

# Lofer Diary 2007

*The Border Holiday Group*

## Day 1, Friday 14th September

The planning, the fundraising, all behind us now, this is the day we have been waiting for the start of the BHG 2007 trip to Lofer. Having met up with our two new drivers, Geoff and Zoë, the previous evening as they parked the Jumbulance at the local Police Station I could not help but notice the immaculate condition of the vehicle, spotless both inside and out.

After a hearty breakfast at the Elm House Hotel the vehicle was moved to the Common Haugh at 9 am. Ready for departure at 11 am. The sight of the vehicle certainly caused considerable interest with the locals, by 10.15am a hive of activity ensued round the vehicle as VIP's, Carers and families arrived, wheelchairs, suitcases and food donations piled up ready to be safely stowed. Promptly, at 10.30am Alistair Learmonth, from the Hawick News arrived to take a group picture before our departure.



The Group ready to leave.



All quiet on the bus

Suitcases and chairs underneath, VIP's and Carers safely on board we left to a rousing farewell from the now very large crowd. The first leg of the journey was comparatively short this trip, travelling via Jedburgh then onwards to the A1 Hull bound for the ferry. Our first stop was at approx. 1.15pm at the Barnton Service area where all enjoyed a lunch of stovies and pasta, kindly donated by our Secretary's mum Nancy, followed by fruit and yoghurt.

After topping up the diesel tanks it was off for the Port of Hull, arriving at 4.45pm. Gordon and Geoff left the Jumbulance to get everyone booked aboard the Pride of Hull for the overnight crossing to Rotterdam. Everyone off loaded we boarded the ship at 5.30pm, cabins allocated, freshened up, the Group met at 7.30pm for a delicious buffet style evening meal.

Some of us visited the Duty Free Shop then it was to the dance floor for the night's entertainment. A live band was playing and carer, Derek Inglis, was fortunate to win a mini cruise to Bruges in a game of 'Play Your Cards Right' hosted by the onboard Entertainment Officer who was ably assisted by our own nurse, Pauline.

Not too late a night as the Group had a long 13-hour journey the following day to our final destination, Lofer but a great first day to the trip.

Gordon

**Quote of the day** "Look at all the diggers, they'll be for keeping the runway clear in the winter!" Sheila at the port before boarding the ferry.



Derek & "Dolly Dealer" Pauline, the winning moment.

## Lofer Diary 2007

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### Things heard on the holiday:

- "Mine's goan!"
- "Am getting scurvy!"
- "Mind there's a stane in that!"
- "Have you got a minute?."
- "A' fair enjoyed mase!', dressed like this!"

## Day 2, Saturday 15th September

We had an early start this morning, the ships tannoy giving us all a 6am wake up call. After a buffet breakfast it was off the boat, through passport control and onto the bus for the long journey to Lofer. We left a sunny Rotterdam at 9am and travelled through some beautiful scenery in Holland.

When we stopped for lunch those of us who could get off the bus ate it outside in the warm sunshine, while others on the bus took the opportunity to have a move about while the bus was stationary. We set off again at 12.55pm, and so far all the scenery has been beautiful – including some lovely views of German Castles. We passed by Frankfurt airport where we saw planes coming into land.

The bus stopped for tea between 5.55pm and 6.35pm allowing legs to be stretched again and a change of drivers. We set off on the final leg of the journey witnessing a beautiful sunset, but darkness robbed us of the first sight of the mountains.

Having phoned ahead earlier the hotel was ready for our arrival in Lofer at 10.15pm. On our arrival Herr Grisseman, Rudi & Robert, old friends to some of the group, greeted us. Gordon and Pauline allocated rooms and within about 30min everyone and their luggage were off the bus and into their rooms. The more tired of us retired to bed while others relaxed in the bar.

Alison

## Day 3, Sunday 16th September

We woke to a beautiful morning in Lofer, blue skies, the mountains bathed in sunshine, with just a dusting of snow on their tops. For first time travellers last nights darkness had kept Lofers secret well. *(For drivers Geoff & Zoë who had been here two weeks previously it was also the first time they had seen the mountains.)*

We had a free morning this morning so after breakfast Blair and I sat out on the patio in the warm sunshine and enjoyed a quiet drink. We were soon joined by some of our fellow holidaymakers. Others in the group enjoyed a walk around the village and visited the church before returning for lunch.

After lunch it's off to Zell-am-Zee for a ride on the cable car. After a wrong turn and some excellent manoeuvring by the drivers, we arrive at the bottom of the mountain. The blue skies continue as we ascended the mountain in the cable car, some of the group enjoying the ride up more than others. The perfect conditions allowed the group the fully appreciate the scenery at the top of the Schmitten Hohe. We all watched the Para gliders running off the top of the mountain and some of the group had a snowball fight and tried to build snowmen in the pockets of snow at the top. After taking in the scenery we all had a drink on the terrace courtesy of Bob and Winnie, before a mad rush for the last cable car down. Which was sadly all too soon.

Back on the bus we head back to the hotel for our evening meal. After a huge meal we all retired to the lounge to enjoy a drink and a good time. Glenise and Pauline head off to bed at 10pm for an early night, which must be a first in the history of The Border Holiday Group! They are usually there at the death! *(Oh Glenise lost her glasses, have you seen them?)*

Brian & Blair



The Pride of Hull



All quiet on the bus



German Castle.



First morning in Lofer.



A stroll in the village



The top of the mountain.

**Quote of the day** “ *This is the only place in the world were my lungs open properly and I can breath well. I were like that in Alaska as well!*” Glenise at top of mountain.



## Day 4, Monday 17th September

Wake to the sound of the river and blue skies again. Some of the group enjoy a swim before breakfast, and then it's another free morning. I go shopping with some of the girls in Lofer, buying a watch battery and a necklace, before having a walk round Lofer. We meet the group who have been more energetic and enjoyed a cycle ride round Lofer.

At 11.45am we board the bus heading for Berchtesgaten. Not so bright when we arrive but we enjoy (*for want of a better phrase*) our packed lunch in the picnic area. Which is overlooked by 'The Eagle's Nest', one of Hitler's hideouts, which sits on the top of the mountain. Lunch finished, "mind that's got a stane in it", we head down to the boats for the trip on Konigsee.



Not much room!



St Bartholomew



Konigsee



Group leaders



Roberts turn



Smile!



Ta-da-da-da!



Rudi!



Ideal man!



Enjoying the Night



June and friends.



The Jumbulance & friends.



What have they been up to?



Alison & Glenise.



Konigsee.



On the Boat.



Enjoying a joke.

**Quote of the day** "Ma fither fought hunderts o' Germans in the war, a could take him !" Brian on the boat, when the steward got a bit tetchy.

## Day 5, Tuesday 18th September

Up at 7.30am to prepare for the day. Today I am to be group leader. So I need to get everyone ready with a good breakfast before going on a day trip to Salzburg.

I helped Lesley and Sheila go down to the pool by opening doors and sorting out towels. Then at breakfast I rang 'the bell' to get everyone's attention to let them know the arrangements for the day. Asking them all if they could meet at the bus for 9.30am.



Still wet!

It was a shame that we had some heavy showers all day (*although Bob had predicted them*) but it didn't dampen our spirits. Most of the group enjoyed the cathedral before going off in groups to do their own thing. Some visited the gardens, Mozart's house, shopping or just enjoying the view of the castle.

After meandering through the narrow streets we stopped and had some lunch under the umbrellas of a nice café, where humour shone through and again lightened the burden of the poor weather. After lunch we looked in some more beautifully stocked shops, which had many lovely things we don't see at home.



Salzburg Cathedral

While sheltering under a bridge a gentleman played music to entertain the crowds, which again cheered everyone up. We then made our way back to the bus, stopping in a plush café for a coffee. (*Where we watched Gordon, Sheila, Alison, Pauline, and Lesley walk past in the pouring rain, and didn't tell them we were there*). Once back at the bus stop we caught up with the wet Gordon, Sheila, Alison, Pauline and Lesley (*I'm not bitter typing this bit, honest. Lesley*), and the bus. Once on board we got our wet things off and warmed up. An Australian bus driver came on to see the bus and was very impressed. Once the whole group were on board we set off back to Lofer.



Change of leader.

Some of the group went for a swim before dinner, because they weren't wet enough already. At dinner Gordon got up and announced that Billy Hislop who along with his wife, Heather, had travelled with the group last time wanted to buy the group a drink in memory of Heather. Once Robert, the bar man, had brought the round we drank a toast to Heather.



Look at the brains working.

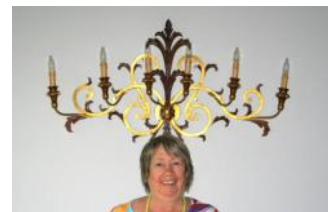
After dinner I thanked the drivers once more and invited everyone through to the lounge for quiz night. Gordon and Lesley thought up some difficult questions to do with the trip and the teams of two, VIP & carer, struggled to answer.



The winners in action!

Once the scores were counted up I had to present the prizes, unfortunately Linda and I won the wooden spoon! Geoff and Zoë won first prize, with Glenise and Pauline a close second. (*If they had had another early night, or maybe if they hadn't had the early night, they may have won it! !*). I then sat and had a laugh with my new friends before going to bed. (*Still no sign of the glasses but barman Bob gave her a basket to keep everything in so she won't lose anything else*)

Elaine & Linda



That's what eating venison does to you!



It was a bit wet !



Salzburg Castle



Alison at the gardens.



Singing in the rain.



Wooden spoon winners



Hands up if you were 2nd.

**Quote of the day** "Have you seen the rain!" Blair, on the phone to Lesley who was standing in the middle of a Salzburg square in the rain!



## Day 6, Wednesday 19th September



## Taking a breather

The morning after.

It was the morning after a Drookin in Salzburg and a toughly fought quiz.

After breakfast that morning we were supposed to join Herr Gordon on a guided tour around the river but because of the rain, which I forecast, it was postponed until after lunch. Some of the group took the opportunity to go to the village others relaxed in the hotel.



Make a wish!

The tour in the afternoon was very interesting, as far as buildings of local interest and the flora and fauna, taking in some of the more traditional Austrian housing, before heading down to the river. I did, however, feel a bit embarrassed that it took two sometimes three carers to get my small wheeled wheelchair moving along the track.

Half way round we stopped on the bridge and Lesley who took a photo record of the whole trip took a group photo from above. I hope she has a photo of Derek doing his submarine act in the river, I'm sure he was speaking with a high-pitched voice for sometime after. While Derek was swimming and some of the others were paddling in the ice-cold river, the rest of us were enjoying our lollies before returning to the hotel.



Wave



Wash facilities are  
basic!!

On return it was time to get ready for another quiet night at the hotel, Fancy Dress Night. After meeting in our dining room we formed a line and proceeded to conga round the other dining room much to the amusement of the others guests. We then had a party, singing and dancing, some of the Germans even joined in at the end of the night.

*(Still no glasses and she left her basket in someone else's room!)*

Bob & Winnie



She's due soon.



Brrrrrrrrrrrrrr!



The shorts were red  
before he went in!!

Continued.....



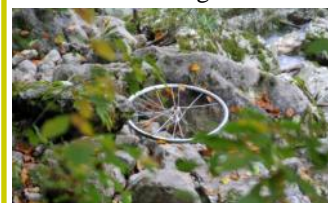
Shopping excursion.



Village walk.



The watering hole .



That's what happened to the  
VIP last time!.



Wave!



The lolly stop.



Robert &amp; Sheena.

**Quote of the day** “*Mind that it's Pauline's!*” Keith all night.

## Day 6, Wednesday 19th September (cont.)



The Nurse



Johnny Depp



Elaine &amp; Winnie



Lift Full!

## MEANWHILE....

Have you ever been questioned about your professionalism? Johnny Depp and I were on Wednesday night, when we were required to come to the aid of Brian, mid fielder for Celtic F.C.

I have never had to assist a doctor, with a medical procedure, dressed as a girl about to put her finger in the dam downtown Amsterdam. I have also never been assisted by a dreadlocked pirate, eagerly giving me rubber gloves, and ensuring the doctor can see adequately, having a hotel bedside lamp upside down, theatre style, for increased light! I have also never been viewed so strangely, by introducing myself to a doctor as the nurse, and have the doctor smile politely and ask in which country of the world I work!!!

On writing all this, both Johnny Depp and I were totally impressed by the doctors, nurses, ambulance crew and hospital in Salzburg, all of which were of the highest standard. We were also kept entertained by our patient, which will actually provide us with enough material for our new trilogy:

*"How to survive tedium on a Jumbulance trip", on sale next trip, all proceeds to the "Border Holiday Group."*

It was unfortunate that Brian had to miss the party night, but looking back on our medical adventure, Gordon and I feel that it may have been a role reversal, and possibly the remainder of the Jumbulance group missed out on a fab trip to Salzburg Royal Infirmary. **THANK YOU BRIAN!**

Brian has now fully recovered, and at no point, in the whole evening, appeared troubled in the least of his ordeal. Gordon and I are traumatized for life!!!

Pauline More (Professional nurse. Honest!!!)



Darcy Bussel eat your heart out!



Lift still full!



She's no lettin' him go!



Countries dancing.



Conga....



Conga....



Conga....



Tina, Fat Sam &amp; Bob.



He's behind you!



Auld Lang Syne.



I don't know what the hospital gave them.

**Quote of the day** "Thanks doctor, Ah'll hea tae buy ye a beer and twenty woodbine." Brian thanking the doctor, there are more but not for this publication!



## Day 7, Thursday 20th September



Sheila &amp; Lorna



Pauline &amp; Robert



Derek &amp; Keith



Gordon &amp; Miko



June, Gordon &amp; Geoff

After a relaxing start to the day it was time to get our group photo taken. All of the group were in their white T-shirts lined up on the hotel steps. Herr Grisseman kindly took the photo for us although he didn't know he would have to take it with 22 different cameras. As a nice surprise the hotel staff all came out to get their photo taken too, as did Miko!

It was then time to load the bus for our trip to the wildlife park. We thought we were going to have an extra passenger as Miko climbed on the bus. But as Keith was in charge today it got told "oot". Once on our way Keith announced that as everyone had their white t-shirts on there would be a prize for the cleanest t-shirt on the return to the hotel. We were greeted at our destination with glorious sunshine, which allowed the group to eat the packed lunch outside on the picnic tables before Keith and Gordon went for the tickets. Everyone enjoyed the tour of the park and loads of photos were taken. Some of the group had the opportunity to feed some of the animals on the way round. Once we were all back at the start cold drinks and ice-lollies were enjoyed in the beer garden. Some had a look in the gift shops while others watched vintage sports cars starting an uphill time trial.

With everyone back on the bus it was back to the hotel where we had all been invited to have coffee and cakes, on the veranda, with hotel proprietors Mr & Mrs Grisseman. Keith judged everyone's t-shirts on entering the hotel, unfortunately our chairman Gordon had a mishap and his T-shirt was covered in chocolate sauce, front and back. Keith announced Gordon was **OUT!** June won the competition.

Most of the group packed their cases before dinner ready for our departure the next day. Due to a hotel function we all ate dinner in the lounge, which was cosy. Sheila bought everyone a drink, thanks Sheila. Then after dinner it was time for the presentations, certificates of achievement for the VIP's and carers. Gifts from the Border Holiday Group for the hotel staff and Grisseman family as well as the driver and a Clock was presented to Sue who had intimated that this would be her last trip. Keith got an extra gift of a monkey reading a paper; you have to ask him what it was all about.

The evening came to a close with everyone watching a slide show of some of this years photographs.

Keith & Derek



Herr Stag



Herr Bear



Elaine &amp; Bambi



The ambush!



The result.



The Hotel



Elaine, Alison &amp; Sheena.



Brian, Zoë &amp; Glenise.



The Von Traps, climb every mountain.



Another ugly view!.



Herr Grisseman &amp; Staff.



Sue &amp; Gordon.

**Quote of the day** "Ah conked oot!" Keith's reply to Gordon when asked if he had slept well the previous night.

## Day 8, Friday 21st September

Earlier start this morning as we are leaving Lofer today. Had an enjoyable evening last night and would like to say a very big thank you to those that made the holiday happen.



The Grisseman's.

We had a surprise send off today, as a busload of Austrian ambulance and firemen serenaded us on the Jumbulance, Pauline even had a dance with them. The Grisseman's and their staff all came to say goodbye and wave us off, and probably thinking "thank goodness they've gone" or the German equivalent.

A long day journey lay ahead as we had to get to Wiesbaden. Lunch on the bus was not up to the standard we had become accustomed to this week, a packet of crisps, a tray bake and a cuppa! A fasting day, (*your never happy you lot are you, you mump all week about eating too much and then mump, there's nothing for lunch, we have to use up all the tray bakes somehow!*) We also all have an ice-lolly when the bus stops to refuel, thank you to the person that bought them.

The poor food on the bus was more than made up for with our overnight accommodation in Wiesbaden. On our arrival Gordon and Pauline sorted out the rooms and inform the group the meal will be at 7.30pm. The hotel lobby is marbled with mirrors and swanky lighting. We are all on different floors but there are three lifts and they can take more than one wheel chair, the doors close and open almost immediately and your on your floor.



The entertainers.

The evening meal was good, pork for a change, with an accompanying drink courtesy of Keith. Gordon was given a pinnie to wear, as the group didn't want a repeat of the white t-shirt mess. After dinner the group had a quiet drink in the bar before retiring for the night.

Motto for the day "Where there's a will there's a way!"



(Found that morning by chamber maid, underwear and a brush. Glenise was presented with them, they had to be hers. but for once they were not, the owner will remain anonymous.)

June & Sue

She'll dance with anybody.

After a buffet breakfast we leave



The kitchen staff.



Robert & Brian.

Wies-



So he disnae make a mess o' himsel' again.



Lofer, the final morning



See it didn't just rain.



Rudi!



The swanky hotel lobby.



Sunset in Wiesbaden

**Quote of the day** *I can't think of one for today.*



## Day 9, Saturday 22nd September

baden to continue our journey home. We enjoy the scenery enroute to Rotterdam. Pauline and Gordon entertaining the bus by turning back the years and letting us see what Gordon looked like with hair! That filled about 2 minutes of the journey. Clear roads meant that we reached Rotterdam about 3.30pm. Lunch on the bus today having been cuppa soup and tray bakes (*we still had a lot to use up*).



Two minutes filled!



Sheena.

As we were early we had to for half an hour in the sunny 24°C heat of Rotterdam before being allowed to board the ferry, The Pride Of Rotterdam. After a quick freshen up, it was off to the bar for a quick refreshment before dinner.

Once again it was a first class meal with a large choice of main courses and puddings. Blair got hold of the camera and was taking everyone's photos while they were eating dessert.

After dinner some of the group went up on deck to see us leave, some did some shopping, while myself and others entered the quiz. Unfortunately we didn't win though Brian did come second. Then the band came on for a bit before the Bingo. Pauline bought every one a card but didn't buy the winning one! Sheena was in her element as the numbers were getting called out. The music started again and we spent the rest of the night dancing.

A good last night, on a good holiday, and I will miss everyone when I get home.

(*Lesley lost her phone on the ferry, it was found, but it just shows sharing a room with Glenise is dangerous what did Pauline lose this week?*)

Robert & Stewart



Stewart.



Bob & Winnie



Geoff & Pauline.



Lorna & Derek.

The strawberries caused quite a stir in the dining room.



Sheila's been shopping!



On the dance floor.



Elaine & Gordon



Robert & Zoë



Pauline & Blair



Group leaders confer.



Gordon sorts Keith out.



Must be in Holland.



Today's Kitchen staff



Today's transport.



Sheila & Blair.



Keith & the gang.

**Quote of the day** "No, it was on channel 5!", Bobs reply when it was suggested one of the two books in the hotel room might have been the Kama Sutra.

## Day 10, Sunday 23rd September

of Rotterdam. It was a buffet breakfast with everything from porridge to a full fry up. The staff were very helpful too. Disembarking went smoothly and as we sat in the lovely Hull sunshine it was hard to believe it was the last leg of our journey, the ten days had flown by.

It's always a time with mixed feelings, as while we were glad to get home we were sad to be leaving our new found friends. Having spent the last ten days with them enjoying great laughs and experiences it would all be gone. Some of us who live alone take it harder than others, but that is what is so special as all we have to do is pick up the phone and hear the friendly voice on the other end.

By ten o'clock we were all on the bus heading for Scotland, watching the beautiful countryside roll by or having a quick snooze. As we rolled along we tried to do justice to the boxes of tray bakes that we still had left with the now familiar tea and coffee orders. *(It only takes us until we are heading home to get them right).*

To try and keep spirits up some of us at the back of the bus started a singsong, singing songs from the shows, we at least as much of the song as we could remember. This pricked Alison's ears up and she came and joined in with a very good voice it must be said, and more of the words than we knew. Songs from the war were also sung, with myself, Pauline, Linda and Gordon, trooping up and down the bus as we sang. Bang goes our excuses for not singing on the talent night next time. Although Brian did say the last time he heard such a lovely sound it was cats fighting outside his window!

With a quick stop at Otterburn to give the drivers a break we were soon heading over the border and back into the Border countryside with what was for most on the trip the familiar hills of home, they may not have been the snow-capped mountains we had looked at all week but they are just as spectacular.

The time came for Gordon to give us his parting thanks to everyone on the trip, especially the VIP's for putting so much trust in the group. This is always an emotional time and always well timed as we were just pulling into Hawick. There was no time to dwell however and tears soon turned to smiles as we crossed the Haugh, with the siren blaring, to the families eagerly waiting our return.

The bus is unloaded for the last time, not as quickly as it was unloaded in Lofer, as there is a reluctance to leave the Jumbulance and the holiday. All the extra shopping bags are unloaded and packed into cars. *(As were the left over tray bakes! We still had enough for another week!)* Hugs and kisses galore as we all say hello to families and goodbye to friends.

Then it's time for the usual finale. The bus pulls away from the Haugh with its sirens blaring and lights flashing, it's a funny feeling watching it go. But I and everyone else on the trip are full of admiration for the drivers Zoë and Geoff, who got us all the way to Austria and back in one piece and who worked tirelessly all week with a smile and a sense of fun, becoming part of the group.

After a final goodbye to everyone, it's back to our own homes to reflect on another wonderful teamwork filled trip. I'm just having my 6 o'clock G&T and raise a glass to one and all and to the next time!!!!

Glenise

*( The glasses never turned up but she did get home without losing anything else, I think!)*

**Quote of the day** "A've enjoyed ma sel' that much this week A think A'll come back again two years ago!" Blair at the end of the night on the ferry.



Wish me luck..



...as you wave..



...me goodbye!



The BHG Band!



Kitchen closed!





Alison & Derek.



Gordon's final thoughts..



Pleased to be home!.



The Jumbulance.

## The 2007 Group Photo.



The faces are from the left:

Back row: Stewart, Pauline, Blair, Robert, Lesley, Glenise, Gordon, Sheena.

Middle row: Zoë, Derek, Winnie, Linda, Elaine, Alison, Lorna, Sue, Geoff.

Front Row: Keith, Sheila, Brian, Bob, June.



Home again.



Geoff closes up.

*The Border Holiday Group, an unincorporated charitable association, organises Coach Holidays to Europe for the Sick and Disabled from the Borders Region and Southern Scotland.*

Registered Charity Numbers:  
1099217.  
SC038524.

## Thank you

The group would like to thank all those people who have helped us make this trip possible, including: RS Hayward Trust, Galashiels, Scottish Borders Council, Hawick Callants Club, Hawick Panto Group, Chrysties of Hawick, St. Phillips Ladies Guild, Livingston, Laurence Fitzpatrick, (councillor), Livingston, John Henderson The Moorehead Trust, Dumfries, Mrs Geddes the Crichton League of Friends, Dumfries, Mr & Mrs G Sangster, Hawick and all those who's donations made the trip possible.

Thanks go also to: drivers Zoë and Geoff for allowing us to continue where we left off on the last trip, and at times being as stupid as the rest of us. To the family Grisseman and all their staff, once again you have looked after us all and gave us a home from home. To Nicola Offer at the Jumbulance trust office for her help with all the paperwork and queries.

Finally thank you to all our friends and family who have supported us over the past two years. I hope you have seen the difference it makes to the VIP's.

Hope to see you all on the 25th November.

Roll on the 2009 trip!

### **Chairman & Treasurer:**

Mr Gordon Jackson,  
7 Bruce Court,  
Hawick,  
Roxburghshire,  
TD9 7ER.  
Tel: (01450) 375353.  
E-mail: familyjax@aol.com

### **Secretary:**

Miss Lesley Fraser,  
10c Green Terrace,  
Hawick,  
Roxburghshire,  
TD9 0JG.  
Tel: (01450) 374166.  
Mob: 07958 312860.  
E-mail:  
lesley.hawick1514@tiscali.co.uk