

# First lady

JULIA BRADBURY celebrates her first National Feast of Lanterns and recalls filming fun in California and the UK

**WOW**, what a fantastic time I had at the National Feast of Lanterns (NFOL). I'd been really excited at the prospect of attending the Club's annual bash for the first time, and it lived up to all my expectations. I expected a lively atmosphere and wasn't disappointed – it was a lovely, warm occasion and it was great to meet so many Club members and spend time with them.

I also loved being able to camp with my son Zephyr, as well as share the experience with my parents and sister, who made it a real family affair. Bringing them along not only gave us a great chance to spend some time together but made it even easier to appreciate the whole family vibe of NFOL, which is one of the things that makes it so special.

Family was one of the things I missed when I spent a year in Los Angeles working as the Hollywood reporter on ITV's breakfast show – now known as Good Morning Britain – but otherwise it was a fantastic experience, and Steve Adams' motorhome touring piece on California in this issue brought back some fond memories (see page 40).

One of my favourite times in California was during the making of Planet Earth Live for the BBC, when we filmed sea otters at Monterey, just south of Santa Cruz. Three otters were intent on hanging around boats in the marina and we were fascinated by how they interacted with the human population.

Sea otters are the cutest, fluffiest creatures, and they even hold paws under the water so that no one gets separated from the rest while they're swimming along. It's a lovely sight to see, and rather more of a visual treat

than the guy I spotted skinny-dipping in Loch Coruisk on the Isle of Skye while filming my new ITV series Wonders of Britain this summer.

He obviously thought he'd got the place to himself and wasn't expecting to be joined by a film crew. Later on I spotted his tent on the top of a hill and thought it was the coolest wild camping I'd ever seen.

We ended up filming until late at night on Skye – where it was still light at 9pm – and after a long day we were all starving, so we ended up sending out for pizza. Some of the crew went across the loch to Elgol and brought it back on the boat, which has to be the world's most remote delivery of pizza. It took 40 minutes to bring the pizzas across the loch – and about ten minutes for the crew to demolish them!

Nearly everyone voted it the best pizza they'd ever had – and speaking of voting, the Club's National Council elections are coming up, so I'll sign off by urging you to take the opportunity to have your say in the running and future of the Club.



Julia spotted this wild camper from afar while filming at Loch Coruisk

