

May 2007



Extent

It ain't over till the fat lady sings

This is my final issue of Extent - oh the woe! It's been five years since I picked up the reins from John Meechan and wondered what on earth I was going to do now to follow sufficiently in his inimitable footsteps.

It certainly was a challenge!

I started off with the idea that I wanted to bring colour to Extent, make it bigger and brighter. Council gave me the go-ahead to produce a colour front page which made such a difference. I feel that I have gone at least some way to achieving a bigger and brighter magazine.

As times have changed, so has the way we've distributed the magazine. The vast majority of you now get Extent by email or view it via the Members Only website - which has cut costs significantly and given Council the ability to keep you all as up to date as possible.

Ah, the power of modern technology...



I've always seen Extent as the opportunity to share and during the years, I've seen and heard of some wonderful stories - the building blocks that make Folk Camps what it is. Children reminding the adults to peel their spuds, adults singing



children's songs at 2 am. I've always felt that part of the the magazine's job then, is to carry that feeling through the months when we can't easily share each other's company.

Looking back, despite the occasional trauma, I have really enjoyed being such an integral part of the society and I'm going to miss the role greatly. The time has come though, to move on and let someone else have a go. When I started this adventure, I was working 60+ hours a week running a pub and I was on Council, now I only work 35 hours a week as a lead claims advisor but I seem to have much less time - if anyone can figure that out, please would they let me know?

Things have changed a great deal, naturally Council changes year on year but we have lost a stalwart of the society from its day-to-day business. Frankly without Roger Conway, we wouldn't have a society to run and I, for one, remain extremely grateful to him for all his hard work and (perhaps more importantly) his friendship.

Of course, it goes without saying that Mic and Brian have done a *wonderful* job of filling his shoes and I'm very pleased to see it. I hope that they, Barry Moule and Council continue with the excellent (and often thankless) task of making sure that Folk Camps continues to thrive.

Personally, I'm going to enjoy seeing what direction our new editor takes us in. You'll meet him later in this issue but let me make the plea to make his job as easy as possible - give him plenty of material to choose from! You can find the email address is in this issue!

I hope you have enjoyed the last five years of Extent, here's to many more! I'll see you all soon.

Beci



Specialist weekends

Dancer's Event - Beckford

1 to 3 June (Friday evening to Sunday late afternoon)

A weekend targeted at the more experienced dancer with a focus on challenging dances to quality music. Led by highly experienced Pete and Marj Hendy, this weekend promises to be full of what the dancers love best - a bit of a challenge but more than that, a bit of fun.

Musician's Event - Beckford

29 June - 1 July (Friday evening to Sunday late afternoon)

A weekend for players of any and every kind of instrument. Lots of playing and a little bit of dancing. Alan Corkett leads, with music from Peter Mac - this promises to be a very special weekend indeed.

The village of Beckford sits beneath Bredon Hill, famed by Houseman's poem, which has truly wonderful views - and not a little magic. In addition to many lovely Cotswold villages, the towns of Tewkesbury, Evesham, Cheltenham and Winchcombe, with its fine abbey, are all within range.

Singer's Event - Miserden

12 to 15 July (Thursday evening to Sunday late afternoon)

The popularity of this event in 2006 has resulted into its extension to start on the Thursday evening. Lots of singing with just a smattering of dancing. The combination of leaders Jay Parrack and Karen Dietz means that not only will you be getting energy and passion for singing but also a great sense of fun.

Miserden is a small village surrounded by beautiful Cotswold countryside. Gloucester, Cheltenham and Stroud are all nearby but the village is so attractive you may want to just sit in the field and admire the view. The village pub is very welcoming and people often enjoy a session combined with a pub lunch.



A view from the back office

I've discovered a side effect to doing this job. At the start of the 2007 camp season I want to go to every single camp. Processing your booking forms means that I feel I know you all personally and want to share in your enthusiasm for Folk Camps. I will be attending more camps this year than I have ever done before in a single year, so I'll be getting to meet a lot of you. It will be interesting to put faces to the names.

Generally you've filled in your booking forms correctly and accurately, although there have been one or two which have given ages for the under 22s rather than their dates of birth. The one thing that seems to have eluded you is giving the contact details of those in your party who don't actually live with you. This means that at present they are listed in the database as c/o your address. This could cause us a problem if families have to be contacted during a camp in an emergency. I've already redesigned the form for 2008 so hopefully it will be more obvious what details you need to complete.

The Folk Camps Council is due to meet on 10th June, so if you've got any ideas about Folk Camps either generally or specifically and you would like Council to discuss them, then please contact me by letter or email so that they can be added to the agenda.

Folk Camps has been pleased to help support various projects during this year. A Bb and Eb version of the music book "Join The Band" is undergoing final editing before being printed. A CD of contra dance music has been produced by the band "Skylark" A community music project has been organised in Hampshire and a children's dance festival, also in Hampshire. All those initiating these projects are enthusiastic Folk Campers and the projects are useful ways of spreading the word about the Society.

The Folk Camps Forum had to be closed down due to the dreaded spammers. If you would be interested in starting it up again and

being a moderator to keep it running sweetly, then please contact me at the office.

If you see me at a camp this summer, please come and say “hello”, tell me who you are and how wonderful Folk Camps are.

Mic Spenceley
Administration Manager

Bookings News



Bookings for the early season bank holiday camps and the specialist self-catering weekends are all up on last year. Loxwood, as you know, has been full since the beginning of the year, but there are still spaces at all of the others in Dalton, Beckford and Miserden.

All the marquee weeks and the hall camp are full, and there are waiting lists for every week. Inevitably there are small changes leading up to each holiday, so if you've missed out, then make sure that you are added to the waiting list – you never know, you might still be lucky.

If you haven't yet booked for a weeks summer camp, then we still have a few spaces at Halsway Manor from 28 July to 4 August (camping or residential). This is the “no duty” week, and the absolute height of luxury is to be resident in a room with en-suite facilities. If you speak nicely to leader Brian Pollard he might even peel you a grape!

It is expected that the end of season August Bank Holiday weekends at Redmarley and Whixley will attract their usual late bookings and end up full. You know what happened with Loxwood this year, so make sure you don't miss out and book your places early for these popular camps.

Winter follows swiftly after summer, so you need to also get your bookings in for the two unique 2008 winter camps, Halsway Manor winter warmer (25 to 27 January) and the Symonds Yat Craft Week

(11 to 15 February). Both are fully residential and very popular. You can download specific booking forms for each of these two camps from the members website at

www.members-only.org.uk

Footnote:

Council has reluctantly had to cancel the Continental camp this summer. There simply weren't enough people booked early enough to make it work. Everybody affected has been contacted and offered a transfer, where possible, to a UK camp. Council will be discussing plans for future continental camps. If you have any ideas about how we can ensure its success again, please let Council have your thoughts.

Message from the Chairman



Well – it's going to be a bumper summer! Bookings are up for nearly every camp this year and as many people have found to their cost - it pays to book early. Council will be discussing the possibility of adding an extra UK week next year to cope with the demand.

The singers weekend in July is growing in numbers and if you want to be there it would be a good idea to book soon.

Staffing

As ever, we are always on the lookout for more staff. If you fancy catering, leading, musicianing or wardening, don't hide your light under a bushel. Drop me a line and we'll see if we can make use of your talents at a future camp.

Sites

Our sites team are out scouring the country for good sites for next year's camps. If you know of any good potential hall or marquee sites please get in touch. If we use it you could earn £100 for your trouble! What is the criteria for a Folk Camps site? Somewhere that provides all the physical needs of a Folk Camp plus that X Factor – a place that delights the soul!

Extent

As you will see elsewhere in this issue, our editor Beci brown is planning to hand over the reins to Jon MacNamara in the autumn. Our thanks go to Beci for all her hard work on Extent – we don't get many people queuing up to do the job!



Promoting Folk Camps

We have a journalist from the Guardian coming to get “immersed” as a camper at Loxwood this month, with a view to writing an article on the joys of folk camping. Sarah O'Meara is bringing her tent, so she will be seeing how it is from the ground up (literally....). We'll let you know when it gets published.



Happy camping!

Paul Weir
Chairman

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Head Office- Mic Spenceley
Folk Camps Society Limited
43 Mill Street
Tonyrefail
Porth
CF39 8AB
0208 12321 36
micspenceley@folkcamps.co.uk

Editor - Rebecca Brown
25 South Lonsdale Street
Stretford
M32 0JE
0161 286 8355

New Editor - Jon McNamara
17 Nursery Road
Bishops Stortford
CM23 3HJ
01279 656664
extent@folkcamps.co.uk

Chairman - Paul Weir
paulweir@folkcamps.co.uk





Meet the new Editor!

Jon McNamara

Born - in wedlock - (so I was always told) I was apparently a beautiful child until three days old when my father - in his joy and excitement - lifted his baby son high in the air with a shout of pure exaltation - only to find the room height was a few inches less than his reach. I don't recall if it gave me a headache - but my mother always said that my qualities as a beautiful child diminished from that moment (it might also explain my fear of flying and obsession that the roof might at any time come crashing down on ones head).

The place of birth was the north end of the Malvern Hill - a part of the country I still feel drawn to. At the age of two - when the war ended (having been born in 1943) my parents moved to Chelsea, London - where I spent seven years playing mainly on the streets and on the bomb sites (no we did have a house - it's just that we played out on the streets - because you could do in those days). I have memories of walking home through thick London smogs where the density of the air actually managed to "black out" the street gas lighting - memories of sweets that tasted of nectar - Mars bars that were dolled out slice by slice over a whole week - collecting waste paper through the school to re-cycle - but mainly I remember it as being dour and dark - clothes were make and mend, toys were few (and a wooden box was a real luxury) and the highlights of the week were the sixpenny cinema - and sneaking down the next door garden to listen to Dick Tracy on the radio through the open window (I think our neighbour knew we were there!).

When I was nine the parents went to the country - in fact to Bishops Stortford - a totally unremarkable town on the edge of Hertfordshire. It hasn't changed much - just got bigger. At ten and a half I took my 11+ exam (don't ask - I just did) and got into what was then the Hertford Grammar



School - and started 9 years of creeping out in the pre-dawn twilight to catch trains and buses to cross the county to start school by 9 am! Part of my education was to gain a dislike of dull travel - and to find ways to overcome it.



Grammar school, a bout of jaundice and a smashed thigh (a tree fell on me unexpectedly when I wasn't looking)- left me with a few scars and a bunch of "O" and "A" levels - enough in those days to gain reasonably well paid employment - so, with my salary of £480 - per year I set up in a flat, got a regular girl friend - started to run two of the local youth clubs - and became deeply involved in drama (note folk music hadn't reached our town at this point). Industry became my educator and in two establishments over three years I learned about leather and leather finishing, creation and use of emulsion polymers, paint technology, mineral analysis (including how to make NCR (no carbon required) paper, how to cast metal in the foundry and all about open cast mining for Fullers Earth and how to modify the product ... I also took an ONC in chemistry.

Music had joined drama as a passion in my out of work hours - with the local folk club suffering from my attempts to sing (I did eventually get the idea - but it took a very long time!). The ONC led me to the Hatfield Polytech (now the University of Hertfordshire) and a full time Hons. Degree in applied chemistry. Musically, the guitar and voice were used when and where I could to raise a few extra pounds to buy survival - a little food a lot of beer and as much music and drama as I could afford!

After college came the rather dull period of thirty plus years of "punching the clock" as a research chemist, a development chemist, a compound controller and eventually a database operative feeding three dimensional structures in to the company computers for use in complex pharmaceutical analysis. I also managed to fit in a general degree in Theatre Arts, promotion from acting member to directing member of the local





Am.Dram group, getting married and generating a child (when I was just on 50) an involvement with the concertina at international level (just wish I could PLAY it at the same level) and developed skills at creating magazines, as a playwright, and as a boring old f**t!

I would like to say I have an ambition to take over the world - but have come to the conclusion that I wouldn't want it anyway - so I'll simply try to make a small difference in the organisations and areas of life that I value and enjoy. I don't propose to be a wonderful editor for EXTENT - I trust I shall be woefully inadequate so that you all have cause to take up your keyboards and tell me what I should be doing - communication is a two way street = and the more traffic it enjoys the better it will be for the Folk Camp Society. Communication is the first step towards change - and change - in a positive direction - is a power for growth and out of growth comes survival.

So your starter for ten - what I would really like from all you wonderful people who have attended the marquee camps for the past few years is at least one suggestion each as to how it might have been made a better experience - not the negative gripes and grumbles - but the positive suggestions!

And - now I have to say - sorry to see you go Beci - you've done a brilliant job - I'll try not to klutz it up too much - but if I do please feel free to jump in and take it over again!

Jon McNamara

[Editor's Note : I really don't think I have anything to worry about, it looks like I'm leaving Extent in very safe hands.]

In other news...

Paul Bull died on Friday 6 April 2007. Paul had been a Folk Camper for many years, especially at Halsway Manor and at the Symonds Yat Craft Camp. With Joy Simmons he had led the Craft Camp on many occasions. Paul and Joy also jointly ran Eastleigh Folk Dance Club and Paul was an accomplished caller there and at Folk Camps.

"I am saddened to hear about Paul's death - he was such a kind and talented man, with the patience of a saint, when so many people were demanding his attention, for help with their projects - he will really be missed at future Craft Camps."

Sue Durran

"I'm very upset to hear that Paul Bull has died, he and Joy made Carole and I feel very welcome at Symonds Yat when we started going there a few years ago. He made an enormous contribution to the Craft Camp."

Brian Bull

Richard Trewinnard died on 31 January 2007 from a heart attack. He was 48 and had lived in Lisbon for the last 18 years with his wife Maria-Carolina and two daughters.

On 23 February 2007 his mother **Eleanor Trewinnard** died, also from a heart attack.

The Trewinnards are one of the original Folk Camps families and our thoughts are with Eleanor's husband Geoff in Church Stretton, Shropshire.

Geoff is one of the original directors who, along with Bill Rutter, formed the Folk Camps Society into a limited company in 1968.

Folk Camps Society Limited

43 Mill Street, Tonyrefail, PORTH CF39 8AB

☎0208 12321 36 info@folkcamps.co.uk

Nomination Form for Governing Membership

I wish to become a **GOVERNING MEMBER** of Folk Camps Society Limited. I understand that my financial liability, in the event of failure of the Society, is limited to £10, or any other amount set by the Society at an AGM or EGM.

I enclose my cheque for £ (Min£5) being ()years advance subscription at £1 per year.

NAME

ADDRESS

POST CODE

TEL NO

email:-

signed

Date

PROPOSER (signature):-

(Block Capitals)

SECONDER (signature):-

(Block Capitals)

Both proposer and seconder must be currently fully paid up Governing Members.

(You can send in the form even if you don't have a proposer or seconder.)