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Extent

Publication Autumn 2008

FORTY YEARS OF SUN-SHINE!



A FEW LINES FROM THE EDITOR



Presenting a rare picture of your Editor - almost smiling. - For some reason I always look miserable when people take pictures of me - and I do know that the magic box doesn't really steal one's soul! Ok - the theme of this Extent must be "Forty Years of Sunshine" and, as a relative newcomer to the Folk Camps Society, may I personally congratulate you all for your persistence - my life would certainly be poorer if you hadn't.

☐

Sunshine - we certainly got a liberal bucket full for the first two weeks of the Marquee camp at Beddingham with only a couple of days of rain to let us know how lucky we were. My favourite memory has to be the thunderstorms; great roaring rumbles overhead that had me leaping out of bed (ok - creaking out of bed!) checking the canvas in moments! Looking out over the campsite, it was obvious that most of the campers were doing the same since nearly every tent was illuminated by flashing torchlight - a unique and almost magical sight.

One thing I had never really appreciated before was just how different the various weeks must be - relating to the various leaders and the friends they (unintentionally) gather around them. Having enjoyed two weeks of Paul Weir influenced camping (someone described a Paul Weir Camp as "Butlins on acid" - which surprised me - I didn't think I knew anyone who might have gone to a Butlins Holiday Camp!) I returned for a day visit a couple of weeks later (so my daughter could catch up with a friend from previous years) - and what a difference! Well maybe not so much "different" as a alternate facet of a perfectly brilliant jewel. I mention this as a message to any new camper - if the camp you went to wasn't quite what you wanted from your camping experience - do try a week with a different leader - you could find things are much more to your liking.

I really must congratulate everyone - office and council for their hard work - the leaders and staff of the camps for their time and toil (often quite thankless) to make the camps work as holidays for so many of us. The congratulations must also be extended to all the campers - what a wonderful bunch you are - generous, tolerant, helpful, caring and talented ... If only the outside world reflected the Folk Camps Society!

So, forty years of sunshine - and the time has now come for us all to contemplate the forty first! Details of next year's camps will appear later - do take heed of this year's events - if you want to get on a particular week BOOK EARLY.

Whatever you do - don't forget ... the REUNION at Cecil Sharp House on November 22nd - (see back page for details.) - meet up with old and new pals, swap stories, show photographs, participate in the AGM and eventually dance away the evening With John Kirkpatrick and Mr Gubbins' Bicycle.

THE VIEW FROM THE OFFICE WINDOW

The Folk Camps office is on the ground floor at my home in Tonyrefail. As I look out of the window the first thing I see is my motorhome. That makes me think of folk camping. Just beyond the van I see a small stream which became a raging torrent just a couple of weeks ago. That brings to mind the summer weather we've just experienced. To the side and above the van I see a wooded hillside similar to the wonderful view from the Hanley Swan hall camp. Ah, what a great Folk Camps season. How do we top that? Quite simply by giving you Folk Campers a 2009 season which will provide more of the same qualities.

The highs of my season, other than the camps themselves, started with the introduction of on-line booking with Google Checkout. It worked perfectly and fits our needs just right. Of course paper booking forms will always be around, but to give you an idea of its success, 42% of this year's bookings were done on line and, as I write this, 60% of the Reunion ceilidh tickets have been bought on line. Who said that Folk Campers are Luddites?

Another innovation which proved successful was the extension of the higher booking rate across all camps for those booking or paying later than one calendar month before the start of the camp. This certainly concentrated your minds. For the 2007 season I spent whole evenings on the phone chasing up late payments. This season they were reduced to the number of fingers on my hand.

2008 finishes with the 40th Anniversary Reunion at Cecil Sharp House on 22nd November. The number of advance ticket sales guarantees its success. If you haven't already bought yours, then do it now to avoid disappointment. You can park in the streets around Cecil Sharp House, or by public transport the nearest tube station is Camden Town, just five minute's walk away.

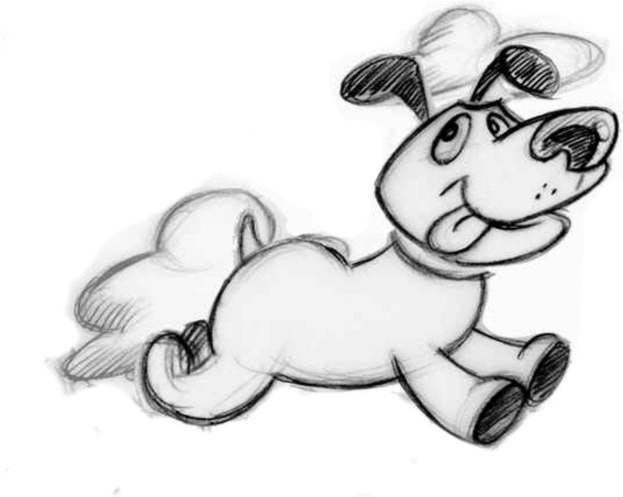
So on to 2009. You'll see from the programme of camps that the new innovation is a session musicians weekend at Miserden from 19 to 21 June. This is for those of you who like to get together and just play, swapping tunes and learning from others. Will there be dots? Who knows? If you don't care, then this is the weekend for you.
The usual musicians' weekend (with dots) has been swapped with the dancers weekend so that music for the dancers can be practised. This was an idea that came from the comments book. Why didn't anyone think of it before?

The Council has decided not to run a Halsway summer camp in 2009. There hasn't been a clamour of voices asking for its return. If there is, in sufficient numbers, then 2010 could see it back in the programme. You can still enjoy the atmosphere of Halsway Manor at the Winter Warmer from 23rd to 25 January, but numbers for this event are currently low. Without your support these events will not happen in the future.
Similarly, there are still a few spaces for the excellent Craft Camp at Symonds Yat during the half term week from Monday 16th to Friday 20th February. Get your bookings in now.

By contrast there is a ground swell of support for a European camp in 2010. Feelers are currently out for a site in France, so if you want this to happen please contact the office and give an indication of the level of support it would receive. Without your commitment the Council cannot run this event.

All the summer 2009 catered camps are within the school holidays and the line up of staff ensures that an excellent season is going to happen. Bookings are now open, so if you want a holiday which is affordable, friendly, inclusive of all your food and entertainment and doesn't risk you getting stranded because your airline has gone broke, then make 2009 your Folk Camps year!

Mic Spenceley, administration manager.



DOG OWNERS, YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!!

DOGS AT FOLK CAMPS

It has come to the notice of Folk Camps Council that there have been some breaches of the rules by owners of dogs at Folk Camps during the 2008 season. The Council has decided to watch closely the behaviour of dog owners at camps during 2009 and if necessary review its policy in time for the 2010 season.

As a dog owner (two Shelties) I thought I'd include the "rules" that apply to dogs on site - though to be honest they are really common sense and no more than should be expected:

DOGS

If dogs are allowed on site they must be kept on a lead. All exercising must be outside the camp site. ***Dogs must NEVER be taken into the hall, marquee or the kitchen.*** *Inadvertent messes must be cleared up by the owner immediately.*

Dogs must be kept far away from the hall or marquee, the entrances to the hall or marquee, workshop areas and the washing up areas.

It is generally courteous for campers to keep their dogs close to their own tent or caravan and to ensure that they do not create a nuisance to their neighbours.

Personally, I hope everyone does comply - partially because it's so much more pleasant for everyone - but also I would hate to have dogs banned - we haven't brought our two along for a couple of years because they tend to be noisy - but as they get older and slower there may come a time when we would prefer to have them with us. One small question for the council - could someone define the most acceptable place for the dog owners to dispose of the "inadvertent messes" they clear up?



My Girls!

CRAFTY CAMPING

It seems to me that people who camp also tend to be people who enjoy crafts. It must be something to do with the creative urge expressed by the drive to make music and the desire to dance - the Symonds Yat "craft" camp - as described by Mic earlier this year,is also a good indicator. My first inkling that a major craft project had been going on at Folk Camps came when Lou Tribus sent me an email containing some interesting pictures :

Here are a couple of pictures I meant to send to Extent, but didn't know who to address them to until now.

At a marquee camp during the summers of 2006 and 2007, I initiated a patchwork project. These creations quickly took on a life of their own, and the final product was stunning each time. In 2006 we gave it to the camp musicians, Jenny Newman and Andy Glass, as Jenny was pregnant with their third child at the time. Last summer we gave it to Shoishana Finn in memory of Charles, and their many years of folk camping. On both occasions we were able to keep it a secret from the recipients. I know that Shoishana has hers hanging in her living room.

So here are the folk camp patchworks.
Lou Tribus



Jenny's Patchwork



Shoi's quilt, finished, Jan 08


Shoi's quilt in progress

This is the first chance I've had of showing you these pictures but I can't help but think how magnificent the patchworks are and what a joy to the recipients to think of the love and craft that went to make their gift. The question was raised with Lou "would there be another patchwork this year?" There seemed to be no reason why it shouldn't be - but for whom would it be made? The answer is we don't know ... It was suggested that we celebrate the 40 year anniversary of the Folk Camps Society and create a patchwork to be raffled at the Reunion on November 22nd - so there's another excellent reason for turning up for the event.

In the summer of 2006, I arrived at the Lympstone Marquee week with my 13 year old twins, all the usual camping equipment and musical instruments (including a cello), and needles, thread, and a bag of fabric. I'd been learning to make patchwork quilts, and i though I'd take my project along to Folk Camp. I wondered if there would be any interest in a camp patchwork project. I tentatively suggested it to Sue Malleson, the leader, and she announced it.

To my surprise lots of people were interested, and we started making patches. The music leaders that week were Jenny Newman and Andy Glass. Jenny was prominently pregnant with their third child, and we soon had the idea to give the patchwork to them, for the new baby. They were very busy with the music and with their two small boys, so they didn't really look at the patchwork in progress. We managed to keep it a secret until the end. Meanwhile, the patchwork took on a life of its own. The great variety of colours and ideas was staggering. Almost everyone contributed a patch, and I had a whole group of volunteers to sew it together in time to present it on the last evening. The finished patchwork said "Folk Camp Lympstone 2006". Once assembled, it was so much more than the sum of its parts. I felt really proud of myself and all of us for having created such a wonderful thing.

Andy and Jenny never suspected a thing until I actually presented it to them. They had a backing sewn on it, and have hung it in the baby's room. (We decided that all the buttons, bows, fabric paint and glue might not be too healthy for the baby to actually touch.)

Several months before the 2007 camp at Poole, several people contacted me to ask if I would be doing another patchwork project. I knew I would be at camp for two weeks, so I said i'd do it again. This time, I felt we should create a patchwork for Shoishana Finn, in honour of the many years of Folk Camping she and her late husband had together. I felt great admiration for Shoi that she has continued coming to camp on her own. I had two weeks at Poole, and Agi Richardson and Val Coleman to help. The patchwork that year was even bigger than Andy and Jenny's.



The problem was - how could we keep it from her? I told everyone that we would have a draw for the patchwork, then I spread the word quietly that it was really for Shoi. It worked perfectly. Some people, who hadn't heard the real story, even put their names down for the draw! In fact, Shoi put her name down for the draw! This patchwork too, took on a life of its own. It said "Folk Camp Memories", and had patches with everything imaginable - instruments, tents, butterflies, and more.

I presented it to Shoishana on the last night - she hadn't realised. Shoi's patchwork now has a place of honour, hanging in her living room - I have seen it there!

I wasn't sure whether to start another project this year, but there was a suggestion that I make a reunion patchwork. And so the message went out, asking everyone to contribute. I arrived at camp to find the a the project well under way.



Jon McNamara had set it going and left me a pile of colourful fabrics and some completed squares.

As in previous years, I set myself up at a table in the corner of the Marquee every morning. Others came to join me, and the patchwork began to take form. I had announced to the camp that I needed suggestions for a logo on the patchwork. The best suggestion so far was Jon M's "Forty years of Sunshine". There were many suggestions, some too long to sew on a patchwork! The most popular suggestion was simply "Forty Years of Folk Camp". I handed the project over to Val Coleman at the end of the week. I also had contributions at the August Bank Holiday weekend camp, and have been receiving them by post. Each square is unique and beautiful, including four cross-stitch squares contributed by Irena Munday.



At the end of October, I will go up to Milton Keynes to join a "team" of folk campers to assemble the reunion patchwork. We have about 50 squares, and I can't wait to see the finished product!

The best aspects of these projects for me has been the joy of the recipients when the patchwork was presented, and the opportunity to get to know so many folk campers as we sat and sewed our patches. I am looking forward to seeing the reunion patchwork presented at the reunion ceilidh and I am more than a little jealous of Andy, Jenny and Shoi and this year's recipient, who have such a beautiful labour of love hanging in their houses.



Lou Tribus

AUNT B'S HANDY FOLK CAMPING TIPS (3)

If you've come across those tiny push lights that you find nowadays in pound shops (the ones that take 3 x AAA batteries) you'll already know that they are ideal for camping. The question is, how do you fix them in a tent so you know exactly where they are when you need them? The answer: pop them into a small sandwich bag and then can then hung practically anywhere.

ANOTHER HANDY TIP...

My tent is a Conway Trailer tent ... We've had it a few years now and we considered it a good idea to have the wheels/ brakes etc. serviced before this year's camp in Norfolk. Duly we identified a local garage who would undertake the work - and a few hours and £70 later the tent was, we were told, good for another three or four years.
Feeling virtuous, relaxed and secure in the knowledge that the trailer was safe to go on the road - we packed and set off early - a quiet drive in the country and the McNamaras would arrive at the campsite cool, collected and ready to help set up the camp (my wife was one of the caterers on the first week - and they have all sorts of setting up and sorting out jobs to do.

Anyway - to cut a long story short - eight miles away from home - the wheel fell off the trailer! Mercifully, it did little damage and didn't cause anyone to have an accident! Being quite close to the garage that did the service we quickly got them to attend to the problem - and three hours later we set off again ...

I mentioned this to an AA man who was on the first week of camp and was told that he sees something like one incident a week! So I pass on the tip he gave me to prevent it ever happening again which was simply to buy a torque wrench and check that the wheel nuts are tightened to 100 Newton/meters before you start out on your travels (though I suspect it might be worth while checking with the manufactures of your equipment). Does it work? I don't know - but I'm now in possession of a torque wrench - and the wheels haven't fallen off again!



One of those glorious tranquil moments during the second week of camp - when we went on a paddle boat trip on the broads. We walked the short distance to St. Benets Abbey and, on looking back, found this wonderful sunset. We can vouch for the old saying "red sky at night - Shepherd's delight" as the next day - like most of the first two weeks was warm and sunny.

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



I hope everybody enjoyed their folk camps this year as much as I did! Council met in September to plan the camps for 2009 and bar a few small details we now have most of the sites and the staff confirmed.

With the increases we have seen in food prices, we are expecting a bit of belt tightening and we have kept the prices for 2009 as low as we can. It will be interesting to see whether tighter family budgets preclude some people from camping next summer or whether we will see a surge of people coming on Folk Camps as an alternative to less affordable foreign holidays!

New innovations for 2009 include the "Session Camp" - a sort of complementary event to the Musicians Weekend but aimed at those people who are happier playing by ear and are less attached to sheet music. And we hope we may be able to resurrect the French camp in 2010.

We are also celebrating 40 years since the Folk Camps Society flew solo after starting out under the wing of the EFDSS. How fitting then that for the reunion we should return to the bosom of where we started - Cecil Sharp House. I still have fond memories of the reunions there in the early seventies when as a teenager I could meet up with all my folk camp chums for the day. It would be nice to see more of the younger age groups there again in 2008!

Younger folk campers may not know that John Kirkpatrick picked up his first concertina at a folk camp in the 1960s, so it's nice to have him available to play and call for our grand 40th reunion with his band Mr Gubbins' Bicycle.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has helped to make the year's Folk Camps a success – the camp staff, other volunteers behind the scenes, the members of Council and our hard-working contractors Mic, Barry and Brian.

See you at the reunion!

Paul Weir
Chairman

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2009 campsites



	Camp site
1	Halsway
2	Symonds Yat
3	Wildhern
4	Dalton
5	Loxwood
6	Beckford
7	Miserden
8	Woolsery
9	Herefordshire/ Shropshire
10	Whixley
11	Kington Langley

FOLK CAMPS PROGRAMME 2009

2009

REF. No.	CAMP	TYPE	VENUE	DATES
01	Winter Warmer	residential w/e	Halsway	23 - 25 Jan Fri to Sun 2 nights
02	Craft Week	residential week	Symonds Yat	16 - 20 Feb Mon to Fri 4 nights
03	May BH	self cater	Wildhern	1-4 May Fri to Mon 3 nights
04	Spring BH North	self cater	Dalton	22-25 May Fri to Mon 3 nights +1 free
05	Spring BH South	self cater	Loxwood	22-25 May Fri to Mon 3 nights
06	Musicians w/e	self cater	Beckford	5 - 7 Jun Fri to Sun 2 nights
07	Session music w/e	self cater	Miserden	19-21 Jun Fri to Sun 2 nights
08	Dancers w/e	self cater	Beckford	26-28 Jun Fri to Sun 2 nights
09	Singers w/e	self cater	Miserden	9-12 Jul Thu to Sun 3 nights
11	Marquee 1	catered	Woolsery	25 July - 1 Aug Sat to Sat 7 nights
12	Marquee 2	catered	Woolsery	1 - 8 Aug Sat to Sat 7 nights
13	Marquee 3	catered	Woolsery	8 - 15 Aug Sat to Sat 7 nights
14	Marquee 4	catered	Woolsery	15 - 22 Aug Sat to Sat 7 nights
15	Hall 1	catered	Herefordshire/ Shropshire	1 - 8 Aug Sat to Sat 7 nights
16	Hall 2	catered	Herefordshire/ Shropshire	8 - 15 Aug Sat to Sat 7 nights
17	Aug BH North	self cater	Whixley	28 - 31 Aug Fri to Mon 3 nights +1 free
18	Aug BH South	self cater	Kington Langley	28 - 31 Aug Fri to Mon 3 nights

CAMPS 2009

Summer Family Weeks (fully catered)

The **Marquee Camp** runs 25th July until 22nd August at Woolsery (also called Woolfardisworthy!) in North Devon.

It's a part of the country that I have visited quite often over the past thirty years always with the greatest of pleasure. Is there anything to do there? - well, there are always the beaches - the camp site is within easy driving of some 25 beaches - three of which are "blue flag" (whatever that means!). For the fit and fearless there are a number of surfing beaches where you can "do your thing" !

Very close by is the village of Clovelly - and although the entrance/parking is nearly as steep as the road through the village it's well worth the visit - for what is a unique experience. The high street drops 122m (400ft) in 0.8km (half a mile) through the 16th century cottages to a small harbour. You can save money by walking back up from the harbour - but considering the road is crazy steep - the cost of a ride up to the top is worth every penny! I seem to recall that the famous writer Charles Kingsley had an association with the village during his childhood. Sensible shoes are highly recommended for a visit to Clovelly and I saw parents with children in pushchairs blanch and retreat with great speed on reaching the first corner going down. Not a visit for the old and un-firm - I shall think twice before making the decent!

A few tourist websites that should give you the wider picture
http://www.touristnetuk.com/Sw/devon-n/index.htm
http://www.somewheretogo.co.uk/north_devon.html
http://www.gnomereserve.co.uk/index.htm

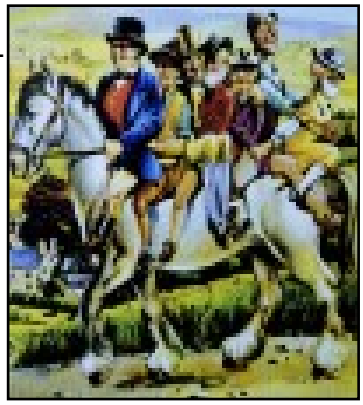


The last reference sounds a very strange place - I'm not sure that I would want anyone to know I'd visited "The Gnome Reserve and Wild Flower Garden" - but, it'll probably turn out to be "the place to go"! Locally of course - there is the village pub - the Farmers Arms - one of 4 within 5 miles of Woolsery (but apparently serves Real Ale!). Alarmed by the apparent lack of locals I extended my search to find there are 162 within 15 miles! I also suspect there may be another pub in Woolsery - these Internet searches are always a bit problematical.

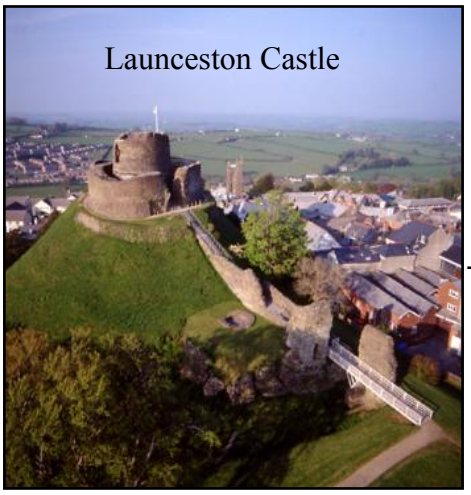
If your "thing" is walking, seemingly there are walks everywhere, all neatly set out in easy to carry books. I must admit to being mildly addicted to buying them, looking at the pictures and never putting their use into action!

But of course there are things for the kids - a couple of swimming pools seem to be within easy reach - there is the Milky Way Adventure Park at Torridge along with the Hartland Abbey and Garden and Dartington Crystal.

It's always hard to assess just how far people want to travel on a holiday "day trip" so I'm going to suggest that 50 miles is about the limit! Lands End is further than that - so maybe don't bother - last time I visited there it was only a very expensive car park (with about four cars in it!). The Lizard is much more interesting - but equally far. If I have the energy to make the trip (just over 50 miles) then the Eden Project could well be my destination - not particularly cheap - but worthy and "do-able in a day".

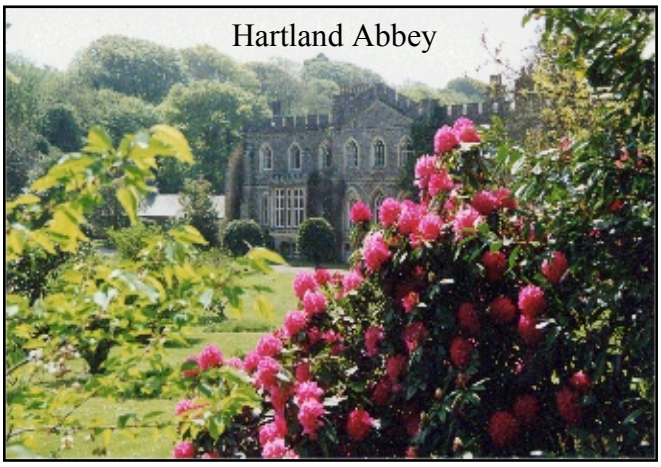


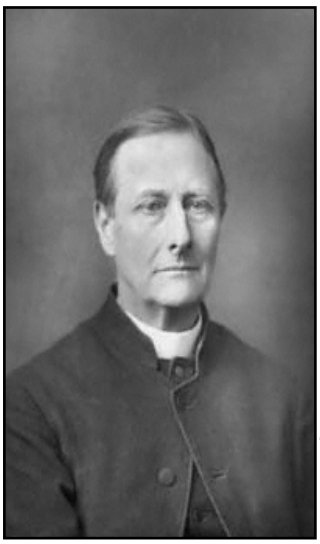
Well within the 50 mile circle we find the mysteries of Exmoor (and please - Lorna Doon was just a story) and the wilderness of Dartmoor - if you want to research a little before you go - try: http://www.legendarydartmoor.co.uk/
And of course if you do cross the moor you have to go Widecombe-in-the-Moor famous for it's citizens' mistreatment of grey mares!


Launceston Castle

There are chances for English Heritage members to make a small saving on their investment by visits to Okehampton Castle (26 miles) and Launceston Castle (27 miles). National Trust members can find places of interest Fintch Foundry (nr Okehampton) Castle Drogo (38 miles), Buckland Abbey (43 miles). Closer to the camp but not, I suspect covered by EH or NT is Hartland Abbey (7 miles) - so it may be that the saving on petrol cost will cover the entrance money!

Maybe, one thing I should do is visit Lewtrenchard (30 miles) as a small pilgrimage to the home of Sabine Baring Gould who, along with Cecil Sharp, did so much to record and preserve the folk music of this country. Without his efforts our culture would be so much poorer! Maybe we should remember this pioneer of folk music by dedicating one singers circle in each week to performance of material he collected!


Hartland Abbey


Sabine Baring-Gould
1834 - 1924

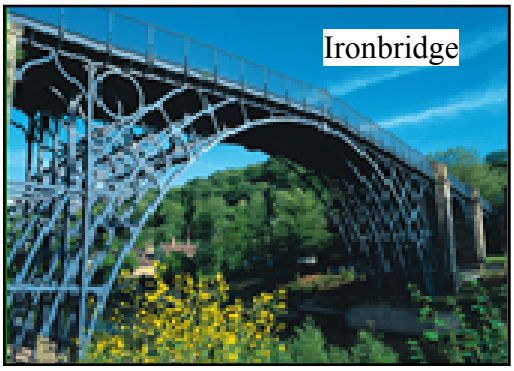
But what ever your interests I doubt a visit to Woolsery will be dull because Folk Camp is never dull - how could it be with all the wonderful characters that come together in its canvas confines? - it's still a mystery how it all works - and has worked for more than 40 years - and I have no doubt that in 2009 the magic will happen again. Remember book early - the 2008 camps were almost completely booked shortly into the New Year!

The **Hall Camp** (August 1st to 15th) is to be held "somewhere" either near Hereford or within twenty miles at Clun in Shropshire - which is being considered as a "fall-back" site. Whichever hall is chosen you will find yourself on the English side of the Welsh border. It isn't an area I know at all well although I may have "passed through" at some time - or come near at another - so my comments below are simply based on my findings on the Internet.

From a casual inspection of the map I suggest that this isn't going to be much of a beach holiday with the nearest access to the sea being at Aberystwyth - some 60 miles away!
On the other hand there are all the wonderful Welsh Mountains to explore and even the pleasures of the Malvern Hills again (50 miles to the East)

From the Internet:
Clun is a rural gem in the South Shropshire Hills. It lies in a designated area of outstanding natural beauty close to the border with Wales in what is termed the Middle Welsh Marches.
Moving southward some 20 miles we are in Herefordshire which is "*a county of unspoilt countryside laced with hidden backwaters waiting to be explored. Though you will find all the modern amenities you would expect, things go at a more leisurely pace here reflecting the county`s historic agricultural past and there are plenty of traditional crafts and local fresh produce for you to enjoy."*

So - what's to do? Let me give you a few web site references : for Shropshire:
http://www.shropshiretourism.co.uk/shropshire-visitor-attractions/


Ironbridge

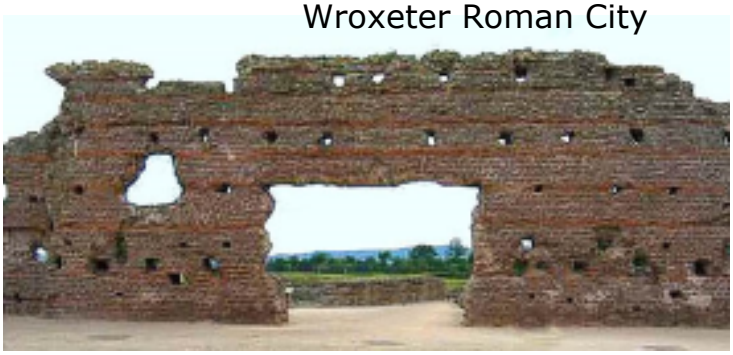
There you'll find the following attractions:
Stokesay Castle. A very romantic 13th Century fortified manor house.

The Ironbridge Gorge Museums. The world's first iron bridge (oddly beautiful) spanning the River Severn. Birth place of the industrial revolution, Ironbridge is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Ironbridge Gorge Museums are nine award winning museums and sites that tell this momentous story.

The Severn Valley Railway. Britains premier steam railway, 16 miles of glorious countryside and restored stations. Shropshire has many other steam train attractions besides.

Wroxeter Roman City (Viroconium). The fourth largest Roman city in Britain. Wroxeter was also the city of Camelot from the ledgend of King Arthur. Much to see and learn. You can follow the trail of the Real King Arthur.

Wroxeter Roman City



The Royal Airforce Museum Cosford. Aviation history brought to life, the largest collection of missiles in the country. Exciting displays of civil and military planes…Last of the few.

Weston Park. Ancestral home of the Earls of Bradford. Lots of events, concerts and the occasional world summit too.

Hawkstone Historic Park and Follies. Wooded magical land of Grottoes, caves, cliffs and follies. Setting for the TV Chronicles of Narnia. Awesome.

Wroxeter Roman Vineyard. One of the worlds most northerly vineyards producing red, white and sparkling wines.

Moving on to Herefordshire - the choice looks amazing - with hundreds of things to do: http://www.visitherefordshire.co.uk/thingstodo.asp

Since I have no idea where you might be - I won't select any in particular - what I will suggest is that you won't be bored!

Of course - I haven't touched on the other area of incredible interest - not far to the west lies the Welsh border and all that is strangely un-English - the food, the language - the people! Both counties border on Powys - and another multitude of attractions ...

Personally I think I would find it overwhelming and probably just stay on the campsite with a good book and with good friends ... Or out walking! I don't think it really matters - the joy of a good holiday is not where you are - but where you are not! You're not at work and not tied up with the grind of daily problems - you are as free as the wind in your hair, in the company of friends, good music, dancing - and maybe the odd bottle of wine - absolute bliss!

Most of the weekend self cater camps are repeating their venues of 2008. The May bank holiday weekend at Wildhern in Hampshire, the Spring bank holiday at both Whixley in Yorkshire and Loxwood in Sussex. The musicians and dancers weekends at Beckford in Worcestershire. Miserden, Gloucestershire, is again the venue for the singers long weekend and also for the introduction of the new weekend for session music.

The August bank holiday northern remains at Whixley in Yorkshire, but the southern camp makes a return to Kington Langley in Wiltshire, not far from Chippenham. I mention that detail since I kept reading it as Kings Langley - which is miles away!!

You can check many of the details against last years Extent at: www.members-only.org.uk I see that all the weekend camps were covered there - I really don't think I could do as good a job again - so if you want to consult those entries (but changing the dates of course)...





CAMP STAFF 2009



Paul Weir tells me that the staffing arrangements are not yet fully "firmed up". What can I tell you? - Well if you are intending to "follow the caterers" then Hilary and Cheryl are down to cater for the second week of the Marquee camps. Ann Tracey will be catering for both of the hall camps.

The first of the marquee camps will be led by Jason Rosser. The second week Paul Weir is joined by Anis Finn. Chris Jewell makes a welcome return for the third week and mayhem ensues in week four with Doug Brown.

The marquee musician so far confirmed for week one is Dave Young. Week two has an interesting combination of Alastair Gavin and Chris Jewell. Richard Jones and Holly Sheldrake will be there for week three.



Leading the second of the hall weeks will be Sue Malleson.



The musicians weekend in June sees the return of Pete Mac who will be working from his new publication "Band Time" due for publication at Easter. Mic Spenceley leads that weekend and also will be putting you through your paces for the dancers weekend later that same month. He tells me that there will be opportunity for the callers amongst you to contribute your skills during that weekend.

The singers weekend in July will again be lead by Jay Parrack and Karen Dietz with music from Bob Shatwell. The new session music weekend will have Karl Stevens and Doug Brown presiding. It will be interesting to see how this new baby of Folk Camps grows and develops over the next few years. Council believe that it will grow into a valued member of the Folk Camps family.





Brian Bull leads the August bank holiday camp at Whixley in Yorkshire with musician John New while at Kington Lagley in Wiltshire Jay Parrack will be in the hot seat.

Staffing is constantly being updated, so keep a regular watch on the members website for the latest details at www.members-only.org.uk

MY STORY WITH FOLK CAMPS SOCIETY …

… is a rather long story.

It starts in 1946 when I discovered English folk dances, at the age of 15. La Russe, Circassian Circle, Galopede, Morpeth Rant, etc, etc, and also Rufty Tufty, Sellengers Round and Picking Up Sticks … In 1951, I went to the folk festival at Stratford-upon-Avon, where I met Douglas, Helen and Peter Kennedy, Pat Shaw, Sibyl and Kenneth Clark, Alan Humberstone, etc. Then, in 1966, looking for family holidays with folk dancing, I wrote to the EFDSS and got an answer from Hugh Rippon, who recommended the Family Camps !

So we went with my 2 children, Aude, 11 years old, and Olivier, 9, to Porlock, and discovered the atmosphere of the folk camps, friendly and cheerful and many people who became good friends : Bill Rutter, Hugh, John Tether, Bryon and Barbara Bonnett, John Kirkpatrick, Brian and Nancy Pattenden, and many others.

The following summers, we enjoyed many other fortnights on different sites : the Gower Peninsular (where we had marvellous sunny weather the first day, and again the last Saturday, and it rained all the time in between), Polegate, Cartmel, Bridgewater, Crowcombe (youth camp) … Bill asked me to be leader for a week or two. We also met other people like Alan Corkett, David Kettlewell, etc…

In the meantime, we had founded, in Belgium, an association (as we say in French), which we called *Mains Unies (meaning : take hands in a circle).* In 1970 we organized together with Bill Rutter, the first camp in Belgium, at the village of Laroche-Tangissart. I guess some of the FCS campers remember that camp, which was followed by other camps on the same site, and in 1977 by an exchange of sites between Mains Unies in France (La Fressinette in the Auvergne) and FCS (Studland bay in Dorset).

Mains Unies was founded in 1969 and since then runs Folk Camps called Vilarets, in many different places all around France (Auvergne, Vendée, Bretagne, Haute-Provence, Savoie, Ardèche, etc), also in Italy (Piemonte), Austria, etc, and even on a small island in Norway!

Finally, let me mention *le Regain de La Mure*, a *maison d'hôtes* (chambres et table d'hôtes) in the Haut Vivarais (*Ardèche*, France). This is a house – or rather a whole hamlet – in the middle of a vast area of fields, woods, chestnut trees and meadows, where we organize camps, courses, etc, with particular emphasis on activities like folk dancing, singing, playing music, and discovering a beautiful and interesting area … Maybe a place for a future FCS camp ?

Eric Limet, Mons (Belgium)
3 October 2008

John Driver writes from Portugal:-

40th ANNIVERSARY REUNION

Hopefully there is a substantial number of 'old' members still around who were active in Folk Camping not just 40 years ago, but dating back to the middle 1960s. Like me, some may be unable to attend the forthcoming re-union but wish to retain contact with friends made over the years.

My first camp was with Bill Rutter near Swanage in 1965 and salient 'episodes' since then (can't list them all – too long!), included Uplyme/Lyme Regis, Morfa Nefyn, Alnwick and numerous French camps. Neither can one list all the characters met along the way, Bill and John (Tex) Blomfield are no longer with us but hello John Kirkpatrick, Brian Heaton, John Brock, and Ray Taylor!

Although currently living in Portugal I plan to return to UK in 2009 and revisit the folk camp scene. Should any old friends wish to make contact then my e-mail address is johnsdriver@gmail.com; I would be happy to maintain a list of 'old' members' e-mail addresses if the need is there.
John Driver

END PIECE

And that's about it from me this time - not as large as the Autumn issue last year - but then I did have the advantage of an excellent contribution from a past member. I really didn't get the same quality (or quantity) of contribution this time. It is also very hard for me to comment on any particular camp - as much as I would like to go to more, the family restrains me to just two weeks at the Marquee camp - if I report on those weeks every year - you the readership, will start to get a very distorted view on the Folk Camps World. I would love to have reports from any or all the other camps - reports from special groups of people within the organisation - the Leaders, the Wardens, the Caterers, maybe reports from the old and cranky (sorry - you get those already from

me!) or the teenagers! Views and opinions would be good - did the camps live up to your expectations, did the teenagers make far too much noise after the party night on the Marquee Camp (Hint - cool it a bit next year Eh? You know who I mean!! Remember that while you're sleeping off your early morning riotous partying - your adults are having to put away wet tents and preparing to drive a few hundred miles home ... Enough said!)

The one thing I have failed on completely in this issue is to expand on the theme of "40 years of Sunshine" - the year when we gaze back on the past through "ruby" tinted glasses. My own memories only go back eight to ten years to the Hall camp near Cromer - friends had been encouraging us to go for some years and we gave in this particular year on the grounds that if it was really bad we could pack up and flee home as it wasn't that far. You might have guessed that we didn't flee - though it did take us a few years before we extended our one week into two - and the Hall experience into a Marquee camp.

One thing I find fascinating is how constant the camp experience is - and yet how vastly different each camp can be. The experience of helping to move the toilet blocks at Lympstone by towing them on the back of the Jeep. The towing was easy - but there was a certain amount of consternation when we couldn't get the toilet off the towing ball and, for a while, there was the chance that we would have to take the toilet block with us whenever we went off camp!

There was the time at the Dover camp when, during a torrential downpour, we got the message from "down wind" that a hurricane wind was making it's way up the channel towards us ... It never arrived - though when we were at Holton Lee we had one afternoon of vicious winds and horizontal rain.

And all the things that happened - the enormous jelly fish on the beach - the beach party with the food having to be passed down a chain of nearly 50 people - and a couple of hours later the empties being returned at double quick speed when we discovered that the tide really raced in on that beach! The boat trips along the "Jurassic Coast" geology and fun at the same time - plus a real appreciation of our South Coast. All the while, permeating through the whole mix - people, music, people, songs, people and dance - the quiet moments, the crazy capers, the meals ... And the crumble and custard. Porridge for breakfast and bacon and sausages and fried bread and ... It's all too much and all so very acceptable. Camp food is just the best - not that we don't eat well at home - we do - it's just that camp is the only place where I have to miss meals - normally lunch - because I'm still too full from breakfast and want to do justice to the evening meal. Though one thing I never understand - I actually lose weight at camp!!

But the best thing about folk camp is simply the people. I know I'm a "bit of a loner" a bit shy and uncertain of myself - but most of you seem to accept me for what I am and drag me into conversations - and while I may not be able to tell you how much I really appreciate it - I really do - and I appreciate also that everyone who comes to Folk Camps is similarly given the comfort and companionship we all need. Folk Campers are indeed a "breed apart" from the outside world - and your presence makes the experience so special. For forty years the Society has been creating an oasis of peace and calm in peoples chaotic lives - may it continue to do so for another 40 year - and then many more after that ...

Cheers , Jon McNamara








Enjoy camping?

Enjoy music?

Enjoy dance?

Enjoy song?






Then you'll love Folk Camps!










A "handy" collage from the camera of the irrepressible Ray Garnett ... It must be a front runner in my on-going quest to find the image that represents just what folk camping means! Talking about photographs - I have received a number of collections of pictures for the "FOLK CAMP 2008" compilation DVD - but there is still plenty of room - and time to add your pictures to the mixture - my hope is to have the compilation issued before Christmas - an ideal cure for the winter blues - a DVD of summer recollections, friends and events. All I require is your pictures (edited or otherwise) ideally on a CD Rom (though I can read almost every form of digital storage). When completed the DVDs would be supplied to any interested camper for nominal cost (to cover blank DVDs, package and postage) ! So send your pictures to: Jon McNamara, 17, Nursery Road, Bishops Stortford, HERTS, CM23 3HJ ... We already have a good collection - your contributions would make it brilliant.


Ray Garnett

Folk Camps Society 40th Anniversary Reunion Ceilidh

7.30pm - 11pm
Saturday 22nd November 2008

Cecil Sharp House, Regents Park Rd, London NW1 7AY

John Kirkpatrick
with
Mr Gubbins' Bicycle



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