

# NORTH EAST CAMP UPDATE

30 April 2013



Nikki Gould on Olympic Day

## A Return to the Good Old Days What is Camp Missing?

By Nikki Gould, St.James Brightlingsea

**The minute camp ends, the countdown to next years camp starts. Camp has given me some of the best memories and experiences I have had. I could go on and on (and I can talk a lot!) about the fantastic activities on offer, the amazing people that make camp feel like a giant family, the fabulous menu and Ray's bargain canteen but I won't because I am sure many of you have also experienced this or have heard about it.**

It's ironic for me, that the last night of camp used to be the best night because it was the 'camp concert' and everyone got involved. It was a great way to complete a fabulous week, you forgot all about your bruises, aches, tiredness and the fact you were leaving in the morning. The camp concert was full of entertainment with a variety of talents, in some cases I use the word talent loosely, including my favourite performance which was when myself

and Tanya sang Me and My Shadow on space hoppers.

It was great because the majority of Members, Leaders, Kitchen staff and clergy would have practiced prior to camp or during the week to provide a programme full of laughter and good times. One of my most memorable moments was when Clive (the camp Chaplin) dressed as a swan dancing around a makeshift nest to a piece of instrumental music - it was an 'epic' moment. Once the concert was over, the music went on and everyone was up and dancing. Usually ending in a giant circle, everyone's arms linked, kicking legs in time to New York New York.

This is something I would like to bring

back, the good old fashioned camp concert involving everyone, we have a giant stage, let's use it. I propose that all companies bring an act to camp

ready for the concert, it can be dance, music, song, sketches, routines. Believe me that countdown to camp will be a lot quicker if you do.



# Twelve at Heart

## Twelve years and 98 Days to be Precise

By Craig Harris

6pm Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May 1982.....Is the only day in my life where I can say I know exactly where I was and exactly what I was doing...that very minute was the end of an 8 year and 3 day countdown and the beginning of a 4 year 95 day countdown confused?...well let me explain.

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May was the first Thursday after my 8<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 6pm was the time the door opened at the hall, in the hall was the Brigade, the promised land, the magical place my Dad had filled my head about since I was old enough to understand, the place where if he was to be believed, I would make the best friends I would ever have and have some of the best times I would ever have. He was not wrong!

The stories I had been told as a young child were of band and marching and church and football and swimming and.....CAMP.

Camp the Holy Grail, the place where everything happened. How did my Dad and his friends manage to do so much in one week? I swear the stories I was told about camp and the things that went on, if you told them back to back it would take a year to hear them.

Stood in the hall at Shotton CLB for the first time listening to the buzz going round about this years Camp (Braithwaite) made the fact that I had to wait another 4 years before I could go seem like an eternity. I had waited 8 years and 3 days to be standing where I was, and yet now all I wanted to be was 12.

12 and 98 days to be precise. I will save the tales from my first 4 years in Brigade for my book and skip straight to Thursday August 21<sup>st</sup> 1986 5pm Brigade Hall Shotton:-

The love Affair Begins.

My first taste of the ritual of packing the van, doesn't sound very exciting so far does it (right now I know both Derick and John are saying YES IT DOES)

But let me tell you at that very moment on the street outside the hall at the back of a Nelsons of Durham Removals van a 12 year old boy found his place in the world.

This was the first minute of the rest of my life, a life that will be consumed by Camp and everything associated with it, the people there, the smells, the sounds, the feelings.

To the un-initiated this may sound strange, but let me tell you, if you let Camp grab you and you go with it, it can consume you too. It will take you places (the Lakes mostly) and if you let it, it will

give you more than you ever thought possible. The venue matters not, its camp, its family, its life long friends, its memories that those who have never been will never understand why you hold them so

dear. I have friends who have never been to camp ask me why I do it and I cant answer, but my friends who no longer go to camp never ask me why I still do....Its because they know, they have been, they are still part of that family that crazy bond, that thing that makes you book your holidays with work the very second the dates are announced, the thing that

makes you stay up until three in the morning telling stories of past camps. The thing that makes you travel home on the Saturday with tears in your eyes, exhausted and wishing it was next year, the thing that makes you work out how many hours, minutes and second there are till next camp and then post it on Facebook.

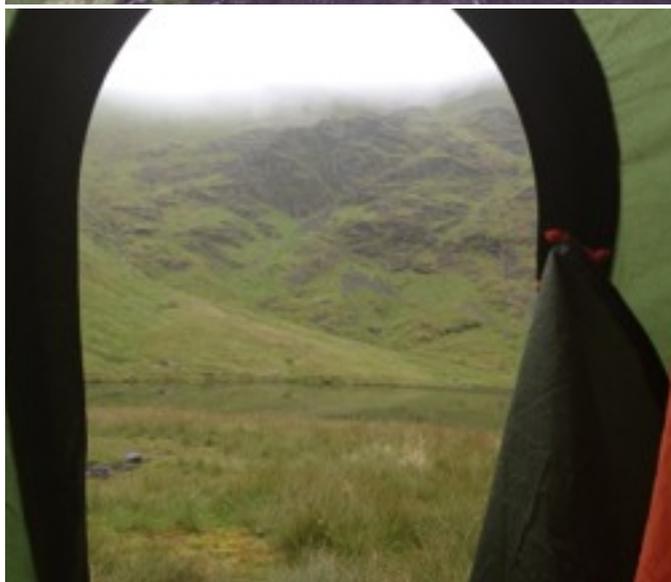
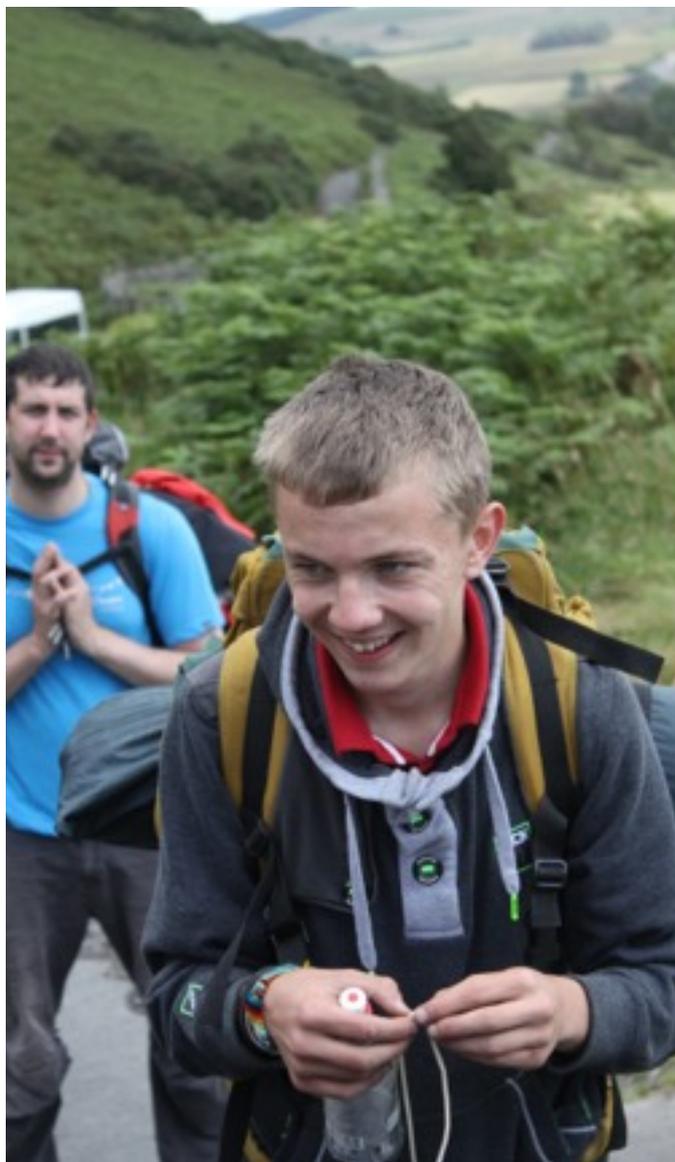
I guarantee that if you have been to Camp you will be sitting there now smiling and thinking he's right, that's how I feel!

If you have never been to camp and are thinking it cant be all that....I challenge you, come try it let it grab you and take you, in 25 years time you will be saying the same things I am.

So if you don't want lifelong friend and unforgettable memories stay at home this August. However, if like that 12 year old boy in 1986 you want to find a little place in the world then you have to be at North East Camp 2013

Craig Harris (CSM) (Twelve year old at heart)





## Perseverance Pushing It

By Mike Perry

**North East Camp, amongst many other things is an opportunity to try something new. I don't know about you but where I grew up there wasn't a ghyll around the corner, not a large body of water to go kayaking in, unless you count the River Mersey.**

I remember loving Camp when I was younger for the activities. I loved going hiking, cycling and climbing. I adored orienteering, windsurfing and kayaking; and when I was old enough the overnight was an opportunity I couldn't miss.

The overnight is the one activity that no-one will ever do again. Every year. I remember my first year doing the overnight. It was Skafell Pike we took on that year. It was hot; it was dry. My rucksack, borrowed from the Bishop, was akin to some kind of medieval torture device that cut into my shoulders with the weight of all my kit. At the time I was wounded deeply.

Back at camp I told my tent mates all about it. As I did so I realised that I loved it. It set me apart from the others on

Camp. I'd done the overnight. The hardest activity and I had done it. Survived a night on the mountain, made a fire, cooked on a camp stove. Suddenly the pain I went through to do it didn't matter. If anything I felt all the better for it.

Since that first camp out on the hills, the overnight has brought us washouts, broken tents, fry ups, the 'Perry Dines Toasty Making Machine', art, literature, cliff top sermons, laughs and memories the likes of no other activity.

Maybe something you should try; you know, if you've got it in you...



## C.O. Update

By Derick Jackson

**Well, at the time of writing we are exactly 15 weeks away from Camp 2013! The returns and activity forms are about to go out to companies and, for the first time, members will be asked to choose their activities ranked in order of preference. The theory being that if there are changes necessary to the programme then your favourite activities can be considered as a priority.**

Of course, for the leaders, its a very busy time of year but we are all hoping with the forms being out earlier than usual that everyone can get a full set of returns back to us on or before Saturday 6 July. That's 10 weeks to get the information required and get payment to us. Following the success of the Gift Aid scheme for leaders (leading to an additional £400 coming into Camp funds) we will be rolling this out again and all information will be with the returns.

As always, the biggest challenge for us all is to get members committed to coming along. You've read in this edition of the newsletter, and the others before it, how great our Camp is and I call upon everyone to encourage as many as possible to attend in 2013. If we can support you in any way with this please let me know.