



Folk Camps Autumn 2015 “Extent” Newsletter

Welcome to the Folk Camps newsletter. This issue has news from Folk Camps and information about our 2016 holidays. This issue was edited by our guest editor Anthony Keen.

Find out more about our holidays including prices, staffing, dates, venues and booking at the website: <http://www.folkcamps.co.uk> .

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/folkcampsholidays>.

Twitter: @FolkCamps <https://twitter.com/FolkCamps>.

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Office Matters

Wow, what a year!

My last season as Administration Manager has been great – busy, successful camps; new Folk Campers. It's all gone by in a flash.

I will leave the information about the 2016 season to my successor, Sarah. She is working hard to make the change over run smoothly and ensure that all is in place for next year.

In the style of academy awards, I would like to thank all the various Council members and contractors who have worked with me over the last ten years. They have been co-operative with, and sometimes tolerant of, my methods.

I feel I know so many of you now, if not from meeting at camps, then by email and correspondence. The Folk Camps Family really is a good description and I can now go back to being an ordinary Folk Camper and meeting up with more of you at camps.

I will have the pleasure of being the MC at the Reunion Ceilidh on 21 November with the Folk Camps band led by Chris Jewell, so I hope to see a lot of you there.

- Mic Spenceley – Retiring Administration Manager

Message from New Admin & Events Manager

I started on 1 July 2015, shadowing Mic, who has been doing the backroom work to make the organisation work and camps happen for nearly a decade. It's been a steep learning curve, but I'm gradually getting to grips with the complex range of activities needed in the background to deliver the holidays we enjoy so much.

I'm an old school Folk Camper, starting as a little one in 1968; when we had loo tents with Elsans and a latrine pit, which had a tendency to be moved unexpectedly when the pit was full. The winning formula for the family camps hasn't changed much over time, just a few more nods to modern health and safety requirements, but Folk Camps remains a fabulous family holiday for children and the young at heart of all ages.

I rediscovered Folk Camps in 2004 when I brought my young daughters, and was delighted to discover it was still going, and now I'm enjoying being more heavily involved in the detail and the processes. 15 years in IT and before that, jobs in customer service and retail, and a degree in Information Management have prepared me in some measure for the challenges to come. I take over the reins for the 2016 season whilst Mic closes down the 2015 season, and will endeavour to answer all queries as well as I can, with reference to those more expert than myself. I hope you will bear with me as I learn on the job, and I

look forward to communicating with everybody in due course – whether we have had the pleasure of meeting already, or if that is something to look forward to soon.

Unlike Mic, I don't call or play an instrument, and I only sing when I'm sure I'm alone – quite often whilst riding my motorbike, but I love to dance. Peeling potatoes whilst putting the world to rights behind the marquee in light rain is my favourite part of Folk Camp, but I've been known to give an impromptu bicycle puncture repair workshop or a touch of shoulder massage, and I'll always help put up a tent, although I'm not very accomplished with awnings. Circle time, OXO, Levi Jackson with chairs, murder game – Folk Camp is always just a couple of days away from a brand new tradition, and long may it continue to give us happy memories.

- Sarah Richardson (aka Aggie)

Along with her many other accomplishments, Sarah has written a novel, which you can check out here: <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/538298>.

Thanks to Sally Clayden

This November, Sally Clayden steps down from Folk Camps Council after 6 very busy years.

She joined in 2009, and then in 2010, after only 1 year on Council, she took over as Chair, when a very inexperienced Council was elected: 5 were new out of 9! Sally was Chair for 2 years, then Vice Chair for another 2 years. Sally has also had a pivotal role in coordinating the sites and staffing committees over several years, she found us the beautiful Gower site for 2013, she played a major part in recruiting changes to our contract positions (Admin and Events Manager, 2 Sites Finders, Publicity Coordinator, Equipment Manager), she coordinated the new bursary scheme, and she has been a caterer most summers. And I have probably forgotten several other activities too! This is all unpaid, voluntary work in her own time.

Without Sally's work, all of our holidays would have not been as smooth or lovely. So I'd like to give Sally a huge thank you.

- Patrick Self - Chair

Summer Marquee Camp - Rhayader

Rhayader is a market-town and a paradise for walkers, cyclists and nature-lovers. Red kites patrol the skies, otters swim the rivers. On the edge of this beautiful area of mountains, lakes, and forests, our large, level, secluded field is less than 1½ miles from the small market town of Rhayader. The Elan Trail, an 8-mile cycle track, runs near our site. A mountain road takes you to the superb waterfalls and steam railway at Devil's Bridge.

Rhayader is also home to a community-founded art and heritage complex, which includes a museum and gallery, a leisure centre, numerous parks and all the amenities expected of a larger town.

Rhayader is also renowned for being the town with the highest concentration of pubs and drinking establishments, per capita, in the UK, with one to each 173 people – perfect for many en-masse Folk Camper pub trips!

Summer Hall Camp - Roch

Roch allows you to relax in our spacious village hall in this unspoilt Pembrokeshire village. The fabulous coast line of Pembrokeshire is just a short distance from the wonderful Newgale beach. Wales' smallest city of St David's is just a short drive away.

The town of Haverfordwest is only a fifteen minute drive down the road, and boasts attractions such as coasteering, go-karting, a trampoline park, and Abermawr sand and pebble beach, complete with a prehistoric forest submerged just off-shore – perfect for swimming, angling and surfing.



Miserden "Inbetweener" Folk Camp

In 2016 we are experimenting with a new camp for those attending either or both of the Workshop Weekends at Miserden.

The Session Workshop Weekend (3-5 June 2016) is followed by the Singers South weekend (9-12 June 2016).

If you book either (or both) of these weekends, you can also book the "Miserden Inbetweener" (5-9 June 2016).

This will allow people to camp at Miserden for the 4 days and nights in-between these 2 weekend camps. (Sunday afternoon to Thursday afternoon). The entertainment will be DIY, depending on who goes. So we will not have a guaranteed Folk Camps programme of activities, but there is a good chance of a little music, song, and maybe the odd dance. This will also allow you the chance to explore the beautiful village and countryside, (which was the location for the filming of the recent TV Series Cider with Rosie), visit The Carpenters Arms pub, and relax with Folk Camp friends in the beautiful field and village hall. This camp has been requested by some of the regulars at these weekends, and is likely to be a small, relaxing gathering for a self-cater few days.

- Patrick Self

Thanks to Mic Spenceley

Mic retires from his contract position at Folk Camps after 9 years, having originally been just the Administration Manager (holiday bookings and running the organisation), and then more recently, Events Manager too (organising our major camp suppliers – toilets, waste, marquees, and overcoming red tape). We are very pleased with how Mic has kept Council on the straight and narrow, and looked after our holiday-makers – ensuring they not only pay up(!) but also fielding many enquiries from both new and experienced campers. We will miss Mic from Council meetings, but look forward to seeing him at camps, and dancing when he calls.

Thanks for all your hard work Mic.

- Patrick Self



Folk Camps Incentive Schemes

At our working weekend, where we plan your holidays and try to ensure that Folk Camps gets better each year, Council discussed the schemes that we have to encourage more people to experience Folk Camps. We took into account the take-up, success, cost, and benefits to the whole membership of each scheme.

As a result, we have terminated the Loyalty Reward Scheme, which was to encourage frequent Folk Campers to try our Workshop Weekends. It was successful in helping some people try something new, but also had some disadvantages.

The incentive scheme that we continue to run is our “Introduce a Friend” scheme. This benefits every member of Folk Camps, because we always need to expand our membership to ensure a healthy future for Folk Camps. Without an expanding membership, we would decline in numbers and eventually wither away, to everyone’s loss.

The Introduce a Friend scheme gives you a credit for every new person that you introduce, whether to a weekend camp or a week. The more people you introduce, the more you gain. If you introduce several friends or families, then the credits could add up to a completely free holiday for you!

To gain the credit, please just ensure that they mention your name on their booking and we will do the rest.

There are more details of this scheme on the website, here:

<http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/membersIntroduceFriend.asp>

- **Patrick Self**

A worthwhile addition to any young person’s CV

Employers today are looking for more than qualifications and part-time job-experience to differentiate between candidates for professional positions. Young people could do a lot worse than adding Folk Camps activities to their CVs.

Folk Camps is keen to encourage young musicians and potential leaders to develop their skills as performers and organisers. The running of workshops, helping with staffing or blogging on social media constitutes the kind of ‘giving’ that many employers value. Shadowing and learning from experienced musicians and campers provides a safe environment for young people to develop, to give something back to Folk Camps and to learn professional skills like communication, leadership and creativity.

Folk Camps provides many opportunities to contribute, whether you take on a duty at camp, run workshops, call dances, play in the band, share songs, train to become a member of staff via our staffing apprentice scheme, receive a subsidised holiday via the Bursary, or even join Folk Camps Council and learn how to run a business. Stepping up and doing more than usual is good for both the individual, and also for Folk Camps. By encouraging the next generation to become more active, we can ensure the longevity of Folk Camps, allowing us all to enjoy these fantastic holidays for years to come.

- **Lori Weber**

Bursary for 2016

We are very grateful to Yvonne Hunt for the legacy that she generously left to Folk Camps in her will. We have used this to fund the Bursary scheme which has been running for two years.

For 2016 we will update the scheme slightly so that it benefits the future of Folk Camps even more. We will have two different criteria for receiving Bursaries.

The "**Discover Folk Camps Bursary**" is intended for people new to Folk Camps, who are active in the folk world (musicians, callers, singers, etc.) who could benefit from discovering Folk Camps and using a holiday with us for developing their skills. We hope this will be a mutual benefit to both the recipient and also to Folk Camps in gaining more skilled participants.

The "**Promote Folk Camps Bursary**" is intended for people who can take on a specific project to make Folk Camps more widely known. For instance, in 2015 one bursary recipient has been making a video of what happens on a summer week. When finished we hope this will be a useful publicity tool. This bursary is open to both new and existing Folk Campers.

There will be more details of the scheme on the website in November with a detailed application form explaining how to apply, including the benefits and criteria.

- **Sally Clayden and Patrick Self**



The Bampton Bucket Game

'The Bucket Game' started at Dalton Folk Camp some years ago as a fun way of collecting a levy to pay for party night punch.

At Bampton this year, time constraints meant that we couldn't have a punch but everyone still demanded the Bucket Game, such is its popularity! We decided to give the money to charity instead.

The nuances of the game are such that you have "to be there to appreciate it", and are really too complicated to explain clearly – but simply, it is a version of pass the parcel - instead of a parcel- a bucket, passing it round the circle to music. When the music stops the players are gradually eliminated in response to various tasks/questions/forfeits set by the MC, paying their money before sitting down. The last one or two people left standing win a small prize.

It was suggested that the money go to a local charity – Great North Air Ambulance was chosen, as it was the charity that the village of Bampton supported with their raft and duck races during the weekend we were there. We received a certificate from the charity, thanking us for the contribution.

If you are still none the wiser, perhaps you should come to the Dalton weekend camp next spring, and experience for yourself the phenomenon that is - "The Bucket Game"!

Thank you all Bampton Campers for making the weekend so enjoyable.

- Brian Pollard, Bampton August Bank Holiday Camp Leader



Certificate for Local Lifesavers

This certifies that

"Bampton Folk Camp"

has helped the Great North Air Ambulance save lives.

By raising funds of

£60.00

With much gratitude from the
GNAAS team and certified by

Grahame Pickering
CHIEF EXECUTIVE





The Old Village Hall

Village halls have done a great deal for Folk Camp and vice-versa. Many of these halls started life as huts used by the forces during the World Wars of the last century. The original hall at Beckford, one of our sites, was such a hall. It boasts a poem written in the 1920s. I set it to a well-known tune and sang it at the Dancers' weekend 2015. Ray Davies of the Kinks lauded The Village Green; tradition hailed the Village Pump. Here's to the Village Hall!

(Tune – Lead us, Heavenly Father; Lead us)

SHADES OF GLOUCESTERS, WARWICKS, WORCESTERS, RAF and ASC
THO' THE DAYS OF STRIFE ARE OVER – NE'ER FORGOT YOUR NAME SHALL BE

Old army hut of unknown fame
These lines were written down for you
Folks made you welcome on the day
You ventured out on pastures new

Huts removed from Wiltshire's Plain
No longer used by French's boys
Wiltshire's loss was others gain
Adding much to village joys

What you did in days of strife
Meant so much to those who fought
Home from home through every season
Your walls have witnessed so much taught

Your service gained you great devotion
And your fame has been retained
Old days gone – you've gained promotion
VILLAGE HALL – you've been renamed

- Song reworked by Keith Gregson 2015

You can find more writing and music by Keith at: www.keithgregson.com



Folk Camps Etiquette

It is always a difficult job to explain Folk Camps to new-comers. Sarah Richardson has written a guide on 'Folk Camps Etiquette' that might help you lay down some of the rules for being on-site.

A Folk Camp is a communal experience for a few days in a rural setting. Most of us have some communal experience, at school or work, but this is usually with people we come to know well over time, and mutually acceptable rules arise naturally.

The Folk Camp setting brings together a communal experience with relative strangers for a short time, and therefore requires some pre-determined rules and practices. These are driven either by safety, health, or the general social requirements of the communal setting.

Safety Practices

All vehicles should keep to very low speeds on site. The demands of particular sites will indicate no drive areas, this will develop quickly at each site, and drivers must make themselves aware of these. Drivers must respect the tented areas, and the fact that children have free access to all areas of the site (except where they are restricted for safety reasons).

Hot water boilers require careful attention to safety and usage should be confined to those who have reached an acceptable level of responsibility – to be determined by a responsible adult.

No-go areas for those under 16 are required for safety reasons and must be enforced by everyone on behalf of the youngsters.

Some parts of site are always unsuitable for running or energetic games – the washing up area, the boiler areas, near the loos or showers, near the kitchen tent, in the marquee, near tents.

Bikes should not be ridden in the same areas where running is not appropriate, they should be stored off main thoroughfares, and should not be ridden after dusk.

Health Practices

Food and drink – debris must not be left lying around as it encourages insects, particularly wasps. This is particularly important on the snack and beverage tables. Wasp plagues can make Folk Camp an unhappy experience; once they come they are very hard to get rid of.

Rubbish – it is everyone's responsibility to dispose of any rubbish in either the bins or the skip. A messy site encourages insects and animals, and rubbish left lying around can be



hazardous in the dark. The rubbish squads do not remove this responsibility from all individuals, including the tiny ones.

Loos – everyone uses them. Don't leave personal stuff in the loos. Do keep an eye on disposables: (loo roll, hand drying towels, soap); and ask for more supplies in the kitchen tent (or get an adult to ask) if something runs out. Leave the loos as you would like to find them. Discourage playing near the loos.

Communal Practices

Washing up – please do several items of cooks' washing up at every meal. Make sure youngsters who are taking a turn at washing up also do this. During the course of the week make sure you do a few of the more difficult items. Chuck washing up dirty water in the pit. If you want to rinse, get a rinsing bowl. The outside sink is for the rinsing of all cooks' washing up only, not for washing up any personal items. The washing up area can become very muddy in poor weather, be careful and try not to make it worse. Washing up should be done promptly after meals. Dawdling over the table especially at dinner makes it harder for the marquee to be cleared and cleaned for the next activity. Late diners and left over washing up leaves the washing up area messy for the next session.

Potato peeling – the idea is that one person per family group does the potatoes/carrots for their group plus one for the cooks. If you never do potatoes (say if your group all do morning music) it would be reasonable to do a bit more cooks' washing up to make up for it.

Children's activities / dancing – the early evening little kids dancing is an important part of camp for this group. Please support it sometime during the week in some way.

Marquee – A heavily used space, particularly in poor weather, it has to work hard. Respect the marquee; don't leave personal stuff (other than personal eating equipment) in the marquee. If instruments are allowed to be stored in the marquee please store them effectively, in their cases, so that they don't impede other usage.

Charging electrical equipment – This can be done when the generators are on at the marquee camp (morning music, evening lighting, and amplification), but there is limited capacity. Plan when your equipment needs charging and respect the charging needs of others. Phones should have priority over solely entertainment devices.

General – show your appreciation, people have worked hard to earn it!

- Sarah Richardson



Going to Weekend Camps

The vast majority of time you may have spent enjoying Folk Camps will probably have been attending the week-long summer camps every year – either on a hall or a marquee camp. These camps are also the places where the ‘younger’ population of Folk Campers flock to, which makes sense; people go on camps to see their friends and catch up on the year gone by – naturally you will want to go on the same camps, and the same weeks as those you know already.

But with us ‘younger’ people beginning to take bigger roles in Folk Camps, as Lori said earlier in this issue of Extent, it’s important to realise that there is much more to Folk Camps than just the summer camps.

We’ve all been caught with ‘Folk Camp Blues’ throughout the year, and weekend camps are the perfect remedy. Typically over a Bank Holiday Weekend, weekend camps truncate a week’s worth of folk camp singing, dancing and music into 3 days of fun, sometimes with a party night at the end (can’t go without a party night, after all). The well-known and well-loved Folk Camps feeling of community is still there, and felt that much stronger over the shorter time at camp – people banding together to cook their own food, or take the opportunity to nip down the road for a pub lunch. Don’t we all, every once in a while, wish we could just get away from everything in our day-to-day lives, just for a little bit?

As well as the regular bank holiday weekend camps, there are also ‘workshop weekend’ camps on offer too. For musicians, singers and dancers, they offer a specific flavor of the regular summer workshops you’ve come to love, but for more of the time. Whatever you’re wishing to get involved in, there will probably be a weekend camp for it!

Keep an eye out for weekend camps in the coming year, and for more details, look on the Folk Camps website.

- Anthony Keen

2015 Obituaries – and Jill’s Accordion

In 2015 several older and long-time Folk Campers passed on. The obituaries for Geoff Giddings, Walt Tingle, Jill Hammond and Barbara Ginn are on the website in the Members News section: <http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/membersNews.asp>

Several of our older members were involved right at the beginning of Folk Camps, assisting our founder, Bill Rutter in establishing Folk Camps.



Derek Hammond was pleased with the support he received from Folk Campers at Jill's funeral. He also advertised Jill's much loved accordion on the Folk Camps website, and told us that:

"Jill's accordion has gone to a deserving young musician up in Newcastle. One who really appreciates the opportunity we've given him to progress in his folk music ambitions.

I do like to hear any news of Folk Camps. Both Jill and I had so much to thank Folk Camps for. Having devoted so much of my life to the establishment and running of Folk Camps, it's only natural I have it's well-being at heart.

Good luck and my best wishes to you all.

Derek W. Hammond

P.S. Should anyone happen to be passing through Wotton-under Edge there will always be a welcome and a cup of tea at No. 12 Gloucester Street."

Site Finder

So that we can find you more beautiful sites for Folk Camps each year, we have appointed Steve Porritt as our Site Finder Contractor for an initial contract of one year. Steve is tasked with finding suitable sites, mostly for our summer events, but also for weekend camps when we need a change of venue.

If you can think of a suitable location for a Folk Camp (a specific field for a marquee camp, or a village hall with adjoining field), then you can help us by reading the materials on the Resources section of the website to see if the site might be suitable, and then letting Steve know about it via Sarah in the office. Email to info@folkcamps.co.uk.

Next year we will advertise this role to the membership to give other Folk Campers the opportunity to apply; we decided to appoint Steve quickly this autumn because he has suitable skills and we had an immediate need to find future summer sites. Steve has extensive experience as a warden, he is a very frequent Folk Camper, was a member of Council, and is also working with Graham Clements as Equipment Manager Contractor, which involves setting up our summer camps, so he is suitably qualified. He has also already put time and effort this year towards site finding before we awarded this contract – well beyond his responsibilities on Equipment Management.

We congratulate Steve on his appointment.

- Patrick Self