

# WARWICK FOLK FESTIVAL

You could tell this was not going to be a normal weekend when a young lad rides past on a unicycle, without falling off, and the feral kids all over the place.

And indeed it wasn't; this was the 35th Warwick Folk Festival, all over Warwick last weekend. The first thing you noticed was the friendliness and general calm atmosphere of the Festival, even in the magnificent Beer Tent.

People talked to one another, and to you. You made a lot of new and unexpected friends.

The Saturday night highlight was John Tams and Barry Coope providing a live and hilarious set, with John referring to Morecambe and Wise, and finally having the whole tent singing "Wages For Soldiers" (come on).

Unfortunately they were followed by a large Danish ensemble who nobody could understand, and most people left for the Beer Tent.

And Workshops, Meet The's, Singarounds, small concerts, etc. everywhere: so many that you cannot possibly go to them all; you miss half of the Festival with no catch-up button.

There was a marked gap between the elderly, white-haired people from the 60s Folk Revival, and the younger artists from the past few years who were often praised to the skies by other artists, including the Tea Cups (what?) coming straight from Newcastle University's very live Folk Degree.

The Late-Night singing ended this year soon after bedtime at 11 p.m. (we really are getting older), but Saturday Night did carry on in the Beer Tent.

A very exhausting and expensive weekend, probably not worth it when all was said and sung.

*Peter Jackson*