



# News and Views

of

## East Sussex DA

### Chairman's Chatter

Wow! Where did the summer go, it doesn't seem like five months since I was writing the last newsletter, albeit we have packed a lot into that time with our three plus weeks trip to Germany and first ever visit to the FICC. This was followed very quickly by a trip up north for the NFOL 2018 organised by the North West Region.

The sun eventually came out and stayed but where did all the campers go? Our meets recorded numbers below the norm. The July meet was decimated as many of our members went along to support the London DA at their EGM however despite the best efforts of many tragically the DA closed after some 97 years in existence.

With just our Christmas party meet still to be held at Seaford Head School from 17:00 hours on 30 November to 02 December 2018 (more details later) our camping season is virtually complete. However, Roger has again been working hard to ensure that we have a good selection of sites to meet up at in 2019. He has been a little cautious given the reduced numbers camping this year and the difficulty in finding stewards for some meets, full details are appended at the end of this newsletter.

Our thanks go to Jen Woolgar, Sue Bishop and Jane Tanner for getting our Facebook page up and running. "**East Sussex District Association Group**" If you use Facebook you should apply to be on this group, you will need to confirm your current membership number.

Whilst it may still be six months away it is not too early to start to think about the AGM. Currently we are running with a minimum number of committee members and two will be stepping down at the AGM, thus we will need to elect a minimum of two ideally four replacements. All posts are subject to election however the Chairman, Secretary & PRO roles will need to be filled. Meetings last up to two hours and there are only normally four per year thus it is not a huge commitment whilst it ensures that our DA remains viable with some great camping meets.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Jane Tanner on achieving a zero-query audit of our accounts by HQ. I am also delighted that she has agreed to again be our treasurer for the coming year.

**ESDA Christmas Party**  
**30 November to 02 December 2018**  
**Seaford Head School**

The gates will open at 17:00 hours on the Friday, **(Please do not arrive any earlier as the school is in use)**. **Please note the road closures below and plan accordingly.**

Friday night will be the usual social in the hall with some background music.

Saturday morning/afternoon will be hall decorating please help so that everybody gets some free time.

Saturday is also the Seaford Christmas Magic day (a short walk down the road) with lots of commercial and charity stalls plus a selection of entertainment. As a result the following roads will be closed albeit there will be no effect on our egress. However, depending on your route you may need to plan your access more carefully: -

- Broad Street All areas CLOSED from 5pm Friday 30th November 2018
- Place Lane All areas CLOSED from 5pm Friday 30th November 2018
- Sutton Road All areas CLOSED from 5pm Friday 30th November 2018
- Croft Lane No ACCESS from 5pm Friday 30th November 2018
- High Street All areas CLOSED from 5pm Friday 30th November 2018
- Saxon Lane All areas CLOSED from 5pm Friday 30th November 2018
- Church Street All areas CLOSED from Friday 30th November 2018

This just adds an extra touch of magic to our party weekend.

Saturday evening will commence with an American Supper, Jeannie May is coordinating the food so please contact her regarding your donations. There will be some beer and wine provided by the DA.

Following the American supper, you can dance the night away to Richard Tickle's Disco.

There will be the usual **raffle and donations will be gratefully received**, the DA will also be providing a prize as usual.

Non-campers are very welcome to attend the evening at a cost of £3.00 per person

As always this is a great opportunity to exchange Christmas cards with your DA friends and save on the postage – we will not be posting on cards to members who are not at the party. However, they may get taken by a mutual friend - who says Harry is a scrooge?

This is the last chance for camping with the DA in 2018 and we look forward to seeing a good many of our DA members in attendance and having a great time.

## The Friendly Club

While stewarding the Wylands Holiday Site this year Colin was taken off to hospital in the middle of August.

I really don't know how to thank all the people who offered help. I cannot express how I felt. Our club really is the Friendly club.

I want to thank my knights in shining armour for their help and support during Colin being in hospital. Reg and Joan were there with help (including doing the loo run) and lots of cups of tea.

Richard and Dawn for their support. They cheered me up when times were looking bad.

Both of my knights took down the awning put it in the right bags and before I knew what was happening it was all packed in my car.

The Friendly Club really is alive.

Joan

**Editor's note** We are delighted to report that Colin is very much better although it will be some months before he is back to his usual self. Also, the committee would like to thank everybody onsite who helped to look after Joan especially as all of us were also away at the time.

## Our Scottish Adventure

We left Polegate on 1<sup>st</sup> September and made our way North to Lincoln where we stayed a couple of nights with my brother and sister-in-law before travelling up to Northumbria to stay at a THS on the beach at Seahouses. We spent a couple of days sightseeing and walking around there, including a trip to Lindisfarne where you have to wait for the tide to go out before crossing the causeway. The island is cut off from the mainland the whole time the tide is in.

We then travelled into Scotland to stay near Falkirk to go and see the Falkirk Wheel and the Kelpies. We stayed at Carhill CL, which was brilliant, clean and well maintained, with use of showers and toilets and a washing machine for £18 a night. We thought that was expensive until we went further north!!!

From there we went across to Aberdeen on the East coast, spent a day in Aberdeen and walking around locally before heading off to Inverness through the Cairngorm National Park. Magnificent if a bit scary in places.

Loved Inverness. And Loch Ness is HUGE, 20 miles long. Harriet had a run along the little beach at the northern end finding rocks, but was quite poorly overnight with a hacking cough, and seemed to have a sore throat for a couple of days afterward. We drove all round the Loch and had lunch at Fort Augustus where the heavens opened.

We watched The Loch on the tv when we got home and got quite excited at seeing all the places we had walked or sat.

We then travelled north again, to Thurso where again we stayed on a CL. From there we checked out Dunnetts Point, the furthestmost point in GB, spent a couple of hours at John O'Groats and had a tour of the Castle of Mey. Apparently, we just missed Megan and Harry, which was good because we wouldn't have been allowed in if they had been there.

We then started our return journey by travelling over to the west coast to stay at a tiny village in the mountains called Elphin – not even a shop – and probably the worst CL on our journey and £18.50 a night. Mick says if that had been his first experience of emptying the loo he probably wouldn't have carried on camping. He won't even say why, it was so bad. We had a trip into Ullapool which was a typical rainy seaside sort of place, but the pub was great with a roaring log fire and dogs allowed in the restaurant.

The weather was really deteriorating by then and a hurricane was forecast for the Wednesday, so we left a day early to travel to Shiel Bridge and managed to be settled before the hurricane hit. We arrived about 5 (after sitting at road works for 4 hours just up the road) and again were unable to put the awning up. We were getting quite used to not having it by now and wondering why we had brought it. It was another CL but there seemed to be room for ten vans, surrounded by mountains with a river running down the side to the loch. So, when the hurricane hit we were protected by the mountains and most of it seemed to go right over the top. But I can honestly say I have never seen so much water in one place. It was dropping out of the sky, pouring down the sides of the mountains, and a loch or river around every corner. The river almost burst its banks, it must have been a metre deep and was absolutely awesome. Harriet wouldn't go near the edge at all whereas the night before she had been doing her usual looking for rocks in the water. Two days later it had all gone, and it was back to fast water running over high rocks, amazing.

We stayed there for 5 nights during which time we drove over to the Isle of Skye, visited Glenelg where you can catch a ferry to Skye, and we generally wandered about.

After leaving there we travelled south again, via Fort William, past Ben Nevis, and through Glen Coe. Mick's mum's ashes were scattered above the waterfall in the Gorge, so we stopped there and climbed up the side of the waterfall to pay our respects before continuing our journey south.

We circled round Glasgow and were a bit intimidated by the amount of traffic on the roads!! Thank goodness for SatNav. We made our way to a THS being run by BCC behind a garden centre in Lanark where we spent a very nice couple of days. Their marquee had been blown away, but the site owner had given them a little café to use in the evenings. We were invited over for a cup of tea and were very relieved to see we weren't the only ones to take a bottle. And we won 4 raffle prizes at the coffee morning. It was lovely and reminded us why we love our DA camping so much.

Our next leg took us to Haworth on a commercial site right on the top of a hill. We had to take the awning down before going to bed as the wind was up to over 40 mph and was rocking the van. During the night Mick moved the van twice as the wind changed direction. We got tucked up behind a thick high hedge and settled down to sleep about 5 am. Lovely site but I don't think we would stay there again. Enjoyed Haworth and did 'The Railway Children' train ride and walked quite a lot of the circuit.

Our last leg was down to Oxford where we stayed at another CL in the village of Marsh Baldon, which was lovely and we're hoping to go back again.

Would we do it again? Absolutely, but not yet. What would we do differently? Wouldn't pre-book sites, it's not expected and not necessary, so you can be flexible, and we wouldn't take the awning. Overall impression of Scotland – it's so clean.

We did 1811.2 miles in the motorhome and over 700 in the little car and the birds loved it. They have a window to look out and chatted and whistled all the time we were travelling. Harriet loves travelling on my lap unless it was raining as she is now scared of windscreen wipers!!!! Her leg now seems fully repaired, not limping for a couple of weeks so the pram has been put away.

*luv  
Jeannie*

**Editor's note** Shame about the rain after so many hot weeks however the Scots do transform it into a rather enjoyable brown liquid or if you prefer a colourless liquid – yes, they have a reputation for distilling Gin as well as whisky.

## **FICC Paaren Im Glien Germany 2018**

Hot, Hot, Hot! The lowest temperature was 30 degrees and the hottest 37 degrees, our poor fridge just could not cope. BBQ's of all varieties were banned due to the tinder dry conditions.

Having driven through the top of France, stopping off for a night in Belgium and then touching the Netherlands and into Germany where we stopped again and ran into a tour party on their way to the event.

Upon arrival it was rather surreal, we were very close to Berlin however all the voices on our field were English or Irish and not only that we were greeted by friends from our own Region.

It quickly became evident that the overall numbers were less than half of those anticipated. Thus several of the entertainments had to be cancelled. On site there was no shop which had been promised nor in the adjacent village, however we did find a supermarket some six miles away.

The main admin and entertainment area were quite a distance from our field and thus not conducive to popping in and out. Information was hard to come by and even the field steward had difficulty in getting any information.

Due to the heat the Pennon parade was shortened, however it was wonderful to see other nations in their national costumes some 26 nations took part overall. The ESDA pennon was very proudly displayed throughout the event.

Only when it came to the street parties did it start to feel like it really was an international meet. For some reason we were the first to have a street party followed by the Germans. At 12:00 hours the barrier was opened and a big throng of people from different nations descended our street. Our Cumberland sausage disappeared very quickly with many positive comments. Again, many of the people especially the Taiwanese and Japanese wore their traditional dress and looked stupendous. We had a wonderful time talking to so many people from other countries whose English was superb. All too soon our offerings were gone and so were the visitors, just time to clean up and get off to the German street. By the time we got back to our caravan we could not eat another morsel.

We visited other street parties, Turkey, Swiss and French although we missed several others as we wanted to visit Berlin plus it was quite exhausting moving from street party to street party in the heat and despite my size you can only eat so much.

The evening entertainment was varied and so was the quality however it was always fun to mix and meet with others and enjoy a refreshing cold lager (or two).

Whilst we were there we made two trips into Berlin, what a wonderful place and how well the old and the new gel together. Also, there is still a dramatic difference between the old East & West from a building's perspective. Whilst checkpoint Charlie is now a revamped place specifically for the tourist there are still parts of the old wall which are protected and memorials to the holocaust including large empty rooms in the library in memory of all the Jewish books which were burned.

On our return from one visit to Berlin we were immediately invited to join Howard's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday party so we missed the evening entertainment that night but had a wonderful evening in the true traditions of DA camping with a lot of us chatting happily and partaking of some food and cooling liquids.

We also missed the caravan manoeuvring competition which we understand was fascinating with some great skills on show.

Whilst regular attenders said it was not up to the usual standard potentially due to the lack of numbers, we had a most enjoyable time and we are looking forward to our next attendance at an FICC.

From there we moved down to Dresden, another fascinating city, regrettably the Elbe was short of water therefore the river cruises could not take place.

From Dresden we took day trips to Poland, The Czech Republic and Meissen (that was an expensive visit with two nice pieces of Meissen pottery coming home with us).

Wherever we went we were treated exceptionally well English was widely spoken (thankfully) although they did appreciate our poor attempts to speak their language. We also enjoyed many local delicacies.

All too soon it was time for the long trek home although our last day in Dresden the weather changed dramatically with solid rain and a temperature of a mere 24 degrees which felt bitterly cold after all the heat.

If you have never visited Germany, we can certainly say it is well worth a visit.

## **NFOL Arley Hall Cheshire 2018**

Not a great start to the day as we couldn't get the hitch lock off the caravan, fortunately there was a mobile service man on site who knew how to release the sticking key lock and had it off in about 5 minutes.

Our travel north was blighted by heavy rain compounded by a big traffic jam on the M40 due to an earlier accident and then the M6 roadworks creating a "Smart Motorway" delayed us even further the result being that a 4.5-hour journey took us 7.75 hours. However, on arrival we were greeted by Region friends and a very welcome cup of tea.

Whilst there were only seven units from the SER others were on the working party. There had been a late surge of bookings given the superb weather leading up to the event and consequently there were more than 1000 units on site with lots of young people and pets.

Our position on site could not have been better as we were right on top of everything. Sadly, the weather was typically northern weather and it had an affect on the daytime displays and children's entertainments especially the inflatables which often had to be shut down due to the wind and or rain. However, the evening entertainment was excellent, and the beer tent was an extremely popular meeting place plus there was entertainment on in the bar as well.

We were very fortunate on the Saturday that the weather brightened, and the Mardi Gras took place in the dry, as always there had been a lot of work put into the costumes and consequently the judges took rather a long time to decide on the eventual winners, certainly not an easy task and I am glad that I didn't have to choose. Milo Moore (SER) again won the junior prize (third year in a row).

Saturday evening and the street lighting was the major event with again some fabulous efforts having been put in. As always, the viewing was crowded, and the atmosphere was fun filled and upbeat.

The ESDA Pennon was proudly displayed in the parade of pennons and the closing ceremony.

Despite the weather it was a great meet and most enjoyable albeit the trade area was again very poor whilst the fast food stalls were excellent.

All too soon we were parking up on the M6 again 2.75 hours Knutsford to Nantwich all of 15 miles. We headed home via the club's site at Kingsbury Water Park near Birmingham where we stopped off to visit friends in the area.

## **Salient issues from the SER Council meetings of 02 July and 01 October 2018**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of July meeting was largely made up of reports which had no effect on the DA's the main points of interest were: -

National Council elections this year would exclude photographs, dates of joining and ages of the candidates. The SER council stated that the photographs should be included as people may recognize faces if they don't recognize names, to be raised by Allen Russell at the next National Council meeting. N.B. this has been raised and will be considered following this year's elections.

Dinner dance booking forms are available on the region website.

Demise of Arthur Brown, Past President of Surrey DA and Former Surrey Chief Fire Officer was noted.

A certificate of Honour has been agreed by HQ to a Region Couple and will be presented at the Dinner & Dance.

A question was raised at National Council regarding Units left empty at THS – it was confirmed that this is in emergency only & at the discretion of site steward.

It was noted that a group called "Freedom of Camping" is currently encroaching into our CS's and have tried to attend CCC meets.

## **Salient issues from the ESDA Committee meeting 03 October 2018**

### **Treasurer's Report in brief.**

We had such a wet start to the season but then it turned really hot. However, we haven't had vast numbers out camping.

It has come around again. I have had to send the paperwork off for the Year Ended 31.12.17 for an audit. I am delighted to say that they didn't find anything they wanted to change.

The Birthday, FOL and Sea Fishing meets all ran at a loss as will the Christmas party. Additionally, two meets being lost due to the weather and the Sharnfold THS being lost due to Wealdon District Council has not helped financially.

We are forecasting a loss on the year overall as a result.

Jane was congratulated on the exemplary audit.

### **PRO Report in brief.**

Marketing has again had some success and is an ongoing item with more volunteers needed.

## **Site Secretary's Report and setting the 2019 fees.**

I have taken a cautious approach to site bookings for 2019, there are difficulties getting Steward Commitment and support numbers for w/e meets has been weak.

The site list is appended below

All agreed that Roger had taken a very sensible approach to the 2019 sites bookings.

It was noted that Sharnfold Farm was currently up for sale as a going concern and thus we have to wait and see how it may affect our camping weekends there.

The site fees for 2019 were discussed and agreed at £9.00 pun for quiet meets, £10.00 pun for those with additional costs. Visitors are welcome to entertainment evenings at a cost of £3.00 pp

## **Equipment Officer's Report.**

The goods in the trailer will be sorted out during the winter period.

## **Election of Treasurer & Youth Leaders**

Jane confirmed that she was prepared to stand again as the treasurer and was duly elected.

No youth Officers were proposed.

## **Christmas Party Meet**

See Separate item at the beginning of the newsletter.

### **Happy Birthday**

We are pleased to send the following members our very best birthday wishes

On the 10th of October Gwen Harber & Sandy Hosken – a little belated sorry ladies

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of October Brenda Tarrant

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of October Yvonne Leach

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of November Harry Leach

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of November Colin Pannell

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of November Pearl Goodwin

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of November Pat Baldwin

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of January Phil Grant

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of January Beryl Hovell

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of February Sue Bishop

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February Debbie Evans

## ESDA weekend meets 2019

2019 sites list				
	<u>DATE</u>	<u>SITE</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>P/CODE</u>
JAN	Sat. 19th	S E Region Cumberland Hotel	Dinner Dance Eastbourne	BN21 3YT
APRIL	13th	St. Lukes Stone Cross	<b>D.A. AGM 2pm.</b>	BN24 5SL
	18/4 - 22/4	Roy Hill Wood	Easter w/e	TN22 5HU
MAY	3/5 - 6/5	The Laughing Fish	May Day w/e	TN22 5XB
	16/5 - 19/5	Hole Park Rolvenden	SER AGM (Sun)	TN17 4JB
5 days	<b>24/5 - 29/5</b>	SHARNFOLD FARM	Spring Bank Hol. w/e	BN24 5BU
JUNE	14/6 - 16/6	White House Farm	BIRTHDAY meet	TN22 2EA
	21/6 - 23/6	Sussex Farm	week-end meet	RH13 8JR
JULY	19/7 - 21/7	Roy Hill Wood	weekend meet	TN22 5HU
AUGUST				
THS	26/7 - 26/8	Wylands Lakes	THS	TN33 0SU
SEPT.	6/9 - 8/9	White House Farm	Uckfield Carnival w/e	TN22 2EA
	<b>21/9 - 23/9</b>	NFOL Turnpike Shwgd	Motcombe N Devon	PL20 6ST
	27/9 - 29/9	Sussex Farm	D.A. FOL	RH13 8JR
OCT	<b>11/10-13/10</b>	Seaford Head School	Sea Fishing	BN25 1AL
DEC.	6/12 - 8/12	Seaford Head School	Christmas party	BN25 1AL

## ESDA Committee for the 2018-19 Season

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Youth Leaders	Vacant		
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**The next newsletter is due out February 2019 with details of the Easter & Mayday meets plus the AGM so please get some articles in to me for inclusion.**