rose from pastures bright with flowers or loud with cowbells. He also discovered an added dimension when storm clouds erupted, for then the whole world seemed to shake. The atmosphere was charged with fury which he observed from his window as vivid blue flashes of lightning struck the mountains again and again, and rain poured from the roof into what seemed like a moat around the building. But when the clouds drifted away and the sun came out to set the grass a-steaming, Franz breathed in its freshness and felt restored.

He baked the bread, made yogurt, rösti and bilberry tart for visitors...

As the weeks rolled by, he'd go for short walks in the valley behind the *berghaus*. He'd chat with farmers as they tossed the hay, and engage with cheesemakers who welcomed him into their parlours, and before the summer was over he knew he belonged there. It was as though he'd come home. If only to die.

He hadn't expected to survive that summer, but when he went to the hospital for a scan, the specialist told him the tumour had not increased in size. If anything, it may have shrunk just a little.

So Franz went back to the mountains and stayed there through the autumn and the following winter. He helped the young couple who ran the *berghaus*, and when they wanted a day off, he served drinks and snacks to the locals who'd visit after work. He enjoyed it so much that when the couple's contract ran out and they decided to try somewhere else, Franz became the acting manager. With the help of a German girl who

worked as waitress and chamber maid, he baked the bread, made yogurt, rösti and bilberry tart for visitors, and slept soundly at night. And still he didn't die.

We first met him that summer when he was acting manager. We were checking routes for my guide to the Bernese Alps, and having stayed at the old *berghaus* in the past, decided to use it once again as a base for a few days. Like Franz, we were charmed by its weather-stained timbers, the low beams, uneven floors and ill-fitting doors. And that view. The dorm in which we stayed may have had pillows as soft as sandbags, but from it we had a million dollar view for only ten francs a night, plus meals. Meals prepared by Franz and served by the German girl with yellow hair who'd sit with us sometimes after Franz had gone to bed, and talk about mountains.

We returned to the old *berghaus* the following year as we plotted the route of the Tour of the Jungfrau Region. The German girl with the yellow hair had been replaced for the summer by a Swedish student, but Franz was still there, and he welcomed us as old friends. We signed in for a couple of nights, and this time, instead of the dorm with sandbags for pillows, we celebrated Franz's survival by splashing out on a room with twin beds, a porcelain jug of water on the dresser, and that view that would glow beneath a heaven full of stars at night and greet us with the flush of daybreak staining the Jungfrau's crown.

He lived for the moment and only wanted to talk about the mountains

On our way up to the *berghaus* we'd passed bushes heavy with bilberries, so we asked Franz for a bowl and we'd gather some for him. After an hour of picking four-for-the-bowl and two for us, we were stained with juice but had enough fruit to last Franz and his guests for the next week. After that we had bilberry tart for dessert, bilberries for breakfast and more bilberry tart for lunch. Franz said they'd be good for us. After all, they were good for him. He didn't mention the state of his health. He lived for the moment and only wanted to talk about the mountains. They brought the smile into his face and the healing he hadn't expected.

From the Swedish girl we learned that Franz slept most afternoons for a couple of hours, and sometimes woke to find that his eyes wouldn't focus. He still baked bread and made yogurt, but left the Swedish girl to do most of the other cooking.

I remember the last time we saw him. He walked us to the door, shook us by the hand and thanked us for spending time with him. 'Walk well,' he said, before waving us goodbye.

Two years later we called at the *berghaus* but he wasn't there. Ten months earlier the man who couldn't die had been rushed to hospital where he drifted in and out of consciousness before slipping peacefully away. They didn't say where he was buried, but I do know where his spirit rests...

The *berghaus* won't be the same without him, so we've never been back.

Rows about RoWs

Jon Sparks finds a route through the challenging issue of rights of way

Far be it from me to stir up walker vs cyclist aggro; the overwhelming majority of meetings with mountain bikers when I'm out walking, and with walkers when I'm on my bike, are entirely friendly and positive. However, one encounter by the shores of Rydal Water stands out – and illustrates that what some people 'know' about Rights of Way (RoW) law isn't always correct.

Indignant pedestrian: 'You can't cycle here.'

Me: 'Why not?'

'It's a footpath. You're committing an offence.'

'Sorry, I'm afraid you're wrong. It's a bridleway.'

'No, it isn't, it's too narrow.'

This exchange encapsulates two common misconceptions around RoW law. The first is that you can identify a footpath or a bridleway by eye, or by width. A footpath or a bridleway may exist without any visible path on the ground. Conversely, a substantial track may exist without any public right of way attached.

A right, not a thing

The definitive work on RoW law, *Rights of Way: A Guide to Law and Practice* by John Riddall and John Trevelyan, puts it beautifully: 'A highway is not a thing; it is a right.' Footpaths, bridleways and byways are all highways. All can exist without any discernible trace on the ground, and neither footpaths nor bridleways are – in general – defined by width.

One exception applies where a route crosses a field. If a farmer ploughs a field or plants a crop, they should restore the RoW as soon as possible,

clearing a width of 1m (footpaths) or 2m (bridleways). Another set width is for gates: on bridleways these must be at least 1.5m wide.

Elsewhere, the test is what is required for passage. A bridleway should allow two horses to pass each other; a footpath only needs room for walkers. But even this applies to the right of passage, not to any physical trace on the ground.

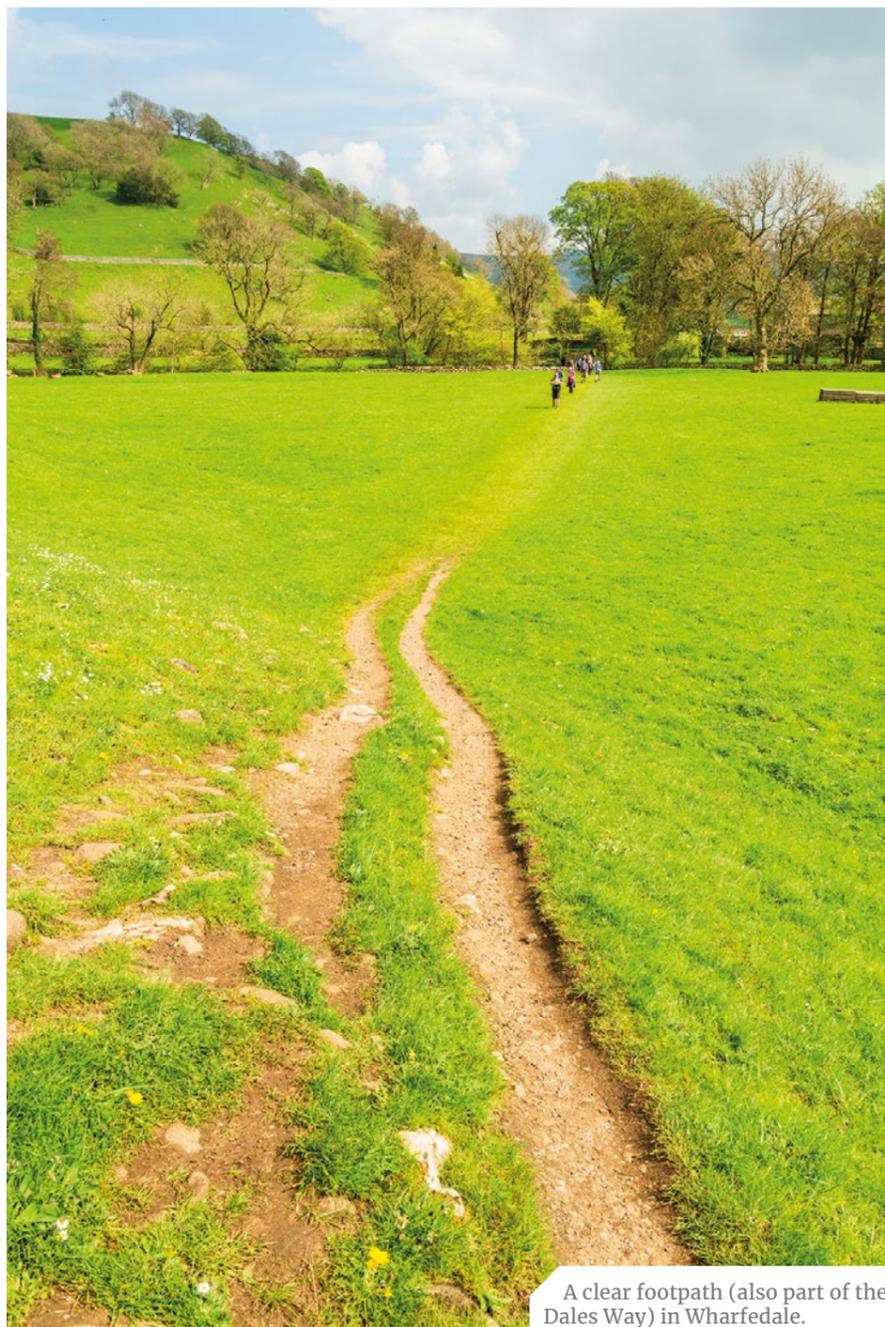
Not a criminal

The second misconception was that – if I had been riding on a footpath – I would have been 'committing an offence'. In fact, riding a bike or horse on a footpath is merely a trespass (a civil wrong or tort) against the landowner, not a criminal offence, except in rare cases where a specific local bylaw or Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) applies.

However, driving, or riding a motorbike, on a footpath or a bridleway is a criminal offence. So is cycling on the pavement (in legalese, 'a footway set aside for the use of pedestrians') – probably one source of misconceptions about the 'illegality' of cycling on 'footpaths'.

1949 and All That

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 instituted a system for comprehensive recording of RoWs in England and Wales, mandating the creation of Definitive Maps. The local authority has a statutory duty to keep their Definitive Map up to date, and it must be available for the public to inspect without charge during normal working hours. Some authorities also make their Definitive Maps available online. Subsequent refinements to some of the RoW categories have created a four-tier system. Additional categories



A clear footpath (also part of the Dales Way) in Wharfedale.



'A right not a thing'. This bridleway west of Kendal wasn't very clear on the ground at this point.

of interest are outlined in the table over the page. Mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs are also entitled to use all RoWs and Open Access Land.

England

England has about 146,000km of footpath, 32000km of bridleway, 6000km of restricted byway and 3700km of byways open to all traffic. Only 22% of the RoW network is open to bikes and horses.

Wales

In December 2013 the Welsh Government published a consultation paper on Developing integrated legislation for outdoor recreation. Two key principles are: presumption in favour of increasing access for responsible recreation and meet the needs of the widest possible range of activities. Organisations such as OpenMTB, Cycling UK, and the British Mountaineering Council became very actively involved in campaigning and lobbying.

The Welsh Government has just (June 2018) announced, 'There were strong but differing views on how best to reform access legislation. We therefore believe that now is not the right time for substantive reform. But we are committed to exploring selected aspects of change where there was greater consensus...' As yet it's completely unclear what 'exploring selected aspects of change' may mean. In any case, for now the law remains the same as in England. The total RoW network in Wales is about 33000km.

Scotland

Scotland's law is different. Even before The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, there was no distinction between footpath and bridleway, and it was generally presumed that cyclists and

horse-riders were entitled to follow any RoW. However RoWs as such were relatively thin on the ground – less than half the total for Wales. There was no obligation on local authorities to record them and they weren't shown on OS maps. The 2003 Act introduced Core Paths, roughly equivalent to bridleways, and charged local authorities to identify and maintain these.

Much more radically, the Act also instituted the Scottish Access Code, which broadly follows the gold standard established by the Nordic countries, often known as 'Every Man's Right'. The Code's access rights, covering most land in Scotland, permit walking, cycling, mountaineering, canoeing and horse riding. Exceptions are houses and their gardens and, usually, land on which crops are growing.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland has a worse position on RoWs; even for walkers, access is much more limited than the rest of the country, as far fewer RoWs are identified. As the Countryside Act 1968 did not apply here, bridleways are strictly speaking only open to walkers and horse-riders.

Establishing a right of way

One way to establish a RoW is if a landowner dedicates it as such. In fact, Riddall and Trevelyan observe, "Relatively few highways can be shown to have been expressly dedicated." Most Rights of Way are established, instead, by the 'inference of dedication'. The basic test for this is that the route has been used by the public 'as of right' for 20 years or longer.

However, the test fails if a landowner has in any way indicated an

Public Rights of Way	Open to...	Waymark Colour	Shown on OS Map
Public Footpath	Pedestrians	Yellow	Explorer, Landranger
Bridleway	Pedestrians, Cyclists, Horse-riders	Blue	Explorer, Landranger
Restricted Byway	Above plus non-mechanically-propelled vehicles (e.g. horse-drawn)	Purple	Explorer, Landranger
Byway Open to all Traffic	All, including motor vehicles	Red	Explorer, Landranger
Other Categories of Interest			
Open Access Land	Pedestrians		Explorer
Other Routes with Public Access	Unclear/Variable (see main text)		Explorer, Landranger
Permissive /Permitted / Concessionary Routes	Permissive FPs open to pedestrians; permissive bridleways open to horses, bikes	White	Explorer
Canal Towpaths (& rivers regulated by the Canal & River Trust)	Pedestrians, Cyclists (Cyclists may not be permitted on non-CRT canals, e.g. the Bridgewater Canal)		

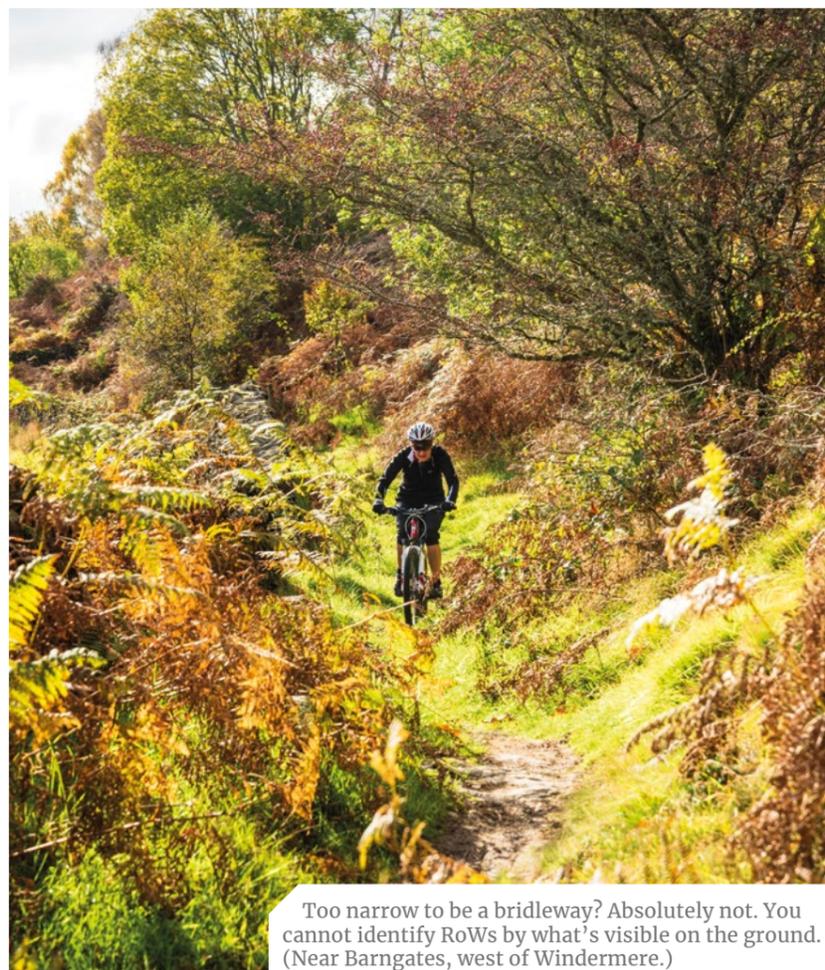
unwillingness to allow the public to use a route; for example, if there is a locked gate across a path, even if the public are regularly climbing over it to use the route. (On the other hand, if a route is already established as a right of way, landowners cannot legally block access in this way, nor does a path that has fallen into disuse cease to be a right of way.)

If a route has been used for 20 years without any evidence that the landowner has taken any steps of this kind, then the 'inference (or presumption) of dedication' can arise. So far, so promising. However, it still takes effort and persistence to work through the legal process. Landowners who have ignored the passage of feet, hooves or wheels for decades are quite prone to sit up and take notice when an application to establish is made, and applicants can find themselves facing tough and confrontational tactics from slick lawyers.

Permissive/concessionary footpaths or bridleways can't automatically become a RoW even if they've been used by the public for 20 years: all a landowner needs to do is to place a notice stating that 'there is no intention to dedicate (the route) as a right of way'. Some landowners may close a permissive path for one day a year as a further precautionary measure.

Reference

A good source of plain-English information on most aspects of RoW law is the Ramblers' website: www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/rights-of-way-law-in-england-and-wales.aspx
For more on the Scottish Access Code see: www.outdooraccess-scotland.com.



Too narrow to be a bridleway? Absolutely not. You cannot identify RoWs by what's visible on the ground. (Near Barnegates, west of Windermere.)

Kate Spencer (1939-2018)

Stalwart lady veteran of bicycle and leisure publishing Kate Spencer died at the Marie Curie hospice in Elswick, Newcastle upon Tyne on Saturday, July 7. The locality is recognised as base of the 19th century Elswick Bicycle Company absorbed in 1910 into the Barton on Humberside business, later a part of the Tandem Group.

Kate had become ill with sepsis in February, then after hospital and home care treatment she was admitted as patient of the Mary Curie hospice charity two weeks ago. Seemingly recovering, alert, and happy there was a sudden relapse and she passed away peacefully in her sleep on Saturday evening. At the end of this month Kate Spencer would have reached her 79th birthday.

Forty years ago Kate Spencer and her father James Robinson founded the KSA Partnership business in the north east of England to distribute and publish books and guides for outdoor living,



leisure travel, bicycling and hiking. As a young mother, writing about cycling and camping she was to become lynchpin as secretary and officer of the communicators and journalists group she helped found, the UK organisation OWG now known as the

Outdoor Writers' & Photographers' Guild.

Kate Spencer travelled Europe extensively, often based in a touring caravan with her journalist husband Peter Lumley to attend trade Fairs and research topics and companies. She was a regular visitor to both Eurobike and OutDoor in Freidrichshafen, earlier it was the IFMA in Cologne, also attending EICMA in Milan and Munich for the ISPO. She will be recognised as the lead person behind the magazine *tradeandindustry*, now 38 years into its publication run after opening as the monthly *Bicycle Trade Times*. Her work for the first dozen or so years was publishing consumer magazines and annuals for cycling and outdoors, including the print magazines *Cycling World*, *Bicycle Times* and *Footloose*.

Afflicted with breast cancer over 22 years ago Kate defied that earlier prognosis, she then battled with secondary BC four years ago and after her first spell at Marie Curie she always tells their care saved her life. In 2017 she celebrated her company's 40th year with a 90-day caravan tour around the British mainland, demonstrating you can effectively operate a business from an office on the move! In February of this year, she was a guest at the 65th year celebrations of the Maldon & District Cycling Club, the Essex club founded in 1953 by her husband where the British team member Alex Dowsett of Katusha Alpecin pro team joined as a thirteen year old.

When you met her, Kate Spencer always carried a caring, sharing manner, and was always enthusiastic in the engagement.

Kate Spencer, is survived by her daughter, three sons and husband. There are also grandchildren and a great grand daughter.

Kate Spencer: Lynchpin of the Guild

Roly Smith remembers the vital role Kate played in the OWPG

Kate Spencer was the person who persuaded me to join the Outdoor Writers' Guild, as it was known then. I was attending the annual Camping and Outdoor Leisure (COLA) Show at Harrogate in 1983 with photographer friend Mike Williams and our new book *Wildest Britain*, hoping to do a bit of what I believe is now known as 'networking.'

"You should be a member of the Guild," enthused secretary Kate with that ever-present, warm and friendly smile. "We're all outdoor people and you'll make lots of contacts." Little did I realise then how right she was, and how that meeting would so substantially change my life.

Just three years before, Kate had been a founder member of the Guild at that legendary meeting of six like-minded outdoor professionals in the bar of The George Hotel in Harrogate. And at the time I first met her, Kate Spencer was undoubtedly the one who held

the Guild together. In so many ways in those days, she was the Outdoor Writers' Guild.

Fellow founder and life member Tom Waghorn told me: "Kate was someone very special. She was a lovely lady and a real pillar of the Guild. It simply would not have existed without her hard work and dedication." Later, of course, and largely again because of Kate's persuasive skills, I became chairman for 13 years and was later president for a similar length of time. Kate was always supportive and encouraging in the ways we strived to make the Guild into the respected professional body it is today.

Kate's courage and determination in fighting the breast cancer that struck her an astonishing 22 years ago was nothing short of amazing. Despite several terminal prognoses, she just never gave in. This was despite several set-backs with treatments and operations, and she never, ever complained about her dreadful illness. She just got on with life.

Continued >

The last time I saw her she was in the Marie Curie Hospice at Elswick, where she passed away peacefully on July 7. As always, her main concerns then were Pete, the business, and the Guild, and she wanted to know everything about what was happening. She was determined, as she said, "to make every day count." She certainly succeeded in doing that throughout her long and distinguished life.

Kate was perhaps best known for her work with Pete in publishing consumer magazines and annuals for cycling and the outdoors, including *tradeandindustry*,

Cycling World, *Bicycle Times* and *Footloose*. Opposite in so many ways, she and Pete formed a formidable and loving partnership, which was widely respected throughout the outdoor trade.

A proud Mum and grandmother, Kate was not only the lynchpin of the Guild, but also of her growing young family. She will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved her. And they were usually one and the same people.

Rest in peace, Kate, and thanks for everything.

New members



Hanna Lindon started her career on Trail and now freelances across a wide range of newsstand outdoor titles. Her features have appeared in *The Great Outdoors*, *Countryfile*, *Walk*, *Adventure Travel*, *Outdoor Enthusiast* and *Country Walking*. She also writes on walking and scrambling for the BMC and pens general travel pieces for newspapers and airline magazines. She lives in the South East and spends an inordinate amount of time driving to-and-fro between the hills of Snowdonia, Scotland and the Lake District for outdoor adventures. With a second kid on the way she'll be scaling back on work for the next year or so, but still hopes to take an active part in Guild life.

www.hannalindon.com



James Deboo. I was brought up in Wiltshire, went to Lancaster University 21 years ago and stayed in the northwest. I have a PhD on the poetry of William Wordsworth, with all its Lake District connections. I was a freelance editor, including for Cicerone Press, for a number of years, but having been recently diagnosed with autism I've decided to pursue my dream and become an outdoor writer. Based in Milnthorpe in southern Cumbria, I'm so far writing for *Lakeland Walker*, *Cumbria*, *TGO* and *Country Walking*, as well as working on a book about the Arnside & Silverdale AONB. I'm married to a GP and I have three children: so home is a busy place.

I have a new blog at www.debooutdoors.blog



Ash Routen is an adventure writer and exercise and health scientist based in Leicester. Growing up in the New Forest he developed an interest in the outdoors through scouting, which led to walks, climbs and scrambles across the UK, with the odd foray into Europe. A post-doc career in academia chained him to a desk for a while, but in recent years he has taken up arctic sledding expeditions, including leading a 634 km crossing of a frozen Lake Baikal in Siberia. Ash primarily writes about adventure and expedition news, but also covers hillwalking and product reviews. He has written for a selection of leading publications and newspapers in the UK and US.

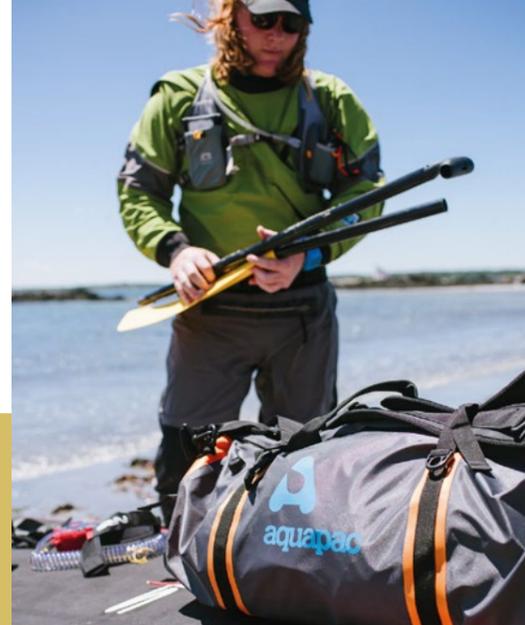
www.ashrouten.com

Carsten Krieger is a German native and has been living and working in the west of Ireland since 2002. He started out as a landscape photographer but over the years he has spread out to cover a wide range of topics including wildlife, outdoor activities, portraits and food. His clients include Tourism Ireland, The Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark (for whom he also produced the flagship book *This is the Burren*), The National Monuments Service and others.

Writing in both his native as well as the English language has been taken on an important role in his work. Carsten has photographed and written a number of books on Ireland's landscape, wildlife and heritage, including the best-selling *Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way* and *Ireland's Ancient East*. He just finished *The River Shannon*, a book on Ireland's longest waterway and two photography guides for Ireland, one in English and one in German, which are due for publication in the coming months.



www.carstenkrieger.photography



Aquapac offers OWPG members a 40% discount on all their products. Details of how to obtain that, and the Aquapac contact point for OWPG members, are on our website at www.bit.ly/OWPG-Aquapac (linked from the 'associate members' page). When you access this, enter the general 2018 member password.

OUR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

In our new series, the companies and organisations that share our aims and values introduce themselves.



IT ALL KICKED OFF DOWN THE PUB!

Until 1999 Aquapac was actually called Aquaman. It all began in 1983 with three guys chatting in a London pub and the story goes that one of them said: "Hey, wouldn't it be cool if you could listen to a Sony Walkman while windsurfing?" (both the Walkman and windsurfing were the latest thing back then). The next day they set about creating a waterproof case that would make it possible.

They launched their Aquaman bag at the London Boat Show, and it caught the eye of a visiting American distributor of marine electronics. He asked if it might be possible to design a version to protect handheld VHF radios. This approach led to their first VHF radio case - the AQ2 - which led on to a range of handheld VHF radio cases that boaters worldwide still rely on today.

SMART PHONE PEOPLE

Not long afterwards some bright spark at Motorola invented the first mobile phone. Naturally Aquapac didn't hang around, becoming the first company in the world to market waterproof cases for mobile phones.

Soon Motorola was overtaken by Nokia as the world leader in mobile phones, and it wasn't long before someone from Nokia was asking the team if they would make a custom case that Nokia could sell as an accessory. For several years Nokia was Aquaman's best customer, buying hundreds of thousands of their cases.

The Aquaman team then hired an industrial designer to help them develop an all-plastic seal to replace the original metal clamp. The new product was patented and christened the Aquaclip.

Next, they added waterproof camera cases and waterproof wallets to the range. A lot of time and money went into developing colourful retail packaging. The new Aquapac line went down a storm, and soon Aquapac cases were to be found on the shelves of big boating and outdoor retailers all over the world. Around that same time the company name was changed from Aquaman UK to Aquapac International.

WHAT NOW?

Internationally Aquapacs sell in more than 60 countries. To date they've sold over 5 million bags - not bad going for an idea someone came up with in a pub! The Aquaclip was selected as a Millennium Product at the turn of the century, and the company has won three Queen's Awards for Enterprise.

Aquapac is a member of the Outdoor Industries Association, and for some years now has supported the OWPG by sponsoring its annual travel guide prize.

The range is still dominated by mobile phone cases but increasingly the emphasis has turned to larger bags such as waterproof backpacks and waterproof duffels.

THE PROFESSIONALS' CHOICE

Aquapac doesn't just supply consumers. Its bags have always been valued by emergency services from the London Fire Brigade to the Japan Coast Guard. Aquapac now offers a 40% discount to Search & Rescue teams and the like. As indeed it does to all members of the OWPG!

Tim Turnbull | [email tim@aquapac.net](mailto:tim@aquapac.net) | [telephone 020 7738 4466](tel:02077384466) | [website www.aquapac.net](http://www.aquapac.net)

Aquapac sponsors the OWPG Guidebook Award

THE JORDAN TRAIL

Tony Howard takes a walk along the varied Jordan Trail



Main Di Taylor, exploring the Jordan Trail, springtime in north Jordan
Inset Jebel Rum's 500 metre cliffs dwarf a Bedouin camp in Wadi Rum

Inspired by the film *Lawrence of Arabia* at Christmas 1983, I organised a trip the following year to Wadi Rum with Di Taylor, Mick Shaw and Alan Baker, joined in subsequent years by Wilf Colonna, a friend from France. In 1987 my Cicerone book *Treks and Climbs in Wadi Rum, Jordan* was published. This left Di and me free to explore the rest of Jordan all of which was literally a blank on the map. In 1999 our second Cicerone guide, *Jordan - Walks, Treks, Caves, Climbs and Canyons*, was published. By then it had become obvious that we had the basis of a country length trail and we continued to add to it whenever an opportunity arose during our annual springtime visits.

We were later joined by Jordanians who were also now discovering the wonderful variety of adventures that their country has, telling us, "Your guidebooks gave us the love of our country," and you can't say better than that! Finally, in 2016 we linked the pieces of our jigsaw and reached the Red Sea. Next spring, the trail's official Inaugural Thru-Trek took place, a happy and optimistic multi-national group being waived off from Um Qais by official well-wishers including Jordan's Tourism Minister, Lina Annab, herself a keen trekker.

In spring the green rolling hills, flower-filled meadows, orchards, olive groves, and forests of North Jordan are quite unlike most people's concept of Jordan as a 'desert country'. As elsewhere along the trail some nights are camping, others are at village homestays, guest houses or hotels. Whatever the location, the mouth watering array of local food is irresistible, perhaps too much so! Jordan Trail guides accompany trekkers and a support team ensures that camps and meals are prepared wherever necessary along the route.

Throughout its length the trail passes through numerous antiquity sites dating from as far back as the 11th millennium BC through Neolithic, Greco-Roman and Christian Byzantine periods to Early Islamic and Ottoman. From Madaba with its mosaic map, one of the oldest in the world depicting Palestine and other major Biblical sites in AD560 the trail descends to join an almost forgotten Roman road on the hot barren plateau above the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth, 430m below sea level. The Three Canyons each around 800 metre deep then have to be crossed. First Zerqa Main, then the Hidan, crossing its river where a waterfall and pool may prove irresistible before the big climb out. Finally the Mujib, Jordan's answer to the Grand Canyon.

A good descent into the Mujib had seemed unlikely until we were shown a Bedouin trail. In its lower reaches, an ancient path constructed across a cliff provides the only way down. Below, the river beckons temptingly. With fish swimming between our legs we waded through its cool knee-deep water, to find a campsite and another tempting pool. The trail then valiantly climbs

up to the south rim meeting the vestiges of a Roman road again.

Ahead the great Crusader castle of Karak offers a choice of hotels before the trail enters the hotter and drier south. Crossing the 1000 metre abyss of Wadi Hasa is the next obstacle though its hot spring is tempting. An easier walk then reaches the village of Ma'tan, its ancient but now renovated cliff-top guest houses offering a dramatic view into the next day's big canyon descent and ascent. Next, the trail passes the village of Buseira with its Iron Age ruins before rising to yet another impressive view: a deep arrow-straight valley cleaves its way down to the hot, sea level depths of Wadi Araba, the southern end of Jordan's Rift Valley. At its head the cliff top village of Dana perches on its eerie. When we first trekked through in 1985 it was an almost deserted ruin. Now it offers a choice of accommodation in renovated Ottoman period houses or a hotel run by Jordan's *Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature* (RSCN).

Descending Dana valley the next day is a pleasure with wild scenery all around until the spoil heaps of Roman copper mines can be seen before reaching remote Finnan Eco-Lodge. It's tempting to stay overnight but many continue across the hot black stone desert of Araba pitching their tents as the sun sets ready for an early start back up into the mountains. A time-worn Bedouin trail climbs up through dramatic scenery before plunging into the ravine of Wadi Feid where a waterfall and pool offer refreshing relief. Then up again to a high camp.





Shepherd on the Jordan Trail, north Jordan

Whilst pitching my tent I was bitten by a scorpion. “What colour was it?” Mahmoud, our Bedouin guide said. “Yellow,” I replied. “They are the worst,” he said, followed by, “What size?” “Only small,” I said. “They are the worst,” he said again with a grin. You have to like their sense of humour! I felt lethargic all the next day but it was a beautiful trek along a high escarpment with a warm breeze rising from the depths before we descended to a tourist camp near Petra which we entered the next day via ‘the back door’. This old Nabataean trail had been a narrow path across cliffs when we first walked it in the mid 1990s but had since been ‘manicured’ by the Petra Park Authority into a wide, safe, wall-edged trail, losing its history but enabling it to be promoted as an alternative entrance to the famous Petra Siq.

The first glimpse of the mountain top Monastery is as surprising as the first famous view of The Treasury from The Siq. The latter is avoided on the way out by exiting Petra through a tunnel carved through the mountains by the Nabataeans to divert floodwater away from the canyon of The Siq, the main thoroughfare in ancient times as well as today. Flash floods are dangerous!

The Siq is savoured early the next day before continuing past Petra’s Roman theatre then south beneath Jebel Harun, reputed burial place of Aaron, brother of Moses. The descent of wild and lonely Wadi Sabra follows past the remains of yet another Roman theatre. Then on deeper into the remote mountains of Masuda before climbing back onto the high desert plateau four days later

through the impressive Aheimir Canyon. On our exploratory trek we had to wade a deep pool and climb a tricky boulder-jam at its head. A year later all had been swept away by a flash flood and Aheimir was obstacle free, but beware, its no place to be on a rainy day!

Now visible across the desert to the east, the mountains of Wadi Rum are reached by a two day trek across the sands. Lawrence called it “Rum the magnificent... vast, echoing and God-like”. He was right! The trek then continues still in superlative desert mountain scenery for another day before entering the basalt and granite hills that border the Red Sea. Its distant waters are first glimpsed from the crest of a hill beneath which the final camp is made.

A long descent and climb then lead to the final pass beyond which the Red Sea beckons temptingly. Descending a valley of pink granite boulders on the Thru-walk in early May it was hot, too hot at around forty degrees. We sought every possible shade before descending the final sandy wadi to the sea. A welcoming band were there to greet us as we ran past and plunged jubilantly into the welcoming waves.

In 2018 the Jordan Trail was listed among the top 21 destinations by National Geographic. The Jordan Trail Association also received an award from His Majesty King Abdullah for its contribution to tourism development and putting Jordan on the global tourism map as well as providing jobs and improving income for communities along its route.

Sometimes dreams come true.

PEAK EXPOSURE

Ronald Turnbull helps you get your head around the histogram



Photography
1
Writers • For

Photographer Ansel Adams (I think it was him but it could have been some other famous photographer, the Outdoor Focus editor will know*) had a principle of tones and shades. One eighth of the black-and-white image should be black, one eighth should be white. One eighth should be very dark grey, one eighth should be very pale grey. One eighth should be quite dark grey, one eighth quite pale grey. And one eighth each of pale mid-grey and dark mid-grey.

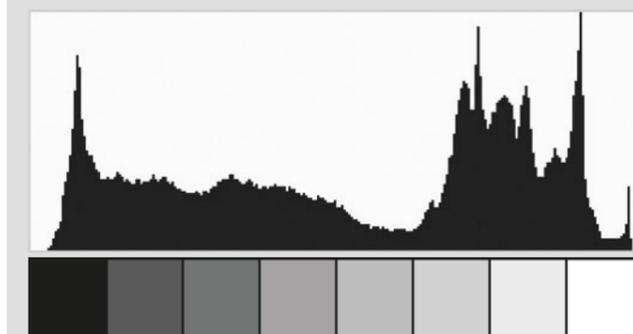
Picture rights for Adams photos are pricey, so I insert one of my own taken, where else, in the Ansel Adams Wilderness. It’s the place where every image of Cathedral Peak naturally falls into the Ansel shade arrangement. Or does it? Today, the computer can do this for us digitally, by graphing how much of my pic falls into each of the shade ranges. We see that the distribution isn’t quiet as Adams would have it. I have rather too much pale-pale greys – that’ll be the lower sky. And I’m a bit lacking in the mid-pale-grey zone.

In the cairn picture (right), the big spike represents the middling-pale tones of the mist and sky. The small spike at far left measures the darkest shadows, the unlit areas of rock like those directly below the cairn. The other small spike at the right is the sunlit snow. The histogram reveals, what’s not obvious to the eye, that there are no areas of pure white or even of near-white in the image.

So what’s it for?

In outdoor sunlight, it’s very difficult to tell from your camera screen whether you’ve got the exposure or not. In very low light, the brightness of the camera screen can, contrariwise, convince you of a nice bright image when it’s actually underexposed. A peek at the histogram tells you straight away. Just supposing you a)

* It was Ansel Adams (with Fred Archer) who developed the Zone System described above.



understand the histogram and b) have persuaded your camera to show it to you.

The dawn image (right) looking south along Loch Lomond has the usual defect of dawn photos looking south. The left hand side of the sky is burned out to white: and even worse, the adjacent sky (burned out in the blue channel but not the green) has a nasty unskylike turquoise green. If I'd looked at it, the histogram would have revealed this: the right-hand, light-tones end of the graph is chopped off against the edge of the frame. Actually, I did look at the histogram... This one's made from two separate images; and dates from when I used to do panorama stitchups by hand, and the two component photos had to have the same exposure. These days I expose each of the component photos the way they should be. Photoshop, which now does my panorama stitchups with digital insouciance, sorts out the differences in exposures.

Looking back at the cairn histogram, it's not underexposed to the point where the left hand end is chopped off. So there is still full detail in the dark areas. However, the blank at the right end suggests I could, and maybe should, try it again with a longer exposure. That would move the whole histogram to the right, for a better colour range and more detail in the shadows. That second version of the image has now been deleted: I liked the way the off-white snow has caught the slight golden tinge of the newly-risen sun. Just sometimes, the human may know better than the histogram...

Level Headed

The image of Skiddaw (right) was taken with a telephoto lens from the wrong side of the Solway. My excuse is, I live on the other side of the Solway. The histogram shows that it's very low in contrast. As an unsophisticated image manipulator, you'll just hit brightness/contrast and hope for the best... But the Levels command (CMD/Control + L in Photoshop) hits you with a histogram. By moving in the markers at either end (as per the red arrows) you can give the image the greatest tonal range possible without either burning out the whites or losing detail in the darkest bits.

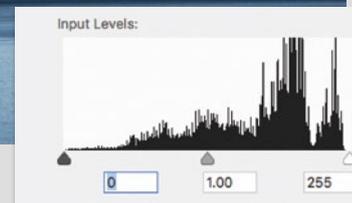
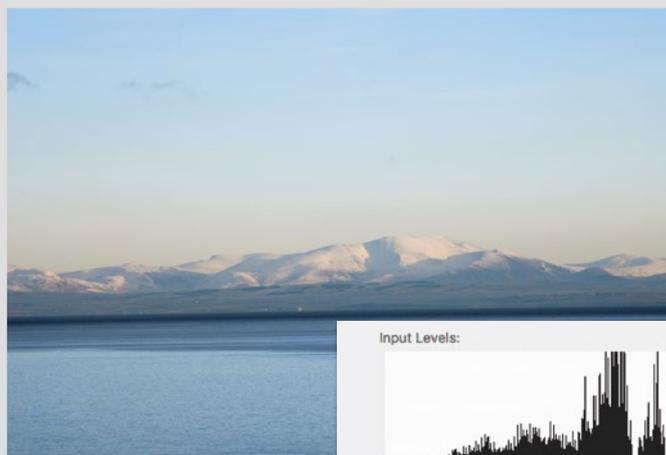
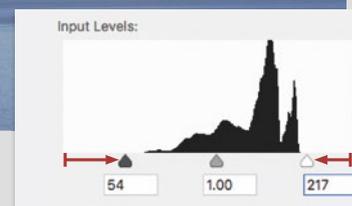
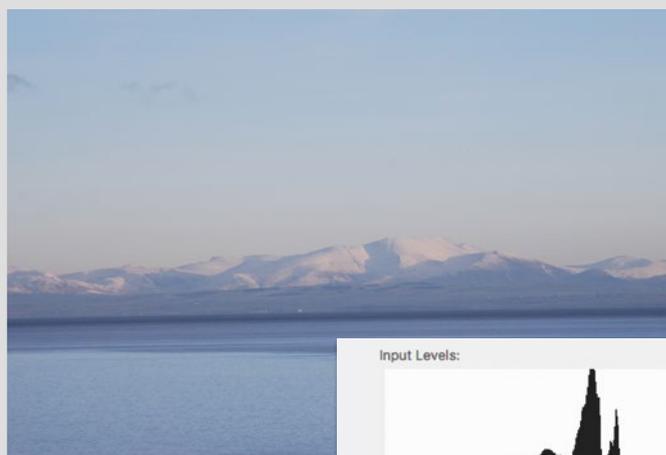
The resulting image and histogram are shown on the right. You may or may not like the image. But the histogram is a bit horrid! The jaggy gaps indicate the loss of quality caused by stretching out the JPEG image. Shooting in Raw format will be the way to overcome that one – the subject of my third article in this series, supposing the editor lets me go on that long.

I must have my histogram!

By default, your camera's back screen shows you the picture you just took. Hitting the up and down arrows will give alternatives. There could be a version where blown-out areas flash on and off – that one's for unsophisticated people who can't hack the histogram. Further up or down should give you the histogram, either alone or with the image alongside.

Any photo editing software will already be showing you your histogram, or will do so if you ask it nicely. Because it's a computer it needs to be cleverer than you are – and it may show separate histograms in red, green and blue.

So welcome to a future of hardly ever having wrongly exposed photos ever again!



So – what constitutes a proper camera?

This series of articles is aimed at writers who aren't really photographers but need to be. So you need a proper camera. A proper camera has:

- A sensor 24mm wide (36mm is better than you need!)
- Lets you shoot in a semi-automatic exposure mode (eg Aperture Priority), or Manual Exposure
- Can display a histogram, either in Live View or playback
- Will shoot in Raw format

Advanced compact cameras do it. A second-hand digital SLR camera is cheaper, around £200, but heavy and cumbersome. Next – White Balance, what it is and why you need to set it correctly.