

We English - Your Ideas



We English by Simon Roberts (pub: Chris Boot, 2009)

Simon Roberts travelled throughout England in a motorhome between August 2007 and September 2008, for this portfolio of large-format tableaux photographs of the English at leisure. Roberts' national survey was informed by the photography of his predecessors Tony Ray Jones, John Davies and Martin Parr, and by the romantic tradition of English landscape painting. Photographing ordinary people engaged in a variety of pastimes, Roberts finds beauty in the mundane; the result is an elegiac exploration of identity, attachment to home and land, and the relationship between people and place.

During the course of this project members of the public were invited to post ideas of events and leisure pursuits that Roberts could come and photograph; a suitably democratic way of working, positioning him as it did alongside his fellow countrymen – a citizen, not just an onlooker – and attempting to involve people, to a certain degree, in their own representation. The ideas that were posted provide an interesting snapshot of England in 2008 in their own right. They illustrate what's important to people and explore their own thoughts on the notion of Englishness. You can read them all here in unedited form and in the order they were posted on the website (www.we-english.co.uk), starting with the most recent.

Michael Blann November 13, 2008

We are an island and therefore surrounded by water and beaches. It has protected us throughout history, offered us a source of food, has been a playground in the summer and is ever changing too. I'm not sure what the specific project could be but it's a good starting point. Maybe beaches out of season, ports such as Dover as entry points into the UK, long shore drift and silted up land such as the fens or Romney Marsh in Sussex.

Dean O'Brien November 11, 2008

How about taking pictures of a scooter rally or photos of owners with their Lambretta scooters in their home environment? These scooters are an obsession for many English people and lots of owners have at least three or four. Patriotism seems to play a big part as well, even though the scooters are of Italian origin. I own a few Lambrettas and know plenty of people in the scene so feel free to get in touch if this sounds like a good idea.

Hannah Duguid November 10, 2008

Go to a village called Spital in the Street, which is considered to be the beginning of the 'North'. It's just south of Scunthorpe. There's a beautiful Georgian house designed by the architect John Carr of York and built in 1776. There's a lake, lots of geese, it's stunning in winter because there are so many trees and they look bleak without their leaves and there's a crumbling old Georgian bridge that was vandalised during the 1970s. It's a dairy farm as well so there are cows. The farmer, his son and grandson (he's 5) all live there and they will let you take their picture. They have two Jack Russell terriers who are also father and son.

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James

November 04, 2008

Go see Grantchester barrel race on boxing day.. before h&s and lack of pub goes for teams leave it by the wayside.

Watch it here- <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=U9rYDPxDRfg>

Jesus

November 03, 2008

English abroad, you know a lot of English live abroad.

In Spain a lot of them live as a english teacher, i know some of them who lived here 10 years, and some of them go to Japan Birmania, etc,

Another issue is people on holidays on Spain - Ibiza, Canarias Island and Santiago Pilgrate.

All the best from Spain

Toby Coulson

October 15, 2008

Surf Casting - A sport where the participants use a fishing rod to cast a lead weight down a field the longest cast wins. there is a team of people who meet on Bodmin moor in Cornwall to practice very unique and interesting. I am a student currently studying in Falmouth and came across the event whilst photographing on the moor. Very different to see a group of people walking across the moor with fishing rods in hand.

Alec Chalmers

October 04, 2008

The nicest place in the UK without a doubt is Durdle-door in Dorset. The photographs of it are pretty good but they still don't do it justice. No tour of the UK would be complete without visiting this beach as it's been voted time and again the nicest beach in England. The cliffs and Durdle-door itself are the stuff of gods.

Jeff Hemmings

October 01, 2008

Lewes bonfire celebrations - i suspect you may know about this one, but this is by far the biggest and most interesting celebration of bonfire night - particularly as it involves the whole of the local community and is of immense political and cultural importance, not just to Lewes, but for the UK - not least the fact that if someone proposed such an event today the health and safety people would laugh in their face!!

Strangely, it still seems rather like a special, underground celebration unbeknown to outsiders..

Dennis Beevers

26 September 2008

This may seem macabre but there is a whole book just waiting to be written whose subject would be the shrines which have sprung up on roadsides where a loved one has been killed in an accident.

Some are attended more regularly than many a grave , with floral tributes frequently restored. Others have grown to iconic proportions with photos and the deceased 's number plate .

All have a tale to tell I'm sure.

For starters, if it's still there , look near the lay by on the A628 near Woodhead between Glossop and Barnsley (the Woodhead pass). It's just before the lay by which is more like an old quarry entrance and has a snack bar trailer in it. This is on the left if you are travelling from west to east. The shrine is in a very dangerous section.

Zelda Blackadder

September 19, 2008

I. Sorry its a bit late in 2008 for this but there is a fair on the small green of Kew Green, probably the last Saturday in August of each year. Apart from bric a bric and local crafts stalls there is a large marquee where the local Horticultural Society display their produce and prizes are awarded for the

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best or largest vegetables and fruit. Also included in the awards is home made bread, preserves, even photography! Its a real local event.

2. In Kew Road near to Kew Gardens is a traditional English tudor style Maids of Honour Teahouse. This is owned and run by the Newens family and has run at least 3 generations and work on the premises. Tea is served in Spode blue and white ware. All cakes, tarts, pies and bread are baked on the premises and quite delicious. The house delicacy is "Maids of Honour", a pastry to have with tea or coffee which is a "secret recipe" and apparently dates back to Henry VIII. This establishment also serves coffee and lunches!

Andrea Pendray

August 31, 2008

September 6th 12 noon - Chalfont St Giles Country Show

This Show has been taking place yearly for over 100 years & is held on Stone Meadow, which is where Oliver Cromwel camped after the Battle of Aylesbury.

The Show has 2 main aims: to give people a good day out & to distribute funds raised to local good causes.

The theme of this year's Show is Paradise, to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the completion of Paradise Lost by Milton, who lived in Chalfont St Giles for a while.

Mary Meek

28 August 2008

Disaster. The Bellingham show has been cancelled due to bad weather! How typical of an English summer!

Mary Meek

27 August 2008

Every year we go to the Bellingham Show which is on the last Saturday in August. This is a truly English Northumbrian event with homemade jam, scone and cakes to be judged, made by Mrs. Cannybody.

Sheep and terrier events, Northumbrian piping and Cumberland wrestling. This entails, grown men and boys men in velvet embroidered knickers wrestling according to weight not age and girls being pulled on sledges behind quad bikes for money (our 22 year old daughter gained second place and won £30).

There is show jumping, fancy dress on horseback and lots, lots more. I am not an organiser just a spectator who knows how to have a good time on the last Saturday of the Summer Hols.

I hope you are inspired, there could be plenty of weird and wonderful photographs to be had. There are plenty of campsites in Bellingham that you can stroll back to if you have accidentally spent the afternoon in the beer tent! Hope you can make it. Bring a picnic and your wellies.

Bruce

22 August 2008

Hi Simon,

Hope you don't mind I took these pictures of you on the pier, I was the chap distracting you while you were busy trying to work, sorry.

I love your pictures, I like the way you photograph people, do we British look so comfortable posing in a formal way? Luba in the kitchen is great.

Are you still looking for subjects to photograph for the "We English" book? I work for Roadside Assistance, part of the RAC but I have no branding on my van, I could sort a roadside breakdown in a safe place if your interested?

Look forward to seeing the book. Good luck

Caroline

August 25, 2008

Griffin Association in Blackburn Lancashire along with Griffin youth club have received funding to deliver a music event in the local park, the aim of the event is to bring live music to the community and to promote bands, instruments to all. You have met some of us before at an event in Blackburn on a car park with young people DJIN

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Colin Procter

August 18, 2008

It's a bit late in the year for it, but have you taken in a rock festival? Rather than the big corporate events, lots of towns and villages hold smaller scale festivals, featuring local bands and centering on pubs and parks etc. The rituals and characters you find at these places can be fascinating; local old missed-the-boat musos, local radio DJs, the almost famous, appreciative crowds of family members.... Alternatively, "battle of the bands" talent spotting events are a very similar institution and are probably most popular around autumn time...

Carol

August 11, 2008

The National Forest Wood Fair is held on August Bank Holiday Monday. In a magnificent setting below the craggy summit of Beacon Hill Country Park in Leicestershire, see quintessential English crafts such as willow weaving, pole lathe turning, coracle making or ancient dug out boats, watch a wheelwright at work and traditional horse logging.

Thousands of people flock to this annual event and enjoy having a go at many of the activities, and sampling the tempting choice of locally-sourced food and drink. New this year is the grand auction at the end of the day. The gavel will come down on a handmade coracle, the chain saw sculpture made during the day, and a Gordon Monk child's chair, plus a selection of other top quality items. The Wild Man of the Woods sings his songs and spins his yarns throughout the day, you can learn survival skills and all about country potions. The photographic possibilities are endless and it would be great to include this in the We English project. What could be more English than an oak tree? National Forest Wood Fair Monday 25 August, 10 am -5 pm see www.nationalforest.org

Miriam

August 06, 2008

On 11-13 September, the Temple is hosting an RHS flower show within its huge garden. It's a little known fact that the Temple is actually the original home of the Chelsea Flower Show, and hosted the RHS's annual spring show there from 1888 to 1911, before this got transferred to its current Chelsea location. This year will be the first time in nearly a century that the show will return to its original home and many of the exhibits are marking the occasion with ornate historical displays.

Just for info, the Temple is a 20-acre piece of land that lies between the Embankment and the Strand, and is home to two medieval Inns of Court, an 800-year old round church (made famous in the Da Vinci Code), the Elizabethan Middle Temple Hall and the enormous Inner Temple garden (3 acres!). Any chance the floral show, garden or round church might make a good photostory?

David Mercer

4 August 2008

I saw the picture of Janet's Foss in the Times today - it's very much part of my childhood years, and I took our son there a few years ago too. It's a great place, with Gordale just up the road, and the Cove/tarn away behind. If you're in Staffs/Derbyshire you may want to go to my cousins farm above Ilam, you can check them out at www.beechenhill.co.uk. Make sure you go up the Manifold Valley, around all the local villages - it's great stuff.

Allan Stone

August 01, 2008

16th Aug, the start of the football season at Pro level, sports plays a huge part in many peoples lives in england money in the game is huge, grass root level people play and have to pay..... it is going from the street and local field..... this might be a good idea?

Derek Pimble

July 28, 2008

At the present time a second TV mast is being erected alongside the first, at Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham. The riggers can be seen quite clearly, working some hundreds of feet above the ground. With a telephoto lens, should make a good picture

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The Sevenoaks Directory

July 22, 2008

I'm reliably informed that there is going to be a drag race with a difference held in Tonbridge this summer. Instead of cars they're going to use narrow boats on the river medway. At full tilt they may even reach 5 miles an hour!

Less exciting but still photo worthy. They often have a guy playing a piano on a floating platform in the middle of the lake at Hever castle. Summer weekends I believe.

Alex Davey

July 22, 2008

60th Anniversary of the 1948 Olympics - Firefly dinghy Nationals Champs in Torbay in 1st week August 2008.

In 1948 the Olympic sailing events were hosted in Torquay. The single handed dinghy chosen was the firefly. The winner of the gold medal was a young Paul Elvstrom who went on to win a further three gold medals over the next few decades.

The firefly became very popular in the UK, particularly at universities, and it is still thriving now (as a double handed boat) offering cheap, close, competitive sailing. In the first week of August (3-8) we will be back at the Royal Torbay Yacht Club, 60 years on, for our National Championship regatta. One of the top competitors is sailing a beautifully renovated boat which was used in the '48 Olympics. Details on the RTYC website.

Louise Woodcock

July 22, 2008

Ramsgate is holding a Historic Festival.

It will be set in 1800, all will be dressed in 1800s costume.

It starts on Monday 26th July to Sunday 3rd August.

On the Sunday we will be having a Napoleonic re-enactment battle with the 88' regiment of foot "The Devil's Own".

More info our website: www.steppingbackintime.co.uk

Peter Laurie

July 21, 2008 - 08:19 AM

Come greyhound racing at one of 30 race tracks around the country and enjoy a very British sporting and social occasion. A fun, exciting and affordable night out for all groups and families of all ages.

One major forthcoming event is the final of the prestigious Sussex Cup competition at Hove Stadium on Tuesday 29th July, starting at 7.25pm. If it is a warm evening you can enjoy the top class racing from the terraces with a cool beer and watch the sun go down. Alternatively enjoy a three course meal in the well-furnished restaurant.

Nicole Hurwitz

21 July 2008

I came across your 'Photostory' in The Times this morning and have also had a look at your website, and found your concept very interesting. I am working on behalf of Hever Castle in Kent and would like to know if you would be interested in featuring the castle in your 'Photostory'. Hever Castle is best known as the childhood home of Anne Boleyn. The oldest parts of the castle, the gatehouse, walled bailey, moat and drawbridge date back to 1270. Additionally the castle is complete with beautiful gardens, including the Rose Garden & the Italian Gardens. On top of this, topiary decorates much of the castle surroundings and Hever Castle boasts one of the few full hedge mazes in the country open to the public, as well as a unique water maze. There are also many activities at the castle and they put on frequent events. I have listed some of the upcoming events that we have coming up, which may be of interest to you.

- Jousting Tournaments- July 26, 27 & Aug 2, 3, 16, 17, 23
- Out of Africa (supporting the work of The Cheetah Conservation Fund), 'Experience the thrill of the chase as the cheetah hunts with vultures and birds of prey'- Aug 9, 10, 24, 25
- Mediterranean Weekend, 'see how citrus, olives and the hottest chillies grow in the Italian

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Gardens'- Sept 20-21

- Halloween- An event for adults & children, 'spooky stories and workshops'- Oct 27- Nov 2

For more info, see- www.hevercastle.co.uk

Let me know if you would be interested at all or if you have any questions.

Vic Steyerma

July 21, 2008

The 43rd. annual Worstead Village Charity Festival.

Home of the world famous Worsted woven cloth.

Three day country festival 25/26/27th July

Something for everyone.

Arts/crafts marquees/ stalls/

Full programme of entertainment in village square and display ring on Sat/Sun, groups, vintage

tractors/cars/heavy horses/sheep dog displays/rescued birds and animals/home made

food/bands/children`s rides, demonstrations by famous Worsted Weavers and lace makers in the village

church. Large car parking area/trains from Norwich and free tractor rides to village from station.

Probably the best value for money family day out you will find. 10am-6pm daily.

Children £1.00 Adults £5.00

Come and enjoy a Norfolk country day.

N. Coulson

17 July 2008

There are don't-miss local sights we can recommend - August is (local agricultural) show time in Cumbria – the Grasmere sports being in many respects the least interesting and most touristy. Try the Patterdale Dog Day if you want to go back to Wordsworth's England with matching accents. There are others, but I need to check with the locals that photography would be welcome . . . in the NW Frontier province, the sensibilities of the hill-tribes should be respected. You must also go to West Cumbria – one of the remotest and poorest places in England. The Lake District distorts the perspective terribly.

Bonne route!

John D Carswell

16 July 2008

This is not English in any way but we can have 500 dancers from all over the place/world having lively fun to some live music in the courtyard of this ruined Palace where Mary Queen of Scots was born: the website may give you some idea www.scotchhop.co.uk.

It is on Wednesdays 16th July to 13th August and there is a pipe band before etc and Beating the Retreat 22.30 Wednesday 6th August

I look forward to seeing you. (I am the guy with the mic)

Peter d'Aguilar

July 16, 2008

The National Pinetum at Bedgebury is the finest collection of conifers on one site in the world. The collection has over 10,000 trees shrubs from five continents growing across 320 acres. Many are rare, endangered and historically important specimens.

It is a beautiful and tranquil place to walk, picnic and enjoy nature away from the stresses of everyday life. Each season offers different experiences and delights:

Summer - the many giant specimens cast deep shadows and dappled shade, creating a cool oasis in the warmth of the sun.

Autumn - the fiery leaves and brilliant berries stand out in sharp contrast to the background of rich green conifers.

Winter - a light dusting of snow or a sharp frost transforms the Pinetum into a winter wonderland.

Spring - a kaleidoscope of azaleas, daffodils, rhododendrons and bluebells.

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Kathryn Saul
July 15, 2008

This Sunday - 20th July, the Crystal Symphony, the most elegant mid-sized cruise ship in the world, will be docked in Liverpool with the Tall Ships. Imagine - the juxtaposition of old and new with a backdrop of the Liver Building. MAGIC!! We will be there - hope you are too. Kathryn.

John D Carswell
July 16, 2008

Linlithgow Scotch Hop - Scottish Dancing for All held in the ruined Linlithgow Palace (EH49 7AL) with several hundred folk dancing round a 600 year old fountain. 20 miles west of Edinburgh. See www.scotchhop.co.uk Dancing is very difficult to photograph!
Linlithgow is in Scotland!

Patrick Daniell
14 July 2008

I have read in the Times that I may post ideas for your photographs on your website. I have tried to do this but without success; hence this email. I will be opening my garden (Abbey Cottage, Itchen Abbas, near Wnchester www.abbeycottage.net) for the public in aid of the National Gardens Scheme Charities (The Yellow Book) on Sunday and Monday 24th and 25th August. My openings are always a very English occasion - a lovely garden, teas and plants for sale, lots of visitors, and I always fly St George's Cross). If you are nearby you may like to take a photograph.

Tim Mitchell
13 July 2008

My contribution of what to photograph is a really obvious one which I'm sure you'll already have on your list. Speakers corner - London.

Angela Humphery,
14 July 2008

I saw your picture of Peatling Magna, Leicestershire, in today's Times2 and that you are up for ideas for more pix.

What could be more English than a garden party to raise funds for an animal charity? A double whammy!

I see that you are fixed up this week in Cheshire and Merseyside so probably could not make our lunch in a Hampstead garden for Compassion in World Farming this coming Sunday, 20th July.

However, we are having our third (and last for this summer) lunch on Sunday, 17th August at 12.30. This will be for The Born Free Foundation and its founder, Virginia McKenna will be here in person to greet our guests and to tell them where their money is going.

My husband and I (both in our late 70s) have been doing these fun(d)raising lunches for the past six summers and our next will be No. 18. We have about 50 guests at each one, an eclectic bunch of people, some local, some from as far away as Lancashire, Hampshire, Sussex and even China, and we charge £20 a head which includes home-cooked food (with a little help from my friends) and unlimited white wine (provided by my husband). With money from a raffle we manage to give each charity a cheque for around £1,500. It's a wonderful way of keeping up with old friends, making new ones and helping charities dear to our hearts. As long as it doesn't rain! Come and join us.

Frank Greaney
July 14, 2008

The tall Ships will be out in Force on the Mersey 18/07 -20/07. A great photo opportunity

Melanie Moughton
11 July 2008

I understand that you are looking at various welly wanging competition around the country. I work for the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI) which is the farming charity for England and Wales. In October we are holding a fundraising and awareness initiative - Welly Week.

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We have been busy promoting this campaign and have a number of events taking place including a number of Welly Wanging events. With this in mind I was wondering whether you might be interested in including our welly events in your research?

Please find attached a fundraising pack which will give you more information about our charity and what we hope to achieve with Welly Week. We have already got support from Farmers Weekly, the NFU and Hunters.

Should you need any further information please get in touch.

Grace Barnes

July 09, 2008

I went to the local laundrette for the first time in ages and I could not believe the cross section of society I encountered in just one hour. I was there because my washing machine had broken but I imagine reasons vary. I then realised although it is not quintessentially English, the laundrette, it does tend to be amongst the foundations of communities. Represented in soaps like Eastenders, it's a hub at the centre of a community. Not only this but they do also tend to be visually, really interesting places, the decor and equipment having remained the same for years. Not the victim of technological advancement, who cares what the laundrette looks like even though one may spend hours in there!? I found it fascinating, sparked loads of questions and thoughts about how we all go about our daily lives and I just thought it was a real draw when looking for grounds to study society!!! Hope you agree, I see it as a one shot wonder!

Barbara Fleming

July 07, 2008

Sunday 13th July will see the 31st annual Pram Race in Kimberley, Nottinghamshire.

Contestants wear fancy dress and push wacky contraptions through the streets to raise money for charity.

The event starts at 1pm from the Stag Inn, finishing at the Nelson and Railway Inn.

Gillian Burch

July 07, 2008

On Friday 11th July 2008 as part of the Eastwood Arts Festival over 700 pupils from 9 different schools will parade through Eastwood, Nottinghamshire the theme will be 'Planets' the parade will commence at 1.00pm and will parade from Chewton St along Nottingham Road through Eastwood Town Centre onto Eastwood Comprehensive School field where children from the age of 3 to 18 will present their art work.

Hope you will be able to attend this event.

PS. You are probably aware that Eastwood is the birthplace of D.H. Lawrence

K Gifford

6 July 2008

How's it going? How about photographing a car boot sale, a pub lunch in a beer garden, or a gathering of friends at a bbq in the garden? That seems to sum up our summer so far? We're away camping in France from 12th - 28th July but would love to see after that one weekend in Suffolk if you are coming to this neck of the woods. It's beautiful here, we love it.

Sue Clements

6 July 2008

I was very interested to read about your "We English" project and responded to your website invitation informing you that this year's opportunity for people to become Centurions will be held Milton Keynes on Sat/Sun 15th/16th August. During the course of that weekend walkers will attempt to walk for 24 hours non-stop. Those who achieve 100 miles will be eligible to be invited into the Brotherhood of Centurions and will be allocated a unique number to record their achievement. e.g. see my email address - I am the 950th British Centurion. As we get closer to the date of the event we are becoming increasingly interested to know if you will be coming along. If so, I will send you details of the venue etc. Further details can be found at <http://www.centurions1911.org.uk/>

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Andrew Keeble

June 30, 2008

We are Debbie and Andrew Keeble of Debbie & Andrew's sausages and would like to ask for your help in supporting the beleaguered British pig industry by capturing our Welly Wanging competition to raise money for Farm Crisis Network.

As pig farmers of 20 years before we diversified into sausage making and after successfully developing a fair price structure for our farmers and processors, we are holding a welly-wanging showdown at the Royal Agricultural Show in Stoneleigh, Warwickshire on Thursday 3rd July. The aim of the day is to keep the plight of struggling pig farmers in the public eye and, at the same time, raise money for Farm Crisis Network, the charity which provides support for farmers and their families.

Hopefuls who sign up will be encouraged to put their heart and sole into perfecting their boot-chucking techniques. The best home-grown talent who throw the furthest over the course of the day will be challenged to a final our North Yorkshire farm later in the summer. In the hope of a win at next year's Boot Throwing Championship games, we also plan to sponsor the best overall talent with a trip to the event in 2009.

As pig farmers, we have been lucky, but many more are struggling at the moment and we wanted to find an interesting way to keep their plight in the public eye. We spend our life in wellies, they appear on our new sausage packaging and Yorkshire is both our home town and the home of welly-wanging, so it seemed the perfect fit for our campaign. We will be asking for an entrance fee of £10 per person and all proceeds will be donated to Farm Crisis Network.

We do hope you find this particularly English eccentric past time of interest. Please do let us know if you and your family would like to come along.

Philippa Benson

June 30, 2008

The Harley Davison meet in Kirkby Lonsdale (edge of lakes, lovely place you may know it) is worth a visit, they meet at Devils Bridge for bacon butties. It is in July but not sure when exactly. Hope your trip is going well.

Colin Reeves

June 30, 2008

Pershore Abbey is a stunning setting in the middle of England with a spectacular day planned for the Plum Fayre on August Bank Holiday - 30 gleaming Rolls Royce cars will mark out the plan of the long-gone cloisters while 100 teddy bears will race down zipwires from the top of the 200ft tower. Inside the hollow tower (part of a thriving parish church) more teddy bears will leap off with parachutes. The organ will play, the bell-ringers will ring and Plum Fayre activities will be all around the town and River Avon. See www.pershoreabbey.org.uk and www.pershoreplumfestival.org.uk

Carla Evans

June 30, 2008

Martin Burton, the proprietor of Zippos Circus, would like to invite you and your family to come to the circus to meet him and the eclectic circus artistes who make up this diverse and magical travelling community. You would be given a normally unseen glimpse into the circus world - including seeing the trailers where the artistes live to finding out what really goes on behind the scenes. And of course you would also get to see the show (and maybe join in yourselves!)

Zippos Circus is England's largest traditional touring circus, with the Big Top moving locations every week until November 2008. To see more about the circus and where we'll be, please visit www.zipposcircus.co.uk

We hope to welcome you to the circus soon and wish you the best of luck with your project!

Janet Conneely

30 June 2008

Why not come and visit your old haunts at Tandridge Village Fete - 12 July, the Glebe Field opposite the church where you will find the 'National' Egg Throwing Championship taking place at about 5ish - eggs are thrown and, (more importantly for a win) caught! Along with the quintessentially English tea

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and beer tents, pimms, Tandridge Grand Prix (well remote controlled cars on a course) ferret bingo, something with a cow in it, tug of war, slippery pole - all run by the local villagers, parishoners of the church and parents of the school to benefit the village hall, church and school. even the minutes of our meetings are surreal and not to be missed - committee comprises several northerners and several posh oxted ladies! oh and forgot to say our compere is wonderful - completely whacky and terribly British! whole thing starts off at 1.30.

Also the other really good things around here are the Tandridge Village Show - hilarious acts from the village - people actually pay money to come and watch!

Also Outwood in Surrey have the most fantastic safari supper night (think its around harvest festival) where the whole village go round to each other's houses for various courses, and then regroup in the village hall for coffee at the end.

Susanna Storey

June 27, 2008

I don't know if the channel islands are included in this project but if they are the sark sheep racing is someting you should check out! <http://www.sark.info/index.cfm?fuseaction=news.content&cmid=486> totally barny! check out the strange laws as well while you are there, like being able to marry at 14 and being able to beat your wife with a stick no larger than your little finger... looking forward to seeing this project!

Fergus Noone

One idea for your "We English" project came to me from a conversation I had with a plumber friend of mine. He recently joined the local conservative club in Eltham SE London and described to me the selection process. I thought to myself what a great scene "A Conservative Party selection panel interviewing a prospective new member" and how English.

Good luck with the project and I hope it proves a huge success.

Gary Butcher

17 June 2008

Send the photographer to the green bikers cafe (burts cafe) at high beech/ epping forest. andy in epping

Since our photographer friend is in Chelmsford today, there is one quirky place I can think of.. It's the transport 'wall' of the garden of the house on the corner of Mildmay Road and Grove Road. I don't know what state it is in at the moment [I know he paints it occasionally] but it is an amazing piece of work. I think he usually has a flag flying too - since Simon's theme is 'we English'.

Matching Green...(a village on the Herts/Essex border)

Hyland House (Chelmsford)

Ulting Church in Chelmsford

A couple of places I can suggest are..Thaxted (white washed Guildhall...market on a Friday morning).

Also a tiny village which intersects Herts/Cambs and Essex - called Great Chishill...I think it's the highest point in all three counties..and on a clear day you can see Eastern Europe (so I'm told!)

Peter Combes

June 17, 2008

You are welcome to come to see me teach Basic first aid to students from companies/schools etc all over the Abingdon ish area, (I have a large footprint, you would see why if we met).

Better still we as in the British Red Cross, Commercial Training Team run courses everywhere in the UK & Ireland.

Just pop onto www.redcross.org.uk. Click on first aid at work and you will see loads of courses going on, some wherever you are.

Why not give the central admin number a call, say who you are and why your interested. I'm sure they will be happy to assist.

If you want to catch me then do give me a call.

This Friday I'm in Milton Keynes teaching infant & children resus at a community school.

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(Friday night Teaching judo in Faringdon on a community project, started in 1964, my hobby since 1971).

Monday in Cirencester teaching a 1 day adult works related life support (students from various local companies there).

Thursday + Friday next week at my base here in Abingdon at the above address. Teaching a group of 24 students on their refresher course. To enable them to re-qualify as first aiders in their respective workplaces.

Simon. This is a positive side of life that people don't see, in these uncertain times it's nice to see. You could be that window.

"Always look on the bright side of life"

Michael-John Jennings

June 16, 2008

Essex: Suggestion

I am a photographer and saw your pic in today's Times and I think your overall project sounds fascinating.

As you are in Essex I think you could go to Dagenham. It's old white working class territory but always had a history of right wing politics it featured on recent BBC series white working class. Not sure of specific event but Barking and Dagenham as a borough is very interesting. Also Faces nightclub in Gants Hill the nightclub frequented by footballers and wannabe Jordan types...could be very interesting to photograph from different perspective to the usual papps who hang outside there on a Sunday night

Caroline Picking

16 June 2008

I wonder if you might be interested in coming to photograph our school sports day tomorrow - Tuesday June 17th between 1.30 and 3pm. St. Philip's Priory is a small independent school in Chelmsford; sadly, our owners, The Servite Sisters, have decided to sell up after 80 years, so this will be our very last sports day. We are a traditional family school (I teach year 2- I was a past pupil, as were my children and my father), and the children are delightful. We have races such as potato and spoon, skipping, etc which are often no longer seen in England as they have been replaced by less competitive games.

St. Philip's Priory School

The head teacher is Sister Michelle.

It would be great to see you!

Kate McGregor

June 11, 2008

Hull Fair 10th-18th October.

This is one of the oldest travelling fairs in the country (it celebrated it's 700th birthday in 1993). It is looked forward to by local people as much as Christmas is. A good time for all.

Mary Thum

June 10, 2008

"The Bumps" in Cambridge, 11-14 June. I see Cathy Hunsley has already suggested this, but I'd second the suggestion!

Cathy Hunsley

June 10, 2008

This week Wednesday 11th to Saturday 14th June is May Bumps on the Cam in Cambridge. This is a form of rowing devised to suit the Cam, where you cannot row side by side. It is almost impossible to describe but each race is several minutes of total chaos and great fun - particularly for spectators who've picnicked on the riverbank first. Taking part are something like 1500 young people.

See <http://www.firstandthird.org/frames/rowing/bumpsintro.shtml> for details of Bumps with links to results and times of the races.

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Katherine Howells

June 10, 2008

Hi Simon, It was lovely to meet you last night. As suggested here is the link to the Cropredy Festival in Oxford. <http://www.fairportconvention.com/guide.php>

My parents have been going for a couple of years and from what I can gather it is a bit of an old hippy convention... don't tell them I said that. They will be there again with their camper, which is my Dad's biggest love, second only to my Mum (and hopefully me), so do give me a shout if you wanted a couple of tour guides.

Good luck!

Victoria

10 June 2008

I understand you travelling around England with your camera and family. I wondered if you would be interested in taking pictures of my Dad's Lavender field. He is having two open days on Sunday 6th and 13th July where the fields are open to the public and last year hundreds of people turned up. I know he would be more than happy to show you the fields another time however if you cant make it then. I have attached a picture so you can see how beautiful they are.

We are based in West Sussex, near Chichester.

If you have any questions or need any more information do let me know

Vanessa Stabler

June 10, 2008

The East of England Agricultural show is being held at Alwalton Showground, Peterborough on 13th, 14th and 15th June.

Julie Lenton

June 10, 2008

On Thursday night we will be having a sport evening at my house for a group called "The Huw Johnson Club". This is a club for disabled people and this is one of their summer events. If you would like to join us in Essex (know you are in Cambridgeshire this week) you would be very welcome

John Woodcock

9 June 2008

On the first Tuesday in August for more than 200 years - August 5 this year - the Egton Bridge Old Gooseberry Society near Whitby, North Yorkshire, has held a competition to find the season's heaviest berry.

It's one of the last such societies in the country and certainly the oldest. More than 80 growers from around the country will present their offerings after months of complex nurturing.

The honour is for the title Champion Berry, and there are secondary classes involving colour, shape, hairiness, etc. Prizes are modest and non-cash - the gooseberry people don't want to fall victim to the temptations which have tainted leek and marrow-growing.

Judging of the gooseberries, involving ancient scales and what have you, begins in the local primary school at 8.30 am. The winners are announced in late afternoon, and a party follows.

The setting is marvellous and the whole thing captures English eccentricity perfectly.

I'm sure the organizers would be delighted to see Mr. Roberts.

Jessica Walters

June 09, 2008

I am a student at Cambridge University and the Cambridge University Amateur Dramatic Club (ADC) are currently rehearsing for their may week production of High Society, in which I am playing the lead, Tracy. The performance is on 17th-19th June at 2pm in Emmanuel College Fellows Gardens.

Even if you would be unable to make the performance, I thought it would be lovely to photograph some of the rehearsals taking place outside in the gardens on a wonderful summers day.

We would be honoured for you to come and if you would like any more information then please do not hesitate to give me a call.

We English - Your Ideas

Charlotte

9 June 2008

We are great fans of your *photostory*, and would like to invite you to attend a press preview of the inaugural Folkestone Triennial on 13 June. 22 major new art projects will be unveiled, ranging from a giant mobile seagull appreciate unit, a dog park for Folkestone's resident dogs and owners, comedic performances arranged by Jeremy Deller and major new works by Tracey Emin and Mark Wallinger among others.

All of the artists involved (nearly 30) will all be attending the press preview. There will be a photo-call with the artist Tracey Emin at 11.30am as well as opportunities to photograph the other works in the exhibition.

The Folkestone Triennial is one of the most ambitious art projects in the UK, and forms part of an ongoing campaign of cultural regeneration throughout the seaside town. I have attached the press preview invitation, as well as some press material for your reference, and do hope you can join us.

Jan Precious

June 09, 2008

Reading Phoenix Choir is 40 years old at the beginning of September 2008. We are holding a special dinner at the Calcot Hotel Bath Road Reading to celebrate the event. The choir is renowned throughout England giving about 20 concerts a year, and are very well thought of.

The musical director Norman Morris created the choir and is still very much in charge. He is a remarkable man having given his all for this choir and he also does music with Alziemer people and conducts an Operatic group.

Phoenix is his first love, and we have to date nearly 170 people to attend the dinner which will be an emotional and nostalgic evening.

We would love you to come along and photograph the event, and you may hear some fabulous singing too.

Sarah Flanagan

6 June 2008

I wonder whether we might be of interest to you and your book 'We English' which sounds a fascinating venture. This year Salisbury Cathedral is celebrating the 750th anniversary of the dedication of the building in 1258 so 2008 is also a special year for us.

There are two events coming up in June and July which fit your criteria – aka "...where groups of people congregate for a common purpose and shared experience....spare time, leisure pursuits....." and so on.

The next big event we have is from 17-21 June and is the spectacular Flower Festival. I say it is spectacular for more than one reason – not just because of the huge numbers of flower stems and foliage being used but also because the 550 flower arrangers are from the parishes and NAFAS members from throughout Wiltshire and Dorset, aka the Diocese of Salisbury.

Set up day is 16 June and will be full of photo opportunities – be it inside the cathedral with the ladies or out in the marquee where innumerable numbers of cups of tea and slices of cake will be served all day long!

I am attaching a news release which will give you some idea of the nature of the event – flower arranging being a hobby with a colossal following and Salisbury Cathedral itself being an iconic building. If you would like further information on this please call me and I will help you all I can.

Another event which might be of interest to you is the Diocesan Pilgrimage on Saturday 12 July for which about 1000 people - families, youth groups, young and older - are expected together with the Bishops of Salisbury, Sherborne and Ramsbury and all the Sudanese Bishops who are staying in Salisbury before attending the Lambeth Conference later in the month. It will be a hugely colourful event. Again, I am attaching some information about this but if you would like more, you have just to ask. After the Pilgrimage – which begins at Old Sarum just outside the city (the location of the original cathedral) – there are festivities in The Close and a joyous open air service plus the dedication of a new statue on the West Front of the cathedral. Plenty of photographic possibilities again!

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Alison Evans

June 04, 2008

From this week on, we get 45,000 people over just 3 weeks coming to see our world-famous quintessentially English rose garden: these are centuries-old rose varieties which flower only once in June. Their scent is superlative, the shapes of the blooms exquisite the stories behind their names romantic, and they attract visitors from all over England and the world. We're a National Trust property open every day until 8.0pm.

Tim & Maureen Roberts

June 04, 2008

On monday 21 July at 23 Keedwell Hill Long Ashton nr Bristol, Luca Phillips will be 2 years old- born on the hottest day and was 1 on the wettest day. What will the weather be like this year?
Tues 10 June at Queens Park Centre Aylesbury Bucks, the Sunflower Group are unveiling a community plaque made by the group (adults with learning disabilities).

Mikey Carr

3 June 2008

Excellent!! I'm bollocks with blogs – this might sound a bit gay, but once in a while, there's a Visla meet at Richmond park. We walk Louie on it, it's a big thing down here – I know it sounds a bit lame, but there's like 40-50 of these fuckers running around after the same ball. Visually it's a bit of a weird one – but looks great...they look like seagulls swarming around the trawler (in a non-Cantona way!!!!)
Really good to here from you – where are you now?

Rhian Croucher

3 June 2008

After seeing your page in the great new-look Times2 on Monday I thought I would flag up some photo opps we have going on in the coming weeks around England, all of which are fantastic fundraising stunts for the charity Retail Trust (for whom we do the PR).

From the 3 peaks trek in Yorkshire, to a skydive in Bicester, and a 30km run in Gravesend....retailers everywhere are joining forces to raise funds and awareness for Retail Trust Week (19th - 25th May). Activities have been going on for weeks, with some 110,000 retailers across 900 stores nationwide taking part. Please find several photo opps listed below.

If you require any further information or you think these are areas you will be able to travel to in your motorhome, it would be great if you could let me know!

Margaret and Peter

we will be opening our garden should you like to call and photograph it – Grafton Cottage.

J. Symons

June 03, 2008

The first new theatre of this millenium has opened this year. The Rose of Kingston, Surrey is more spectacular inside than out but it is manned by volunteer ushers and it would be fun to show one of the teams with the building as a background. There will be matinees on Saturdays June 7th and 14th at 2.30 and also on Thursday, 12th June again at 2.30pm. Call 0208546 6983 if you would consider organising such a shoot.

Mary Margaret Lambert

June 03, 2008

Our amazing volunteer run museum in Topsham, nea rExeter, Devon is holding a Secret Gardens Day on this Sunday June 8th, 11 hidden gardens will be open to the public in this history little town, you be so welcome....finish the trail with a homemade cream tea (of course, jam and then cream on our scones!!) Curious hidden heavens of plants, paving, sculpture and of course a plant stall full of cherished cuttings and seedlings!

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David Annetts

June 02, 2008

How about the annual remembrance day service on Great Gable in the Lake district?

Good luck with your project!

Mary Marshall

The Free Radicals are a ladies rowing VIII of a 'certain age' and will be competing in The Cambridge City bumps held on July 22 to 25th and we intend to get our blades!!

Alexandra Barbour

June 02, 2008

Dear Simon - in the week July 7th - 12th we are celebrating Ingleborough, The Hill in the Yorkshire Dales. It is on the western edge of the limestone dales - stunnig grey rock, guided walks up it, bat and moth watches , archaeology, kite flying - you cannot go wrong.

Come and join us and I promise you won't be disappointed - landscape and locals at their best.

Pamela Sim

June 02, 2008

How about visiting the Isle of Wight -(almost Hampshire!) to see "The Festival of Croquet" being held at Ryde Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, Playstreet Lane, Ryde. There will be Advanced Association Croquet, a Handicap singles event and an Alternate Stroke Doubles. The Festival runs from Thursday June 5th to Sunday June 8th.

We could arrange to collect you from the Hovercraft or Catamaran which both come to Ryde

Angela Cooper

June 02, 2008

On 16/17th August some of the biggest, loudest and dirtiest Monster Trucks will be at The Hop Farm Family Park, Kent. This year The Hop Farm will welcome a very special guest. Shane Lynch, singer with top band Boyzone and Monster Truck owner, will be meeting fans and showing them his driving skills on Sunday 17th August.

Monster Trucks weigh in at a massive five tonnes each, are 12ft wide, 10ft tall and 18 –20ft long. Each truck has over 1000 bhp and many around 1500 bhp. This is the equivalent of two and a bit Formula One cars!! Over the weekend these massive beasts will take each other on and race against the clock. Each race involves two nail biting jumps, a spin around a 180-degree hairpin turn and a final leap to glory over the last obstacle to the finish line. For more information check out www.thehopfarm.co.uk

Richard Hamblyn

June 02, 2008

Every September/October sees the Harvest of the Sea Thanksgiving festival, at St Mary at Hill, Lovat Lane, London (known as 'the Billingsgate Church'); the church is decorated with fish, nets and other items, and looks both strange and wonderful in its urban context. It's surprisingly popular, too.

Tim Matthews

June 02, 2008

Cricket: Please do come and see the Grayswood Under 11s side play against Witley Under 11s at Grayswood Village Green on Sunday 8th June 2008 at 10.00am. Youth cricket is alive and well and Grayswood (near Haslemere) has over 100 boys and girls in its various teams. Grayswood Village Green has a trademark oak tree in the playing area as well as beautiful church overlooking the ground.

Jo Underhill

May 28, 2008

Every boxing day, there is a tradition in Maldon, Essex, called the mad Maldon mud race where a large number of brave (and crazy) people have to cross the river, at low tide, and back again in deep, thick mud. It is hilarious to watch and local people come from all over Essex and beyond to watch this event Check it out....<http://www.maldonmudrace.com/>

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Sue

May 23, 2008

Go to flatford in suffolk. home of john constable and "the haywain" among others. join in a field trip or painting class you so obviously don't need to join the photography class!

Sue Hunns

May 22, 2008

Minsmere RSPB RESERVE Suffolk usually have something arranged over weekends and sometimes during the week and you are able to get sightings of wildlife. Last time we were there I almost had a "road kill" on my mobility scooter as a muncjac deer crossed the path close to us.

Aaron

May 20, 2008

Wiltshire. The crop circle season is coming up. Camp at the Barge Inn-

<http://www.cropcircleconnector.com/Travelogue/bargeinn99.html>

The Summer Solstice at Stonehenge or Avebury

<http://druidnetwork.org/sacredsites/stonehenge/manopenacc.html>

Maria Louka

May 20, 2008

The Race for Life in Regents Park 19th and 20th July 2008. It is all ladies running or walking for Cancer Research and all with a story to tell on the back of their t-shirts - it is a very large event with beautiful surroundings. I shall be taking part on the 20th July in memory of my father and in celebration for my friend who survived Breast Cancer.

Tom Nunes

19 May, 2008

I'm attending the Photographer's Gallery charity auction, looking forward to it My ideas for your new project are to get away from "Martin Parr" Village fetes and cream teas and look at the urban english and gatherings in the City. Working and living in the City, I think it'd be good to show the contrast and different worlds that co exist like Post work drinkers and the homeless on the same street, The clash of styles of in places like Hoxton and Shoreditch, Work parties going for a curry on Brick Lane, Friday lunchtime at Borough Market, the "informal gatherings" on the last train home from Liverpool Street station going into Essex

Judy, Bob & Gregory Hughes

24 April 2008

I couldn't quite work out how to use the ideas section on the website so thought I'd drop you an email instead. I've printed off the blurb and it sounds very interesting - we english

My Art ladies and one man "Fast & Loose" Art Group are painting outside on 3 occasions at least in June weather permitting - June 9th we will be painting the St Clements Church (in St John's, Worcester) Monday 16th June YMCA Building in St John's and 30th June the River Severn from a friends' garden. The 23rd June Greg and I will be eating strawberries at Wimbledon - queing no doubt - how English is that and probably in the rain!!

My eldest brother and his family live in Brighton. He has a company called "Wireless Workshop" or was called that and goes round the country to events installing short wave radio and radio stations to Universities etc. - Tim Postgate Foulsham - email and web site if you're interested in meeting him. I'm Judy Foulsham (for Art) must organise a web site sometime soon

Nice to meet you and see your wife and little girl in the Campervan. Bob was envious I think. My youngest brother is studying photography at Salisbury College after being widowed and left with a 2 and 4 year old! Life is strange. Who'd have thought that a trek in the Himalayas would have brought me to Worcester and the Malvern Hills! (18 years ago) We raised over 120 pounds today for the Hospice and I think spending leisure time helping others is in my opinion the most rewarding and enjoyable thing to do. Good Luck with your project and your journey. Meeting new people is so interesting especially in unusual places like the top of the Malvern Hills!

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Margarete Rolle

May 17, 2008

Thanks for your lovely visit.

We were delighted to hear about your current project and wish you all the best and more good weather! Three Counties Show: 13-15 June. "A celebration of the people and animals that make up the very best of British farming, country living and rural life".

Plus an exciting & entertaining programme of events: Harness racing, the parade of foxhounds, Grand parade of livestock, Hot air balloon take off, Metropolitan Police activity ride, Royal Signals Motorcycle display team, The Parachute Regiment Free Fall team and the Red Devils. www.threecounties.co.uk

Malvern Autumn Show: 27-28 September. "An eclectic mix of country pursuits, inspiring displays, enthralling entertainment and unique shopping. A great family day out in the heart of the country".

www.threecounties.co.uk

John Robertson

May 13, 2008

The 2008 Festival of History held at Kelmarsh Hall down the road from where I live on 19th and 20th July. I photographed it for The Telegraph in 2007 and met 'Queen Elizabeth', 'Charles 1st' a group of 'Russian' infantry, 'Roman' Guard, 'WWI pilots', 'German WWI soldiers' ,(who were all english), etc.,

Timothy Phillips

May 13, 2008

Scouts (not Baden Powell's lot, but the name for cleaners in colleges in Oxford University) gathering in a quod for a cigarette in the early morning, before starting to clean students' rooms.

School children queuing for chicken and chips after school at one of London's Chicken Cottage restaurants.

A shot across the leafy and rural-seeming cricket pitch at Vincent Square, Westminster, with Big Ben and the House of Commons looming right behind it.

Sam Gee

May 11, 2008

The very low-key but not to be underestimated pastime of having an allotment. My father has one and derives a great deal of pleasure from growing enormous amounts of fruit and veg - including things you would not associate with the UK, like Pak Choi.

Think the practice started during or between the World Wars, when food was scarce so home-grown was essential.

My folks live in Hampshire (but not for much longer as they're moving soon).

Michael Cockerham

May 09, 2008

Not sure how appropriate, but I remember when growing up making the journey to see my Dad's parents in Leeds. I remember lying in the back of a clapped out Mini 850 watching the sky turn to black as we passed through the Peoples' Republic of South Yorkshire, and its capital, Sheffield. When the last of my Leeds relatives died, the family went to the funeral, but it was the journey back that was informative: how many groups of people make journeys in convoy for whatever reason? Like us, they always choose to stop at a prearranged service area to stretch legs. Those service areas are so impersonal, and yet often they become an unintended last meeting place before groups split to go back to their everyday lives.

Lloyd Spencer

May 08, 2008

Just running through the activities that seem to me quintessentially English...

- fell running (esp. in Cumbria)
- village cricket (esp. under the looming peaks in places like Cumbria)
- superbikes (at places like Donnington)
- punts (Cambridge)

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- ballroom dancing (Blackpool)
- historic battle reconstruction (Sealed Knot and that sort of thing)
- and the various hunts

Football? in the road amid the back-to-backs, or the scratchy grass next to a tower block

If I were doing it in photojournalistic style I would wait near the playground in a sunny park for that moment when the paths cross of a dad and very young boy with a ball and someone with three dogs on a leash...

Tourism is such a vital part of local economies. Most 'traditional' festivities are likely to have a big PR component. What interests me are the new 'traditions' that have been invented, especially where these really are 'vernacular'...

Here in Headingley, Leeds the traditional pub crawl has long been called the "Otley Run" (see Wikipedia) as it goes along the Otley Road (A660). What is fairly new is how many groups adopt fancy dress . . . so that on virtually any day one can meet people in the most extraordinary costumes walking past the local supermarket. I have collected some photos of this scene at

<http://otleyrun.wordpress.com>

Adrian

May 07, 2008

Horseman's Sunday in London, generally mid-September. Horses from the Hyde Park stables are blessed by vicars on horseback.

Stuart

May 02, 2008

Jerry Deeney mentioned your "quest".

Might I suggest:

The Burning of Old Bartle: West Witton N Yorks onor around 1st week August

The Haxey Hood Haxey Lincolnshire (unsure of dtaes or if still happens!)

Good luck!

Rosie

May 02, 2008

In the Esk Valley in the North Yorkshire Moors, Egton is a picturesque village which is quiet, scenic and peaceful. Until June 8th, that is - when hundreds of people descend on the village for a charity road race which is always a fun day out for everyone who attends.

Whether you're a pensioner who fancies a scenic walk, a serious runner who loves a competition or a lazybones who fancies a sunny day followed by a few excellent pints in one of the village pubs, I would recommend Egton Road Race (aka the Gooseberry Run) to anybody.

For a little bit more information, visit this link-

http://www.sports-fitness.com/events/sf/uk/view/gooseberry_run

Mary Cook

May 01, 2008

Epsom Derby at Tattenham Corner

Well -dressing Shropshire

Frisby (can give you contact)

Proms in the Park

Uni rag weeks (do they still have them!!)

Open air theatre (National Trust venues)

queuing for Proms

Glyndebourne picnics

Morris dancers

outdoor bowls, croquet

steam engine enthusiasts

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Steve Brown

May 01, 2008

I have recently been talking this man on a bus, he's an area manager for the British legion. It seems like these clubs are seeing hard times because there are less people around who remember when and why they were originally set up. Apparently they are closing down quite alot. They are one of those ordinary things in english towns and as they would have once been quite important to the community maybe you should think about them for your book.

Simon Anstey

May 01, 2008

Although I am now ex-pat, when I think of England I always include what roughly 10% of the population engage in each and everyday of the week.....eating Indian Takeaway. Beats Macdonalds everytime.

All the best

Nina & Michael

May 01, 2008

Some locations we mentioned were

Have a skittles contact if you want more local info

Also thought of handgliding at Nymphsfield lots of hills around here with good thermals!!

Cheese rollers at Coopers Hill

Lock gates at Devises

Severn Bore

Cotswold Way

Canal boating(a friend of ours organizes the Saul Festival which is a huge gathering of canal boats here they have a web site for more info and we can put you in touch with Paddy who does it)

Someone told us Skittles is also big in Gloucestershire

Will email you as we think of more!!

We were very impressed by your photos on the web page!!

Tessa Bunney

May 01, 2008

I'm sure you will have considered fishing already but having spent a few years in my early freelance career photographing for fishing magazines, I was always fascinated by the (usually) men who sit on the edge of a very unpicturesque concrete hole with 3 fishing rods that beep when giant carp can't help but bite only to throw them back in at the end of the day. Not sure if that's peculiarly English but most other nations I've come across catch to eat! Also fascinating rogues galleries of huge catches. Let me know if you would like see of archive of Yorkshire venues.

Sarah Fisher

May 01, 2008

The Erith Riverside festival

This takes place every year by the side of the Thames in Erith Kent (which is in the London Borough of Bexley which is odd). The festivities are mainly outdoors but they also overflow into the local pubs and theatre which are next to and opposite the riverside gardens. Some years the festival is quite good with lots of things to watch and do and eat and other years it just seems bizarre with strange things such as the chip pan fire demonstration in 2006 (see the poster in the archived events section on the attached link).

http://www.bexley.gov.uk/service/towns/pdfs/events_archive

If 2008 is just peculiar festival or a rather good one there will still be plenty of interesting things to photograph with locals ranging from pensioners to babies attending. The town is also very old and has a great deal of history and it would be good for the events in Erith to continue to be recorded in photographs.

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Jo Foster-Murdoch

April 30, 2008

A floatilla of friends (from the very old to the very young) that only meet up once a year on an annual trip to the Norfolk Broads on the last week of July... Alcohol fuelled cruisers following a bunch of drunken musicians since 1965 whom like to call themselves The Water Rats Jazz Band - <http://www.water-rats.info/>. Last year I think there were about 12 hire craft following the band from their lunchtime gigs at an ale house on the Broads to evening gigs in similar situ. The next day - the whole process starts again.

Each year there is a different itinerary of daily lunchtime and evening locations for the week.

I have been following them for a few years now - as did my Mother - and am anticipating new itinerary coming out for 2008.....

Steph Murphy

April 30, 2008

I would suggest Rochester during the Dickens Festival, which takes place over the first weekend of December. The atmosphere is fantastic, as well as a funfair there is often a snow machine and lots of carol singing. The high street fits in perfectly with the Dickensian Christmas, people dress up in Victorian dress, there are roasted chestnuts and mulled wine sold on the streets. It really encapsulates that Christmassy excitement, and is undeniably, unmistakably, English.

Sarah Hayes

April 29, 2008

The pagan festival of 'Flora Day' takes place in a small town in Helston, Cornwall every year on May 8th. It celebrates the going of winter and the coming of summer. A re enactment of cornish saints and St. George occurs around the town where lots of people and children act out the Hal-an-Tow, St. George killing the dragon - my daughter is a fair maiden and I am a hedge apparently it is a very important role!. We sing as we dance. Also taking place throughout the day is the Flora Dance 7am early morning dancers, 10am hundreds of local schoolchildren dancing through the streets in and out of shops and houses, the Midday Dance with top hat and tails and big dresses and the early morning dancers again at 5pm. It is a really great day, Lily of the Valley is the official flower and everybody smiles, all the time. So on may 8th remember Summer is a come o and Winter is a gone o. It would be a great event to photograph as all the usual characters come out of the cupboard!

Lee Jackson

April 29, 2008

Hope you are well when we talked about your new project you asked about any events down here in Newquay, the Run to the Sun event is on from 23-26 May Here is the web site.

<http://www.runtothesun.co.uk/> Hope this is useful.

John Price

April 29, 2008

Several events spring to mind in the context of Englishness, to wit,

Any Folk Festival with a reasonable amount of traditional English Dance, no, not just Morris but North west clog dancing, Molly dancing from the Fens, Rapper sword from Northumbria, Longsword from Yorkshire, Mumming from all over and Border from the Welsh Borders.

Calendar customs galore but among the more interesting are

Hallaton Hare Pie Scramble and Bottle-Kicking.

Ashbourne Shrovetide Football.

Saddleworth Rushcart.

Rebecca Potts

April 28, 2008

My name is Rebecca and I used to live in Randwick in Stroud, Gloucestershire. I saw your photos on the BBC website, I think they were part of the "we england" campaign and it said that you might be interested in other very English traditions, well..... The villagers of Randwick, called runickers, have an

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annual tradition called the Wap (pronounced "wop"). I still live in Stroud and I try to make it to the Wap each year. Please find below details of the cheese rolling and the Wap.

"Randwick - Cheese Rolling

The first Sunday in May

Randwick is only one of two villages who still enjoy the ancient custom of cheese rolling. In Randwick the cheeses - usually three double Gloucesters are rolled mystically and anticlockwise around the Church after being blessed. The Church service begins at 10.30am on the first Sunday in May. The rolling of the cheeses supposedly wards off evil spirits. After rolling, one of the cheeses is cut up and shared amongst bystanders. Eating of the cheese protects ones' fertility and ensures future generations of "Runickers" - the local name for villagers.

The other two cheeses are kept until the following Saturday when they are rolled down the steep slopes of the Well Leaze three times as part of the ancient Wap celebration. For further details see Randwick Wap or contact Stan Giles tel 01453 766782.

The Saturday following the first Sunday in May

The Randwick Wap is an ancient procession and festival that dates back to the Middle Ages. The colourful and musical procession of villagers in traditional costume wends its way from the War Memorial to the Mayor's Pool. The procession is lead by the Mop Man who swishes his wet mop to clear the crowds. During the procession, the Mayor and Queen are carried shoulder high and escorted by an entourage of flag boys, ladies in waiting, cheese bearers, Princesses, a sword bearer and a flag man. The Mayor is dunked in the Mayor's Pool before being doused with spring water. The procession continues to the Well Leaze where two double Gloucester Cheeses are rolled down the steep slope. After the procession there are bands playing all afternoon, country dancing, stalls, and entertainments, refreshments and something for everyone. Admission to the Wap is free. It starts at 12.45pm on the Saturday following the first Sunday in May. For details contact Stan Giles tel 01453 766782."

The website which I got this from is

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleaction=print&articleid=1882>

Tryphena Penswick

April 28, 2008

What is more traditional than a village carnival? Where I live in Longridge we have a carnival every year with local playgroups and organisations such as the Scouts and Brownies taking part. There are decorated floats, the local brass band and lots of people in fancy dress.

This year the carnival takes place on Saturday 14th June and is due to start at noon.

Linda Rae

April 28, 2008

Hi, I am publicity person for a great re enactment gr

Regia Anglorum, which portrays the life and times of this island around a thousand years ago. We stay in character while maintaining an extremely authentic standard of reasearch in an attempt to get the public more in contact with thier 'roots'. It is a fabulous way for families to enjoy time together as we often camp over the weekend in some wonderful locations. We also have a full size Saxon longhall in a palisaded burgh which we are comstructing at the moment in three acres or so down in Kent(with real wolves!). If you want to come and see us in action or just find out a little more, please go to

www.regia.org or contact me at the above .

Jane

April 27, 2008

What's more english than camping/caravanning.. in all weathers! I've even lived to tell the tale of Hurricane Charlie (the hurricane that Michael Fish said would never happen) in a tralier tent, in Devon, on top of a cliff! There is nothing more English than the view of a load of tents on a field in the pouring rain and gale force winds! (and guaranteed that will be the moment that will be the moment your gas runs out!)

There are also camping & caravanning clubs all over the UK, all split into regional "centres". These different centres hold loads of events all year round, ranging from "quiet" weekend breaks (usually held near a pub!) to week long extravaganzas. My parents used to take me along to the New Years rally

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which involved walks, social evenings (with line dancing!!) and the New Year's dip in the lake early on new year's day for the brave (or still drunk!).

Also, you can't get much more English than a nice pint of bitter down your local pub... I'm currently living in Sydney and I can tell you one of the things I miss the most is a Sunday afternoon down at the tiny old minors pub The Harp in Little Neston, Wirral. It has fantastic views over the Dee estuary into the Welsh hills, a roaring fire and all the locals and their dogs. If you don't know people when you arrive you will be guaranteed to be saying bye to your new found friends when you leave! In my opinion it is the best pub in the world :o)

Bird watching is a fairly English past time... mind you I think any outdoor activity is English when you do it in the "unique" English weather!

wimbledon (and strawberries) in the rain (with Cliff Richard)

picnics

... blimey I'm really homesick now!

Sarah Farrell

April 27, 2008

For a traditional English leisure activity that is enjoyed by millions, you've got to look at amateur theatre. Try the Garrick in Stockport - it's England's oldest 'little theatre'. Season runs September to June. www.stockportgarrick.co.uk.

Joe Wheatley

April 26, 2008

I think my suggestions may not be unique but reflect my passions anyway.

Any act of worship in an Anglican (Church of England) church. Part of the fabric of our communities for four hundred years. Probably not appropriate during the service by before or after? Alternatively the village fete (Culcheth Community day - Monday 5 May) or 'Walking Days' up here in the North West. Steam Fairs - What is more English than our passion for old machinery? Traction engines, stationary engines, cars & lots more.

Try Kelsall Steam Fair (28/29 June - Near Chester), Cheshire Steam Fair (12/13 July - Tabley House, nr Knutsford), Astle Park (9/10 August, Chelford, nr Macclesfield).

What about Classic Car shows? During the summer there are several each weekend up & down the country. Two of the best at Tatton Park, nr Knutsford (31 May, 1 June & 16/17 August).

More classic vehicles and the best model airplane meeting in Europe at Woodvale Rally (nr Kirby) 2/3 August.

If you'd like a free entry to any of the above you can put your camera gear in the back of my 1952 Ford Prefect and join me as an exhibitor / enthusiast. Best of luck with your project. Joe W

Sue Clements

April 26, 2008

This year's opportunity for people to become Centurions will be held Milton Keynes on Sat/Sun 15th/16th August. Walkers will attempt to walk for 24 hours non-stop. Those who achieve 100 miles will be eligible to be invited into the Brotherhood of Centurions and will be allocated a unique number to record their achievement. e.g. see my email address - I am the 950th British Centurion.

<http://www.centurions1911.org.uk/>

Vicki Corke

April 25, 2008

Wimbome Folk Festival.

The second weekend in June sees the 'folk' community of the UK and beyond converge on the little town of Wimbome in Dorset, for the annual Wimbome Folk Festival.

From the local schools' maypole dancing (I remember it well!) to community BBQs on the Minster Green and some fantastic second-hand beer fairs. The pubs always used to manage to obtain late night licenses before 24-hour drinking came in. Real community spirit.

<http://www.wimbomefolkfestival.co.uk/>

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Jim Young

April 25, 2008

The theme of beach huts is very socially photogenic

I have a photo-blog here going back 3 years and I post a photograph (or more) every day - and the blog is visited by expats all around the world

<http://jimyoung14.blogspot.com/>

Best wishes and good luck with your project.

PS I also have a beach hut and I go swimming in the sea every day of the year - interesting skin tones:-)

Dawn Hazle

April 25, 2008

Something really unusual, mostly unheard of by 'normal' people and actually quite popular are LARP (Live Action Role Playing) events. LARP is usually a fantasy-genre roleplaying event where people get dressed up and, in its most energetic form, people fight in swords-and-sorcery battles with 'safe' foam weapons. It's a bit like reenactment. Take a look at the Lorien Trust and Curious Pasttimes websites: they're the two biggest LARP associations in the country and both run their largest event over the August bank holiday. I think the Lorien Trust's one is bigger. There's also, going back to the idea of reenactment, plenty of those events around! Personally I'm a big fan of the bigger Napoleonic events because you can't beat massive cannons, massed infantry and hordes of cavalry!

Matt Archibald

April 25, 2008

I think your project is a great idea!

I am a photographer myself, but have never really focussed my vision to such a degree as yourself.

I take mainly candid portraiture shots of bands and musicians and demonstrations are also a passion.

I live in a small-ish Cotswold town of Stroud in the heart of rural Gloucestershire, (home to the writer Laurie Lee- Cider with Rosie, As I Walked Out One Midsummer's Morning) in a predominantly white, middle class area of Gloucestershire.

There is a farmers' market that takes place in the town every Saturday, which seems to me to defer an air of the nature of the place.

I should think that you could certainly get some very interesting shots at the market, and maybe thereby convey something of the feel of a white, middle class West Country market town.

Fiona Mckichan

April 25, 2008

'Live at the Bandstand' on Southsea Common takes place every Sunday afternoon in June, July & August. It is free and provides a platform for local bands to entertain crowds which sometimes reach 5000! It is always a wonderful atmosphere with people having picnics, dancing & enjoying a couple of beers in the sun! We are lucky in Pompey / Southsea to have it!

Becca Walker

April 25, 2008

There is a fantastic two day event in Brockwell Park Brixton. Everything from steam engines, sheep dog trials, horse stuff, boys on mini motor bikes, bikes to main stage for big names, small stage for local stuff, ie Africa dance, folk singers, kids doing break dancing, steel bands etc. There are loads of food and craft stalls, the latter being a lot of local stuff. ALL the local people come and it is great fun!

Also my 6 year old son plays football every Saturday with three other groups and it is a fantastic mix of nationalities.....

H

April 25, 2008

Wow are you and your family going to be busy watching all of these events - pity the English Tourist Board doesn't pick up on all of these ideas. For me, being English means 99 ice creams, buckets of sand, mud up to the armpits, building snowmen, spotting the new registration cars on the motorway, walking around ladders and huddling under golf umbrellas

We English - Your Ideas

Anne Patton

April 25, 2008

From 2nd - 17th May, the Norfolk & Norwich Festival takes place in and around Norwich. For 16 days the city comes alive with amazing artists from around the world. It's a celebration of creativity, innovation, beauty and diversity with jazz, classical music, comedy and dance. Choose the exhilaration of circus and pyrotechnic spectacle, the polished splendour of great orchestras, ensembles and choirs or the twists and turns of contemporary theatre.

For full details go to www.nnfestival.org.uk

Juliet Eve

April 25, 2008

The last weekend in August 30 & 31 is the 2nd UK Body Painting Festival and competition. Stunning artwork on some adult bodies. Face painting competitions also takes place.

Another event is the Welsh Face & Body Painting Festival on 11 - 15 August.

Fantastic spectacle.

Ros Elcombe

April 24, 2008

The fountains in the courtyard of Somerset House always attract lots of kids (and parents!) during the summer holidays. Doesn't feel like central London at all.

Phil Littleford

April 24, 2008

Barn Theatre Oxted is one of the most successful amateur theatres in the south east. Beautiful building & a wide variety of performances. In June we install air conditioning, building work going on outside might make an interesting photo, having raised £90,000 on our own to pay for it...this is after raising £250,000 for an extension. Our prime goal is to put a wide variety of entertainment & plough all profits/fundraising into improving the theatre for our hirers & patrons.

More details can be found at <http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk/>

Neil Ritson

April 24, 2008

Two things that come immediately to mind are the regatta at Cowes which is a great spectacle and brings together a huge range of people. Very colourful and photogenic. The other is the annual round-up of New Forest ponies where people congregate, chat and "horse trade". Good luck with the project.

Michael Palmer

April 24, 2008

Please refer to www.Eastsuffolkmorris.com web site for our preparations for our Jubilee year celebrations and our programme. Many events connected with our traditional English dance style

Alex Currie

April 24, 2008

I live in Brighton with the annual festival appearing yet again in May. This however, is not my idea and a little obvious. I am a photographer myself and spend as much time as possible travelling around Europe and have noticed that the carboot fair is indeed something quintessentially English. Admittedly the French do them, but in their own unique way and only during the summer months. In England it has become a cultural establishment that brings people together from all walks of life, in all weathers. I think this would be a fantastic thing to photograph and capture a unique essence of the English uniting together in collusive absurdity by way of finding a bargain. The English are often called a nation of shopkeepers, and this is surely a fine example of how everyone can participate. I myself will often be found selling second hand records at the carboot just behind Brighton Station, which is a fantastic carboot that runs all year round, even on New Years Day.

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Sharon Davies

April 24, 2008

North Manchester Scout District are having a St Georges Day Parade for Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts, Explorer Scouts, Network Scouts, Fellowship & Leaders, which would be good to photograph, should be around 400 on parade, Bands too. Sunday 27th April

Lena Wright

April 24, 2008

I have just been looking at your photos on the BBC website and it says under one to suggest places/events that encapsulate English people at play. Here in Bristol we have the Redland May Fair held on Redland Green, this year on the 5th May. It is a quintessentially English affair with a walking band, food and stalls and attracts young and old alike. Just an idea for a great photo opportunity.... best wishes and the photos are great!

Don Burgess

April 24, 2008

"Bread and Cheese Day". An ancient tradition on Whit Sunday where Bread and Cheese is thrown from a high wall outside St Briavels Castle, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, to the people of the forest as part of a tradition going back to Medeval times involving access to the Royal Forest of Dean by the Commoners of the Royal Forest.

Jo Gilbertson

April 24, 2008

Inland waterways festivals and events - narrow boats and river boats etc, and the people who associate with them, festivals at Little Venice Paddington London on 3-5 May, Etruria Canal festival Etruria Industrial Museum Stoke on Trent 31 May - 1 June. Saul Canal Festival Saul Junction Gloucester 4-6 July - IWA National Festival Autherly Canal Junction Wolverhampton (500 Boats) 23-25 August.

<http://www.waterways.org.uk/Events>

Adam Mason

April 24, 2008

Hallaton Bottle Kicking - the origin of Rugby as we now know it and true English chaos at its best.

<http://www.hallaton.org/index.html>

Lindsay Endean

April 24, 2008

You would be very welcome to come and photograph Croydon Summer Festival: 12 & 13 July 2008. Croydon always gets such a bad press and isn't generally thought of as a place worth making a special visit to. However, for two days of the summer all the local residents - of all ages, nationalities and ethnic groups - converge for a free two-day music festival at the glorious Lloyd Park in Croydon. They are two of the happiest days of the summer in multi-cultural England! www.croydonfestival.com

Alexander Hofmann

April 24, 2008

You might like to visit our village cricket club in Shoreham, Kent. <http://www.shorehamcc.co.uk/>

We cater for all sorts of cricketer, from all walks of life and there is a home game almost every Saturday and Sunday throughout the summer. We are renowned for mid-order batting collapses, atrocious fielding and cracking teas. The ground is one of the prettiest in England, with outstanding views to the chalk cross on the hill which is a memorial to those who died in the Great War.

Chris Wheeler

April 24, 2008

Ottery St Mary Tar Barrels

I lived here for a few months during the winter and experienced first hand the 5th of November Tar Barrels. These are barrels that are carried around whilst on fire - I do not know the origin of this but I

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believe it has been going on for over 300 years. There are up to 17 barrels throughout the afternoon and evening from junior barrels up to adult barrels. It has to be seen to be believed.

Ashley Martin
April 24, 2008

I've always thought of our local village event as being quite unique. Cabbage Sunday is a celebration of harvest and an auction of local produce for local charities. It takes place at the waggon and horses pub in Beckhampton, Wiltshire. There you can purchase anything there from a fruit basket to a bottle of the finest slow gin! A great family day out and lovely in the Autumn sunshine!

Dominic Turnbull
April 24, 2008

I would suggest a visit to Audlem, in Cheshire. Lots to do and see in this beautiful place. It was voted best village in 2005 and could do with some extra tourism to boost its local economy. It boasts bilingual speakers and has much more to offer than a mere fleeting drive-through on the way to Wales. Audlem is an under-rated, quintessential English village 9 miles from the border with Wales. A must-see place to take the family on any day of the year!

Cath Exley
April 24, 2008

Just a few ideas from up here in the North East: I apologise if this duplicates stuff you already have.

- 1) Fishing boats coming home at North Shields
- 2) 'Just' Tynemouth Beach on any day of year, there are always people out there
- 3) Newcastle quayside any weekend/ Whitley Bay on a Bank Holiday Monday – not necessarily we English at our best, but a tradition none the less and the girls in their short skirts and lads in their shirt sleeves, whatever the weather are a sight to behold
- 4) The Great North Run

Hope these are of some help. Good luck!

Kerri Hawkins
April 24, 2008

Walking my dogs through Box Hill on a bright, sunny summer's morning, followed by a drink at any one of the pubs on the way back home for lunch. Nothing to beat it.

Rosie Read
April 24, 2008

The Annual Carpet of Flowers Festival at Arundel Cathedral Itakes Place around Corpus Christi each year. This year it is on Wed. and Thurs. 21st and 22nd May and the Papi Nuncio will be present on the Thursday. At the end of Mass on the Thursday there is a procession from the Cathedral to Arundel Castle Chapel.

The Centre Aisle is filled 'as a carpet' with beautiful blooms and petals and should be a great photo for you!!

Sheila
April 24, 2008

Good luck with your project, Simon, and I hope you have a lot of fun gypsying around England in the months ahead. I'm so glad you found a suitable tenant.

A few more ideas:

Every village will be having its (traditional and therefore often rather corny) summer fete, as will the horticultural shows displaying longest, heaviest, oddest produce, etc. And the rivalry is often intense. This year is the 150 anniversary of the Scout movement and there should be plenty of Scouting and Guiding activities.

Additional to my ideas on Blackpool, (donkey rides, candy floss, rolled up trousers & knotted handkerchiefs in stripey deckchairs on the prom), there should be some Punch and Judy shows to be had, as well as lots of nationwide outdoor theatre productions for adults and children alike. There's

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the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park and they don't cancel unless the rain is really bad! The Edinburgh Festival.

Punting on the Cam. May balls, and maypole dancing. Morris dancing. Hang gliding (nice site near Lewes). Bird watching and canal boats in East Anglia. The Boat Race. London/Brighton vintage car rally. Pie eating contests and gurning contests. Train spotting. Silverstone and Brands Hatch traffic jams. Kite flying. Southampton boat show. Bar-b-qs in the rain.

Brain drained.

happy travelling

Sue

April 24, 2008

Scarborough skipping day and pancake races on Shrove Tuesday.
Boxing Day football on the beach - and raft races in the Harbour.

Angel Louis

April 24, 2008

The London Sugar & Slavery is an ideal place to photograph in the heart of Canary Wharf.
A turning point for the future!

Rick

April 24, 2008

Why not come and photograph climbers in the Lancashire quarries. On any given weekend in the summer the quarries around Lancashire are often filled with local climbers and boulderers. Following on from the pioneers of the 50s and 60s, the Lancashire quarries are well loved venues enjoyed by many climbers.

If you decide to come, let me know and I can give you details on the best and busiest as well as the esoteric and interesting places to visit.

Jean Pittaway

April 24, 2008

Needham Market Raft Race

Sunday 15th June 2008 from 1.30pm

Annual community event held on local lake in the small Suffolk town of Needham Market

This year's theme (fancy dress raft teams) is Dr Who

Up to 20 Raft Teams of four competitors. Spectators have been known to number 2000 when the weather is good (and more often than not it has been!)

Claire

April 24, 2008

The Moor Music Festival near Ilkley in Yorkshire this August. It's a small festival, it's child friendly and it's good fun. It poured with rain last year and my kids went feral and loved it. Lots of wet people in a very muddy field living in mostly leaking tents. How English is that?

Sarah

April 24, 2008

Well Dressing in Derbyshire.

Here's a calender. Just click on the name of the town and info appears.

<http://www.sinfin.net/welldressing/dates2.html>

or google and there are loads of sites.

If you contact the organiser then you could photograph one being made by a team of people.

Darren Walker

April 24, 2008

I have seen some of your pictures on the BBC website and I think your project of photographing Britain at play is a great idea. The website also said that you would be interested in attending any event

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of festival happening in any locale.

If this is correct I'd like to invite you to the Garforth Arts Festival. This is a 2 week event that takes place in Garforth which is in the east of Leeds. The festival is in it's fourth year and ends with a large open air concert on 5th July 2008. It isn't a Glastonbury but it is well attended and (or at least attempts to) introduces an eclectic range of musicians and literature to a fairly middle class area.

Please let me know if this is something you would be interested in.

<http://www.garforthartsfestival.co.uk/open.html>

Leslie Hakim-Dowek

April 24, 2008

Next door to us there is a church-cum-arts centre which does everything from belly-dancing classes, theatre, car boot sale and wrestling on a Saturday afternoon. The wrestling, I have been told, is specially interesting as it attracts a very dedicated following and a friend of mine does the media coverage for a tv channel just about wrestling !

Amanda Kingsnorth

April 24, 2008

Not necessarily in my own locale but we are involved. Huge festival on the 1st May bank holiday (3,4,5th May) in Kent: Rochester Sweeps festival. Originally a holiday for the chimney sweeps who paraded through the town, with music and dancing; now more like one of the biggest morris dancing festivals in Europe, with sides from all over the country and beyond. A fantastic spectacular of colour, music and dance featuring traditional English dancing, including: Cotswold, border, clog, rapper, molly, and sword dancing to name a few.

Please come - you will get some great pictures! and it is about time we celebrated something traditional that has existed for hundreds of years.

I am the dance teacher for Green Dragon morris (border side based in Bury St Edmunds) and we will be there on Saturday 3rd May.

Caroline Leeds

April 24, 2008

Come to the The Castlethorpe Duck Race! 5 miles from Central Milton Keynes in the beautiful village of Castlethorpe, it happens every other year on May's Spring Bank Holiday Weekend. This year, Sunday 25th May 2008, 20 years after the first race, 1000 ducks will be released into the River Tove.

The first duck to cross the line will win you a cash prize of £100!

Castlethorpe Duck Race is a unique event and as well as duck racing, there will be live bands, a beer tent, lots of great food, rides and activities to keep the kids amused – and all in a glorious setting by the river. Entrance is free and there's free parking.

Fun starts at 1pm with four sprint races throughout the afternoon and the main 1000 Duck Race is at 4:15pm.

Taff

April 24, 2008

Lawnmower Racing at Brinsbury College just outside Billingshurst!! Not sure if they still do it but it's bonkers!!

Sounds like a great idea so best of luck with it.

Sue Hewitt

April 24, 2008

I think that this is a great idea. You must include some rock climbing in the book. This used to be seen as a minority sport, only for hard men. However with the advent of indoor climbing walls there are many more people involved now, including a lot more women. By its very nature climbing is anarchic so there are no organised festivals outdoor where people go to. If you want to snap us at play then you'll need to find your way to the more popular crags on a sunny day. From a distance it will appear to be covered with brightly coloured ants. Get closer and you'll see us suspended in apparently impossible positions.

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The overall body responsible for climbing in the UK (it cannot be regulated as such), part pressure group, part hobby group, part safety advisor, is the BMC thebmc.co.uk

There is a network of local clubs across the country. You could get along to one of their meets where you'll probably see people climbing, depending on the weather. For example my local club in Keswick meets at a Lake District crag on Tuesday nights throughout the summer – you'll find the meets list on our website www.kmc.org.uk My other club in Swindon has meets which are weekends when they go away to Stanage or the North Devon sea cliffs for example.

Or you could just roll up at Stanage Edge outside Hathersage on any summer (or winter) day and find plenty of activity there.

Johnny Bean

April 24, 2008

The annual Scarecrow Festival in Wray (Lancashire) takes place every May Bank Holiday and for a couple of weeks before. Village greens full of scarecrows playing cricket, giant scarecrow parades and all the villagers keeping their scarecrows under wraps from the neighbours until the last minute.

<http://www.wrayvillage.co.uk/scarecrows.htm>

or, the Egremont Crab Fair in Cumbria - Street racing, apple chasing, cumberland wrestling, pipe smoking championships gumming and plenty more - now that's a weekend!

Steph Wiffen

April 24, 2008

The Pershore Plum Festival

<http://www.e-wychavon.org.uk/wychavon/tourism/events/>

This festival lasts a week, during which the town of Pershore is painted purple! It's a very traditional festival at the end of August to celebrate the harvest of more different types of plums than you can put a name to. Great fun.

Tanya Kynaston

April 24, 2008

The Abbots Bromley Horn Dance - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbots_Bromley_Horn_Dance or http://www.abbotsbromley.com/horn_dance

It is a traditional dance which takes place on September 8th this year, where six men carrying antlers, a man in a dress (Maid Marion), and archer and a man on a hobby-horse spend the entire day dancing around Abbots Bromley and the surrounding parish. It's an incredibly old tradition and the antlers were dated to around 1065. It's quite a spectacle when you see it and the antlers are enormous, it requires a huge effort for the men to carry them around all day.

Also in Abbots Bromley - once a year on Commemoration Day, the girls who go to Abbots Bromley School For Girls stand two by two singing "Jerusalem My Happy Home" and then process down to the local church for a thanksgiving service. Everyone has to wear blue and white veils, and the choir wear cloaks as well. It is definitely a sight to behold!

Catherine Wakely

April 24, 2008

The Berkhamsted Walk - <http://www.berkhamstedwalk.org.uk/>. It happens every year to raise money for the Children's Society. I usually do it but this year can't because I'm pregnant - the first one I've missed for years.

It's usually a lovely day out - 18 miles through the Chilterns (or 11 miles or 6 miles if you don't feel up to 18). Last year it rained all day but we still did all 18 miles!

It's on the 11th May.

Andy Coster

April 24, 2008

Reading beer festival - May 1st - 4th

A chance to congregate with fellow beer lovers, try up to 450 ales, eat a hog roast and watch Morris dancers. My brothers and I use the occasion to catch up and enjoy ourselves in an English way.

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Anna-Marya

April 24, 2008

Watford:

I work with other people running a scrapstore as an art resource for the community; we are based in the town "Waste Amenity Site" (rubbish dump)

There are two interesting aspects to this: the amount of mostly pre-production waste that we collect is witness to the number of small production units all over the place (not everything is made out of country)

The location itself is an interesting study in a ritual of the mundane as people bring endless domestic waste, particularly the line of cars that forms at 10 on a Sunday morning, perhaps replacing communal gatherings of a previous time?

Charley

April 24, 2008

Sheep Racing weekend on Sark in the Channel Islands!!! Unique due to the island itself, no cars, no tarmac, no street lights. Then add in a healthy dose of a weekends sheep racing - what more can you want??? This years is the 5th & 6th of July... Its beautiful and fun!

Rob Wilson

April 23, 2008

Shrewsbury Regatta (the oldest in the country) 10th-11th May
or

Durham Regatta (the 2nd oldest in the country) 14th-15th June

Rowing events are very English, flags, pimmis, boats and also very photographic

Subhadassi

April 23, 2008

The extraordinarily primitive Allendale Tar Barrel Festival, where a procession of 'guisers' carry blazing tar barrels on their heads to a midnight bonfire on New Year's Eve. Pennine paganism at its best.

MM

April 23, 2008

For an English pastime with amazing photographic potential. You should go and photograph people racing model gliders. The best spots are always on steep escarpments. The gliders are no longer balsa and tissue paper. Nowadays they are carbon fibre and blisteringly fast.

This year's 'English Open' F3F competition will be held at White Sheet in Wiltshire on Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd of August.

http://www.whitesheet.co.uk/html/english_open_f3f.html

For an idea of why this sport is so photogenic see

http://gliderking.smugmug.com/gallery/1307714_SvSgw#61143560_mw7La

Sean

April 23, 2008

You have to see the UK's most unforgettable day out:

http://www.bpc-cave.org.uk/gaping_gill.htm

My favourite image of the day is always the crowd around the top. From hardened expeditioners to people who are only just beginning to fully understand what's about to happen.

Almost American

April 23, 2008

First Thursday in June - Lady's Walk in Neston, Wirral.

The Neston Female Friendly Society was founded in 1814 and is the last surviving society of its kind.

Every year on 'Ladies Day', the first Thursday in June, there is a procession to commemorate the Society.

Small, local, full of character.

We English - Your Ideas

Natasha Grant

April 23, 2008

Englishness can no longer be epitomized by red letter boxes, Sunday roasts and village cricket. This is 2008 and England is now the motherland of multiculturalism. Our culture, food, music and our people can no longer be regarded as a singular, homogenous entity.

For me, there is nothing that captivates this concept of fusion greater than the Notting Hill Carnival in London. This breathtaking, soul shaking annual event attracts people from places far and wide, thrusting England under the International spotlight. This is not to say that what was once 'truly English' has all been lost, instead its meaning has been broadened and redefined to incorporate the diversity and spirit of the people of Old Blighty.

Clair Field

April 23, 2008

Lyme Regis watching the Red Arrows practice.

People sit on the grass above the beach and lay back and watch the Red Arrows flying around practicing their maneuvers just over the water

Steve Driver

April 23, 2008

I am helping to run a fishing match at the end of June just outside Leighton Buzzard. It will be in aid of a local charity and nearly all the places have been taken.

You would be more than welcome to attend the UK's favourite pastime with a great bunch of people, young and old, male and female.

Neal Rollason

April 23, 2008

The many varieties of Folk Festivals we have, from small weekenders like Chippenham, Towersy, Fylde, to all weekers like Whitby and Broadstairs:

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

Or internationals, like Sidmouth, all including Englishness, in it's many forms, as well as it's inclusiveness of other British and Continental cross-overs...

Very much a speciality of the English way of life... Absorption and adaptation rather than conflict!

Steve Wickens

April 23, 2008

On a saturday or sunday morning or afternoon,even during the week,ashdown forest is a wonderful place to walk,ride horses,picnic,walk the dog,eat ice cream from the van,visit pooh comer.located just outside of crowborough in sussex.it's where i spent many a weekend with my family.

good luck with the book,

I will be looking for it in 2009.

Julia Hagan

April 23, 2008

I live in Nottingham and every year we have a massive fair which is called 'Goose Fair'. It's a tradition in Nottingham going back hundreds of years and although no geese are sold anymore we do have the biggest fair in the country. It is usually on the first week of October, running from Weds through to the weekend. A couple of weeks before it arrives a huge plastic goose is placed on a road island near to the site (Forest Recreation ground) alerting all residents to the imminent arrival. It's a great sight to see and many of Nottingham's residents enjoy the sight of the fair, although I am a little too old to enjoy the rides anymore.

I am suggesting this as it is the one event in Nottingham which is sure to get everyone talking and I'm sure everyone who is from Nottingham or has lived here has gone along, if only to enjoy the mushy peas and mint sauce out of a polystyrene cup, which is a true Nottingham delicacy!

We English - Your Ideas

Dominic Turnbull

April 23, 2008

Try The Outdoor Show at the NEC in Birmingham for camping, mountaineering, canoeing, climbing and anything else connected with outdoor pastimes. They have demonstrations and equipment on sale. Good luck

Dominic Turnbull

April 23, 2008

The RHS (Royal Horticultural Show) at Tatton Park, Cheshire is usually featured in the local media and popular, if you like gardening and all-things green-fingered. Has an element of creative design about it, too. Oulton Park for motor racing. The Roodee is where Cestrians stage their passion for horse-racing. A great day out for the family with a walk around the City wall in Chester, with a bit of shopping and a nice pint and pub lunch by the river.

I believe there is also a regatta in Chester, as well.

Kelly Hill

April 23, 2008

The scout's annual regatta in Old Leigh, Essex would be a great 'we english' photo opportunity ... for a taste of what's on offer ...

'... live music for all tastes - this year bands performing are 208, Heartbeat, Highly Strung and Diaz. Morris dancing, banana eating, cracker eating and cockle eating competitions, for both children and adults. Also, there is Climbing the Greasy Pole and Bowsprit pillow fighting and various water based events include Dinghy Tug of War, Dinghy Sculling Races and the sailing races.

Catherine Ingram

April 23, 2008

I'd suggest any of the well dressings in May/June/July

Dates and places available here- <http://sinfin.net/welldressing/dates.html>

Good luck!

Dominic Turnbull

April 23, 2008

How about any cheese rolling festivals ? There's usually one in Chester.

Alternatively, a cheese-tasting festival.

The Poynton Show, in Cheshire on August Bank Holiday weekend is very popular.

Another idea might be the Guitar festival in Liverpool, showcasing all-things guitar-ish.

Lot's to choose from in leafy Cheshire, if you wish to venture that far.

Best wishes

Tony Tree

23 April, 2008

Hello Simon, I wish you every success in your project, One location that may be of interest to you is the Chattri on the Downs out side of Brighton, Every year there is a commemorative service to honour the Indian soldiers who died during the First world War. The service is attended by Hindus, Sikhs and Muslim ex service men as well as the local community. The Chattri is a memorial to soldiers who were died in Brighton hospitals and were cremated on the Downs on pyres.

I can give you further information if you are interested, ie dates contacts, etc.,

Barbara

April 23, 2008

How about a lovely cream tea in one of the the beautiful locations of Cornwall & whilst there, a ramble around the Cheeserings.

A nice Sunday afternoon pint in a fantastic thatched roofed pub.

I suppose I'm thinking on the "social" side of things.

Loved the pictures already posted on BBC - beautiful. Good luck!

We English - Your Ideas

Heather Martin

23 April, 2008

I love your idea and would like to add my tuppence-worth of family/community events which we periodically attend to the suggestions on your website.

In no particular order....

Cricket & childrens picnics - on the common here in Lindfield (W.sussex, 20 min north of Brighton) men play throughout the summer. However a lovely time is on a Friday afternoon around 3.30pm from the beginning of June (maybe sooner I guess) when the junior section play on the common. All the school children & mums picnic on the common (helped by the fish and chip van which arrives at about 4pm) and play in the kids playground whilst the cricket takes place. obviously the most busy date is the last day of the summer term - but this does depend on the weather (this year the last friday of term for the primary schools is 18 July, although the common will probably also be busy on wed 23rd july which is the last day of school before the summer hols, but i'm not sure if the crickers play on that date?).

Village day - Lindfield village day is on 31st may on Lindfield common = a bit like a fete but with all the village's societies being involved

Rememberance day parades

Agricultural shows such as the South of England show at Ardingly showground (quite expensive though!) - think you may already have visited looking at your blog..

Mens sunday league football at any local park

Boys football training eg. Wivlesfield green park on a Saturday morning

Boys rugby training eg at Whitemans Green, Cuckfield (if you can find somewhere to park - its normally really busy!)

Car boot sales (!)

Making snowmen on Lindfield common (rarely, but I counted around 100 snowmen when it did briefly snow this easter)

Hot air balloons landing/taking off from a park

Groups of ladies jogging through the town after school drop off in the mornings

Teenage boys skateboarding in the park in Burgess Hill

Watching parades eg the Lord Mayors Parade in London, or the simple bonfire procession in Lindfield (or hundreds of other places!)

.... I'm sure you don't need me to carry on as I guess you'll have loads more contacts.

Good luck & best wishes

David Browne

April 23, 2008

Come and photograph the open artist houses in the village of Ditchling that are open each weekend in May as part of the Brighton festival.

Ditchling Morris dancing on Lodge Hill as dawn breaks on the 1st May

Andy

April 23, 2008

Go and watch a village cricket match for at least an hour. There will be hundreds anywhere in England every Saturday and Sunday. You can't go wrong !

Elisabeth Jennings

April 23, 2008

How about visiting Ilkley Carnival on Bank Holiday 5th May 2008. There will be floats parading through Ilkley, before going to the Carnival field, by the river.

Or how about visiting the Great Yorkshire Show in Harrogate, in July. (Further details about this can be found on the Yorkshire Agricultural Society's website. (It is a 3 day event.)

We English - Your Ideas

Martyn Baldock

April 23, 2008

Simon, good luck with your project. Haven't had time to read all your responses so these may have come up already.....

Birdman of Bognor

Goodwood festival of speed

West Dean chili festival

Bestival

Southsea kite festival

Jocelyn Lortie

23 April, 2008

Having just seen photos and information for your new book on the bbc website I enclose a few ideas. I live near Poole, Dorset. I'm immensely pleased to see you embarking on a new project after being awed by your work on Russia in "Motherland" (I have a vested interest in the country, being a cambridge history graduate whose first love was russian history!).

1.) Biker night in Poole

<http://www.pooletourism.com/services.asp?id=26C35B30E2A948>

<http://www.pooleview.co.uk/pooleimages.htm>

Situated on Poole Quay, every Tuesday between March and October. Machines of all shapes and sizes (scooters, trikes, harleys and boss hosses) are all on show. The event is a social gathering that has grown over the past 7 years or so. It all takes place on the waterfront with Brownsea Island and Poole Harbour as a backdrop (you'll also find boats in the backdrop from the quaint to the obscene - Sunseeker have their boatyard down one end of the Quay!).

The best aspect of these evenings is the mix of people and genial atmosphere. People don't usually associate Dorset with leather clad bikers. It's a real family evening.

2.) Fireworks in Poole Harbour

<http://www.pooletourism.com/services.asp?id=A4F1A3EB63A649>

Takes place every Thursday in June and July. Spectacular crowds line the Quay at 10pm when the fireworks go off on the firework boat in the Harbour; timed to set off as the Barfleur ferry from France comes into the Harbour with all her lights on.

3. Wimborne Folk Festival -

<http://www.wimbornefolkfestival.co.uk/>

4. Brownsea Island Shakespeare Plays -

<http://www.brownsea-theatre.co.uk/index.php>

'The Merchant of Venice' will be performed from Wednesday 23rd July - Friday 8th August 2008.

5. Purbeck Landscape and Corfe Castle - better in the autumn / winter without the tourists (or "grockles" as we refer to them). Sandbanks is best after the end of September; see all us locals out walking!). Stunning landscape.

Especially Purbecks; walkers down at Seacombe, Winspit and the climbers down at Dancing Ledge.

<http://www.isleofpurbeck.com/>

<http://www.corfe-castle.co.uk/index.asp>

6. Poole Quay Bath Race - every New Year's Day the citizens of Poole take to the water in a sprint down the quay in homemade bath boats and costumes - details at

http://www.pooletourism.com/eventscalendar.asp?act_events=display_event&occurrenceid=6780

7. See also for places of interest -

Kingston Lacy & Badbury Rings (sometimes holds point to point horse racing) near Wimborne,

Maiden Castle near Dorchester,

West Bay alterations in Bridport

If any further details are needed, I would be happy to help.

Good luck for the project!

I look forward to seeing the results and hope for your further success.

We English - Your Ideas

Sarah

April 23, 2008

How about visiting the Isle of Man? The TT races are starting on 24th May to 6th June. A fantastic experience and this will be the 101st year.

Sharon

April 23, 2008

Didn't really want to post email address on your site, but locally these are our biggies:

Saddleworth villages brass bands competition -

<http://www.whitfriday.brassbands.saddleworth.org/intro.html>

Saddleworth Beer Walk - <http://www.beerwalk.co.uk/info/infoview.asp?documentid=1>

All the best and good luck with the journey.

Thea

April 23, 2008

I have two you might be interested in,

1) Victorian Christmas Craft Fair - Victoria Country Park Netley Southampton. 6/7 December.

Everyone dresses up in Victorian garb and sells crafts. (you might need to ask permission to photograph though I am not sure, the contact details are Nicky Myers at The Park Centre, her phone no is 02380455157)

2) Stamp Auction (really fastinating view of collecting and worth the trip..) Peartree Community Centre Woolston Southampton

17th may and every 6 weeks. www.sotonphil.co.uk

02380448373 - you may need to ask permission.

Good Luck!

Francesca Vezzani

April 23, 2008

Sorry Simon,

Africa Day is on the 26th May in Trafalgar Square,

for more info see: <http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/events/may-08.jsp>

and <http://www.daysoutguide.co.uk/events.aspx?month=05-2008>

Hope to see you there!

Joel Porter

April 23, 2008

Cumberland Wrestling is worth a investigating...A form of wrestling developed in northern England and southern Scotland, also called the North Country style. The wrestlers stand chest to chest, each grasping the other with locked hands around the body, each opponent's chin on the other's right shoulder. Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling Association - World Championships 2008 programme of events

All Weights - Cockermouth Show - Saturday 2 August

15st - Wolsingham Show - Sunday 7 September

14st - Cumberland Show - Saturday 19 July

13st Penrith Show Saturday, 26 July

12st Harbottle Show Saturday 6 September

11st Killington Sports Thursday 29 May

10.5st Powburn Show Saturday 2 August

Under 18 Haltwhistle Gala Sunday 6 July

Under 18/10st Hesketh Newmarket Show Saturday 30 August

Under 15 Eskdale Show Saturday 27 September

Under 15/8st Gosforth Show Wednesday 20 August

We English - Your Ideas

Alok Gahrotra

April 23, 2008

Simon - hope things are well and best of luck with the project. Since restricted to London and more from an outsiders perspective I was wondering if things like the A I GP Regent Street Pit Stop this Sunday or the BBC Proms or the Taste of London that happens in Regent's Park on June 19-22 and in other parts as per the attached schedule <http://www.channel4.com/life/microsites/T/taste2008/> may be interesting. Annual events like these are a integral part of all that the city has to offer but not sure if they fit in with what you're trying to achieve. Great idea though and best of luck with it.

Joel Porter

April 23, 2008

Ramblers in the Langdale valley and on Scafell, the Lake District.. Cumbria. Errosion of the footpaths has meant that many new pitched paths have been created to ease congestion...

Rhiannon Killingbeck

April 23, 2008

I attended the "World" Black Pudding Throwing Championships in Ramsbottom (yes, it really is a place) Lancashire in 2006. It's actually a lovely town and the event is an odd War of the Roses derby with the the aim being to knock over the biggest stack of yorkshire puddings from a height, although I guess it's just an excuse to drink in the sun.

Anyway, I think it's the second weekend in september (and we came second - go AC Blackpuds!) and it was a lot of fun if you're interested.

Mike Brown

April 23, 2008

Darley Park Concert - the largest free outdoor classical concert in the uk. happens in Derby on Sunday 31st August. 30,000+ people eating picnics, getting tipsy and enjoying the music. because its free the audience is a complete cross section of society.

Mike Brown

April 23, 2008

Weekend of the 26th September this year will be the launch of the Cultural Olymiad in the East Midlands. This will be happening on the market place in Derby and will coincide with the launch of QUAD Derby's new visual arts centre. celebrations will include performances from both international street performance groups and locally created and curated community work.

Steve Barton

April 23, 2008

This sounds like a superb project, and will hopefully cover things people have never heard of, or fail to appreciate. I am a member of a live role playing club who meet monthly to playout fantasy characters in a made up setting. regardless of peoples views it is a great way to let of steam and have a laugh, and it would be superb to see this often frowned upon pastime given a little coverage

Jenn Goodheart-Smithe

April 23, 2008

Polsten Lacey Theatre - out door theatre held every summer at the landscaped grounds of Polsten Lacey in Bookham, Surrey. This year's productions is "Anthony and Cleopatra".

Colin Pantall

April 23, 2008

People in the allotments overlooking Solsbury Hill here in Bath - 100 years old this August if you're looking for an allotment 'event'.

And for the everyday - parents and kids hanging out in the park after school. Mainly because that's where I've just come from.

And how about The Close Season by Ken Grant in the photography links.

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Sarah Jane Davies

April 23, 2008

This just sounds like such a fantastic project - I hope you enjoy your research!

I know rowing has already been suggested in the Oxford v Cambridge Race and Henley Regatta, but just like lots of the other pastimes mentioned, few people realise there are hoards of us rowing every week at amateur level. The delight of our sport is that at events like Henley we get to row out against the professionals!

However, our training is far from glamorous and we compete at regional Head races and regattas throughout the year, come rain, snow, sleet and, occasionally, sunshine.

It is fascinating to watch hundreds of boats being taken apart and put back together for racing and loaded on and off trailers. The rowers are a diverse lot and aren't all built like Steve Redgrave.

We train on a canal in the city of Manchester, so you can just imagine the things we encounter in the water!

Good luck - I look forward to seeing the finished results.

Alistair Ross

April 23, 2008

Know its late notice, but this Sunday (27th) see's the largest mini/junior rugby festival in the south west of England. Approx 1000 children and 3500 adults will descend on Sharpham Road playing fields, Cheddar. This will be our 28th tournament, not bad for a club that doesn't have a club house.

For more info on the club visit www.cheddar-rugby.co.uk

Would love to see you there.

Paul Nicholson

April 23, 2008

Bedford River Festival, every two years, is on weekend of July 12th and 13th this summer - includes raft / dragonboat races and other leisure pursuits.

Also, OASIS BEACH POOL in Bedford is a futuristic pyramid structure alongside the river (and Tesco).

Hope these suggestions help, good luck!

Charlie Levine

April 23, 2008

Think you should visit Fierce Festival in Birmingham during May. It's a performance art festival and the opening is always worth a viewing filled with cabaret acts, the burgeoning art scene, performers and booze.

Not particularly typically English in the tweed sense of things but rather that of punk!

Phil Chivers

April 23, 2008

Ottery St. Mary Flaming Tar Barrels on November 5th. Scrum of individuals and teams tussling for control of a flaming tar barrel in narrow streets....

Electra

April 23, 2008

There are many flamenco events going on in London, many of which have no Spanish people at them!!

The guitarists are all British and the dancers come from all over the world. Have a look at

www.flamenco-london.org.uk and www.myspace.com/flamencofiesta for more info.

Francesca Vezzani

April 23, 2008

1. Carnival de Cuba, Southwark Park, 28-29 June 2008

2. Africa Day, 3 May 2008, Trafalgar Square?

3. African Dance-Drumming classes:

3a. Idea Store Whitechapel, Saturdays 12.30-16

3b. Victoria Park Baptist Church, Bunsen Street, Wednesdays 19-21

3c. Horniman Museum, Sundays 11-14

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Lucy Price

April 23, 2008

Padstow May Day Celebrations in Cornwall on 1st May every year -
Cornish pride at it's best

Susan Shepherd

April 23, 2008

You need to get some photos of people messing about in boats. Not just the glossy yachts of Cowes week, but the dinghies and small racing day boats, the liveboards and cruising folk, the fishing boats and coastal day trippers, the container ships and freighters, the canal boats and the Norfolk Broads holidaymakers. We are an island race after all, and the sea plays such a large part in our lives.

Sarah Dixon

April 23, 2008

Have you seen the cheese-rolling contest in Gloucestershire? Its the most wild I have ever seen the brits. Health and Safety go to hell! People hurling themselves down a 80 degree slope, breaking limbs, in order to win...a cheese. And the adoration of the local girls of course. <http://www.cheese-rolling.co.uk/>. I love it, surely you will too.

Allan Smith

April 23, 2008

Upton on Severn hosts a folk festival every year at the start of May - the procession of morris dancers on the Sunday morning has to be seen to be believed. <http://www.uptonfolk.org/>

My own side, Plum Jerkum from Warwick, will be there.

We also appear at many venues throughout the year & are always willing to be photographed.

Details can be found here <http://www.plumjerkum.co.uk/4.html>

Good Luck - I look forward to seeing the finished product

Katy Darby

April 23, 2008

How about the Regents Park Shakespeare shows? Thoroughly English in every way. Details below, but they've got tons of plays on throughout the summertime.

<http://www.openairtheatre.org/>

Kate Wells

April 23, 2008

Lambeth Country Show, Brockwell Park , Brixton, London (19th and 20th July).

The country in the city!

Need I say more...

Hannah Thomas

April 23, 2008

Go and see one of the Summer Bumps races at Oxford or Cambridge Universities - they are unique to England, and as well as the special way of racing rowing boats, will feature the drinking of Pimms.

On the subject of Pimms, Henley and Royal Ascot are probably a good bet for scenes of Englishness too...

Annette Goyette

April 23, 2008

Go to Enville Common not far from the village of Wall Heath in West Midlands, you will see a typical day spent by us English, flying kites, having a picnic, kicking a ball - plain family fun.

Close by is Bobbington airfield where a flea market is held.

I no longer live in England, your pictures bring back wonderful memories - Oh to be in England again!!!

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Michelle Arnold

April 23, 2008

Bridgwater has had an annual carnival for hundreds of years, the largest in the UK and the biggest and best float carnival in the world. If you believe the hype! You couldn't photograph the carnival procession as that occurs at night. But the preparation behind the carnival is what is interesting, the design and building of the floats, the fundraising and level of commitment and dedication of those involved (and the whole community) is quite inspiring, slightly obsessive and at times more than a little odd!

I no longer live in Bridgwater and my only contribution to the carnival is as a spectator. If you are interested in photographing this uniquely British pastime I suggest you contact one of the carnival clubs via <http://www.bridgwaterncarnival.org.uk/links.php>
Please!!!

Sam

April 23, 2008

I would suggest English holiday makers dodging the seagulls while eating ice cream at St Ives. Bit Martin Parr but lots of material there and also excuse to travel down to Cornwall...

Brian Ingle

April 23, 2008

essential to the existence of a Brit is fishing, hundreds of people (mainly men it's true) line the riverbank and encircle lakes every weekend.

morris dancing has experienced a revival, with sides celebrating many important dates such as St. George's Day and May Day, and don't overlook festivals such as Rochester's Sweeps Festival - a relatively new festival, but celebrating ancient traditions.

Football is a given, as is rugby, considering the birthplace.

Dogs, dogs, dogs - beagles, foxhounds, greyhounds, retrievers, sheepdogs.

the pub !!!

Simon Pepper

April 23, 2008

I can recommend you visit Brighton where there is almost always something exciting and interesting happening.

In particular you could pay a visit to the Burning of the Clocks which takes place in December (more info at www.burningtheclocks.co.uk).

Madeira Drive on the seafront plays host to numerous motoring events including the National Speed Trials & the Old Crocks Race (more info at www.visitbrighton.com).

I believe Fatboy Slim is holding a concert on the beach again in 2008 although on a smaller scale than his 2002 concert where 250,000 people turned up to hear him play!

And finally Gay Pride where the whole city comes alive to a parade featuring floats and fancy dress the like of which you cannot imagine! A great social event.

Tom BurrIDGE

April 23, 2008

With Brits seemingly embracing foreign cultures more and more, the idyllic "quintessentially" British past-times are becoming less relevant, as more exciting and innovative cultural activities take hold.

With this in mind, I'd like to put forward my chosen past-time. The sport of American Football.

The sport is growing rapidly in this country on the back of the NFL playing games at Wembley, and now Britain possesses over 50 senior kitted teams, more than 60 University teams, and huge numbers of Adult/youth flag (non-contact) teams, all competing throughout the summer months.

My team, the Colchester Gladiators, regularly has crowds of 200+ paying spectators, to watch our squad of over 50 players compete against other teams from the region. Our home games are played in an enclosed stadium in nearby Wivenhoe, and are as follows:

11/05 - Home vs. London Cobras 2.30pm

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13/07 - Home vs. Cambridgeshire Cats 4.30pm

27/07 - Home vs. East Kent Mavericks 2.30pm

03/08 - Home vs. Essex Spartans 2.30pm

17/08 - Home vs. Maidstone Pumas 2.30pm

Details of our club can be found at www.colchestergladiators.com

Details of American Football in the UK can be found at:

www.bafl.org.uk

www.getintoamericanfootball.com

www.nfluk.com

Tony Green

April 23, 2008

At dawn on May 1st Morris dancers gather at dawn around the country to dance to welcome the summer. We'll be dancing at 5.30 a.m. in the middle of Wimbledon Common see

www.greensleevesmorris.org.uk for details.

Jon Winter

April 23, 2008

A few Northumbrian ideas. Farmer's markets are popular now, why not come to Hexham on the second Saturday of the month for one of Britain's best, in great surroundings.

We're an odd lot at New Year. The Allendale Tar Barrel ceremony involves blokes parading in the village square with lighted barrels on their heads before setting fire to a huge bonfire. Crowds gather from all around to witness this spectacle.

Try a National Trust property, or similar at Easter to see children enjoying Easter Egg hunts.

Talking of hunts, the Tynedale Hunt is well supported when leaving Corbridge market place.

Maybe to be totally English you'd need some demonstrators too?

I love this idea, I could go on all day....

Matt Davis

April 23, 2008

In July at Kelfmarsh Hall in Northamptonshire is the English Heritage Festival of History, it has displays for every period of English history from the Roman occupation right up to the 20th Century.

Mike

April 23, 2008

Rock-climbing has its own particular style in the UK. A fierce ethic of not using artificial aid, especially on the short, tough gritstone climbs of the peak district.

This blossomed amongst the tough working class men of northern industrial towns like Sheffield escaping from the factories to find something 'higher' in their lives.

Curbar, Froggat, Millstone Edge in the Dark Peak.

Elemental parts of the English psyche at 'play'.

Beverley Beck

April 23, 2008

How about including some pictures of an open-air theatre production? The Bournemouth Shakespeare Players are putting on a production of Macbeth at Christchurch Priory Gardens for 2 weeks from 16 - 26th July.

Open-air theatre is definitely something that brings people together. Last year it rained and there was still an audience!

Richard Walshe

April 23, 2008

From the idiosyncratic and stubborn town of Lewes in Sussex, a couple of ideas (which may well have been suggested already)...

First, of course, the largest, noisiest, most visceral, spectacular and intense Bonfire celebration in the

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country - involving a large proportion of the whole town and stuffed full of local significance and local tradition - start at www.lewesbonfirecouncil.org.uk to find out more. You might want to take some local advice before trying to photograph it as the town is hard to get into and hard to move around during Bonfire, particularly if you don't know where you're going.

Then there's any number of other bizarre local goings-on, but the events centred round the Lewes Arms pub are possibly the pick. Eccentric, mildly pointless, good-natured fun: dwyle-flunking, the International Pea-throwing Championships, the Running of the Pantomime Animals.... well, see for yourself: www.lewesarms.org.uk.

Alex Douet

April 23, 2008

The Victory Wheelers Hayling Reunion, Hayling Island Beach Sunday 18th May from 10am
This is just one example of England's obsession with the automotive vehicle. You get to see all the hard work and dedication that people put into doing up and looking after their classic cars and it really is fascinating. There is also live music which is usually classic 50s Rock n Roll. You get all kinds of people visiting this event and it's a really great day out. <http://www.victorywheelers.co.uk/>

Kirsty McLaughlin

April 23, 2008

Every weekend from now until October sees thousands of cyclists across the country taking part in time trial and road race events on the open road.

Ipswich Bicycle Club are promoting 10 and 25 mile time trials on the weekend of 24th and 25th May in the Suffolk Coastal AONB, and for a more Tour de France experience, Stowmarket and District Cycling Club are promoting the East Division Road Race Championships, at Ashley near Newmarket, on Sunday 1st June. Both have their own webpages for more info.

David Borer

April 23, 2008

Rumburgh in Suffolk holds a May Day fete every year on May Day bank holiday Monday, at which traditional may pole dancing is always a feature. This year will also feature Morris dancing.

Mo Bushell

April 23, 2008

Love your idea ...

I am lucky enough to live in a quintessentially English village called Aldbourne. It has the Norman church (extended in 1450 or thereabouts by a family who still live in the area), a village green, a duck pond, several pubs and two churches.

In the summer the Aldbourne Brass Band plays concerts around the Green and pond - people travel from all over to hear the band and sit quietly in their cars blocking the view! We have a Combined Churches Fete in June, an auction run by the Scouts and Guides and a carnival in September.

There is plenty to photograph in Aldbourne!!

Justine Jones

April 23, 2008

Bristol Balloon Fiesta/Festival - website: bristolfiesta.co.uk Definitely a colourful day. 7-10th August this year. Best day in my opinion is first day (7th) as this is the Special Shapes day where you get hot air balloons in novelty shapes like Bart Simpson or Heinz Baked Bean Can etc. Is subject to weather of course.

Andy Mayo

April 23, 2008

Pretty obvious I'd suggest this: - what about hovercraft racing? There are loads of races throughout the summer, some in the grounds of stately homes. It has that mix of English eccentricity, landscape, and community which I think you're looking for. Have a look at www.hovercraft.org.uk - there is a meet at Claydon House (Nat Trust) on 12-13th July.

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Christina Maslen

April 23, 2008

Clypping the Church: St Lawrence Church Rode, Parish of Hardington Vale

'Clypping' comes from the Saxon word 'ycleping' meaning 'embracing'. This is a ceremony which literally embraces the Church and renews faith and commitment to God, by villagers forming an unbroken circle around the Church, holding hands, singing and saying prayers for Church and community. They first face inward and thank God for his faithfulness and pray for the church. They then face outward to pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to live and work to God's praise and glory. This ancient custom, adopted here in the rural community of Rode, finds its origin in pagan worship of Roman times. Farmers sought the protection of their herds from marauding wild beasts by dancing and making merriment round a local altar. We repeat the ceremony every two years as the climax to a Clypping Service, the next one being held on 18th June 2008

Gillian Rodger

April 23, 2008

How about photographing the Manchester Pride festival, held on the August bank holiday weekend, plus the week leading up to it, each year.

End of Ramadan celebrations held on "Curry mile" in Manchester ...although I suppose this takes place after sunset so may not fall within your criteria.

The Manchester Christmas markets are great.

Jackie Hikal

April 23, 2008

If you are looking for traditional British events, how about a Girl Guide event?

SUMMER FAYRE SATURDAY 7th JUNE 2008

Local girlguiding event held every year at the Guiding Centre in Mitlon Keynes from 12 noon until 4pm website is www.heronlodge.co.uk

Wyrdtimes

April 23, 2008

The Abbots Bromley horn dance.

http://www.abbotsbromley.com/horn_dance

A grand English day out.

Jamie O'Connell

April 23, 2008

One community event happening in Bourne in Lincolnshire is the Bourne Festival . A combination of beer fest , fair and live music all for the local community in the environs of the Well Head park (6,7,8 of June).

Another more mundane , although we thoroughly enjoy it, past time is my friends and i playing Ultimate Frisbee on the beautiful Abbey Lawns on a summers evening - any evening really.

Justine Jones

April 23, 2008

Bridgwater Guy Fawkes Winter Carnival.

You may find the above worth considering. It will be on Fri 7th Nov this year and is an amazing event!

Web site for further info is www.bridgwatcarnival.org.uk for pictures etc. I think it would be worth a look. It is in various Somerset towns over about 10 days but Bridgwater is the biggest one as I think they do the judging there. I don't think all the 'floats' go to all the other venues.

Brian Adamson

April 23, 2008

There are three "events" I would recommend for photographing, all are in the North East of England.

(1) The Kite Festival in Washington - sponsored by Nissan and has a heavy Japanese flavour to it.

(2) The Air Show on the coast (Seaburn/Roker) in Sunderland. Low level, close fly pasts over the sea

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and special attractions.

(3) Beamish Open-Air Museum (like walking back in time). Genuine original buildings re-built brick by brick in the grounds of Beamish museum with trams and trains for transport.

For exact dates and times, I would suggest "Googling" all three.

Guy Hudson

April 23, 2008

As a live action roleplayer I think that one of the main events of the Lorient Trust (at Locko Park, Derby) would show the environment being used in interesting ways. That at the main event you can have around 3000 people in full armour, costume and most of them dressed as warriors or as bizarre monsters and villains. If the local news are allowed to take videos of the massed battles and make documentary then I don't imagine there will be many problems for your pictures.

For more information; look here: <http://www.lorientrust.com/>

David Eyre

April 23, 2008

The 'Round the island' Sailing Race. This year being held on Saturday 28th June. Over 1800 sailing yachts will sail anti-clockwise round the Isle of Wight. This is an annual event, with thousands of people taking part and is a spectacular thing to see (and to take part in).

Thomas Ludewig

April 23, 2008

There are two dates that come to mind for my home town, Scarborough. On Shrove Tuesday there is Skipping on the foreshore road, it could well date back to 1903 and was recorded in 1927 as the 'Scarborough's Skipping Festival. It still continues to date with thousands of young (and old people) enjoying themselves. There are other traditions on the day such as the ringing off the Pancake bell. The other event is Boxing Day in Scarborough. It's a tradition, termed as 'Ladies Day'. There are various explanations, but the most commonly held one is that the fishermen's wives were given the day off to go for a drink after they had worked so hard preparing and delivering Christmas. So the pubs opened.

Now it's for everyone: the pubs open at 11am, everyone's in high spirits. It's a time to catch up with people you see every day, those you see occasionally and those you see once a year (on Boxing Day, incidentally!) There are organised events like the fishermen vs firemen football match played on the beach in top hats, tug of war on the beach and a home-made-raft race in the harbour. There's something for everybody, and around the town are people of all ages. People get dressed up in fancy dress, the best togs and more. Meeting up with friends and go round the pubs from 11am onwards - as you can imagine there's a good 12 hours plus of drinking and fun. How long this has gone on for I have no idea, I have missed two in my adult years and it has been going on for a lot longer than I have been around.

Ian Smith

April 23, 2008

Stokenchurch Village Fete & Companion Dog Show, held to enable local charities and organisations to raise funds. This year the fete will be opened by Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE, attractions include - Birds of Prey, Gladiators and a fly past by Spitfire and Hurricane of the Battle of Britain Flight.

Karl Reilly

April 23, 2008

I've already put one suggestion on the website, but didn't want to take too much space, so here's some more ideas (in no particular order)

I've already mentioned Land Rover, but see www.alrc.co.uk for more info, or <http://www.mroc-national2008.co.uk/> for info on the Land Rover National. I'm chair of the Essex Land Rover Club (www.elrc.info) and you're more than welcome to come to one of our events.

The scouting movement is just over 100 years old, but is so English it really should feature somewhere. I went through the movement, and now my children are, and they are thoroughly enjoying it. From

We English - Your Ideas

weekly activities to church parade and scout camp - there is an awful lot of photogenic opportunity, and that includes the guides as well of course.

Traction Engines - those strange machines that men in cloth caps lovingly restore should feature. The Dorset Steam show would be a great opportunity.

Camping - another strange pass-time. The camping and caravanning club organise National camping week at Whitsun, see <http://www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/>

The Shuttleworth Collection at Old Warden Aerodrome - home of pre-WWI planes is worth a visit on their open days - celebrating all that was great about the English pioneering flights, see <http://www.shuttleworth.org/>

Something that is so strange and peculiarly English is the Tulip Parade in Spalding each year. I went to this as a child many, many times, and have since taken my children to see it. A carnival made up of floats decorated in tulip heads. Strange, but true. And it's their 50th anniversary this year. See:

<http://www.spaldingnet.com/spaldingtown/parade/>

Bristol Balloon Fiesta. I've been a few times, and it's a rare sight... see

<http://www.bristolfiesta.co.uk/content.php?pid=18>

So many ideas, but I really need to get back to some work now. Good luck with the book.

Gemma Bicknell

April 23, 2008

Old Leigh Regatta in Leigh-on-Sea always strikes me as a particularly English affair. Held over the weekend of 13th & 14th September this year in the Essex fishing village, there's live music and attractions, but most importantly 'climbing the greasy pole' and mud football... The official website is below:

<http://www.oldleigh.com/regatta.html>

Mark Mitchell

April 23, 2008

How about skiff racing? have a look at <http://www.tvsc.co.uk>

I expect the most 'photogenic' event would be the skiff championships held in beautiful Henley on Thames on the 24th of August.

or the Chertsey regatta on the 2nd of August, or Walton regatta on 13th July, have there own slightly eccentric appeal. Else there out regular practice sessions on Tuesday and Thursday?

We also do Punt racing.

Dave Murat

April 23, 2008

<http://www.whitfriday.brassbands.saddleworth.org/intro.htm>

The Whit Friday Brass Band Contests

Often described as 'the greatest free show on Earth', the Saddleworth & District Whit Friday Brass Band Contests take place every year on the afternoon and evening of Whit Friday - 16th May in 2008. English enough? :)

Alex Johnston

April 23, 2008

I know its a little way off but every year, just before christmas in Stratford on Avon, they have a small service held in the gardens at the new place, one of Shakespeares houses, where they turn on the lights on a christmas tree. there is a choir (from St James' Alveston) and a brass band, and people come and sing carols. its done at dusk, and is in aid of The Shakespeare Hospice. Its one of the highlights of the christmas season for me, really nice and festive.

Ben Caulfield

April 23, 2008

If you get an opportunity try the open water, water polo tournament, 50 plus teams at the National Water Sports Centre, Nottingham. Hosted by South Derbyshire Water Polo Club, it's an interesting gathering of people of all ages, shapes and sizes....<http://www.sdwp.co.uk/openwater/index.htm>

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Nick James

April 23, 2008

fell race on the outskirts of sheffield, 7pm Wednesday 7th May 2008 details:

<http://www.totleyac.org.uk/Tigers%20Todger%202008.htm>

Karl Reilly

April 23, 2008

Old cars (British ones, of course) in show condition and those used for motorsport are a mainstay of activity for many people. This year is the 60th anniversary of Land Rover, and the Association of Land Rover Clubs will meet at Eastnor Castle at Whitsun bank holiday - where the original designers developed the quintessential British marque.

Similarly other clubs have celebrations, notably Austin Healy.

Motorsport attracts a huge cross section of people in all its guises from grass roots events to major spectacles at nationally recognised circuits.

Amanda Learmonth

April 23, 2008

Come to Strawberry Fair in Cambridge on Sat 7th June (<http://www.strawberry-fair.org.uk/index.html>) - biggest free UK festival with music, arts, crafts - and most importantly... capoeira! :)

Olivia Emery

April 23, 2008

My Dad lived in the West Country when I was a kid and when I went to visit him during the holidays I would always be rather intrigued by the signs I'd often see advertising COWPAT RALLY'S.

I never got to see one, so I have no idea what was entailed but sounded fun....

Casey

April 22, 2008

Anything to do with open water - someone has mentioned the serpentine already (did you know there's a life guard base there, too) but closer to home for you and probably easier are the Shiverers in Brighton - all year round, any weathers, total submersion in the sea.

We've already discussed this one - War and Peace show at Beltring near Tunbridge Wells. the organised activities are only the start of it and the rock'n'roll dancing on saturday night is brilliant.

While I'm on odd entertainment, I've just come back from a hen weekend - at an Adults only, 80s themed weekend at Butlins in Bognor. They do that sort of thing in skeggy and minehead, too, I think, and there is such a variety of people there that the people-watching is outstanding. Being pregnant and not drinking was definitely not an issue!! Some of the outfits, too... There were mostly stag and hen trips, and landmark birthday celebrations, but to go to a holiday camp is a particularly English way to mark a life-changing event, I think!!

I know it's cliché, but some sort of WI or Young Farmer's activity is important, I think. these sorts of organisations are indispensable when you're from a farming family and your day is centred around, for example, milking a few times a day and you start at half four.

Lastly, and very small fry, but something that for me sums up rural traditions (apart from people going to do whatever it is they do on the chalk Long Man at Wilmington's private parts!) is the sight of my mother and all her friends competing for honour, bragging rights and top prizes of 50p at her village horticultural society shows. The Olympics don't touch it. Sir Steven Redgrave would be crushed by the intensity of the competitive edge. They do this four times a year so, if you're interested, I can get you the dates for the summer and autumn shows!

If you want contacts for any of this stuff let me know and I'll suggest some locations for you! Lots of love

For some reason when I saw that flag I thought you'd gone all Kilroy Silk on us. I'm sure that's the intention but it sent shivers up me spine so it did!

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Elizabeth Dunningham

April 22, 2008

The project sounds very Martin Parr, who by the way I love, but I guess you'll be moving it into the 21st century. Have you read Jeremy Paxman's book about the English? You could get some ideas from him. For me I think fell-running and hobbies typify this crazy nation.

My event for the hat is the Helvelyn triathlon, on September 7th. It's ridiculously hard – swim a mile in ullswater then cycle 38 miles up lots of hills, then run up helvellyn – only 9 miles but steep! On the website there's a guy coming through the finish with blood dripping down his knees. I might enter, some people took 7 hours to complete last year so that's heartening!

I bumped into Jane Parr from our course at Heathrow T5 the other day, still snapping for the Watford Observer. It was great to see her, hopefully I'll hook up with her soon.

Take care, if I think of any other events, I'll let you know. I hope I get my signed print! Xxx

Niall Taylor

April 21, 2008

I suggest you go to Frinton- on-Sea in Essex, the home of my late grandparents. They were obsessed with being the right side of the level crossing (sea facing). Indeed you were not considered a proper Frintonian unless you lived "inside the gates". In 2000 Frinton got its 1st pub to much public debate. My brother and I were sent to Frinton when we were little for the summer to attend a church summer school, this abruptly stopped when we were accused of deliberately ripping the wall paper in the lounge and promptly sent home. I have really fond memories of a sea side town that was a little odd...

Life for my grand parents revolved around the Golf Club, so this is where I'd love for you to go.

Check out a golf tournament, find some proper Frintonians. Hire yourself a beach hut and enjoy the sandy beach - YES sand !.

Travel to Clacton and have a complete culture shock (second thoughts don't bother with Clacton).

Darren Zlatareff

April 21, 2008

Just a few ideas to consider the alternative living/partying side of England.

Traveller sites in the east or south west, gypsy sites, free party raves in the country.

Could dig up a few contacts probably.

As usual mr.Simon,youve come up trumps with this web site initiative, cant wait to see the pics.

Louise Chater

April 21, 2008

Portscatho Regatta - Saturday 23rd August.

Fabulous v traditional regatta held in this small village on the Roseland Peninsular in Cornwall. It has everything from beach sports, sandcastle building competitions, sailing, raft racing, stalls and games on the festooned lugger to an evening performance in the street with a local brass band (a bit like the northern bands, the miners bands here have llied on here in the SW) and live music on to late in the evening. The British doing what they do best!

And there's a great campsite near by we can direct you to.

If it interests you, there's a great package of stuff happening in Cornwall - the Minack Theatre nestling into the cliffs / re-constructions at various castles / outdoor theatre in the great gardens of the south coast of Cornwall etc etc.

Marie

April 19, 2008

I'm presuming you've considered joining us at New Wine, Kingdom Come - 26th July to 1st August.

All the places have gone but thats never stopped you before!

Its a chance to see around 10,000 English people behaving in some very un-English ways!

You'd fit right in with your caravan too

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Mishka Henner

April 18, 2008

Just came across these medieval treats:

"Sat 14th June & Sun 15th June

Medieval Fayre at the Old Hall, Tatton Park

To celebrate the 10th Medieval Fayre at Tatton in association with Plantagenet events each day will end with an even bigger and better battle. Men at arms, archers, gunners and a ragtag army of hangers-on promises an exciting and atmospheric event. Over 40 authentic merchants and skilled artisans complete a bustling travelling fair."

And how about a Viking Sunday:

Sun 10th August

Viking Sunday at the Old Hall

Vikings are coming...! Cestrescire Living History invade and take over Tatton's Old hall. Experience battle and domestic life. Try on armour, have a go at archery (small charge). 12pm - 5pm (last entry 4pm).

Nick Heasman

April 18, 2008

<http://www.gallica.co.uk/celts/wickerman.htm>

<http://www.gallica.co.uk/butser2/beltain2008.htm>

See above maybe useful little event just on Hants Sussex border on the 3rd. It usually gets going before dark so should be ok for light, depending on weather

Any questions let me know

Timothy Crum

April 18, 2008

Sounds like an interesting trip. One book that you might want to refer to is "Bollox to Alton Towers" that has a lot of interesting events. The daylight item is tricky.

Cheese Rolling race in Gloucestershire (people injure themselves running down the hill!)

Green man procession in Hastings (a lot of greened up people!)

Bonfire procession in Battle and /or Lewes (this does start in daylight almost) - truly a Sussex phenomenon with all the fancy dress attire.

The beer tent at Cowes week (I know the girl that runs one of the champagne tents if you want a different camera angle)

The Chap Olympics (refer to the Chap magazine) - interesting games dressed in plus fours and trilbys, often in Bedford Square.

I hope that one of these might be helpful.

Big Nige

April 18, 2008

Can't you include Wales!! Pembrokeshire and the South Wales Coast is some of the most beautiful and peaceful places I have visited in the UK and used to go there with my family as a youngster every year for about 5 summers.

Nolton Bay is a lovely typically English cove and really reminds me of my childhood. I went back there recently and it was just the same. I don't know the name of other beaches round there but there is a long sandy beach with sand dunes which is very popular with surfers nearby which is also a must.

We used to go Pony Trekking on the hills and fields near the sea and it's a special place. A small village near Haverfordwest is where we stayed.

It won't surprise you to know Scarborough and Whitby Bay were also places I went with my family. Crazy golf and donkey rides together with the slot machines are the things we used to do. Prob all normal stuff but a real English place nevertheless.

Otley Chevin (overlooks Otley) is a lovely place and you can watch the planes take off from Leeds Bradford Airport with a pint at the pub over the road.

Skipton Castle is probably the best castle I have been too and of course the Yorkshire Dales take some beating with Leyburn, Hawes and Ingleton all offering something for the visitor. Take the road from

We English - Your Ideas

Leyburn over the top of the Dales and moors for some of the best views in the whole of the UK. The Tan Hill pub is also the highest pub in the UK and worth a visit. Last time I was there there was a sheep drinking at the bar!

Anyway that's enough from me.

Kate

April 17, 2008

English going on their package holidays - Heathrow at it's busiest/worst in July!

North Sea fishermen in North Shields, Newcastle. Have been fishing cod etc for good old British fish and chips for many years. Sadly fisheries have declined but there are still some staunch old fellas who go out every day in hideous weather conditions.

And...Butlins, Birdwatchers, Church fetes, Easter egg hunts

Good luck Si, am sure you will have a fantastic adventure with your girls :) xx

Owen

April 17, 2008

A few ideas-

The Morris dancers at Ide Hill (I'm sure my sister knows when they meet.)

Muslim worship outside the mosque in Finsbury Park

Outdoor Shakespeare festival in Ludlow <http://www.ludlowfestival.co.uk/>

Cheese rolling- again Ide Hill <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/curious/>

The birdman competition in Bognor (although they are looking for alternative venue as water levels are low and council have banned it this year...) <http://www.birdman.org.uk/>

gay pride dog show Brighton <http://www.brightonpride.org/calendar.php?date=6+Jul+2008>

All I can think of at mo.

Hope any of them useful and too obvious or dull.

Sam Lipscombe

April 17, 2008

The tough guy competition near Wolverhampton presents some really interesting characters.. The event happens twice a year, once in Summer and once in Winter the Summer one this year is on Sunday July 27th 2008..

(<http://www.toughguy.co.uk>).

Its meant to represent the conditions solders went through in the first world war..

Julia

April 17, 2008

Rugby at Twickenham

Oxford vs Cambridge boat races

Croquet

Andrew Youngson

April 17, 2008

Summer Solstice

Glastonbury

Notting Hill Carnival

Good luck with it all!

Rob Coy

April 17, 2008

Pheasant shooting

Cheltenham Gold Cup

Lords Test match (cricket)

Bottle Kicking - <http://www.hallaton.org/bottlekicking.html>

County Shows

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Helen Stevens

April 17, 2008

Rock climbing and bouldering in the Peak District
(or sport climbing down in Portland by the sea, beautiful)
The cheese rolling festival in Gloucester
Cycling in Hyde Park

Mark Warne

April 17, 2008

Gloucestershire Cheese Rolling (in May so get in quick)

Dan Griffin

April 17, 2008

Swimming in the Serpentine on Christmas Morning!
World Toe Wrestling Championships - why!?
Isle of Wight Garlic festival
Harvest Festival of the Pearl Kings and Queens - you know you want to be a fellow Cockney
Biggin Hill Airshow
National Mud Festival - Sadly in Wales so doesn't count
Bikers meeting up on weekends
Oxted Donkey Derby!
London to Brighton Cycle / Car Races - on your doorstep
Morris Dancing - why?
Point to Point Meetings
Fox hunts
Cowes Week
Henley Rowing Regatta
Harley Davidson Bikes shows
World Championship Viking Boat Racing - Isle of Man
Brecon Jazz Festival - again Wales
Numerous Food Festivals (Ludlow, Henley-on-Thames) etc
International Beatles Week (the band not the bug!) in Liverpool
Time to do some work!

Karoki

April 17, 2008

Battle of Hastings re-enactment
Firegathering, a small hippie music festival near Brighton - <http://www.firegathering.co.uk/>
Looking forward to the signed copies!

Katherine

April 13, 2008

Just a thought, have you thought about covering the London to Brighton vintage cars driving rally...?
Although I'm sure you have!!

If you want something really obscure, there is a competition up in Blakeney (Norfolk), where my family and the Galloway family used to go on summer hols. It's called the 'greasy pole' competition, sounds dodgy I know. But they basically attach a huge log to the side of the port, suspended over the sea (it's a small seaside town) cover it in grease and the competition is to see who can get the furthest to the end without falling off. Bizarre but very typical eccentric Brits. You'll find loads of kids 'crabbing' by the port too, (dangling bait of fish lines to catch crabs) another old seaside pastime. I think of English summers and remember the old seaside towns, Mr Whippy, crabbing ect.....just thoughts, but they seem like English pastimes to me. The 'greasy pole' is an old summer tradition the town does every year, I haven't been for many years but hopefully it still goes on. If you are interested drop me an email and I can see if I can find out more details for you.

Hope you and the family are well, the trip sounds brilliant. Say 'Hi' to Sarah for me.

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Huw J. Williams

April 11, 2008

Perfectly justification - you've really thought this out well mate. Sounds fascinating. Will post some ideas up for you but one for now - I did an historical radio documentary ages ago on the leisure activities and sports of miners in the Yorkshire pits. Seem to remember there was a research done on traditional games which included tracing those still surviving today, pretty sure it was these people... <http://www.ncm.org.uk/> may be worth a call as it might turn up something particularly unusual and regional.

Let me know when it's good for you to meet

Andy Greaves

April 09, 2008

As part of your research can i recommend the book *The English* by Jeremy Paxman and also for a French view *Les Anglais Portrait of a People* by Philippe Daudy published by Headline. Might be worth looking at the poems of Betjeman as well. my photo ideas are as follows:

Sons of the Desert Conventions (Laurel and Hardy Appreciation Society)

Bug Jams (Volkswagon Beetle meets)

Hay on Wye Literary Festival

Muker Show / Reeth Show (country shows in Yorkshire Dales)

Matlock Bath Raft Race (Boxing Day)

Tansley Steam Rally (or nay other steam rally for that matter)

Denby Dale Pie

Grasmere Sports Day and the Fell Dog racing might be worth a look

The Tough Guy (loads of other runs as well like Man Versus Horse)

Vintage Vehicle Rallies

Clown Conventions (there's a church service for Clowns in London every year I think)

Nottingham Goose Fair

Model Railways exhibitions

Bristol Balloon Festival

Gt Gable Rememberence Service (Novemeber)

Tan Hill Sheep Show (@ highest pub in England.

there's also a run of some distance on any weekend somewhere in the country. The Great Langdale Half and Full Marathon is particularly good.

Clive Egginton

April 07, 2008

You kind of touched on it in your introduction, walking in the rain in the Lake district. We are supposedly obsessed by the weather therefore, how about a series on weathermen or weather stations. We as an island also have the shipping forecast which is a national institution.

We English by Simon Roberts

Introduction by Stephen Daniels. Published by Chris Boot Ltd (www.chrisboot.com)

Simon Roberts was born in Croydon, south London, in 1974, and now lives in Brighton. Roberts' photographs have been published and exhibited widely, at venues including Klompching Gallery in New York, and the Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai. They are represented in public and private collections, including the Deutsche Börse Art Collection and the Wilson Centre for Photography. His work has been recognized by many grants and awards, including the Royal Photographic Society Vic Odden Award (2007) for achievement in the art of photography by a British photographer under 35, a National Media Museum Bursary (2007), and a grant from the John Kobal Foundation (2008). His first book, *Motherland*, was published by Chris Boot to critical acclaim in 2007.

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