

N. E. CHESHIRE D.A.

TWENTY FIFTH ANNIVERSARY



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issued at:

A HISTORY OF
THE D.A.

SWETTENHAM

1989

PREFACE

To put into booklet form the history of a D.A. within the Camping Club, you must first enlighten the reader why the formation of a D.A. must be introduced. It is to serve an area which becomes increasingly difficult to handle.

The introduction of a new D.A. will offer to the member more sites without the stress of overcrowding, this is made possible by the formation of a committee to deal with the smooth running of a section formed from members of the parent D.A. For the comparatively new member of the Camping Club, the history of his particular D.A. is only part of the information he requires to build up a full picture of the events which lead to the formation of his particular D.A.

To do this we must go back to pre 1939 days when the North West Region as we now know it consisted of one D.A. only i.e. L & C and N. Wales D.A. In these early days Club membership was small and the problems of overcrowding at D.A. meets was something that was never envisaged.

In these early days to become a member of the Club, you had to be proposed and seconded by other members as to your suitability before being accepted. With the increasing popularity of camping these restrictions were greatly relaxed and membership increased rapidly, so much so that L & C and N. Wales D.A. was unable to cope and two more D.A.'s had to be formed. These were Liverpool D.A. and North Lancs D.A. making three D.A.'s in the North west of England. Regional status was granted in 1946, and the first Regional Chairman was Mrs. A. Mitchell.

These pressures of increasing membership are continuous and with attendance figures at D.A. meets becoming more of a problem we arrive at a situation when the formation of a new section becomes a necessity.

Joe Piggott

former Chairman N.W. Region

former Chairman N.E. Cheshire D.A.

THE FORMATION OF A NEW SECTION

Early in January 1962 an advertisement was placed in the Manchester Evening News, stating that a meeting was to be held on the 26th January, at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Frank Matthews, 87, Solway Road, Cross Acres, Manchester, and inviting anyone interested in forming a new section of the Camping Club of Gt. Britain and Ireland to attend.

Twenty five members of Lancs. and Cheshire D.A. attended this meeting, and it was agreed that a Section should be formed. The reason given was that Lancs. and Cheshire was getting so big, that late comers to camping meets just could'nt find a decent spot to pitch and were invariably forced into the middle of the field.

The first business was to elect a committee, and that committee was Mr. & Mrs. F. Matthews, Mr. & Mrs. N. Pickles, Mr. & Mrs. K. Stennett, Mr. & Mrs. F. Venner, Mr. J. Piggott, and Mr. F. Inman.

A lot of discussion took place as to what title be given to the new section, and eventually all agreed that it be called North East Cheshire Section. The only other business at this meeting was to compile a small list of Standing Orders. No list of members attending was kept, but Lancs and Cheshire D.A. was represented at the meeting by their Chairman Mr. Albert Payne and Secretary Mr. Bill Wall. The new Section was formed with the D.A.'s blessing and remained under their wing until becoming a separate D.A.

The first committee meeting was held on the 20th February 1962, again at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Matthews. Frank Venner was elected Chairman and Frank Matthews, Secretary; a list of camp sites was drawn up, and it was agreed that an application be made to the D.A. for a £5 grant to be used as working capital. It was also agreed that a levy of 3d per unit be charged at camping meets.

The next committee meeting was held at the first camping meet of the Section, this was at Chelford on the 25th March, 1962. It was a wintery weekend but nineteen units braved the elements. The meeting on Sunday morning was held in the Barn as it was snowing heavily. Thirty five members attended, muffled up and sitting on bales of hay. The secretary read the minutes of all that had transpired to date, and the Standing Orders to put everyone in the picture. The meeting was told that Lancs and Cheshire D.A. had granted us £5 and two laty tents.

At the committee meeting held on 13th September 1962, Mr. & Mrs. A. Brown were co-opted on to the committee and it was agreed that all Lancs & Cheshire D.A. social activities be supported, but it was felt that an out of season Section re-union be held. The New Inn Langley was suggested for this event.

The first A.G.M. was held in the Chelford Village Hall on the 30th September, 1962 with fifty members present. Connie Pickles was given permission to make arrangements for the section's first annual Dinner to be held on Saturday 8th December at the New Inn Langley, this was to be a Christmas Dinner with all the trimmings. The committee was congratulated for the work they had done in forming the new Section, and were voted back en-bloc. A list of winter walks was drawn up, and the statement of accounts was read, very different from our present accounts. It was as follows:-

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	L	S	D	<u>ASSETS</u>	L	S	D
Secs. expenses, post and Minute Book		14	8	D.A. grant	5	0	0
Site Secs Expenses		13	0	Income from voluntary			
Cash in hand	6	2	1	Section fund.	2	9	9
	<u>£7</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>		<u>£7</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>

So ended the Sections first year of camping.

The Dinner was held, and it was a huge success, so much so that another was asked for. This was arranged for Sunday 3rd March 1963, to be preceded by a walk. This walk took place in deep snow, and did they enjoy that dinner!

1963 was a normal camping year with no special highlights and as no fixture list has survived, no more information is available.

At the committee meeting held on the 30th September 1963, the secretary reported that a request for a D.A. status had been made to the parent D.A. After some discussion regarding boundaries, it was submitted that it be all Cheshire east of a line drawn from Kids Grove to Bowden, including Manchester 22 and 23.

At the next committee meeting a letter from Lancs & Cheshire D.A. was read. This stated that they thought the easiest solution was that the proposed new D.A. take over the whole of Cheshire. This was objected to strongly by Joe Figgott, who stated that if Cheshire were taken from Lancs & Cheshire, only Manchester and a small portion of Lancashire would remain, and as Lancs & Cheshire were the oldest D.A. in the country, he did not want to take all Cheshire from them, as this would mean a change of name for them.

At the committee meeting held on the 4th December 1963 a new edition map of Cheshire was displayed, showing the M6 motorway, and a proposal from Lancs & Cheshire D.A. was read. This stated that as Cheshire was now divided by the motorway, this should form our boundary line, and that our area be all Cheshire east of the M6. This was agreed.

During the two year life of the Section, the big meets of the parent D.A. were supported, as were their Socials. Film shows were organised by Dudley Boardman, and winter walks were undertaken by the Section. The committee remained stable, with the addition of Mr. & Mrs. D. Boardman and Mr. & Mrs. S. Lovatt at the 1963 A.G.M.

NORTH EAST CHESHIRE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

A snap committee meeting was held at the home of Mr. & Mrs. N. Pickles on the 18th March, as the secretary had received a letter from the National Council approving our application for D.A. status.

An inaugural meeting was held at the Anson Hall, Longsight, on Wednesday 13th May 1964. Forty two members attended, including Mr. Rigg Chairman N.W. Region, Mr. Payne Chairman L & C D.A., Mr. Wall Secretary L & C D.A., and Mr. Potty National Councillor. As it was mid-season the committee were re-elected en-bloc. A decision was made to discontinue the levy, and introduce a Social Box for voluntary contributions. Members were asked to submit designs for the D.A. pennon. Harold Brown was elected treasurer.

The first D.A. meet was held at Stainforth Hall near Settle. Nearly forty units attended in fine weather. On Sunday picnickers came on the site, parked between the tents and used the latties. Apparently it was the farmer's custom to allow picnickers on this field and charge them a parking fee.

This was Lancs & Cheshire's Golden Jubilee year. It was celebrated at their Mid-summer Meet. Our D.A. joined them on this occasion to wish them "Good Luck" for the next fifty years.

The first D.A. Christmas Party was held at the Victory Hall Moberly. Two hundred and twenty four persons were seated for tea which was prepared and served by the committee. The hall had been decorated by the men and the youth of the D.A.

During this first season it was noted that a lot of young campers were with us, so it was decided to form a Youth Section. Mr. & Mrs. R. Kewley were duly appointed Youth Leaders.

There was a good response for pennon designs. Two were finally chosen for submission to the Regional Council, and their choice, with an alteration to the style of lettering is the one we have now. The design was submitted by Mr. Kinder.

The 1965 camping season was a memorable one. At an early meet Beeston, in the shadow of the castle, the camp was disturbed at midnight by much clattering and banging. A large lorry was parked just outside the field, and men were unloading things on to the roadway. This was the time of the Great Train robbery, so imaginations were running wild. It was not until some more lorries arrived that it was realised that the Army were on manoeuvres, and the noise that had disturbed the camp was the arrival of the cook-house.

Then there was the meet at Hulme End when bright lights were observed descending from the sky on a very dark night. No not an invasion from Mars, only the Army once again with flares and very lights at the Army range near Royal Cottage.

Easter 1965 was a joint meet with Birmingham D.A. at Alstonfield. This was a sloping field with no shelter. A gale was blowing full blast across the valley, bringing rain and sleet with it. Every arrival was met with all hands to get tents erected. Many returned home defeated by the elements. The farmer had brought his cattle into the Shippon for protection, this made the water tap just one yard from the back end of a cow. The final straw came when the steward, dipping his measure into the milk churn, came out with a bar of soap. The weather was so bad that by Sunday everyone had packed up and made for home a day early.

This was the year that the National F.O.L. was held at Blackpool. The D.A. had a working party out marking pitches, etc. and the Youth Leader Roy Kewley with the help of some members, rigged up the field telephone, and lines all over the camp. The D.A. Pennon was erected for the first time at this meet, and Mr. Rigg the N.W. Region Chairman was given this honour at a little ceremony held to mark the occasion. Fifty two members were present at the 1965 A.G.M. held at the Victory Hall Mobberly. The chairman Frank Venner did not seek re-election. Harold Brown was elected in his place, and Norman Pickles became treasurer, with Frank Matthews secretary.

Frank was struck down with a serious illness in January 1966, and Harold Brown resigned the chair, this left the D.A. in an un-enviable position. Thanks to some quick thinking and a lot of running about by Norman and Connie Pickles, Joe Piggott agreed to take over as Chairman and Maurice Green undertook the secretarial duties.

Frank Matthews returned to the committee in the July of this year, but after a comparatively short time he was struck down again, and soon the D.A. was to hear of his untimely death.

No words can express the loss this was to the D.A. for Frank was wholly dedicated to camping, and the Club. In all his work for the D.A. he had the full support and encouragement of Mrs. Matthews, who we have great pleasure in seeing from time to time at our social evenings.

The D.A. was under the chairmanship of Joe Piggott from 1966 until 1968. This was a period of slow growth, the average attendance at D.A. meets being about twenty units. Many questions were asked, and suggestions put forward to increase the turn out, and members were repeatedly being asked to co-operate in welcoming any newcomers.

The problem however was basic, stemming mainly from the fact that at this time the committee were mainly business people, and rarely on site before tea time on Saturday. This coupled with the fact that stewarding was done entirely by the committee meant that in most cases signs were not put up until late, thus making finding sites difficult to new members, and on arrival there was no one on hand to advise, and welcome them.

Unfortunately this was also a period of difficulties in committee. During this time the committee consisted of fourteen members plus officials, and it appears that all volunteers were accepted for committee work.

The foot and mouth epidemic of 1968 did not seriously affect the camping season, and it was in this year that the D.A. held its Midsummer Meet at Chelford in conjunction with "Campers week". Mr. Lomas, M.P. for Huddersfield was invited to open this meet, and the general public were invited to attend, either as campers, or spectators. Two hundred suppers were catered for, and the meet was a highly successful one. The D.A. organised the Regional Meet of this year also at Chelford.

Joe Piggott went to the Region as chairman in 1968, and at the D.A. A.G.M. that year Harold Brown was elected chairman, Maurice Green elected secretary, and Norman Pickles re-elected treasurer, together with twelve committee members.

This 1968/69 period was a dark one for the D.A. with trouble in committee, and rumours and denials that the D.A. might fold up, and culminating in a near mass resignation of the committee.

At the 1969 A.G.M. held at Chelford, the atmosphere was tense and expectant. The vice-chairman, Syd Clarke, took the chair and in his opening remarks stressed that committee members should be prepared to take full share in the running of a successful D.A. At this meeting the Model Constitution was adopted and the officers elected were, Chairman, Syd Clarke, Secretary, Wyn Clarke, Treasurer, Norman Pickles re-elected, and nine committee members.

From this point onwards it can truthfully be said that the fortunes of the D.A. took an upward swing. There was harmony in committee, and the winter programme of that period saw a greater emphasis on social activities. The D.A. made its own amplifying equipment at reasonable cost thanks to the efforts of a committee member.

A D.A. newsletter was started in May 1970 with thirty seven subscribers, and ended the year with one hundred and nine.

At the 1970 A.G.M. it was agreed that the committee consist of nine members, plus a Youth Leader, plus officials. It was agreed that this was a good working number. The Chairman remarked on a good year in committee, improved D.A. spirit, and stewarding, with an average attendance of twenty six units at camping meets.

It must be noted here that during this time the nucleus of a thriving Youth Section was being formed, due to the dedication of the Youth Leader John Lovatt.

The season until the 1971 A.G.M. was a tremendous one for N.E.C.D.A. (as we now called ourselves), the average attendance at meets reached thirty six units, and many compliments were being paid to the D.A. by visitors to our various activities.

Norman Pickles resigned as treasurer at the 1971 A.G.M. a post he had held since 1965. Norman had a hand in the fortunes of the D.A. from the beginning, and a record of service to the D.A. second to none. In fact in terms of service Norman can be said to be our grand old man.

It was agreed to discontinue the Social Box, and apply a levy of 5p per camping unit at camping meets, to be collected by the steward.

N.E.C.D.A. continued to thrive, notably the Youth Section, which was now under the guidance of Terry Briney. They were camping separately at meets and having much success in passing the C.C.Y. tests.

Of note too was the fuller winter programme members enjoyed and the start of an Annual Buffet Dance (now a Dinner Dance). At this time too a Swimming section had been formed, and enjoyed by swimmers and non-swimmers alike, and all ages.

One of the main reasons for the rapid growth of N.E.C.D.A. was the policy of the chairman and committee to get as many members as possible involved in the running of the D.A. This was particularly evident at meets, where members were now doing stewarding duties, and getting much pleasure from it.

The 1972 A.G.M. saw Barry Vernon assume the Chairmanship, with Gordon Howkins elected secretary, and Harold Heap re-elected treasurer.

The policy of participation was continued, and a still greater emphasis placed on a full winter programme of social activities.

The introduction of Country Dance workshops got off the ground, and the Slide Show evenings were made more interesting by entry into the Club National Competition field. Here much to the delight of our photographers N.E.C.D.A. won the National Trophy in 1973.

The fortnightly walks were ever popular, and the Socials for all ages continued to be the season's high lights.

Our first venture into the Holiday Meet arena in 1973 was taken with some trepidation, but thanks to the enthusiasm, and hard work of a sub-committee, led by the Chairman, plus some invaluable help from members, this venture proved highly successful, both financially, and as a public relations exercise.

Our 10th anniversary meet was held at Ribchester with 98 units attending. It was a highly successful event.

Barry and Sue Vernon and family emigrated to New Zealand in January 1975, Barry was a dedicated Chairman and Sue the friendliest of persons.

The A.G.M. of 1974 elected Peter Harrison Chairman, Harold Heap Treasurer, and Gordon Howkins Secretary, Terry Briney Youth Leader and Dorothy Holden took over the Newsletter from Nell Tyrie. The late Dudley Ashton was elected to the committee.

Two holiday meets were held in 1975 one on Anglesey and the other at Llanwrst both were well attended. The D.A. were informed of the death of Mrs. Matthews a founder member.

During the Bala meet of 1974 a group of our younger members were sitting round the bonfire talking about the feasibility of walking the Pennine Way. The outcome of this was that in the September of that year a group of five men walked 71 miles in seven days carrying packs averaging 40 lbs. They decided to complete the walk the following year.

The A.G.M. of 1975 Gordon Howkins and Terry Briney resigned, Peter Harrison was re-elected Chairman, Harold Heap re-elected Treasurer, Brian Wood elected Secretary and Russell Bell Youth Leader.

The D.A. bought three new six foot pennons priced £29.79 plus V.A.T. each. Russell Bell retired as Youth Leader and Harry Lofthouse took over.

At the A.G.M. of 1976 Peter Harrison retired as Chairman, he had served two years. Peter later became N.W. Regional Youth Liaison Officer and a member of the National Council (in his capacity as Chairman of the National Youth Committee). Jim Lofthouse was elected to take his place, Harold Heap and Brian Wood were re-elected, and Aubrey and Averil Spencer elected for the Newsletter.

During the 1971 camping season Alf Corfield took over as Youth Leader and also the Book shop started by Ray Davies which was earning the D.A. social fund a very substantial revenue. Alf and Doreen Corfield looked after the bookshop for the next 7 years. The Pennine Way walkers completed the second part of the walk, 122 miles in seven days average pack weight 36 lbs.

The D.A. held its first May Day meet at TATTON PARK, 188 units attending.

The first National VolleyBall Meet was held at Fishpools just over 60 units attended.

D.A. were refused permission to hold a Holiday Meet at Llanwrst, another site was found at Llwyngwriil this was for tents only.

It was decided to make a charge of £1.50 for the Newsletter previously it had been postage only.

The A.G.M. of 1977 saw Jim Lofthouse and Harold Heap re-elected, Stewart Lowthian was elected Secretary and Alf Corfield confirmed as Youth Leader.

Not long into 1978 we were informed of the death of Gordon Howkins. Gordon a former secretary, and committee member of the D.A. and founder member of the walking and outdoor pursuits group later to become the walking group was a dedicated countryman who rarely missed a camping weekend. It was a standing joke in the D.A. that it took Gordon longer to fetch water than anyone else such was his friendliness. In his memory it was decided to have a Rose Bowl engraved to be presented to the winner of the best outdoor display at the annual D.A. Feast of Lanterns.

N.E.C.D.A. youth won the inter D.A. competition shield and Volleyball competition at the youth regional meet held at Hulton Park. N.E.C.D.A. photographic group won the national trophy for best colour slides, and Harold Heap won the Wicks Memorial Trophy.

This was the year that Ray Davies who was one of the party on the Pennine Walk, cycled from Whitehaven on the west coast to Whitby on the east coast.

At the A.G.M. 1978 all the officials were re-elected, Stewart Chambers became Youth Leader and Brian Wood took over the newsletter.

The site secretaries job was becoming more complex. Meets in national parks had to be confirmed by the D.A.'s into whose area you were going. This led to Bala and Talybont being cancelled.

There was a great deal of aggravation at the midsummer meet held at Capesthorpe, we were limited to 100 units and this number was soon reached on Friday night. Many of our regular members had to be turned away. The youth went nearly all this year without a leader as Stewart Chambers left the district to work down south.

The A.G.M. of 1979 saw the officials again re-elected. Bob Lofthouse became Youth Leader and Keith and Brenda Shone got the Newsletter. A Special A.G.M. was called in February 1980 owing to the resignation of two key committee members. These were Albert and Wyn Mellisn who had a long record of service with the D.A. chiefly on the social side.

It was agreed to form a new group to manage the National Volleyball Competition, this group were to have as much freedom as possible in running the event but financial control to be with the D.A. committee.

The Youth Leader resigned in June 1980. Dave Nicholson volunteered and was appointed at a meeting of the committee at the Midsummer meet.

At the 1980 A.G.M. Stewart Lowthian retired after having served three years as D.A. secretary. Jim Lofthouse and Harold Heap were re-elected and Gill Greaves was appointed secretary. Dave Nicholson was appointed Youth Leader.

The Newsletter subscription went up to £2 per twelve issues. At a special meeting of the committee held on the 1st June 1981 it was agreed that with immediate effect the D.A. committee would assume full responsibility for the 1981 National Volleyball Meet.

Due to a letter to Headquarters going astray, the 1981 A.G.M. was postponed until January 1982 to allow the details to be published in the Camping magazine. Officials elected were Chairman Jim Lofthouse, Treasurer Harold Heap, Secretary Brian Wood, Youth Leader Dave Nicholson, the Newsletter was taken over by Wyn Clarke.

During 1981 eight D.A. members made an application to Region asking permission to form a new D.A. this D.A. to be known as the North Cheshire D.A. The area to be administered being the postal districts of Altrincham, Sale, Mobberley, Goostry, Holmes Chapel, Middlewich, Lymm and Knutsford. The committee had two meetings to discuss this proposition and concluded that they should not support the application on the grounds that the numbers camping with N.C.D.A. did not show the need, and any split would result in smaller meets and an additional programme of meets in an area already considered to be over camped. The Regional Council refused the application.

The 1982 A.G.M. saw major changes in the D.A. executive, Jim Lofthouse retired after six years in the chair a remarkable record of service. Harold Heap retired as Treasurer having served eleven years, another record which will be hard to better.

Those elected were Stewart Lowthian Chairman, Gill Greaves Treasurer and Brian Wood re-elected Secretary. The Newsletter again changed editorship Vera M^CGee being elected to the post. Dave Nicholson continued with the youth.

Headquarters gave instructions that future Youth Leaders were to be appointed by the committee, the thinking behind this being that it would give the youth a better safeguard.

Angela Collier won the Ray Hughes Trophy for endeavour, in recognition of her activities outside the club.

During 1983 the project uppermost in the minds of the D.A. committee was the N.F.O.L. to be held at Tatton Park and hosted by North West Region. N.E.C.D.A. played a major part in the organisation and running of this event, being responsible for all electrics, gas lights, servicing and cleaning all portaloos, water point inspections, plus marshalling and stewarding duties.

Unfortunately the weather marred this annual club get together. Strong winds and torrential rain stretched resources to the limit, and at times threatened to disrupt the programme. It was only by supreme effort that those involved managed to complete the various attractions and events peculiar to the N.F.O.L. The committee and members had gone to considerable trouble to construct an Elizabethan Street with a model of the Chester Arch and Clock. Because of the strong wind they were unable to display this. Shortly afterwards however at our own F.O.L. held at Gawsorth, the Street was erected and attracted many compliments from the members present. The Gordon Howkins Memorial Rose Bowl was presented to Stan Tromans for his Saxon Hut and Cross but he accepted it on behalf of all those who had contributed to the building of the complete street.

At the 1983 A.G.M. Stewart Lowthian was re-elected Chairman, Gill Greaves re-elected Treasurer and Ena Robinson elected Secretary.

The Regional Meet for 1984 was transferred from Astle Park to Ribby Hall Park near Kirkham.

In March we learned of the death of Dudley Ashton a former committee member of N.E.C.D.A. Soon after an early retirement Dud was appointed Warden of the Ebury Hill Club Site where he soon gained a reputation for the cheerful welcome he gave to everybody visiting the site, and the immaculate condition he kept the site.

Two frame tents were bought in 1984 which when erected joined together would be large enough to hold members during get togethers in inclement weather. These tents proved their worth at the 1984 F.O.L.

The D.A., thanks to the efforts of the 1984 secretary Ena Robinson, are now a good way along the road to raising the necessary £500 to sponsor our own N.E.C.D.A. guide dog for the blind.

The committee invited the Cheshire Centre of the Caravan Club to our National Volleyball Meet at Astle Park. Many of their members took advantage of the invitation and were impressed by the organisation of the event.

There was mixed opinion in committee as to where the 21st Birthday Meet should be held. The final decision was Mobberley during the week-end of 7th/8th/9th June, 1985.

At the A.G.M. of 1984 Stan Tromans was elected Chairman, Gill Greaves re-elected Treasurer and Dave Nicholson elected Secretary. Marjorie Bennett took over as Youth Leader and Vera McGee kept the Newsletter the subscription for which remained at £2.

Dave Nicholson assisted by his wife Pauline had served just over four years as Youth Leader equalling Terry Briney's spell in the early seventies. Dave and Pauline brought many new experiences into the lives of the D.A. Youth the highlights being Pony Trekking and Canal Boat weekends.

As can be seen from this summary N.E.C.D.A. have been fortunate in having stability among its officials. Eight chairman, eight secretaries and only three treasurers in twenty one years is a record for other D.A.'s to envy.

Besides the names recorded in this brief history, there were of course other committee members who gave long and devoted service in the essential posts of Site Secretary and Social Secretary. Again N.E.C.D.A. have been lucky to have men and women willing to take up these jobs and carry them out with competence and dedication.

What of the D.A. in 1985?... It can be said to have established a reputation of being a D.A. able to organise and run big meets, an example being the National Volleyball Meet which is now a permanent fixture in the national calendar. Four holiday meets are run annually these are well supported and ably stewarded. There is a thriving walking section with experienced leaders, and swimming group.

To cater for the social side of D.A. life there is an annual Dinner Dance, a New Year's Eve Dance, Country Dance evenings, Slide Shows, and a Childrens Christmas Party.

In a Club which caters for an age group ranging from one to eighty, its never going to be easy to please everybody.

The same applies at D.A. level. There are still dogs loose, and ball games played too near to units. Places are still being saved, and there is noise after eleven p.m. At some meets the twenty foot rule is forgotten by many. This could account for the present difficulty in finding stewards. Nobody likes to risk unpopularity by reminding friends of the rules.

Despite all that, a D.A. weekend is always a pleasant experience, and while camping habits have changed in the past twenty one years, the spirit of good fellowship is still the main feature of D.A. camping, long may it continue to be so.

At the 1985 AGM Mr. Brian Cohn was elected Chairman and Mr. Gil Greaves continued as Treasurer. No-one came forward to take on the job of Secretary so the position was left vacant but Mrs. Dorothy Morrison was persuaded to fill the post at the first meeting after the AGM.

Also at the AGM a motion was passed to move the AGM to 3 o'clock in the afternoon to assist members with children.

Mr. Al Edmundson one of our Committee members and well known D.A. member passed away late in the year and a trophy for "the most camped camper" was inaugurated in early 1986 in his memory. This trophy was presented to June and Stewart Lowthian in 1986, to Jean and Bob Cooper in 1987 and Pat and Frank Pearson in 1988.

Mrs. Vera McGee, the Editor of "Cheshire Chat" was highly commended for the magazine at the National Newsletter Competition in 1986 and went one better in 1987 and won the trophy. Unfortunately due to a mix-up Vera did not attend personally to receive her trophy but this was presented to her by Mr. Fred Walls at one of our early meets.

Mr. Jim Lofthouse, who was a committee member for nine years and Chairman for six of those years died suddenly whilst on holiday in Portugal and his loss was felt by his many friends in the Club.

Although 1987 got off to a slow start with attendances well down the Midsummer Meet saw the reversal of this trend and over 80 units attended the Midsummer meet and 51 the F.O.L.

Mr. Dennis McGee was elected Chairman Mrs. Ena Robinson Secretary and Mr. Brian Cohn Treasurer and although we started off the year with no Youth Leader Mr. Peter Harrison, who had received the Certificate of Honour for his services to Youth, took the job on from March 1988.

One of our sites at Nether Alderley turned out to be the site of an old army camp and so we held a "Dad's Army" weekend which was a great success with a great deal of ingenuity bursting forth in the costumes.

The Midsummer meet was again well supported and the weather was more than kind to us.

The Volleyball Meet at Astle Park was slightly down in numbers due to the bad weather leading up to the meet but we were supported by the Club Chairman, Frank Grant and Vice Chairman Terry Burchnall.

The Bonfire Meet was again well supported and members of the Trailer Tent Group joined us and organised the music and a sing-song round the fire.

At the AGM the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were all re-elected and many items were discussed ranging from youth members pitching their tents too near roadways to the D.A.'s 25th Birthday Meet in 1989.

There was a full programme of winter socials and walks including a trip to ice skating for the older youth and a pantomime for the younger members.

We are now into 1989 camping season with many new sites booked for this year whilst still retaining one or two old favourites and it is hoped that this trend will continue.

EPILOGUE

So N.E.C.D.A. has become firmly established as a thriving and popular entity within the Region and the Camping & Caravanning Club.

Those of us who enjoy the good times, and fellowship today would do well to pause sometimes and remember the hours of voluntary labour, put in by a few dedicated people to make it all possible. Luckily by the nature of things there will always be people who are willing to take up this burden for the benefit of the D.A. and the Club.

Above all else, we must not let our standard of Camping & Caravanning fall. The few rules we have must be obeyed, and strictly enforced.

N.E.C.D.A. is a happy friendly D.A. with intimate camping meets, at which no one should feel unwelcome or unwanted, and many varied social activities which cater for all ages.

No one can foretell the future, but with the present membership so full of enthusiasm, and willingness to help, those of you who have watched the D.A. grow from a troublesome start, to the lively thriving unit it is today, can look forward with optimism.

The first pages of this history represent "The First Ten" years and include a preface by Joe Piggott a past Chairman of N.E.C.D.A. Unfortunately Joe past away in February of this year.

The epilogue was written by Barry Vernon - chairman of the D.A. in 1974 the 10th Anniversary Meet of our D.A. - I feel that his comments apply equally well in our 25th year.

SILVER ANNIVERSARY YEAR.

On the occasion of our SILVER JUBILEE year, it was decided to bring the history of the D.A. up to date, and add an account of the last four years to the catalogue of events that was issued at our COMING OF AGE. in 1985, many new members have joined us since then. As older members will know the first ten years were recorded by Connie and Norman Pickles, and Harry Tyrie, and was extended by Harry up to 1985, the present secretary Rowena Robinson has brought us up to date.

Many comments and appreciations of members and events have been made in the past, and it is difficult to find new things to say, but many members outside the D.A. committee, on the Volleyball sub-committee, and the sub-committee for the Jubilee meet, and many more who work behind the scenes must be thanked for their efforts, and assistance in keeping the Camping and Social activities of your D.A. North East Cheshire running smoothly.

In our 16 years with the Club, starting off with the Lancs and Cheshire D.A. when a friend from our younger days Dennis Clayton who is now Chairman of that D.A. persuaded us to join them. Later we joined N.E.C.D.A. and have spent many happy times with you, lets hope we can all carry on to the next milestone together.

Dennis W. McGee.

N.E.C.D.A. Chairman.

1989.

