



Folk Camps

be a part of it!

Autumn 2017 “Extent” Newsletter

Welcome to the Folk Camps newsletter. This issue has news from Folk Camps and information about next year’s holidays.

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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/folcampsholidays>.

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

Editorial

It's always a pleasure to sit down to collate Extent magazine. This edition brings contributions, photos and text, from a wide range of members and two poems. Both poems raise eternal themes for folk camp: the importance of family, both the family we are born into, and the family we find at camp; and, the importance of good hygiene.

Surely, only amongst family do we announce the basic needs of personal hygiene at dinner...so common at camp! Well done to all our wardens who work so hard to make our systems work despite low water pressure, inadequate pits and sloping tanks. Kudos to the toilet fairies who tend most carefully to the surface cleaning. Flowers in toilet blocks are always a welcome sight. Plagues at camp are rare, thankfully. However, the heartfelt plea of those who suffered from tummy troubles this summer, is that we make sure we don't forget how powerful those invisible bugs are. For the more vulnerable in our family, they can be dangerous. It may be worth just checking all members of your tent/caravanhold are being safe. Washing hands, not leaving toothbrushes out on sinks, and not playing in and out of the loos. If you are poorly, it's wise to stay home, or observe quarantine for 2 days.

Creating the perfect camp staffing team is a dark art, but we believe we have an excellent balance of styles and skills for 2018. Apprentice and assistant staff are coming along to learn the ropes. We always welcome new people to see where their talents can take them. Council are looking at ways to make staff duties more manageable. For example, Wardens tackle tasks broadly split into 'practical' and 'people' roles. You might have practical skills but pale at the thought of managing the duty rota, that's fine, we can match you with a people person, or vice versa. You may be a morning musician happy to lead beginners after breakfast, but be flagging at 10pm for dancing. Let's see if we can partner you with a complementary late nighter. Staff and assistants are rewarded for their contributions with free places or transport costs. If you want to know more, contact the office. This kind of voluntary 'work' teaches you all sort of skills. It's one way you can help shape your kind of camp. It looks good on a CV too. Why not chat over the idea with friends. You can present yourself as a team. What would your dream staff line up be?

Preparations for the 50th Birthday Celebrations are well under way. Tickets will be released soon. Save the date in your diary. Come and see the Folk Camps Party Band; meet up with friends; bring your dance side and show them what folk camps is really all about.

Judith Jenkins



Photo credit: Gig Filmer

Message from the Chair Liz Cooper

Another great season of Folk Camps has finished and it is time to put our tents away and just dream of wonderful times, of Festivals, party nights, Devil's donuts and all the fun of being immersed in Folk Camp music, dance and friendship. It has been so lovely camping with new and old friends!

This edition of Extent should get us all dreaming of next year with the excitement of our 50th Anniversary celebrations in Buxton in June. Please try to come and join us for a Folk Camp event. Keep an eye out for more information!

Council recently met for a weekend in Somerset to put plans in place for next year's camps. Details of these will be listed – and with a seaside marquee location on the Gower and a hall camp in picturesque Chiddingly, we are hoping lots of you will be booking your camps as soon as booking opens at the AGM.

Our website is in the process of regeneration (in a Dr Who style) and we should thank Patrick Self for all his hard work on this.

As always Folk Camps would not survive without the hard work of all our volunteer staff, our contractors and Folk Camps Council and I would like to say 'Thank You' to everyone for all their hard work. So dream away the winter, book up for next year and it will soon be summer again!

Office Matters

Sarah Richardson – Administration Manager

At the end of the 2017 season, I would like to say a huge thank you from the Folk Camps office to all our volunteer staff, Council members, and members who have attended one or more of our camps. Folk Camps is a big, loving and generous community, and running the office to make the camps happen is a pleasure. It has its trials: hassles with weather, site locations, sloping fields and loos this year, but Folk Campers are stoical, and brilliant at making a camp work despite the minor inconveniences.

New sites this year had good feedback. The Hall camp at Orcop in Herefordshire and the weekend camp at Meonstoke in Hampshire were excellent locations and we were very well received by locals. The Gaunts Estate site wasn't our first choice of field, and had some challenging features, but the general location is good. There is lots to see and do in the surrounding area, so if we can agree a flatter field we may return.

Summer week campers will have seen some new kit. Over the last few seasons, Graham has modernised our field kitchen and shower equipment. We have finally said goodbye to some old heavy kettles, in service since our earliest days. Maybe they will join the old Elsan loos in Folk Camps equipment heaven.

Campers may be interested to know we have been reviewing Folk Camps policies. There have been a few tweaks to health and safety risk assessment and evidencing our good practice at camp. This is an ongoing process, as we keep up to date with the changing legal requirements. We are also reviewing our data protection policy, and will be in touch with members over the winter regarding the care and respect for your data. If you bring dogs to camp, please take a look at the 'Dogs at Camp' policy

<http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/faq/faq-domestic/folk-camps-dogs-policy/>

2018 camping season

Next year we are camping at tried and tested locations. After Craft Break at the splendid ballroom of the Paddocks hotel in Symonds Yat, we are once again at Loxwood for early May. The popular Dalton will host late Spring break in the North, and we revisit pretty Meonstoke in the South. Specialist weekends are at Blockley for Dancers, Miserden for Session, In-betweeners, and Singers South, Beckford for Musicians, and Bampton for Singers North.

The hall week camps will be at our former weekend site at Chiddingly in Sussex, and the four week marquee camp returns to the splendid Weobley Castle Farm in Gower, right by the sea.

A one off 50th Birthday Celebration August Bank Holiday Camp

This year we are holding a special one off 50th Celebration camp over the August Bank Holiday at Fowlmere in Cambridgeshire. A lovely large, light, hall, in a spacious, flat camping field, this location means we can all camp together. Extent can't confirm the staffing line up at this time, but details will be published soon.



Fowlmere, inside and out



Photo credit Graham Clements

The website has all the details, but here is a summary

Craft Break Symonds Yat	Mon 12 Feb 2018 - Fri 16 Feb 2018
May BH Loxwood	Fri 4 May 2018 - Mon 7 May 2018
Spring BH South Meonstoke	Fri 25 May 2018 - Tue 29 May 2018
Spring BH North Dalton	Fri 25 May 2018 - Tue 29 May 2018
Dancers weekend Blockley	Fri 1 Jun 2018 - Sun 3 Jun 2018
Session music weekend Miserden	Fri 8 Jun 2018 - Sun 10 Jun 2018
Miserden Inbetweeners	Sun 10 Jun 2018 - Thu 14 Jun 2018
Singers South Miserden	Thu 14 Jun 2018 - Sun 17 Jun 2018
Musicians Weekend Beckford	Fri 29 Jun 2018 - Sun 1 Jul 2018
Singers Weekend Bampton, Cumbria	Thu 12 Jul 2018 - Sun 15 Jul 2018
Marquee week 1 Gower	Sat 21 Jul 2018 - Sat 28 Jul 2018
Marquee week 2 Gower	Sat 28 Jul 2018 - Sat 4 Aug 2018
Hall week 1 Chiddingly	Sat 28 Jul 2018 - Sat 4 Aug 2018
Marquee week 3 Gower	Sat 4 Aug 2018 - Sat 11 Aug 2018
Hall week 2 Chiddingly	Sat 4 Aug 2018 - Sat 11 Aug 2018
Marquee week 4 Gower	Sat 11 Aug 2018 - Sat 18 Aug 2018
August Bank Holiday Fowlmere	Fri 24 Aug 2018 - Mon 27 Aug 2018

50th Birthday Celebration, Buxton

23 June 2018, 10.00am - 11.30pm

All campers and friends are invited to a special folk camp reunion day and ceilidh to celebrate 50 years of Folk Camps. Council wants this to be an opportunity for everyone to come together for a day of fun and celebration, doing what we do so well. It will provide a showcase of Folk Camps for the folk media and potential campers. The venue is large enough for 300 people to sit down to dinner, and we can accommodate a ceilidh with 450 dancers. Room for everyone.

The Octagon, Buxton

The Octagon is part of the Victorian pavilion complex set in a beautiful park. The park has several children's play areas, a little train, lawns, a lake and river. Buxton is at the heart of the Peak District midway between Manchester and Sheffield.

<http://www.paviliongardens.co.uk>



Photo credit Judith Jenkins

The Day... A special 'day of folk camp'

Welcome with tea, coffee and squash; Join the Band band; workshops: music, dance and craft. Children's activities Song Circle; showcase dancing in the park; performances in the Bandstand; al fresco picnic lunch (in pavilion if wet); time to chat and catch up with friends; photos and reminiscing; celebration group photo. 2 course dinner with modest ceremony; family ceilidh dances; cocoa and birthday cake; expert ceilidh; bar.

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Introducing the Folk Camps Party Band.

Led by Jenny Newman, this band will select some of the best of our home grown talent to showcase our commitment to developing musicianship. The Band will launch in 2018, and tour festivals and events promoting Folk Camps. Come and hear them and dance. Other performers will be announced on confirmation.

Be a part of it!

As any folk camp event, its campers who make it. We invite you to sign up for the song circle; to perform in the bandstand; dance on the forecourt; make some art; volunteer to make the day run smoothly.

We will need receptionists, workshop leaders; dance callers; cake decorators; children's games leaders; hall decorators; a table and chair set up and break down crew, airport transfer drivers. Email askme@folkcamp.co.uk to volunteer.

We have so much history, some would say 'evidence' of what folk camps is. Let's bring it out and share the memories. Look out your pictures, videos, dust off the anecdotes. We want to mount a display and video montage.

Widening the circle

Although we expect the reunion day to be of more interest to campers, we welcome all guests interested in what Folk Camps has to offer. We would welcome local dance sides and musicians. The evening ceilidh will be promoted locally, and to folk groups.who would you invite?

We will be inviting Folk media to follow the event, and will invite photographers to capture the essence of the day to use in our promotion material over the next few years.

Tickets

Tickets will be available after the AGM from Eventbrite or for those without internet/email they can be made via the office. Folk Camps Society Limited, 74 School Lane, STAVERTON, Wiltshire, BA14 6NZ UK

Full day ticket: Includes all activities, plus tea, coffee or cordial on arrival, 2 course hot dinner, cocoa and birthday cake plus evening Ceilidh. Adults £35; Children (5-17) £20; Family (1 or 2 parent(s) and 2 or 3 of their own children aged 5-17) £100.

Evening Ceilidh: Adult £10 Concession £6.



Getting There



Just 23 miles from Manchester airport, 500m from the railway station, close to M6 and M1, plus only 4 hours by car from Glasgow, London, Cardiff and Norwich.

The railway station is easy walking distance from the venue.

Parking at the venue is free between 8.00am and 6.00pm. Currently the charge for 10 hours is £5.

Folk Camps can put people in touch who may want to gather a group and hire a minibus etc. to reduce costs and driving.

Contact us on Facebook or by email at askme@folkcamps.co.uk

Accommodation

Folk Camps will not be arranging accommodation but there are several options. Jane Rawlins has provided a summary of camping sites and bunkhouses and Folk Camps has negotiated a discounted rate at the Palace Hotel, close to the venue. Details are on the Website www.folkcamps.co.uk/50th-birthday-celebration/

The Long Dark Night of the Bowl

Sharon Hopwood

Twas on the eve of Sunday-
At Orcop Hall, week one
That 'The Sickness' hit House Hopwood
And we became undone.

Our brand new tent – so clean! Pristine!
Now host to scenes most lurid:
A tsunami of vomituousness
And torrential bodily fluid.

The horror that revealed itself
Throughout that long dark night
Brought heaves and groans and wracks and
moans
And seven shades of....blight.

But thirteen hours of holding bowl
And mopping brow and floor,
Doth bring a focus to the mind
And questions to the fore.

Who knows where the germs go?
(As Fairport did not say)
Wither do they come from?
Why do they choose to stay?

These Mysteries Bacterial
Are an ever growing topic,
But are we doing all we can
To combat Legions Microscopic?

All eyes turn to the toddlers
Who are yet to comprehend.
But what about the older ones
And the rules they like to bend?

The little ones need guidance
And hand-washing supervision.
The bigger ones need graphic memes
And terror-induced revision!

So, let us drop a fact bomb.
We'll make it big and bold.
Just how many bacteria
Can one person's toothbrush hold?

The answer is ten million
And that is just the norm
(In any average bathroom
That's clean and dry and warm.)

BUT – there's some who camp among us
Who think that it's alright
To leave their brush to marinate
On the sink top overnight.

Steeping, prone and lonely,
In a puddle of viral brew.
Slurping up E-coli soup
And Staphylococcus stew.

(Is that you?...Eeeeeww!)

Now, I'm no crazy clean freak
But use some microbial sense!
Gather up your toiletries
And keep them in your tents.

Some habits of ablution
We have in our home bubble
Aren't suited to communal life
And can bring a heap of trouble.

Those germs they like it soggy
So wipe up if it's wet -
Even if the Toilet Faeries
Haven't made their visit yet.

It may not be your chosen chore
At marquee or at hall,
But battling those blasted bugs
Is a duty for us all.



Camper comments Lou Tribus.

For as long as I've been coming to Folk Camp, there has been a vehicle for *camper comments* at each camp. For many years it was a loosely bound folder of blank comments pages which would become more and more dog-eared as it was filled up and passed around to read by many campers. It took on the aura of a virtual soap-box where campers aired their opinions, good and bad, and other campers responded (and sometimes even heckled – our own version of Hyde Park Corner).

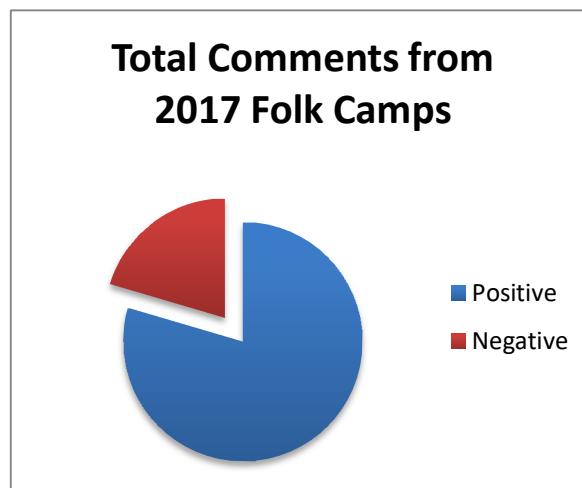
At the end of the 2014 season, council decided to retire the well-worn folder and introduced the *comments box* that we now see at all camps. Although not initially welcomed, it is now a fixture at Folk Camps.

The procedure for responding to comments remains the same:

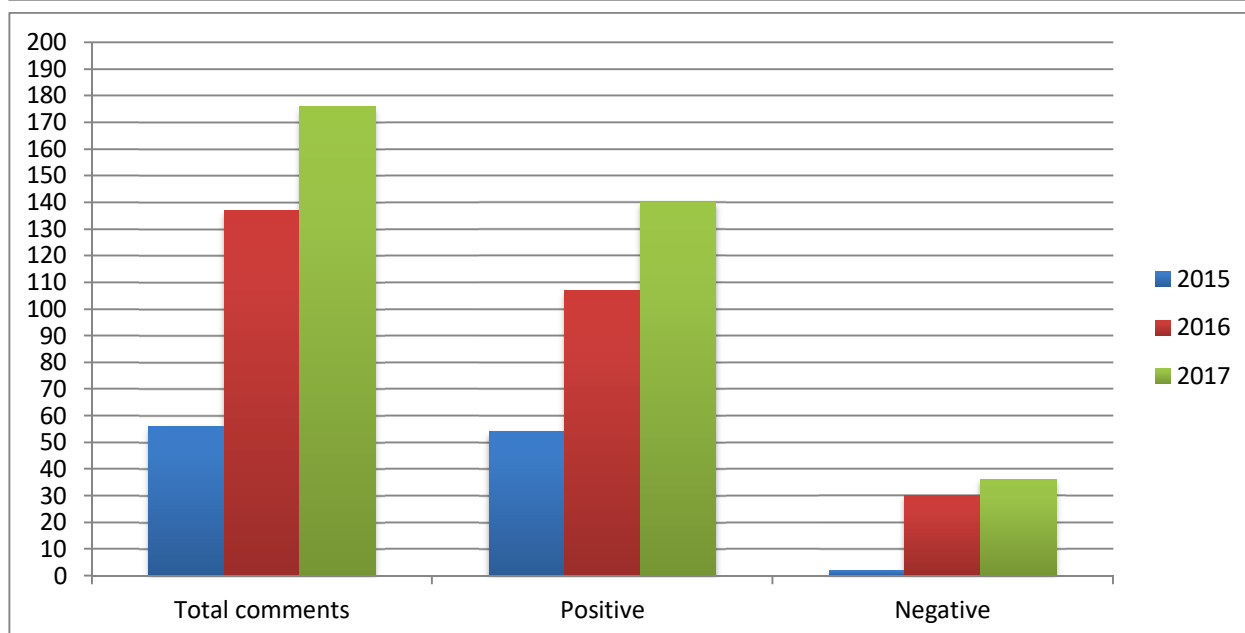
- At the end of each day, the warden looks at all the comments slips and urgent issues are always dealt with on site.
- All the comments slips are sent on to council at the end of a camp. We review them at our annual working weekend each September.
- Any comments, suggestions or concerns can be discussed with camp staff, council members (if on camp) or put into the comments box.

At the end of the 2017 Folk Camp season, Council had a total of 176 camper comment forms from 18 camps to read and evaluate.

Overwhelmingly, camper comments have been positive. The graphs below show how we felt about the 2017 Folk Camps.



Folk Camps camper comments since the introduction of the comments box.



Here are some of the changes we are making this year, in direct response to camper feedback:

- There has been confusion between the address of the Folk Camps office and the address of individual camps. We have modified the information sheet to ensure that the address of each camp is clearly listed.
- We will also ensure that if there is a change of field or location as happened at Gaunts Estate this summer, all campers who have booked will be notified of the new address and directions.
- Our caterers will consider a change of serving practice to accommodate special diets.
- Our caterers will also review the workload for 'cooks of the day' to see if the jobs can be divided.
- We will review and improve how we monitor hall cleanliness.
- We will review our camp toilet cleaning and toilet cleanliness monitoring procedures.

Following the incidence of illness on the hall camp this year, we will review and if necessary change our policy about illness on camps including our refund policy for campers who have been excluded because of illness.

AGM and Reunion

AGM and Reunion

Saturday 18th November 2017

Toddington Village Hall, Leighton Road, Toddington, Bedfordshire LU5 6AN

11.00 Coffee and photo sharing

11.30 Music workshop with Holly Sheldrake

12.30 Lunch in the hall Soup and Pizza etc from 'Jenny's Café'

2.30 AGM

5.00 Singing workshop with Phoebe Wright

6.00 Hot food in the Hall at 'Jenny's café'

7.30 -11.00pm Reunion Ceilidh featuring Touchstone, Hosted by Liz Cooper, Called by Barry Pollard and friends. Tickets £5.

New Look Website. www.folkcamps.co.uk

Do take some time to visit the new look Folk Camps website. We are very grateful for all the hard work, led by Patrick Self, to bring it up to date. Behind the scenes, the new system makes it easier for us to add new material and connect with our databases.

The website is central to our promotional activity, both attracting new campers and keeping current campers abreast of developments, so it is important it is fit for purpose and reflects all our activities.

Information about all aspects of Folk Camps is available through the central menu, and we have incorporated many more photographs than on the old site.

Feel free to give your feedback, especially if you notice any copy glitches.



photo credit: Jane Farndon

Solar charging Liz Cooper

Over the last few years the number of people trying to charge devices and phones on the Folk Camp Charging table has increased dramatically. We would like to encourage all campers to take advantage of the many solar charging systems which are available at reasonable cost.

Last year we set up a family charging station in our awning powered by the solar panel and even in a week that was more rain than sun, we found we did not need to use the marquee charging table.

Suggestions are varied on the internet with reviews and opinion which can be found easily. The price ranges seem to be affordable for most pockets so please do some research and try to use Solar power if possible.

https://www.festive-lights.com/9v-mobile-solar-power-system?qclid=EAlalQobChMI5eqtku3g1qIVb77tCh1qIwVIEAQYAiABEqJc-PD_BwE

This is just one suggestion with some good reviews – only £35 but many more are available and will suit different circumstances.

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I am not a Folky

Harvey Howlett

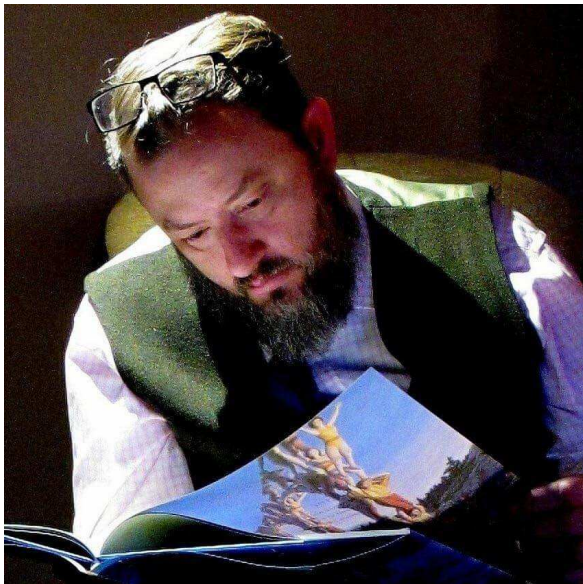


Photo provided by Emma Daniel.

'As a child, I came to Folk Camps with my mum, dad and brother (Alastair, formerly known as Kevin). Nowadays, Alastair visits Folk Camps for a day to celebrate either his or our dad's birthday. Alastair usually tells a story during our sing-around, and this year his partner Harvey surprised everyone by telling us a poem that he had written especially for the event. The poem was very well received and many campers asked for a copy to enjoy again and again. I am very pleased to share the poem here: I am not a Folky by Harvey Howlett.

Emma Daniel

I am not a folky

I'm not a folky,
but I visit a folk camp
maybe once a year.

It's a family thing.
Birthday meeting,
presents, greetings,
annual marking.
Pub gathering,
beer, lunch, music
sharing. Happy
making moments.

I'm not a folky,
but I visit a folk camp
maybe once a year,

It's a dancing thing.
Called out reel, swing
or Jackson rag.
Partners honoured,
circle left and
back to back (not
do-si-do), all
ended in bows.

I'm not a folky,
but I visit a folk camp
maybe once a year.

It's a friendship thing.
Circle seated
sharing, old and
young delighting
each in story,
song, poetry
perhaps. All gifts
affirming life.

I'm not a folky,
but I visit a folk camp
maybe once a year.

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