

# The History Of John's Lee Wood Campsite

John's Lee Wood was purchased at an auction sale held at the Bell Hotel in Leicester on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1946 for the sum of £1,375.00. Mr. C. Harry Walker, Mr. G.R. Broughton & Mr. H.T. Crofts (District Commissioner for Leicester) were at the auction to purchase the land.

Various working parties erected toilets, repaired fences & generally improved the site allowing it to be opened for camping on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1947.

The Collier Hut was donated to the campsite by the Clarendon Park Methodist Church & the 6<sup>th</sup> Leicester Scout Group.

During 1949 a well was sunk within the site to provide a water supply. This has long since been capped off & replaced with a mains water supply.

The Discovery Gates were presented by the Discovery Division on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1950 & the obelisk near the gates was presented by Mr. C. Harry Walker to commemorate the opening of the campsite.

The Dick & Phil Cabin was presented by Sir Arthur Curtis K.C.V.O., C.M.G., M.C., JP, D.L. the County Commissioner, in remembrance of the Leicestershire Scouts who fell in both World Wars & was named after his two nephews who died in the 1939/45 war.

The original dedication service of the camp chapel was conducted by the then Bishop of Leicester, the Rt. Reverend G. Vernon. The original altar & log canopy have long since gone & the altar was replaced with the present stone built one in September 1995.

The Harry Walker Cabin was erected on the site during 1969/70 & first opened for use on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1970. The cabin was named after Mr. C. Harry Walker who had been connected with the site since it's purchase.

The Siggers Cabin was built in 1978 & became the new home for the duty warden teams. It took its name from Ray Siggers, a former Camp Warden.

The toilet/shower block was built by the Manpower Services Commission to modernize the site & to come up to modern hygiene standards. It was built mainly as a result of the hard work & perseverance of Mr. A.A. Gutteridge, the Camp Warden for many years. When the building was officially opened by His Grace the Duke of Rutland in March 1987, it was named the AAG block in recognition of this fact.

For many years the Providor had lived in the Dick & Phil Cabin. This prevented its use for anything else & was also a continual problem with break-in's. To solve both problems the present Providor building was erected & was officially opened in September 1991. The Providor bears a plaque to the memory of Mr. Jack Smith who had been the Providor manager for many years as well as the camp treasurer.

The extension to the Harry Walker Cabin was built mainly by camp staff & volunteers in their spare time & this took some considerable time & eventually opened in 1995. Originally being known as the Walker extension, the cabin was then renamed the Alan Gutteridge Cabin on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1998 in remembrance of Alan who passed away on 24<sup>th</sup> January 1998 after 25 years as Camp Warden as well as previous service in other roles.

The Dick & Phil Cabin was renovated during 1998/99 & work started on The Millennium Activity Centre which officially opened in May 2000. This contains ranges for Archery & Air Rifle Shooting & a tower for Climbing & Abseiling.

## The Present

The site is owned by the three Leicester City Scout Districts & is staffed each weekend by volunteer teams of Wardens on an eight week rota system & are coordinated by the Head Camp Warden with a Management Committee to make decisions on the running of the site, who in turn report back to the City DC's. There is also a Providor staff rota with a shop manager & a midweek working party consisting mainly of retired people who are able to come up during the day & work around the site. At present we have 24 camping pitches & 4 cabins for campers to use.

## The Future

There is always an ongoing process of maintenance & upgrading all the existing cabins & around the site in general. We also hope to improve the Activity Centre & the Adventure Play Area.

We are always on the look out for more staff for Wardens, Providor & the Midweek team so if your interested, please talk to the Head Camp Warden.