



Spring 2019 Issue

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

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

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A Word from the Chairman

A transcript of Marcus' speech from the 50th Birthday Celebration

'They should run something cheap like a camp for families!'

This was the appeal from Bessie Rye to Bill Rutter that began it all. Bill was then the SW Area Organiser for the English Folk Dance & Song Society (EFDSS) and with their backing he created the 'Family Camp' concept that we still know and love today.

The first Family Camp was in the summer of 1961 near Bridport. 50 people attended including 18 children. It was on the basic side to say the least: there were no toilets and water was taken from an open tank. Light was from Tilley lamps as there was no electricity. There were no gas ovens and hot water came from an improvised wood burner. And the marquee had no floor. There was also a strict rule that children under 12 were to leave the marquee by 9pm! It cost just 3 pounds and 15 shillings (£3.75) including the hire of a tent.

In the boom years of the Folk Revival, the idea caught on immediately and by 1968 there were 7 weeks of camps at 3 locations to choose from. At this point it was decided that the operation should be split off into an independent organisation – so on 2nd May 1968, Folk Camps proper was born.

Over the decades, Folk Camps experimented with all sorts of camps: marquee camps, hall camps, weekend camps, youth camps, continental camps (in Belgium, France, Germany, Holland), self-catered camps, activity camps, craft camps, dancers' camps, singers' camps and musician camps. Reading through the history of Folk Camps a few themes emerge that still ring true today. The provision of constant hot water by whatever means is an imperative, adults generally need to do a day of cooking, and bad weather never makes a bad camp!

Bill Rutter's vision was for a cheap camping holiday, suitable for children, with dance, singing and music-making at its heart to which everyone would contribute their enthusiasm and talent. You might say we are no longer cheap - but the evidence says otherwise: In 1968 the cost of a full adult place on a week camp was £6. Allowing for inflation this is equivalent to £100 today. But

this does not take into account the increase in the general standard of living which has increased by a factor of 3 in the last 50 years.

In terms of affordability that £6 per week would have felt the same as about £300 today. You might say we are less committed to the music and dance. Now, it is a fact that we welcome more campers from outside the folk world than in the past. But the effect is not to diminish the Folk traditions but to widen their appeal and bring new families to appreciate their importance. As example, my own family now contains a fiddle player, an accordion player, a folk singer and 4 avid folk dancers – this would never have happened without Folk Camps.

So, have we diluted the vision? I think not!

Folk Camps has remained true to its roots thanks to the untiring efforts of legions of campers over the decades. And the next 50 years? In a world that is increasingly dividing us into suppliers and consumers, Folk Camps insists on every camper being both at the same time. In a world that divides us into performers and audience, Folk Camps encourages us to join in. In a world that wants to standardise, Folk Camps celebrates diversity. In a world that wants to commercialise traditions, Folk Camps reminds us that they ultimately belong to ordinary folk.

Folk Camps is just as relevant today. As ever, the more we put in, the more we get out. With the will of all our campers I believe Folk Camps will celebrate 100 years in style.

Marcus De Frettes

Office Matters

Sarah Richardson

With all this uncertainty around us, the certain thing is that Folk Camps spring and summer season is soon to start, and a warm and friendly Folk Camps welcome awaits.

Loxwood approaches at the end of April, and Dalton and Chedworth at the end of May. There are spaces on all the weekend camps, with the late dates now passed for Loxwood, Dalton and Chedworth. A late staffing change brings a new experience, three musician/leaders for Loxwood, the talented pool of Sarah Malleson, Anna Tabbush and Richard Jones are joined by Steve Porritt as warden.

Dalton will be ably led by Dan Mason, who will be supported by experienced music team of Hilary Vare and John New, and wardened by the tender skills of Nick Whitlock. Richard Jones returns with Belinda for the music at Chedworth with the impeccable leadership of Sue Malleson.

All sites bar one this year are old faithfuls, Beckford hosts Dancers in early June and Musicians in late June, and Miserden hosts Session, the mellow in-betweener, and Singers in the middle of June. Places available at all of these great experience camps.

Returning to Knockerdown, our four marquee weeks are at this lovely site in the Peak District, close to both fantastic open countryside, and lovely historic towns and villages, as well as water sports just close by at Carsington water. Spaces are available on all weeks, and after a super-sized marquee camp in the 2018 season, Council have decided to the space improving extra instrument space from last year.

Our new hall site at Staple is a smaller hall, and so has been capped at 80 places. Week 1 is on waiting list status, and week 2 very close to its limit at the time of writing, so if you want to try out our new Kent coast location, act quickly.

We'll wrap the year returning to the popular and well-situated southern site at Meonstoke, and our glorious Cumbrian site at Bampton.

This is a great year to holiday at a Folk Camp in the UK, whatever happens outside our world, our Folk Camps welcome will be guaranteed. We'll also be congratulating Folk Camps Germany on their own celebratory 40th birthday.

Join Us in the Sun for Marquee Week 2!



**Get to Knockerdown at the end of July for a
week of folk that's not to be missed!**

**Watersports and sailing at Carsington, cycling through the countryside
and, of course, Folk fun for all the family.**

[Book your place now!](#)

<http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/camp/?camp=248>

Folk Camps Party Band

Be sure not to miss out on the Folk Camps Party Band's upcoming gig dates!

Folk Camps Party Band Open Rehearsal – [Facebook event here](https://www.facebook.com/events/502425696959261/)

<https://www.facebook.com/events/502425696959261/>

Saturday 11th May, The Sawpits Centre, 2-4:30pm

Chippenham Folk Festival 2019

Saturday 25th May, lunchtime ceilidh, Market Square

Gate to Southwell Festival 2019

Saturday 8th June, late afternoon/early evening

(plus, children's workshops at the festival)

Knees Up Cecil Sharp Ceilidh

Friday 21st June, 8-11pm, Cecil Sharp House

Towersey Festival 2019

Friday 23rd August, opening ceilidh

(plus, Folk Camps-style music workshops on three mornings of the festival)

Bromyard Folk Festival 2019

Thursday 5th September, opening ceilidh

For more information on all things Folk Camps Party Band, go to our website

<http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/folk-camps-party-band/>

A Call for Volunteers

We need more people to help us promote Folk Camps Party Band at gigs and live events! Do you think you could help FCPB reach as many people as possible? If so, contact **Marcus de Frettes** marcus@defrettes.org for more details.



Folk Camps Germany's 40th Year



2019 is the 40th year anniversary of our European friends, Folk Camp Germany!

Their 40th celebrations are helmed by Folk Camps' own Chris Jewel and Paul Weir, taking place at Zeilitzheim Castle near Würzburg.

On behalf of all of the Folk Camp community, we'd like to extend a congratulations and all the best wishes that their celebrations are as fantastic as our 50th was last Summer.

If you'd like to read more about Folk Camps Germany, you can go to their website at <https://www.folkcamp.de/en>

The pair are also staffing some of our own Folk Camps!

Chris Jewell is leading our Session Music Weekend in Miserden, 14th-16th June

He is also Music leader for Marquee week 4 at Knockerdown, 10th-17th August.



[BOOK SESSION MUSIC WEEKEND NOW](http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/camp/?camp=251)

<http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/camp/?camp=251>

[BOOK MARQUEE WEEK 4 NOW](http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/camp/?camp=250)

<http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/camp/?camp=250>

Paul Weir is leading Marquee week 3 at
Knockerdown,
3rd-10th August.



BOOK MARQUEE WEEK 3 NOW

<http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/camp/?camp=249>

Have You Seen Us Online?

Comment, like it, share it!

Help Folk Camps share the news. When you see a Folk Camps' post on social media, help the campaign by commenting, liking and sharing it with your friends. That way it will achieve a much larger readership and more people will come to know about our great holidays.



[Folk Camp Holidays](https://www.facebook.com/folkcampsholidays/)

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



[Folk Camps Party Band](https://www.facebook.com/FolkCampsPartyBand)

<https://www.facebook.com/FolkCampsPartyBand>



[Folk Camps Cold Bogmarsh](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1632638373688403/) (the unofficial Folk Camps Community Page!)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1632638373688403/>



[@FolkCamps](https://twitter.com/FolkCamps)

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[@folkcampholidays](https://www.instagram.com/folkcampholidays/)

<https://www.instagram.com/folkcampholidays/>



[@folkcampspartyband](https://www.instagram.com/folkcampspartyband/)

<https://www.instagram.com/folkcampspartyband/>

Caterer's Update

In March a group of caterers met with Jenny Hopper – Folk Camps Provisioner – to discuss the past season and think about the new one. We looked at comments from campers about food issues and thought about improvements we could make to menus and to the lives of the Cooks of the Day!

We would like to thank all the Cooks of the Day – it is daunting to spend a day of your valuable holiday preparing meals in a tent with giant utensils and pans – but it is amazing what wonderful food is produced. All the caterers are also volunteering to make sure the kitchen runs smoothly in line with the stringent health and hygiene regulations.

Camps are often a long way from shops and Cash and Carry outlets, which means that caterers have a difficult task to make sure we have everything needed to support the camp. It is therefore really important that we have menu choices and special diets confirmed before the camp. Please check that on your booking you have specified if you wish to have vegetarian meals – and this does mean all week as all our food is ordered in advance and portion control is difficult if people keep changing their minds. We try to cater for special diets but if you do require special food please get in touch with the caterer through the Folk camp office before the camp and we will do the best we can. We try really hard to make sure everyone gets fed well during the week so please keep talking to the caterer if you feel that your needs are not being met. However, it is also important to keep in mind we are working out of a tent and have no Michelin stars yet!

Lunches are provided but we intend to make them simpler this year to keep work in the kitchen to a minimum for the Cooks. Please remember to bring a lunch box if you want to take out a picnic and ask at breakfast time so we can put picnic food out. We have to keep everything properly refrigerated so it is important we don't leave the food out all morning.

We have looked at the menus and tried to balance them a little differently so that the preparation work is simpler and safer and there also is better balance and variety of meals for meat eaters and vegetarians – so yes there will be vegetarian pie! We also have considered a move to eating less meat for environmental reasons and one evening meal during the week will be meat

free. We have listened to comments about this last year and hope this year the meat free meal will be more popular.

Recent changes to health and safety have meant we have had to consider improvements in the kitchen as well as elsewhere in camp and now require Cooks to sign to say they have attended a briefing session. This session is very important for caterers to explain all health and hygiene around the kitchen and also to help with timings for the day. Hopefully this will mean that the Cooks of the day will feel less stressed and able to have a break at some point during the day.

It is important to talk to the caterer / warden if you are unwell and unable to do your shift as Cook of the day – we can't have unwell people in the kitchen but there may be other jobs around the camp you are able to help with.

All the caterers wish everyone a happy and healthy camping season!

Liz Cooper

Get Your Bookings in!



Spaces still available for week 4 of our Knockerdown Summer camp!

**Join our stellar staffing team
Sally Mounter, Chris Jewell, Jess Holland,
Steve Porritt, Ollie James and Susan James**

Knockerdown is a fantastic location with swimming, sun and sights to see.

[Book your places now, before they go!](#)

<http://www.folkcamps.co.uk/camp/?camp=250>

A Staple Preview

Last week, Barry, Graham and I visited Staple in Kent, the site of this year's summer hall camps. Nestled amongst the picturesque villages and landscape to the west of Sandwich, we found Staple Village Hall adjacent to a lovely tree-lined field with a small play park area.

The very local pub, The Black Pig, is only a short walk away. With a large outside area and welcoming landlord, we hope to pay a visit to this child and dog friendly pub, perhaps to see a traditional game of Bat and Trap. The pub houses the village shop which opens daily to provide refreshments and local produce.

As duty required, we investigated pubs in neighbouring villages, and (eventually) managed to find a lovely micro-pub called The Wrong Turn. With short car journeys, it is possible to visit seaside towns including Dover, Broadstairs, Margate, and the beautiful Whitstable.

During our visit, a twenty-minute drive took us to Canterbury for lunch. I am delighted to report that a conversation with one of the Cathedral Close Constables confirmed that busking in the city centre would be most welcome. Whether you are booked on our week, or the following week, we feel that Staple will provide a fantastic location for an amazing Folk Camp.

Emma Daniel

Obituaries

Mick Green

Mick was a happy camper. Once he discovered Folk Camps in the early 70s that was his summer holiday sorted for the next almost 50 years. He, Dil and I arrived at our first camp in (I think) 1971 and Dil and I got out of the car and were immediately sick – it had been a long drive and Mick's ancient automobile had some sort of petrol-related fault. But it got better after that. The Folk Camp blend of sociability, self-reliance, community, live music and dance, being outdoors and being very regularly fed was a perfect mix for Mick.



Fifty – well, 48 – years is a very long time and the fact that the fundamentals stayed unchanged all that time really suited him, and he worked hard to keep it that way, campaigning on Council to keep 'proper' marquees.

As everyone who knew him knows, if Mick considered a thing worth doing, he would do it absolutely whole-heartedly, whether that was singing a song, stripping the willow, peeling a spud or having a loud political disagreement with someone. The countryside settings – some of which he found as official site-finder (though this seemed to take extraordinarily large amounts of time and road miles), were also wonderful for Mick, since he could go off walking and bird-watching. If you've ever heard Mick talk about his childhood, he was clearly the most wholesome child ever, dividing his time between the library, woods and fields, train-spotting and fishing, all with neatly combed hair.

Everyone will have their own Folk Camp memories of Mick, but I have to admit my favourite is when he fell and dislocated his shoulder. A friend who was out of the marquee at that point asked what all the commotion was, and was told by a small girl, 'oh, an old man's fallen over'. He was probably my age.

I'm so glad Mick found Folk Camps, for all the happiness they've given him, me and my family, Frances and Esme, and for the life-long friendships renewed each year. I know a marquee this summer will see a special send-off

for Mick, and the whole family wants to pass on its thanks for all the lovely messages on the Cold Bogmarsh Facebook group.

There was a celebratory memorial event in the village hall in Bacton, Herefordshire, on Sunday 28th April. In the Folk Camps circle tradition, there were Mick inspired songs, poems, and anecdotes, with dancing, plentiful tea, and cakes.

Harriet (Green) Berenger

Geoff Trewinnard

My earliest memories of folk camps were at Broughton in North Devon – can't remember the year, just the rain, my parents, and Bill Rutter.

After that Folk Camps became regular yearly holiday; Geoff took yearly responsibility for the toilet blocks at camp; was an enthusiastic dancer and singer; joined Manchester Morris Men and encouraged my brothers and I to play folk instruments and sing, something that has stayed with us

for the rest of our lives. I think he was the first chairman when Folk Camps became a separate entity and my brother and I went on to run the music for the odd week.

Folk dance and song were a large part of his life. Geoff was the squire of Greensleeves Morris Men and both Geoff and Eleanor danced with Phoenix in London and regularly in Shropshire after retiring to Church Stretton in 1986.



Eleanor died 12 years ago and he continued involvement with Morris when we could get him there – his last appearance was at the Chipperfield Ring Meeting when he was 91. He died after short illness aged 93.

Philip Trewinnard

Jean Carter

It is with some sadness that I have to report the loss of my wife Jean on 31st March (aged 72). We had a 'celebration of Jean's life' in Knaresborough on the 15th April.

Amongst the throng of about 250 people who attended were many old friends from Folk Camp circles, some of whom had travelled hundreds of miles to be there (including Roger & Linda Conway, Bob & Judy Pierce, Dave & Ann Bennett, Keith & Barbara Gregson & Brian & Barbara Pollard etc)



Our first Folk Camp was at Nutwell Court in Devon in the early eighties (probably 1982) led by Glyn Tomkins. We had two young children at the time (Daniel 4 & Tanya 6) and we all loved it. Soon after we attended Long Compton and we were hooked. I think we have been to a Camp of one sort or another every year since. Perhaps Jean's favourites were the early French Camps at St. Denis.

Jean learned many skills during these holidays. Perhaps the most influential was that she rediscovered her talent for the piano keyboard which had lain dormant since her childhood. From this she played in several bands at home as well as at camp. Realising that the keyboard was not the most portable instrument she turned to the English concertina. The music and dancing at camps led us to start our own dance club in Harrogate (Heatherdene FDC) which is now in its 32nd year.

Jean enjoyed the craft skills which flourish at our camps. She took up Bobbin lace making as well as tapestry and corn dolly making.

Over the Winter months Jean and I missed the 'Folk Camp Cameraderie' so at the Millenium we organised a Folk Camp Style New Year Party. This was very successful and we have continued up to this year. Perhaps we shall continue with the New Year Parties in Jean's memory.

I received many messages of support and one stated that 'a light has gone out'.

Upon reflection I think that the light has not gone out. It may not be quite so bright but there is still enough light to show the way.

Bob Carter