

## HERITAGE THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2021

Every four years, August is usually the month for a World Scout Jamboree. I have been fortunate to attend a few as a participant or visitor, unlike others who had the great privilege to select, interview and lead a Unit to a site abroad. I have been advised that the next, 25<sup>th</sup> WSJ will be **1-10 August in SaeManGeum, South Korea in 2023**, in about two years at the time of writing. The last WSJ held in South Korea (there are no Scouts in North Korea) was the 17<sup>th</sup> and was held in 1991. This UK contingent of 1407 included 50 Girl Guides. Hertfordshire sent a Unit of 36 with 4 Leaders. This was named "Hert and Seoul." They were led by **Mike Turner**.

In 1922 one of the first Leader Training Courses for Wolf Cub Leaders to be held outside of Gilwell Park was in the grounds of Heddon Court School, Cockfosters, Barnet, Hertfordshire. Some of the 14 people on the Course are identified as staff. They are **Maud Coleman**, who later became Akela Leader, **David Francis Morgan (ACC Training)** who was also Legal Secretary at IHQ, **Mabel Bulman** a CM from Barnet District and **Pip Powers**. These were all wearing the new Gilwell Woggle that signified they had taken the appropriate training to run a Wood Badge Course.

On 20<sup>th</sup> August 1930 the *Fourth St Albans Scout Group* celebrated their twenty-first birthday in the grounds of "Dursley," a house in Avenue Road, St Albans that was the home of the "**CO**" **Charles Dymoke Green**. In the course of my researches I visited the property and explained to the current owners who the famous former occupiers were, and the significance of the events held there. The 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary Group dinner took place on 1 November at the Red Lion Hotel. Guests of Honour included **Commander Kent** and **Herbert Salway** who were both honorary members of the Group. During the after dinner speeches, the "**CO**" read out a letter of congratulations from **B-P**. At the dinner it was proposed to build a memorial HQ in memory of **Jim Dymoke Green** who had died earlier that year from blood poisoning at the age of 27. He had wounded his foot while demonstrating axemanship at a Troop meeting that was held at their Marshalswick Estate.

The new **Chief Scout Lord Rowallan** attended the first Hertfordshire County Camp held after the War in May 1947. It was held at the invitation of **Lord Verulam** at Gorhambury Park in St Albans and presumably following a suggestion by **CC Sir Percy Everett**. A few minutes before the Chief arrived, every eligible boy in the Fourth New Barnet Troop was presented with his First Class Badge. The Chief also shook hands with every boy in the contingent who were shortly to leave for the Sixth World Jamboree in Moisson, France. This was to be led by **ACC Dr Leslie Pears**. When the Unit returned home, **Dr Pears** invited the Troop Leader **Ronald Maddox**, who was a PL with the First Welwyn Troop, to attend the annual County Scouters Conference and give a talk on his experiences at the Jamboree.

It was with great sadness to receive confirmation that **B-P House** in London has had to be sold to provide much needed finances for the Association. I find it astonishing that only 2% of visitors or residents in recent years have been Scouts! After it opened I remember taking several small groups or individuals there following a visit to the Science Museum. **B-P House** was opened on **12 July 1961** by **HM The Queen** as a memorial and residential Hostel for Scouts visiting London at reasonable cost. The foundation stone was laid by **Lady B-P** 18 months earlier and this marked the completion of an inspirational idea by **Lord Somers** (Chief Scout) as a memorial to the Founder **B-P**. Just before the opening a life sized bronze statue of **B-P** (the only one in London at that time), was unveiled by **HRH the Duke of Gloucester** (President of the Association). The statue was a gift from the Scouts of

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London and was designed and carved by **Don Potter** (who had already carved several busts, statues and artefacts for churches and other historic buildings all over the World). The opening ceremony of **B-P House** was conducted by **The Bishop of St Albans, Rt. Rev Michal Gresford-Jones** (then a Scout Commissioner) and the proceedings were televised with a commentary by **Richard Dimbleby**. The route for **HM** was lined by 142 Queen Scouts from all over the UK. They were also holders of the **D of E Award**. **The Duke of Edinburgh** was unable to attend owing to a riding accident. Rover Scouts from Hertfordshire were also on duty as Stewards. They were **David Rolfe** and **Michael Camp** from Bishops Stortford District, **Chris Flemming** of Third Letchworth and **Michael Somerville** of Sixth Stevenage Rover Crews. The Rover Scouts were recruited from all over the UK to act as Stewards. They were treated to lunch at the Imperial Institute where they were each presented with white neckerchief and briefed on their duties. Scout Groups from Hertfordshire contributed generously to the **B-P Memorial Fund** and a number became "Founder Groups" like the First Rickmansworth who were awarded a certificate showing the amount raised.

*In line with many other rooms and dormitories, they were named after a County. "The Hertfordshire Room" was named following considerable fundraising and was a popular attraction for visitors for over 30 years until refurbishment in 1991 when all historic nameplates and artefacts were removed and disposed of, much to the dismay of the many Counties, Groups and individuals who had given so generously since 1941.*

Some years ago following significant research, I tracked down and visited **Reg Flower** who lived in Cambridgeshire and was Manager at **B-P House** for many years. He was very helpful to ensure my historical facts were correct.

In pre **B-P House** days and for many years, Imperial Headquarters Scout offices were above the Scout Shop at 25 Buckingham Palace Road, Victoria. This was always known as **25 B-P Road** and featured a page in the monthly magazine *The Scouter* as **News from 25 B-P Road**. At that time all staff were expected to attend work in Scout uniform. As a young ACSL, I remember occasionally attending there on the second Thursday in the month when there was an open invitation for Leaders from the **DC of Barnet District, J. Dudley Pank** to meet there for lunch and to discuss any business. At that time Barnet was a District of Hertfordshire Scouts.

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