

# And Finally...

They say a pic is worth a thousand words. What does yours say about your special moment? **Here one reader shares the story behind her favourite photo**

# Every picture TELLS A STORY

● Do you have a story behind your snaps? Did the camera capture a special or silly moment? We'd love to share it. Email your photos to [tab.world@bauermedia.co.uk](mailto:tab.world@bauermedia.co.uk). We'll pay £200 for any we publish



Me feeding Ola



Me now

Staring at the beautiful picture of an otter on the book cover, my eyes widened.

'I know how much you love animals, so I thought you'd enjoy this,' my mum Jean said.

I was an avid reader and couldn't wait to get started.

The book was called *Ring of Bright Water* by Gavin Maxwell, about the author's life with an otter called Mij in a remote part of Scotland.

By the end, I was in floods of tears as I read the details of how Mij had died.

'Why did you buy this for me?' I sobbed to Mum.

Mum didn't know the book had a sad ending, but my sorrow didn't last.

It just sowed the seeds of my love for otters and it was the

start of a life-long quest to help these gorgeous but endangered animals.

After learning there were only five in the whole of Yorkshire where I grew up, due to river pollution, I joined animal welfare groups and campaigned to protect them.

And I often travelled to Scotland, where I watched otters playing in the lochs.

When I met my husband David, I moved to Devon, where otters thrived because the rivers were clean.

Friends and family bought me otter memorabilia and I built up a huge collection over the years. I've got 250 otter figurines from the size of a thimble to one that's 5ft tall in my garden.

'Another otter and I'm

leaving,' David joked.

'Go, then I'll have more room for more!' I replied, laughing.

One day, I spotted an article about two newborn sea otters.

They'd been rescued in Alaska and brought to Birmingham Sea Life Centre.

I'd always longed to see a sea otter and even once travelled to the east coast of America — only to realise they actually lived on the west coast!

I contacted the centre and was over the moon to be invited to meet Ozzy and Ola in person.

They couldn't be released into the wild as they had never learnt how to groom their long coats from their

mother, something essential to their survival.

On the big day, I was face to face with the beautiful creatures.

I blinked hard, as I was given some squid in an ice block to feed Ola while Ozzy watched.

I held it through the glass and he chomped away — just as they do in the wild.

What an honour it was! I'll treasure the picture and the memory forever.

**Mary Heathcote, 70,  
Wraxall, Somerset**