



SE NEWS



As we near the end of the year with just our Xmas Parties and an odd new year meet to come, we wish all our SER members and other club members around the country a very Happy, Healthy and Successful 2019 with many fabulous camping nights together with both old and new friends.

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 Pannell
ESDA

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 1st 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 Carshill 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 furthest 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 May
ESDA

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 we then passed through a corner of the Netherlands and into Germany where we made another stop and ran into one of the guided a tour parties 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 & Surrey DA pennons were 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. 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 party. 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 70th 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 the FICC in France in 2019.

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 on 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 or an FICC, we can certainly say they are 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 in the block booking area others were on the working party or in the electric hook up bays. 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 effect 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.

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 2nd 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.

Special Events coming in 2019

ANNUAL DINNER & DANCE

SATURDAY 19th January 2019

CUMBERLAND HOTEL

Grand Parade, Eastbourne

| | | Price per Person |
|--|---|------------------|
| DEPOSIT | DINNER Dance only | £20.00 |
| Payment in full | DINNER Dance only | £39.00 |
| DEPOSIT | ROOM & Dinner Dance Saturday | £30.00 |
| Payment in full | ROOM & Dinner Dance Saturday | £66.00 |
| DEPOSIT | ROOM FRI/SAT.& Dinner Dance | £50.00 |
| Payment in full | ROOM FRI/SAT & Dinner Dance | £107.00 |
| Also available - Sunday Evening Dinner, 3 courses, Bed & Breakfast Monday check out 12noon. | | £38.00 |

This is always a fabulous weekend and booking forms are available from your DA/Section now or on the SER website so come on get your bookings in now.

SER 71st Anniversary Meet 2019
West Cross Park, Hole Park, Rolvenden, Kent TN17 4PG
16th to 19th May 2018

By popular demand we return to Hole Park for the Region's Anniversary Meet THS and AGM. It's easy to reach, being placed very near the centre of the South Eastern Region.

This is the Region's 71st Birthday Meet and we are planning to make it every bit as good as the 70th Anniversary. The sub-committee is arranging the event to include high quality professional entertainment and a variety of home-grown entertainment is being planned for Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The Anniversary Meet takes place over the first weekend of an 18 day By popular demand we return to Hole Park for the Region's Anniversary long **Temporary Holiday Meet**. Details with booking forms will also be published with the S.E. Region's 2019 Sites Fixture Booklet.

A Grand Raffle (tickets for sale throughout the Anniversary Meet weekend) will be drawn Sunday afternoon, 19th May and will include 'top of the range' camping or camping related items, many donated by Camping & Caravanning dealerships in the South Eastern Region...

The SE Region will be providing **complementary Saturday afternoon Strawberry Cream Teas** together with the now traditional welcome refreshments.... There are other 'special' items also being planned....

CHARITY ARTS & CRAFTS, PRODUCE TABLE TOP SALE

The Chairman's Nominated Charity for 2019 is again **Alzheimer's Research UK**. This Charity is constantly looking for new treatments and ultimately a cure for these mind affecting diseases. Your contributions could make the difference.

Once again SER Chairman Jenny Croney will be organising a Bottle Raffle and a Table Top Sale. Homemade Produce, including arts, crafts, cakes, preserves and potted plants, etc., will be for sale. We're hoping you will again support this fund-raising event by bringing your own table with items for sale and a donation to the charity from your takings.

The theme for the weekend, the Children's Fancy Dress competition and Mardi Gras is: -

"ALICE IN WONDERLAND"

The Anniversary Meet will include all your favourite events, including family sports, Boule, Horseshoes, Molki and Bat & Trap. We are re-introducing the inter-DA/Section sports competitions - you will have to form teams to take part and a chance to win the Challenge Trophy for your DA or Section.

We are looking for Saturday entertainment for the children potentially one in the morning and one in the afternoon **we would like to get at least two children's face painters which could also enhance their fancy dress.**

Ideas to raise more funds for the chairman's charity are also needed - all ideas are welcome.

It is still early days however the rough draft of the event is currently: -

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| Thursday Welcome tea and biscuits (12:00 to 17:00) Quiz night - 20:00 hours | Friday Welcome tea and biscuits (10:00 to 17:00) Games for fun only during the day Some sort of 50/50 race night TBA |
| Saturday Inter DA/Section competitions throughout the day (maximum time per game when the score at the time will determine the winner) Morning - Table top sale and Arts & Crafts - children's entertainer Afternoon - live music and Strawberry cream tea (possibly with more complimentary tea/coffee) - children's entertainer Evening - live band | Sunday Church Service AGM & Open Forum Committee meeting Prize giving and closing ceremony |

72nd Anniversary Meet 2020 - PENNON DESIGN COMPETITION

What would you like to see as the theme for the event? Think of a theme and design a suitable pennon to convey the theme and who knows? You might be the winner - the winner of the best the theme/pennon competition receives a free pennon of their design.

A THS will follow on immediately after the meet so you can stay on site and relax.

National Feast Of Lanterns 2019

**Turnpike Showground, Motcombe, Shaftesbury,
Dorset, SP7 9PL
19 to 23 September 2019**

The theme is **Down on the Farm** and I know that the South Western Region is working hard to put on another super event plus they have some wonderful THS's around the area so that you can explore the lovely county of Dorset.

More details to follow when I have them.

The next newsletter is due out in early February 2018 following the next Council meeting. Your articles are desperately needed especially adverts for your special events. please get your information in to me for inclusion ASAP.