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## Editor's Note

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US.... NOW IT'S TIME TO CHANGE

Dear Readers,

This month's issue marks the fifth birthday of CanDo Magazine.

Back in June 2004 we launched CanDo, not knowing how our magazine would be received or whether it would succeed or fail.

However, our blend of a bright, colourful and positive look at disability issues proved an immediate hit with the public and organisations alike and every single copy of the first issue was taken and read.

We gradually increased our print run and our distribution network with each edition and by the end of 2007 CanDo Magazine was available right across Scotland.

As we are a not-for-profit organisation (we get no grants or public funding, our income comes solely from advertising sales and occasional donations) we launched a contingency plan when the much-publicised 'credit crunch' of the last year meant that many advertisers were tightening their purse strings.

Rather than pulling the plug on the magazine, we moved to this e-magazine format for the latter part of 2008 and early 2009. This move enabled us to continue to provide our much-needed information service and, in fact, it allowed us to reach more people than we did before!

I'm now pleased to announce that we are going to resume production of a printed edition of CanDo Magazine each quarter beginning with an Autumn issue which will be available in August.

This doesn't mean we will be discontinuing the e-magazine though. The electronic version will continue to run alongside the paper copy and will be available for download from our website each quarter.

The last five years have been a whirlwind ride for us... I wonder what the next five will hold!

Nick Smalley  
Editor



[www.candomagazine.com](http://www.candomagazine.com)

## Issue 25: Summer 2009

### Main Items in this issue....

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Newsbytes:</b><br>News and topics   | <b>Page 4</b>  |
| <b>Great Changes Ahead</b><br>How CanDo Magazine will be changing in the months ahead          | <b>Page 8</b>  |
| <b>Fun with CanDo</b><br>Prize competitions  | <b>Page 11</b> |
| <b>Meet the Eighth Wonder of the World</b><br>Scientific Discovery could prove Darwin's theory | <b>Page 15</b> |
| <b>Get Your Free Directory Listing</b><br>A free directory listing for every organisation      | <b>Page 18</b> |

## CanDo Magazine

a not for profit company limited by guarantee

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Editor: Nick Smalley FMA

The title 'CanDo Magazine', the 'CanDo' logo graphic and 'Spot the Dog' image are copyright © of Nick Smalley 2004.





# news bytes

Keep in touch with health  
Keep in touch with CanDo

## New Website for Direct Payments

The Scottish Government has launched an informative website for people who use, or are considering using Self Directed Support (better known as Direct Payments).

The site, which is described as a one-stop shop for services users, suppliers and health professionals alike, is fully comprehensive and contains information, case studies and advice. Log on to [www.selfdirectedsupport.org.uk](http://www.selfdirectedsupport.org.uk)

## Deaf Fiancée Says 'No' to Implants Despite Partner's Success

Last year, 30-year-old Mark Ramsay had cochlear implants, allowing him to hear for the first time in his life, but now his deaf fiancée has refused a similar procedure.

The Edinburgh man revealed at the time of his operation that his fiancée Charlotte Redden was also due to have them this summer, meaning they could verbally exchange their wedding vows when they tie the knot in April next year.

But Mr Ramsay, who is from Gorgie, said Charlotte had now decided against having the implant treatment, which he says has transformed his life.

He said: "She decided going against the cochlear implants, she is too scared. But I can always help her and act as an interpreter if someone speaks to her"

Mr Ramsay added that although his own hearing was now fine, he was still becoming accustomed to listening to the English language.

"I pretty much understand everybody now" he said, "and I can hear a few words behind my back without lip reading."

If you have appropriate news or articles for inclusion in this publication, send it to our address (shown on page 3) or email it to [cando.magazine@btinternet.com](mailto:cando.magazine@btinternet.com)

## Swiss Suicide Clinic Has 800 Britons on Membership List

A record number of 800 British people have joined Dignitas, the Swiss-based clinic which helps people with incurable illnesses who want to end their lives.

This is a tenfold increase in the number of Britons who have joined Dignitas since 2002 and will raise questions about the laws that ban assisted suicide in the UK.

There are 34 Britons due to undergo assisted suicide at the clinic, one of these very soon. A further four will do so in the near future, but the remainder have not arranged a specific date. A total of 72 British people have taken their own lives - by lethal drug overdose - at the clinic since 2003.

The revelations will add weight to the already passionate debate about the 1961 Suicide Act which makes it a criminal offence to aid or abet a person to commit suicide.

It can lead to a 14 year prison sentence for a friend or family member who travels with a loved one who is undertaking assisted suicide overseas, although government law officers have already admitted that anyone who does so is unlikely to face prosecution.

An influential group of peers from the House of Lords - including Lord Falconer and Baroness Jay - are currently seeking to end what they see as an outdated and inhumane system and will table an amendment to the Coroners and Justice Bill in an attempt to lift the threat of prosecution.

They are being backed by prominent peers, many of whom have a medical background.

Editor's Comment: *What are your views about assisted suicide? Email your opinion or comment to us at [cando.magazine@btinternet.com](mailto:cando.magazine@btinternet.com) or write to the address on page 3.*

## Take a Stand for Ability Fest 2009

When it comes to the rights of disabled people does your company sit on the fence, or does it take a stand?

If your company takes the disability sector seriously, taking a stand at Ability Fest 2009 can do amazing things for your company!" Ability Fest is the No.1 event for networking, promoting services, raising awareness and meeting a huge variety of people.

Visit the newly-designed website [www.abilityfest.org.uk](http://www.abilityfest.org.uk) and link into Exhibitors to view the floor plan of event, with one click you can be taken to the Exhibitors Directory and onto the current exhibitors' websites to see what services they will be promoting at this year's event.

Exhibitors are already booking for the best positions at this year's No 1 event for disabled people, the agencies and businesses who work together to "make a difference" within our communities.

Some of the early booking exhibitors are: Cosgrove Care, DIGG (Disability Information Greater Glasgow) Dystonia Society, Epilepsy Connections, GCIL Housing and Employment Services,, Access Solutions and Independent Living, Glasgow Disability Alliance, Glasgow North Training (SAMH), Headway Glasgow, Inclusion Scotland, MS Society, NHS 24, Outside the Box Development Support, Real Life Options, South Lanarkshire Disability Forum, South West Bridging Service, Support for Ordinary Living, The Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust, Update, Wellbeing Initiative and Wheelchair Turners

Make a difference and take a stand. Log onto website [www.abilityfest.org.uk](http://www.abilityfest.org.uk) to download booking forms, floor plans, terms and conditions and much more available to you as a sponsor, exhibitor and visitor at this year's No.1 event.

Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living are co-ordinating Ability Fest 2009. For details regarding the event, which is being held at SECC Glasgow, contact Heather O'Brien on 0141 550 7481.

## Nurse Suspended over Alleged Elder Abuse

A Scottish nurse has been suspended from two jobs following allegations of abuse involving elderly patients.

David Mutty, 59, from Dundee, was doing night shifts at a private nursing home as well as working full-time in an NHS hospital caring for elderly dementia patients. Mutty was suspended after allegations that he had abused patients at St Columba's nursing home, run by private care firm Southern Cross.

Following a police investigation, NHS Tayside also suspended enrolled nurse Mutty from duty at Liff Hospital, where he had worked for more than ten years. The allegations included claims that Mutty was aggressive towards elderly and frail patients at St Columba's and that he swore and used highly offensive language towards them.

There were also allegations that Mutty's behaviour caused alarm and distress to other patients. He has also been accused of risking injuring patients at the expensive, private nursing home.

Mutty was a full-time member of staff at NHS Tayside's Liff Hospital, where he worked four nights a week, caring for elderly dementia and psychiatric patients. He was suspended on full pay from Liff last month after NHS bosses heard he was under investigation over abuse allegations.

Following Mutty's suspension from St Columba's, the Mauritius-born nurse resigned from his part-time post. The allegations surfaced in April following reports from concerned staff at St Columba's. Management carried out an investigation and Mutty was interviewed by the Police and the Crown Office is considering whether to initiate criminal proceedings.

A Crown Office spokesman confirmed a report had gone to the Procurator Fiscal in connection with incidents between January and April 2009.

## Spooky Stories Success for Ayrshire Writers

CanDo Magazine editor Nick Smalley and colleagues from MS Ayrshire & Arran Branch have seen an e-book that they have written prove a big hit with the public.

In the first fortnight after 'Something of the Night', a 56 page collection of strange-but-true accounts of paranormal happenings was released on the web, it was downloaded by more than 3,500 people all not only in the UK but all over the world.

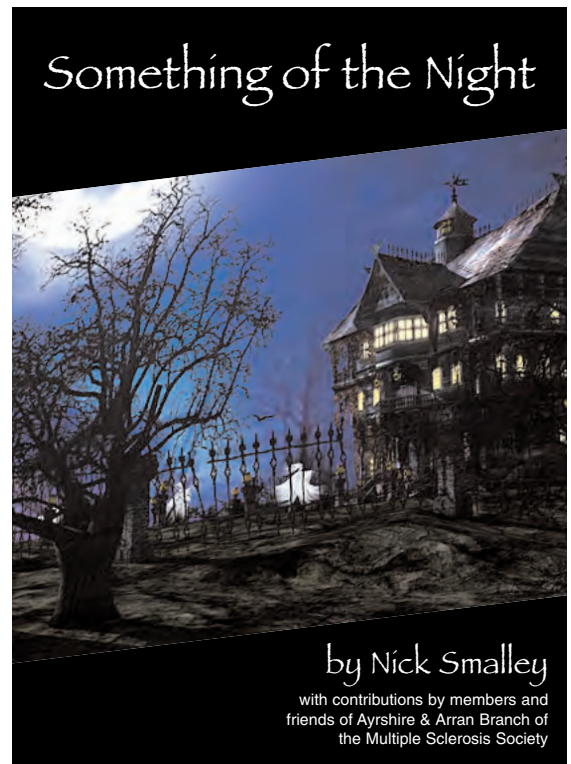
Nick said: "We decided to produce the e-book to raise awareness of MS - and hopefully also a few pounds in donations for the branch - and to show that people affected by Multiple Sclerosis still have a significant contribution to make.

"My co-writers of the book were mainly branch members, Walter Blackley, Carolyn Maclsaac and Jim Cameron did some sterling work and even a couple of seasoned professional writers were delighted to supply accounts of strange experiences.

"Whilst a 'ghost' book may seem an odd choice for subject matter, it has proved very popular and people from as far away as Australia, America and Eastern Europe have downloaded the e-book, even a couple of people in places we wouldn't have expected - Brazil, Egypt and Venezuela... all these people will now be aware of not only the Multiple Sclerosis Society, but more specifically of MS Ayrshire & Arran Branch."

Something of the Night contains more than 30 short accounts of 'true' paranormal events such as the hauntings at Mary King's Close in Edinburgh and the ghosts of Glamis Castle. The story of the Shetland Isles' most haunted building 'Windhouse' is featured and one story, entitled 'The Clencher, Large Purple Fingers a Naked Man... Welcome to Aberdeen' looks at the haunted places in 'The Granite City'. The e-book is illustrated in full colour with many original illustrations.

Anyone with an internet connection can download the e-book free of charge from the branch website [www.msayrshire.com](http://www.msayrshire.com)



## Russian Dog-Girl Taken into Care

A five-year-old girl who was allegedly 'brought up' by cats and dogs in a flat has been taken into care, Russian police have revealed. The child, who lived in the eastern Siberian city of Chita, could not speak Russian and acted like a dog.

For five years, she was 'brought up' by several dogs and cats and had never been outside. The unwashed girl was dressed in filthy clothes and had the clear attributes of an animal and jumped at people. The flat had no heat, water or sewage system. The girl is being monitored by psychologists in an orphanage. Her mother is being questioned by police.

The youngster refuses to eat with a spoon and has taken on many of the gestures of the animals with which she lived. "When carers leave the room, the girl jumps at the door and barks," a police spokesman said.

Feral children, the stuff of folklore all over the world, usually exhibit the behaviour of the animals with whom they have had closest contact. The condition is known as the Mowgli Syndrome after the fictional child from Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book who was raised by wolves.

Such children have usually built strong ties with the animals with whom they lived and find the transition to normal human existence highly traumatic.



Sue Polson living with MS

**“MS is fatal, isn’t it?”**

**“No, but I’ve battled with it for 25 years.”**

**MS**

**Multiple Sclerosis Society  
Scotland**

MS may not be fatal, yet living with it every single day is an endless struggle. But with the MS Society’s support, I can live my life. They’ve got a freephone helpline **0808 800 8000** and you can visit **[www.mssocietyscotland.org.uk](http://www.mssocietyscotland.org.uk)** to find out more or make a donation.

**MS Society Scotland. Putting the pieces together.**

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a charity registered in England and Wales (207495) and Scotland (SC016433)

# Great Changes Ahead at CanDo Magazine

As CanDo Magazine reaches its fifth anniversary issue, we would like to tell you about changes that are going to happen from the next issue.

The reasons for these changes are outlined in the 'Editor's Note' column on page 3.

## • PRINTED COPIES

We will be re-introducing quarterly printed editions of CanDo Magazine from the next issue, which will be released in early August 2009.

## • SIZE AND FORMAT

CanDo Magazine will become an A5 (148mm wide x 210mm tall) publication, with 48 pages of news, features and facts - plus, of course, selected advertising space - in each issue

## • VALUE

CanDo Magazine will become a 'paid-for' publication and each quarterly issue will be marked with a cover price of £2. Organisations placing advertising will be offered an allocation of courtesy copies equivalent to the cost of their advertisement (e.g. an advert that costs £50 will entitle the advertiser to 25 free copies which can then either be sold or passed on to their customers).

## • CHARITY BENEFIT

Alternatively, advertisers can request that their 'allocation' of magazines be passed on to a charitable concern so that the same may benefit from the sales of copies.

The publishers will also make a considerable number of copies of each issue available to charities and other not-for-profit organisations. These will be supplied free-of-charge upon application and the charitable organisation retains 100% of the cover price.

## • CanDo ONLINE

Following the success of our 'e-zine' in recent months, we will continue to release the magazine as an electronic copy which will have the same content as the printed magazine. This will be downloadable from our website [www.candomagazine.com](http://www.candomagazine.com)

## • COVERAGE

We will recommence our coverage across the whole of Scotland and many other parts of the UK. This will work hand-in-hand with our electronic edition to maintain global coverage, meaning that anyone, wherever they are in the world, will have access to every issue of CanDo Magazine.

## • READERSHIP

We anticipate that the 'per-issue readership' of the printed magazine and the electronic version will be in excess of 20,000 readers per issue.

## • CONTENT

The content of CanDo Magazine will continue to provide a positive angle on achievements by disabled people and will focus on various items of interest to people affected by disability. Whilst the magazine is accessible globally, the editorial will primarily cover news and features of interest to readers in Scotland.

## • ADVERTISING

A range of paid-for advertising is available within each edition. This is very attractively priced and will appear in both the printed and online readership. For more information see our advertising rates on the facing page.

## • HOW TO GET COPIES OF CanDo MAGAZINE

CanDo will be widely available from hospitals, medical centres and various charities, drop in groups etc. A full list will appear on our website in the next few weeks. Alternatively you can set up a subscription using the form on page 19 of this edition.

## ADVERTISING INFORMATION

### RATES

Position (Size)	Cost per issue	Cost for 4 issues (one year)
<b>Run of publication</b>		
Full Page (148 x 210 mm)	£150	£500
Half Page (148 x 100 mm)	£95	£325
Quarter Page (70 x 100 mm)	£50	£175
<b>Special Positions</b>		
Outer Back Cover (148 x 210 mm)	£300	£1,000
Inner Front Cover (148 x 210 mm)	£250	£900
Inner Back Cover (148 x 210 mm)	£250	£900
Page 3 (148 x 210 mm)	£200	£700
2/3rds Contents Page (p5) (100 x 210 mm)	£200	£700
Double Page Spread (296 x 210 mm)	£300	£1,000

Note: Until further notice, advertisers taking a half-page or larger advertisement in CanDo Magazine will be entitled to receive an editorial article of equivalent size at no extra cost.

### PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

Issue	Scheduled release date	Copy deadline
26 (Autumn 2009)	15 August 2009	31 July 2009
27 (Winter 2009 - Xmas Special)	15 November 2009	30 October 2009
28 (Spring 2010)	15 February 2010	29 January 2010
29 (Summer 2010)	15 May 2010	30 April 2010
30 (Autumn 2010)	15 August 2010	31 July 2010
31 (Winter 2010 - Xmas Special)	15 November 2010	30 October 2010

**If you are considering placing advertising and wish to know more, please contact us on 01294 550791 or email [candomagazine@btinternet.com](mailto:candomagazine@btinternet.com)**

If you are part of a charity or similar organisation who would like to receive FREE copies of CanDo Magazine to sell on to your members or clients, you may request these by writing to us at **CanDo Magazine, 3 Five Roads, Kilwinning, KA13 7JX**, emailing us at [candomagazine@btinternet.com](mailto:candomagazine@btinternet.com) or by visiting our website at [www.candomagazine.com](http://www.candomagazine.com)

## ***Football Hero's Wife in Fight For Life***

Denise Hendry, the wife of former Scottish footballer Colin Hendry is fighting for her life after being struck down by a brain infection following an operation to correct botched cosmetic surgery.

Denise had the operation to correct damage caused by botched liposuction in 2002, which left her with persistent health problems.

Despite the 16-hour operation being a success, she contracted a meningitis-type infection in her spinal cord, which spread to her brain. Colin Hendry has spent most of his time at his wife's bedside at the Salford Royal Hospital, near Manchester.

The former Scotland captain, whose clubs included Glasgow Rangers, Dundee, Manchester City and Blackburn Rovers, said his wife's condition had improved slightly, but that it was still a cause for concern.

Hendry said: "Denise has shown some signs of improvement over the last few days. She's a real fighter and I believe that if anyone can come through an ordeal like this, she can.

"I spend every day at her bedside and it's encouraging to see her progress, although there is still a long way to go.

"This is a difficult time, but we have confidence that the doctors and nursing staff will help Denise back to full health."

The 42-year-old mother of four has endured more than 20 operations to correct problems caused by the disastrous cosmetic surgery, which was intended to restore her figure but which left her in a coma for five weeks.

She won a record six-figure sum in compensation for her injuries but has never fully regained her health and was one of 14 women to complain about the private cosmetic surgeon Gustav Aniansson.

During her "routine" liposuction operation at the private Broughton Park Hospital, near Preston, her bowel and small colon were perforated nine times. She later developed blood poisoning.

The Swiss-born surgeon was branded "reckless and incompetent" by the General Medical Council and can no longer practise in Britain.

Hendry said: "It's easy to look back now and say how we wish she hadn't gone to Aniansson, but she did and we're having to live with the awful consequences. Although the surgery here has gone well, the infection she has contracted has been a devastating blow for us."

Professor Gordon Carlson, who is caring for Mrs Hendry at Salford, said: "Denise has been receiving treatment at the National Intestinal Failure Centre based at Salford Royal Hospital.

"She has undergone 16 hours of complex reconstructive surgery on her abdomen but she is making a gradual recovery on our intensive care unit."

The family's lawyer, Stephen Jones, an expert in clinical negligence cases, said: "I was obviously most concerned when Colin told me of Denise's ongoing problems. She has been through an awful lot as a direct result of Mr Aniansson's surgery and has had numerous remedial operations since."

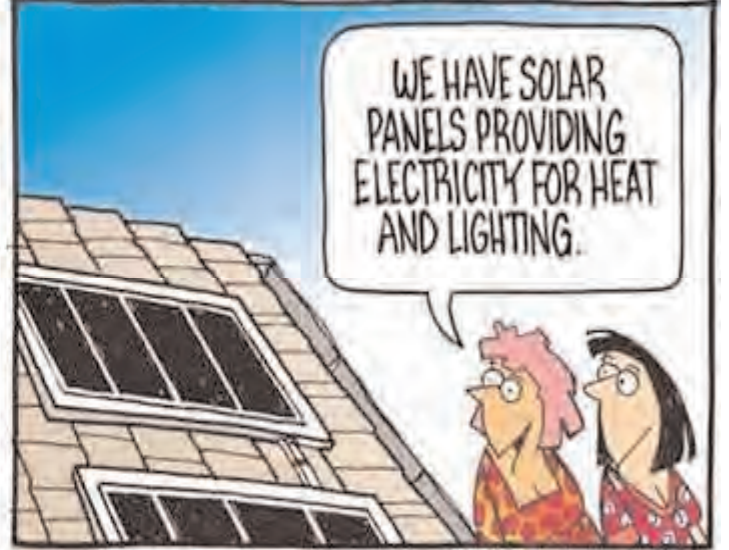
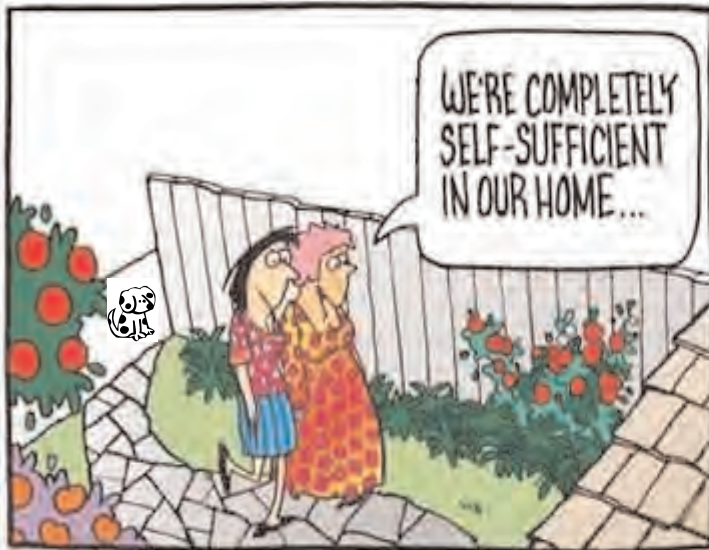
Everyone involved with CanDo Magazine wishes Denise a full and speedy recovery.



# CanDo Fun Pages

Cartoons, Puzzles and Prize Competitions

**WIN** One of 3 Games CDs or a Spot the Dug Mug



# WordLine

See if you can turn FIND into LOSE in just three moves, by changing one letter at a time.

**FIND**

**LOSE**

## Do you know me?

I lie 5 miles south-east of Dunbar and I am highly visible from the A1 road and the east coast rail line.

I am big and square-looking and I stand on the coast. They built me in the 1980s and I am the last of my generation to be built in the UK.

In 1999, there was a big scare when an RAF Tornado aircraft almost crashed into me before ditching into the North Sea.

Around 600 people rely on me for their wages and nowadays I have a visitor centre that shows my role in Scotland's economy.

Can you say what I am?

See page 14 for answers

## What Word?

Insert a word that begins one phrase and ends the other, for example North **SEA** / **SEA** Bird

HOSE

BAND

SUN

POT

SINGLE

ROOM

COAL

ENGINE

CRAZY

CLUB

SONG

CAGE

BAKED

CRISP



**WIN!**

## Win a Spot the Dog Mug

### Win a Limited Edition Spot the Dog Mug

Somewhere on the pages of this magazine is hidden Spot, the CanDo Magazine cartoon dog. If you can 'spot' him, you could win yourself a limited edition Spot the Dog mug.

Tell us the number of the page that Spot is hiding on by send it with your name and address to:

**SPOT THE DOG; CanDo, 3 FIVE ROADS, KILWINNING, KA13 7JX**

Alternatively you can enter via our website at:

[www.candomagazine.com](http://www.candomagazine.com) or by emailing

[cando.magazine@btinternet.com](mailto:cando.magazine@btinternet.com)

Please note that all entries must reach us by 15th AUGUST 2009.

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As well as producing the popular 'CanDo Magazine' we are also specialist publishers to the health and disability sector.

If you need a publication, call us first to discuss your requirements in detail.

**01294 550791**

# Odd One Out

# WIN!

Three lucky winners are going to receive this issue's prize, one of three games CD valued at £13-99 each!

Using the 'Locations List' below, decide which town, city or area on the list is represented by each of the photos. When you've finished, just tell us which of the locations appears most on your finished list.

When you have your answer, e-mail it to us at [candocompetitions@btinternet.com](mailto:candocompetitions@btinternet.com) or you may post your entry to **CanDo, 3 Five Roads, Kilwinning KA13 7JX.**

The winning entry will be the nearest all-correct entry. If several entries tie, then the winners will be selected in a draw. Entries must be received by **15th AUGUST 2009.**



## Locations List

Each photograph shown here was taken at one of these locations... but which ones?

DUNDEE  
AYRSHIRE  
EDINBURGH  
GLASGOW



Send your entry by e-mail to us at [candocompetitions@btinternet.com](mailto:candocompetitions@btinternet.com) or post your entry to **CanDo, 3 Five Roads, Kilwinning KA13 7JX.** The winning entry will be the nearest all-correct entry. If several entries tie, then the winner will be selected in a draw. Entries must be received by **15th August 2009.**

## Alma and Iain Delighted with Allied

Alma and Iain Rodger from Oban, in the picturesque West Highland capital of Scotland, couldn't be happier with their new Peugeot Horizon from Allied Mobility. Alma was in search of a car that would allow her to travel in her wheelchair as well as providing optimum accessibility and the Horizon has proved the perfect solution!

Alma explains, "After I had a fall last year I needed a vehicle that I could travel in, sitting in my wheelchair. My husband Iain recently had a heart bypass so the electric winch system has been a great help as he doesn't have to push me up the ramp. The Horizon is exactly what we were looking for."

Based on the stylish Peugeot Partner, the Horizon's wheelchair friendly features including a lowered floor and lightweight ramp, high quality wheelchair restraints and a full lap and diagonal seatbelt for maximum safety. The Horizon is built to the highest standards with the wheelchair passenger's safety in mind.

"I chose the Horizon because it's a sturdy vehicle and the accessibility features are wonderful for me and my husband. I especially like the storage pockets for all my odds and ends, they are great for us ladies!" Alma comments.

The Horizon is distinguished by its smooth and comfortable ride quality and Alma loves her drives in the car. Alma explains: "I recently travelled to Glasgow for a hospital appointment with William my son as the driver. It was great travelling in my wheelchair because it can be awfully tiring moving from my chair to a car seat. In the Horizon I felt really comfortable throughout the three hour journey. We are enjoying our vehicle very much and hope to take a trip to South Wales this summer to visit my grandsons, Iain and Lee."

Allied Mobility assures a friendly service from highly trained professional staff. Alma noted, "Scott, our mobility rep, came to see us and show us the vehicle and how it worked. He gave us lots of information and answered all our questions. Eileen phoned us later to confirm our vehicle details and she was so friendly. Even Phil who delivered our vehicle was very helpful."

Alma was very pleased with the service she received from Allied Mobility: "The service was fantastic and I am very happy with my new Horizon. Thanks for everything Allied! "

For further information on the Peugeot Partner Horizon or any of Allied's range call FREE on 0800 916 3062, email [info@alliedmobility.com](mailto:info@alliedmobility.com) or visit [www.alliedmobility.com](http://www.alliedmobility.com)



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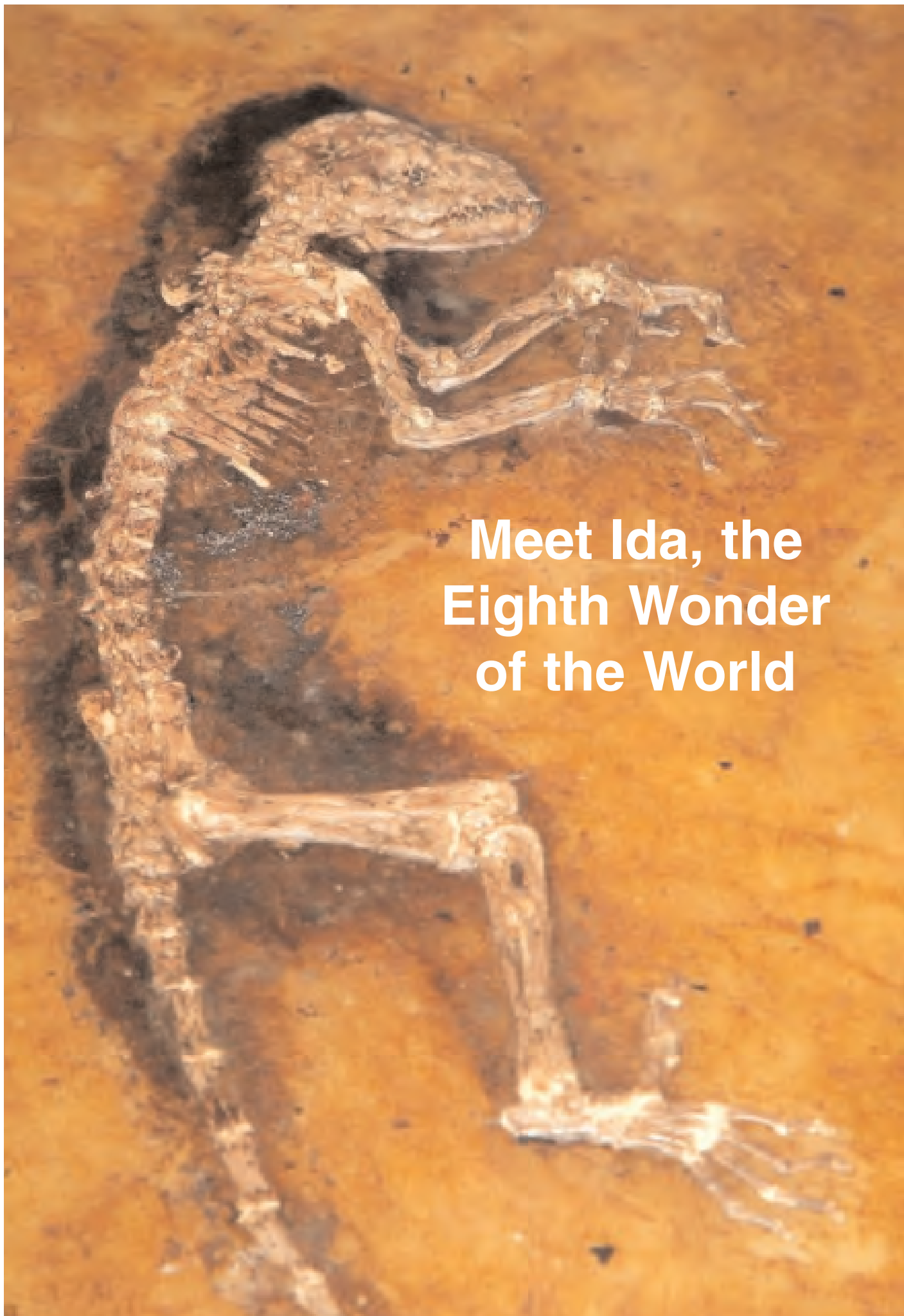
E-Mail: [sbstirling@hotmail.com](mailto:sbstirling@hotmail.com)

### Fun With CanDo (page 12)

Word Line: FIND - FINE - LINE - LONE - LOSE

Do you know me?: Torness Nuclear Power Station

What word?: PIPE - FLOWER - BED - FIRE -  
GOLF - BIRD - POTATO



**Meet Ida, the  
Eighth Wonder  
of the World**

# Missing Link Discovery Hailed as Eighth Wonder of the World

Scientists have claimed that a 47-million-year-old fossilised skeleton of a monkey as the missing link in human evolution. The discovery of the 95% complete 'lemur monkey' , dubbed Ida, is described by experts as the "eighth wonder of the world".

The search for a direct connection between humans and the rest of the animal kingdom has lasted for 200 years - but it was presented to the world at a special news conference in New York.

Scientists say that the discovery's impact on the world of palaeontology will be "somewhat like an asteroid falling on the Earth".

Researchers say proof of this transitional species finally confirms Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, and the then radical, outlandish ideas he came up with during his time aboard the Beagle.

Sir David Attenborough said Darwin "would have been thrilled" to have seen the fossil and says it tells us who we are and where we came from.

"This little creature is going to show us our connection with the rest of the mammals," he said. "This is the one that connects us directly with them. Now people can say 'okay we are primates, show us the link'. Until now, they would have said the link is missing... well it's no longer missing."

A team of the world's leading fossil experts, led by Professor Jorn Hurum, of Norway's National History Museum, have been secretly researching the 1ft 9in-tall young female monkey for the past two years, and recently it was transported to New York under high security and unveiled to the world during the bicentenary of Darwin's birth. Later this month, it will be exhibited for one day only at the Natural History Museum in London before being returned to Oslo.

Scientists say Ida - squashed to the thickness of a beer mat by the immense passage of time - is the most complete primate fossil ever found. With her human-like nails instead of claws, and opposable big toes, she is placed at the very root of human evolution when early primates first developed features that would eventually develop into our own. Another important discovery is the shape of the talus bone in her foot, which humans still have in their feet millions of lifetimes later.

Ida was unearthed by an amateur fossil-hunter some 25 years ago in Messel pit, an ancient crater lake near Frankfurt, Germany, famous for its fossils.

She was cleaned and set in polyester resin - and incredibly, was hung on a German collector's wall for 20 years. The owner had no idea of the unique fossil's significance and simply admired it like a cherished Van Gogh or Picasso painting, but in 2006, Ida came into the hands of private dealer Thomas Perner, who presented her to Professor Hurum at the annual Hamburg Fossil and Mineral Fair in Germany - a centre for the murky world of fossil-trading. Professor Hurum said when he first saw the blueprint for evolution - the "most beautiful fossil worldwide" - he could not sleep for two days.

A home movie records the dramatic moment. "This is really something that the world has never seen before, this is a unique specimen, totally unique," he says, clearly emotional.

He says he knew she should be saved for science rather than end up hidden from the world in a wealthy private collector's vault.

But the dealer's asking price was more than \$1 million (£660,000) - ten times the amount even the rarest of fossils fetch on the black market.



Messel Pit, site of the discovery

After six months of negotiations, he managed to raise the cash in Norway and brought Ida to Oslo.

Prof Hurum, who last summer dug up the fossil remains of a 50ft marine monster called Predator X from the permafrost on Svalbard, a Norwegian island close to the North Pole - then assembled a "dream team" of experts who worked in secret for two years.

They included palaeontologist Dr Jens Franzen, Dr Holly Smith, of the University of Michigan, and Philip Gingerich, president of the US Paleontological Society.

Researchers could prove the fossil was genuine through X-rays, knowing it is impossible to fake the inner structure of a bone.

Through radiometric dating of Messel's volcanic rocks, they discovered Ida lived 47 million years ago in the Eocene period. This was when tropical forests stretched right to the poles, and South America was still drifting and had yet to make contact with North America.

During that period, the first whales, horses, bats and monkeys emerged, and the early primates branched into two groups - one group lived on mainly as lemurs, and the second developed into monkeys, apes and humans.

The experts concluded Ida was not simply a lemur but a 'lemur monkey', displaying a mixture of both groups, and therefore putting her at the very branch of the human line.

Professor Hurum said, "When Darwin published his *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, he said a lot about transitional species and he said that a transitional species may never be found, so he would be really happy to be alive today when we have found Ida.

"This fossil is really a part of our history; this is part of our evolution, deep, deep back into the aeons of time, 47 million years ago. It's part of our evolution that's been hidden so far, it's been hidden because all the other specimens are so incomplete.

"They are so broken there's almost nothing to study and now this wonderful fossil appears and it makes the story so much easier to tell, so it's really a dream come true."

Up until now, the most famous fossil primate in the world has been Lucy, a 3.18-million-year-old hominid found in Ethiopia in 1974. She was then our earliest known ancestor, and only 40% complete.

But at 95% complete, Ida was so well preserved in the mud at the bottom of the volcanic lake, there is even evidence of her fur shadow and remains of her last meal.

From this they concluded she was a leaf and fruit eater, and probably lived in the trees around the lake. The absence of a baculum (penis bone) confirmed she was female, and her milk teeth put her age at about nine-months-old - in maturity, equivalent to a six-year-old human child. This was the same age as Prof Hurum's daughter Ida, and he named the fossil after her.

The study is being published and put online by the Public Library of Science, a leading academic journal with offices in Britain and the US.

Co-author of the scientific paper, Prof Gingerich, likens its importance to the discovery of the Rosetta Stone, an ancient Egyptian artefact found in 1799, which allowed us to decipher hieroglyphic writing.

One clue to Ida's fate - and her remarkable preservation as our oldest ancestor - was her badly fractured left wrist. The team believes this stopped her from climbing and she had to emerge from the trees to drink water from the 250-metre-deep lake.

They think she was overcome by gases coming from the crater, and sunk to the bottom where she was preserved in the mud as a time capsule - and a snapshot of evolution.

But amazingly this final piece of Darwin's jigsaw was almost lost to science when German authorities tried to turn Messel into a massive landfill rubbish dump.

Eventually, after vigorous campaigning by Dr Franzen, the plans were rejected and the fossil-rich lake was designated a World Heritage Site.

But no doubt there would have been one person happy for the missing link to have remained hidden. When Darwin famously told the Bishop of Worcester's wife about his theory of evolution, she remarked: "Descended from the apes! My dear, let us hope that it is not true, but if it is, let us pray that it will not become generally known."

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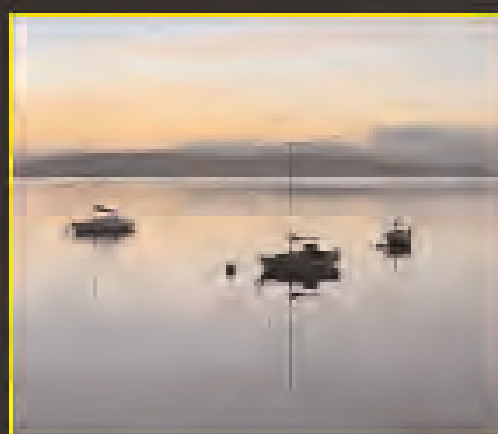
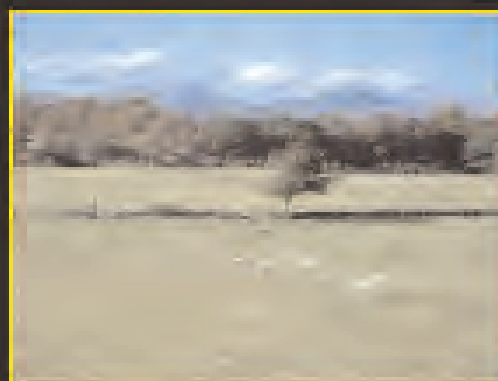
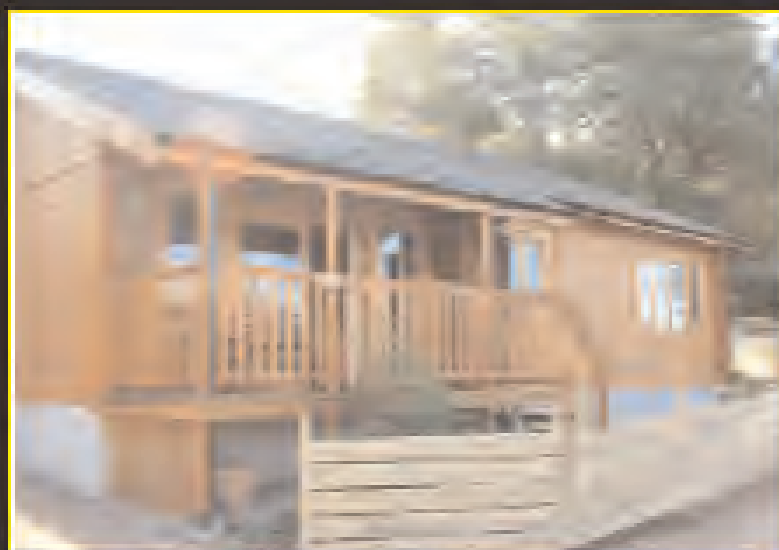
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