

Outward Bound® Generations eNewsletter: Nov 2010

Autumn has arrived and with it comes a very exciting time for Outward Bound Generations.

It is now a whole year since we launched our campaign to reconnect with the one million people who have participated in an Outward Bound course since 1941 and we're delighted to announce that we've now collected over 300 stories from Outward Bounders both past and present. What's more, the Generations campaign has also received national press coverage from the likes of The Independent and The Daily Telegraph and we've also taken part in regional radio interviews with past participants for the BBC. **Our most recent interview is available to listen to online, click here.**



Every week we receive vast amounts of mail from Outward Bound alumni, so we're certain that this is just the beginning for our Generations campaign. We thank you for all your support so far and hope you enjoy this newsletter, which highlights just a few of the amazing stories that people share with us about their memories and experiences of Outward Bound.

Remember, we want to reconnect with as many people as possible, so if you know anyone who has taken part in one of our courses in the past, or haven't yet shared your own Outward Bound story, please visit www.outwardboundgenerations.org.uk and pass it on!

We hope you enjoy this update and look forward to being in touch again soon about our latest work and how you can help support us.

All the best,

Kristina Fitzpatrick Nicole McIntyre
The Generations Team

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The first ever Outward Bound ladies course:
Wendy Evans & Joan Clark

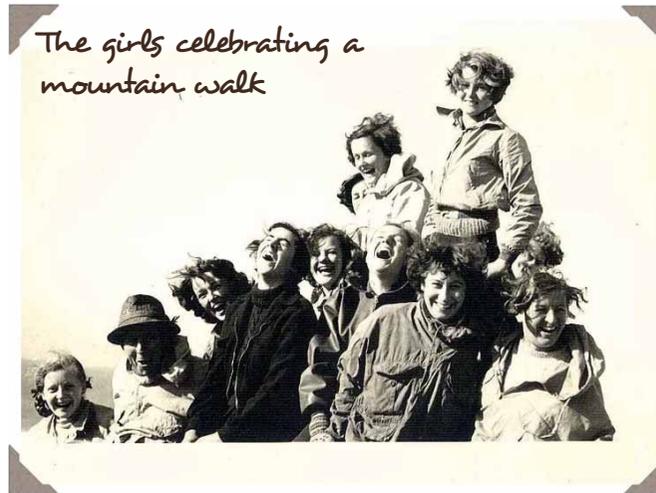
The Trust ran its first course in 1941 and to begin with, courses were only open to boys. Ten years later in 1951, fifty six young women embarked on the first ever Outward Bound ladies course at our Eskdale centre in the Lake District, which caused quite a stir in the national press. Among the participants were Wendy Evans and Joan Clark, who tell their stories below:

Joan Clark (nee Troubridge)

I was very fortunate to be selected as one of the representatives of the Girl Guide Association at the experimental course for girls at the Outward Bound Mountain School at Eskdale in the Lake District in October 1951.

What an adventure it turned out to be! Fifty six young women attended the course from all parts of the UK. Like the Guide motto of "be prepared," we had to be ready to have a go at everything and anything. Most mornings started with limbering up on the front lawn of the house overlooking the tarn. Then on to lectures on various subjects - map reading, first aid and climbing. After lunch

it was time to put theory into practice.



After the day's activities we had more talks, discussions and rehearsals for the play "Hiawatha" which was to be performed on our last evening in front of an audience of staff and local residents. An election was being held in the country at the time, so we had our very own version.

As the course progressed, events took place away from the school including a two day expedition camping out overnight. Towards the end of the course everyone took part in a three day event, some walking and staying at youth hostels, some out on canoeing expeditions and others off climbing.

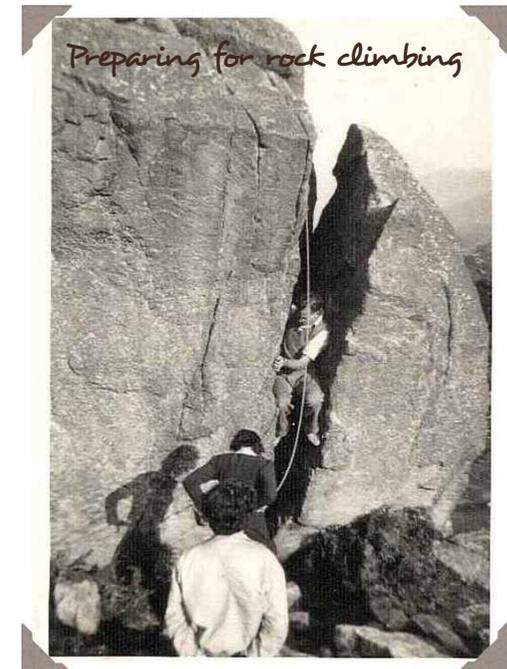
All too soon the last evening arrived, the entertainment was warmly received and we were told that the staff, who were unsure of the outcome of this experimental course, pronounced it a huge success.

Throughout the course we learnt to be personally and socially responsible and to interact with one another.

Attending this course was not only a wonderful adventure it was an education - it was inspirational!

I am confident that our time at Outward Bound benefited us all throughout our lives. I continued with my Guiding and later on having had two sons I transferred to Scouting, working behind the scenes for my local district.

It is good to know that Outward Bound continues with its great work and I wish The Trust well for the future.



Extracts from Joan's log book and letters written to her family about her time at Eskdale:

"The food is very good and lots of it, but do we get hungry! The girls are all very nice, as you know there are 56 of us and it takes all kinds to make a community, but we all get along very well."

"This morning, as I spent my free afternoon rock climbing, I went with a few other girls to the Great Bank to do some advanced climbing. I thoroughly enjoyed this."

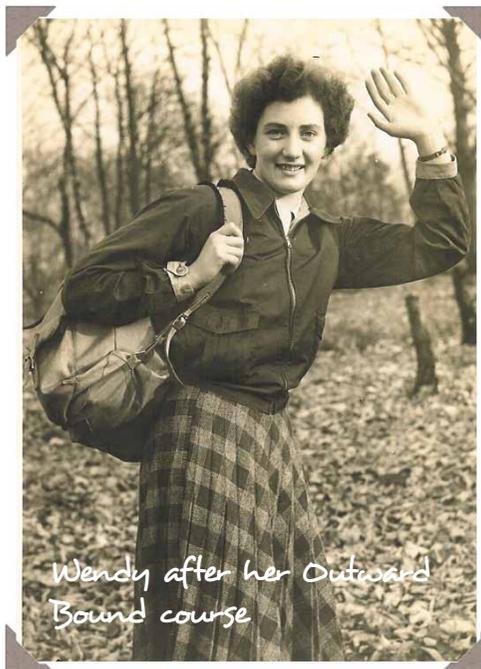
"It has been stressed that we are not competing against one another, but we are out to improve ourselves!"

"...it was very hot climbing the 2,500ft approach. We had lunch at the top and had a glorious snowball fight - the two men had a really rough time!"

Wendy Evans (nee Crompton)

My Outward Bound adventure in 1951 was certainly an amazing month of challenges, which has had an effect on me all my life. I was the youngest girl on the first ever experimental course in Eskdale. I was still at school, sporty and had a love of the Lake District from many family holidays there – so when my Headmistress asked whether I would like to go to Eskdale as a 'guinea pig,' I was thrilled. What I did not realise was that the amazing bunch of girls who came from all walks of life would very quickly become my friends and supporters. The staff members were fantastic and very inspiring, giving us all self confidence to conquer anything.

I am now 75 years old, fit and well. My husband and I spend a lot of time narrow boating around England despite three joint replacements (all successful) in the last six years!



Wendy after her Outward Bound course



Wendy with her grandchildren

If you attended the first Outward Bound ladies course along with Joan and Wendy we would love to hear from you! Please get in touch with us using the contact details at the end of this newsletter - we may even be able to arrange a reunion!

If you would like to share your Outward Bound memories like Joan and Wendy, please visit our website.

I am now also enjoying the pleasure of treating all my grandchildren to a week at Outward Bound after their GCSEs and hearing how much the experience has meant to them. So far six have been to Ullswater, three still to go! I am very proud of them all.

So this is Wendy Crompton (as I was then) wishing everyone who remembers me the best of health in the years ahead. I hope that the celebration of the 70th anniversary of The Outward Bound Trust in 2011 is a great success - The Trust is a very worthwhile enterprise which has come a long way since 1941.

Why I'm cycling around the world for Outward Bound: **Ken Roberts**

After having completed a course at The Trust's Eskdale centre in 1985, Ken Roberts felt inspired by our work with young people. Twenty five years on, he was still passionate about showing his appreciation for what he had learnt from Outward Bound and in doing so, he wanted to take part in an experience that would push him to the limit.



In September 2009 Ken set off on an ambitious quest - to cycle solo around the world to raise money for The Outward Bound Trust. Over four years Ken will cover a vast 45,000 miles, venturing through Europe, Asia, Australia, the Americas and Africa, stopping in at our international Outward Bound centres along the way and has set a target to raise £45,000 for The Outward Bound Trust.



So, we caught up with Ken to ask why he has taken on such an enormous challenge and why he chose to support The Outward Bound Trust.

“The Outward Bound Trust uses outdoor experiences and challenges to help young people unlock their potential. And this is not just their words – with the help of a bursary from The Trust, I had the chance to benefit from what would be described today as a ‘Classic’ three week course at a pivotal point in my own life.

But it's about much more than simply giving something back to The Trust, not just about helping others have the same opportunity I had. At the heart of The Outward

Bound experience is the journey metaphor – physical journeys alongside those of development and discovery for the individual and the team. It's a belief that we all have undiscovered potential that can be brought out through adventure – encouraging people to go out and do things that at first they believe to be impossible and encouraging a deep appreciation of the balance between risk, reward and responsibility. This is what my own expedition is all about.”

Below are some extracts from Ken's online blog, describing his memories of his Outward Bound course, and some of the tougher times he has experienced during his journey 'across continents.'

Dark days, lonely nights - 29 May 2010

Back in February, beyond Istanbul, there'd been dark days, lonely nights. I'd really struggled and had endless tussles with myself. Was this really for me? There were glimmers of light, my stay in Alapli with Zehra and her friends, but the clouds soon returned. But why? True, the Black Sea escarpment had some serious climbs – maybe six thousand feet each day – but that was bearable, even if I felt a bit frustrated by such slow progress. I was confused. The small villages I passed through reminded me so much of Serbia and Bulgaria, countries I'd felt so enthused by. People were welcoming, friendly, often beckoning me off the road for sweet Turkish tea. It just didn't make sense.

There'd been tough days before, but never the insidious self-doubt that was beginning to creep in. I found myself becoming increasingly preoccupied with self-analysis, much of it far from helpful, trying to work out what was gnawing away at me. I'd always imagined, even expected, there'd be times when I might falter a bit, question what



I was doing, and why. But not yet, not here. I'd gambled everything on this project, thrown my all into it. Failure, I told myself, simply wasn't an option. There'd been tough times in my life before, but I'd always persevered, never given up hope, never quit. And I wasn't going to start now. I couldn't – wouldn't – let people down – family and friends, The Outward Bound Trust, people I'd met on the road who'd been so kind and generous.

Looking back - 01 September 2010

Sailing past the vast wind farms south of Urumqi had put me into a reflective mood. A quarter of a century ago, an expanse of time I find difficult to conceive of, I was in the final throes of The Outward Bound Trust's flagship three week 'standard' course at their Eskdale centre in the English Lake District.

The timing was perfect. In the intervening years life I don't think I've shied away from challenges or

opportunities to improve myself. And yet nothing has ever come close to influencing the path I've taken as much as the course. Inward learning in the great outdoors. Doubt I've ever discovered so much about myself in such a relatively short space of time.

Sometimes wonder what I'd have made of it if, twenty five years ago, someone had said to me that one day I'd be cycling around the world to raise funds for The Trust. Not sure. But I am quite certain I'd not be spending tonight above a petrol station somewhere in Western China if it hadn't been for those three weeks back in 1985 and Course E341.



The Outward Bound Trust would like to thank Ken for the magnificent effort he has made to support our work and inspire others to challenge themselves both mentally and physically.

If you would like to follow Ken on his journey you can visit his website www.acrosscontinents.org where you can keep up to date with his blog, and donate to his Just Giving page www.justgiving.com/acrosscontients.

Ken's solo endeavour is a remarkable one, his stoicism and good humour are an inspiration to others to follow the road less travelled.

Ranulph Fiennes



Friends for life: **Dot Lovett and Jeff McRae**

In 1964, Dot Lovett and 'Jeff' McRae met at The Trust's Aberdovey centre and shared a dormitory for a month. Forty six years later, they are still the very best of friends. Read their amazing tale of friendship over the years and their memories of participating in an Outward Bound course below.

Dot's story

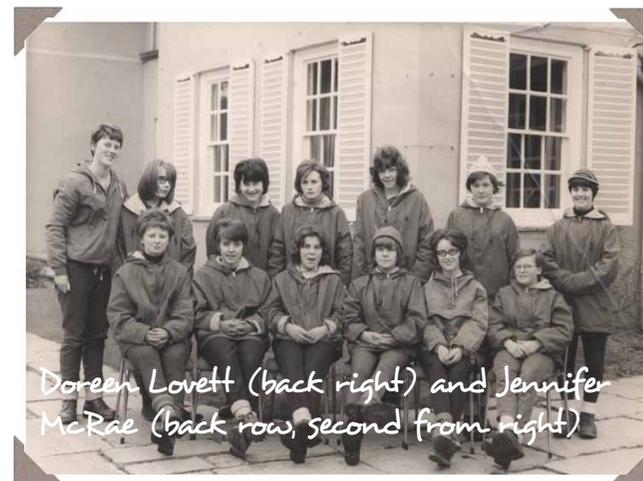
I went to the Outward Bound School in Wales in March 1964 with a contingent of 72 fifteen year old schoolgirls from all over Britain. We arrived on a very cold and wet day but we went on to have the most amazing month of our lives. Most of us were 'townies' that had never spent much time in the outdoors. I had at least had an auntie who lived in the Yorkshire Dales – so I wasn't as green as most, mind you it still didn't mean I was ready for the onslaught of Outward Bound life! We spent much of the month hating it and loving it all at once – I don't think any of us found it easy and most of the girls wanted to go home until the day they left. Needless to say they didn't actually want to go home when it was time to leave. Like all 15 year old girls there were lots of tears and many more echoes of "we'll keep in touch." Well I kept in touch with a couple of friends but as time moved on we, like a lot of others before and after us, lost touch.

One particular friend had been very special. We'd formed a friendship on the very first evening. I arrived with the

Lancashire contingent late in the afternoon with most of the other counties and the girl I was about to befriend arriving late in the evening, with the Glasgow contingent. The dorm light was off when they arrived and while they were standing at the door, the dorm mistress, Miss Knight, told them to come in quietly, find themselves an empty bunk and that they would be given more information in the morning. Two girls came in and one of them tried to get in a bunk at the side of mine – the girl underneath that bunk, who came from London and wasn't too keen on anyone she didn't know staying in the top bunk, became quite vocal and one of the Glasgow girls nearly jumped out of her skin when she was told in no uncertain terms to go away. Seeing her flinch, I said, "it's ok, you can have the bunk above mine." Friendship formed, we were to spend the next month inseparable, we shared everything – a tent as well as bunk beds. I had slight dyslexia as a child and had a habit of mispronouncing things but I'd learnt to have fun with it. And so my newly formed friend became Jeff, as in Jeffiner, instead of Jenn, short for Jennifer. In turn she called me Dot short for Dotty – my name is Doreen but the Dotty came from being slightly dotty (some things never change!)

Like all the other girls Jeff and I eventually lost touch. Aged 19, I left to work in Africa and duly lost my address book. Jeff had tried her best to keep in touch with me but I wasn't the best letter writers and she probably thought that I'd finally lost interest. By now it was 19 of 69 and I was in Africa. I met my husband-to-be there and we were married in 1970 in Lancashire. Unbeknown to me, Jeff had met and married her husband the month before in Glasgow. I dare say you've guessed that we did meet up again, and what a story this is.....

In 1982 my husband and I, with our two children, moved to Glasgow – my husband having been given a transfer with his company. As we made our way there, I turned to him and said "the first thing I'm going to do when I get settled is to try and find Jeff. It would be great to catch up again."



Almost two weeks later the children started at the village primary school. Like all new mums to the area I took the kids to school every morning and met other new mums doing exactly the same. One of them asked if I was interested in joining a local badminton club and of course I jumped at the chance, after all it would be a great way to meet other people in the village. I was no sooner through the door when I saw a strangely familiar face. After all those years I suddenly found myself hugging my long lost pal. Of all the coincidences, we'd ended up living in the same village - Jeff having moved from the south side of Glasgow when she married and me having been half way round the world. I can say that I am truly glad that we made the move north of the border.

Not being anything alike – Jeff is petite and quiet while I'm anything but petite and a little more vocal, we do share something that money can't buy – true friendship. Thank you for everything Outward Bound, you gave me the confidence to go out in this world and do what I wanted. If it hadn't have been for that I may never have had the courage to move to Scotland in 1982 – and I would never

have met up with my long lost pal again. Now we'd like to meet the others – all 72 of them. If there's anyone out there who can help, please do get in touch. The photos below might help to jog some memories.

Regards, Dot Lovett

PS my Outward Bound badge is, and always has been, one of my most precious possessions. We worked very hard for our badges and I always smile when I see mine tucked away in that safe place with other special things.

Jeff's story

I was one of the girls selected to represent Glasgow at Outward Bound School in Wales in 1964 - what an adventure for a 15 year old girl who had never been out of Scotland. We set out on a cold day in March for a very long train journey to Wales. We were the last to arrive and were very tired. We were shown our dormitory and told just to pick a bunk bed and we could explore all in the morning. The first bunk I came to was occupied by a girl from London who decided she wasn't sharing with a girl from Scotland with a strange accent before a very welcome shout came from another bunk "you can share mine," and a lifelong friendship began.

We shared many adventures in that month which we still talk, laugh and argue about. One particular memory springs to mind: porridge. When we were out camping we always had porridge in our rations. The first person up would make breakfast and of course, me being Scottish, the porridge was always made with salt but when Dot made it, it was always made with sugar, hence those mornings I never had any breakfast.

It was a very cold, snowy month but still we camped, climbed mountains, abseiled, canoed, swam in rivers and the sea, acted in a plays and altogether had an amazing journey. On returning home, Dot and I kept in touch for a while but with no telephones, emails or mobile phones, we soon lost touch.

In 1970, unbeknown to either of us, we both married and each went on to have a girl and boy; we have also just celebrated our ruby wedding anniversaries and are now both grandmothers. In 1982 Dot and I met again in a village north of Glasgow where our families lived for many years. We have often talked about our month at Outward Bound and wonder what happened to the other girls. It would be lovely to have a reunion where we could reminisce of old times.

If you are out there girls, it would be lovely to hear from you.

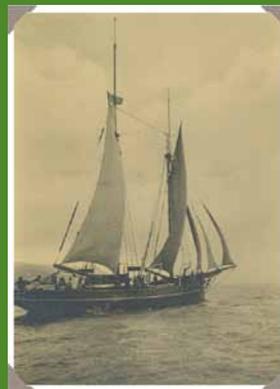
Regards, Jeff McRae.

Dotty (right) and Jeff (left) - don't they scrub up well!



Whatever happened to...?

Since our launch last November, we have discovered a wealth of historical information about The Trust and the people who have attended our courses in the past. However, we also have a host of unanswered questions, which people ask us on a regular basis. So in this issue of your newsletter, we're hoping to find out whatever happened to...



The Garibaldi Ketch

The Garibaldi was a 100 ton ketch that was used at our Aberdovey Sea School for sailing expeditions and sea training. Although we know how the Garibaldi came to be in Wales and that she was used by the O.B.S.S., we don't have any confirmation of what happened to her after she left us. We understand that she might have been sold to a Caernarvon company for further trade but sprang a leak en route. We've heard she was taken to Pwllhelli where she became a wreck, and was then set on fire. But if you can shed some light on the true whereabouts of The Garibaldi, then we would love to hear from you!

Loch Eil has a new 'generation' of visitors!

Since 1976 over 135,000 people have taken part in an Outward Bound course at our Loch Eil centre in the Scottish Highlands. Recently however, the centre has had some of its most surprising and rather unexpected visitors. Rory Stewart reports on Loch Eil's new guests in his instructor blog.



This summer, a number of Loch Eil's Classic course participants had the privilege of catching sight of some beautiful basking sharks in the Sound of Arisaig, a marine conservation area, located off the Scottish west

coast. "It's a place where we often paddle in good weather," said Rory, Deputy Head of Centre at Loch Eil, as he described these gentle giants as being the second largest fish in the world with some reaching up to 11 metres in length.

"Closer up, the sharks can be quite inquisitive and can come up to investigate our boats, often passing alongside or even underneath them. On such occasions you can get a great view of their gaping white mouth and gills filtering the plankton, as they cruise along."

"Watching the big black dorsal fin silently edging towards your kayak or canoe can be a bit nerve wracking, even if you know it doesn't want to eat you! On one occasion, we came across a pair of basking sharks following each other nose to tail as we rounded the north west point of the Ardnish Peninsula. Possibly some sort of courtship behaviour? The bigger of the two was very inquisitive and passed right under one of the participant's sea kayaks. We drifted around for almost an hour watching the sharks as they meandered around us."

So if you were thinking of revisiting our Loch Eil centre it may be a perfect time - you may even be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of a basking shark!

If you would like to share your story about your time at our Loch Eil centre please visit the Generations website:

www.outwardboundgenerations.org.uk

To read this story in full and take a look at more of our instructor blogs, please visit

www.theoutwardboundtrust.org.uk/blogs



A basking shark seen on expedition from our Loch Eil centre

Tell us your story...

Please email us at:
generations@outwardbound.org.uk
or write to us at:

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- ▶ We are all better than we know; if only we can be brought to realise this, we may never again be prepared to settle for anything less. ◀

Kurt Hahn, Co-founder of The Outward Bound Trust

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Ullswater, The Lake District, England
Howtown, The Lake District, England
Eskdale, The Lake District, England
Loch Eil, The Highlands, Scotland

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