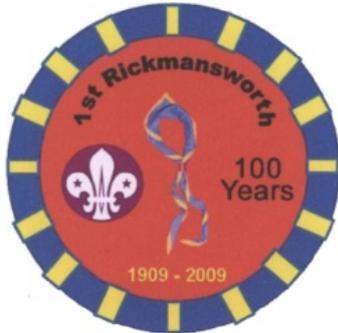


HERITAGE THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH of March 2021.

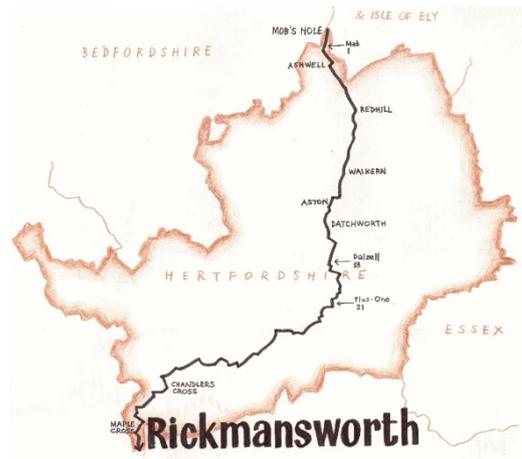


On an historic note, 15 March 1909 was the foundation meeting of the First Rickmansworth Boy Scout Troop. This was held at the People's Room, a small hall located at the start of Norfolk Road. **Mr Fred Galley** presided and agreed to become Scoutmaster. He explained the Aims, Laws and Oath of the Scout Movement to those boys who had formed the two original Patrols the Owls and Peewits. The Troop began camping almost at once. In early summer they were



granted the title to become Lady Eburys Own and were allowed onto her estate for scouting activities. On 4 July they took part in their first official duty at the Hospital Sunday Parade. A banner was carried by **Frank Beasley** and **Percy Dyer**. This attracted considerable attention and encouraged several more boys to join. On 11 July they were invited to a similar event at Harefield School at which more boys showed interest and before long two more Patrols were formed. The Group celebrated its centenary with a dinner at Watersmeet on 7 March 2009. The toast to the Group was proposed by **Dick Pooley**, a former Group Chairman and the "Next 100 Years" by the District Commissioner **Peter Edwards**. A commemorative badge was produced.

In an adventurous project in March 1971, the Great Patrol Hunt Walk (GPH) was designed like many great and inspirational activities in the County by **Ken Johnson (KJ)**. The walk started from Mobbs Hole in Ashwell ending at Rickmansworth. A total of 53 miles. Assembly was the HQ of the First Ashwell Scout Group as this was at the most northerly point of the County. The start time was midnight and breakfast was provided by the Hatfield District Service Team in the open air. Various people were encouraged to join the walk along the route and stayed with it as long as possible. On this walk there were 221 Scouts, 2 Cub Scouts, 8 Leaders and 5 Venture Scouts. Two PLs **Stephen Beech** of Third Ware and **Nicholas Leam** of First Turnford Scout Groups stayed the course to complete the whole route. The map is the one that appeared in the monthly County Newsletter HSN (Hertfordshire Scout News) that was edited by **KJ**. (This was a Newsletter that restarted in October 1963 following a break of 30 years). The GPH was opened to all Girl Guides in 1972. National Scout HQ decided to copy the Hertfordshire scheme and we closed it in 1975 although the Guides continued with a similar competition for some years.



On 11 March 1984, **Chief Scout Michael Walsh** visited the Peak Assault Challenge event at Kirkby Stephen. This was prior to the event being moved to the autumn. He and his wife **Angela** also attended the Hertfordshire Cub Scout Christmas Carol Service at St Albans Abbey in the same year.

The 18 March 2021 marks 12 months since all Scout venues were closed in the UK. This is the longest period I have been away from Well End since 1952.

Hertfordshire County Scout Council

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Tel: 020 8236 0040

e-mail: info@hertfordshirescouts.org.uk

www.hertfordshirescouts.org.uk

County Commissioner: **Liz Walker**

County President: **Robert Voss CBE**

County Chairman: **Michael Shurety**

Charity No: 302606

Scottish Charity No: 39650

VAT registration No: 761 4558 19



<<< This is the first image I took there of the Service Team (mainly Rover Scouts from Cockfosters, in Barnet District). It was taken in front of the original **Graham Wallis (GW)** Hut that was accidentally burnt down in the winter of 1963. I spent some years on the Service Team there before being invited to join the County Leader Training Team in 1967 as County Training Administrator. This was the year when the training of all Scout Leaders became obligatory and several Courses of over 100 people were frequently held. 35 years later I was asked by the **CC Roger Sands** to take over the vacant role of County Archivist. This role has taken me into new experiences for a further 20 years and I now have a number of Archivists to help me. This has allowed me the opportunity to carry out work as the County Scout Historian.

During this month a report in the national press explained that the birthplace of Scouting, **Brownsea Island** in Poole Harbour, was one of four National Trust properties that has severe problems with erosion / deterioration. My last visit there with my wife **Sylvia** was on 1 August 2019. This was the 112th anniversary of the start of **B-Ps** experimental Camp. I usually visit every other year to take individuals or parties from Hertfordshire on an historic tour. On this last visit we joined up with **Peter Hadwin** a member of my Heritage Team. On the Ferry we met a Guide Leader mother and daughter from Dorset making their first visit and were pleased to join us. Let me know if you are interested in a guided tour with your Scouts when circumstances permit? If you are camping nearby, a visit to the Island is an



essential day out or a day visit from home is quite possible. There is a fee for the Ferry and an additional fee to tour the Island unless you are a National Trust member. All visits now have to be planned on line. The Island is currently closed until May 2021 and/or until travel restrictions are lifted. My last visit there with a Scout Group was with the 12 Harpenden that was arranged with their Leaders **Liz and Stuart Jack**. Their photo was taken in front of the Commemorative Stone.



During this month a number of national newspapers carried articles about **B-P** or letters from **Chief Scout Bear Grylls** who also has a new series starting on TV this month. This is where he will take selected sporting personalities to rugged terrain to test their stamina.

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I have reported previously on the proposed Kent Scout Council expedition later this year. This will follow in the footsteps of **Sir Ernest Shackleton** on the centenary of his original expedition to Antarctica in 1920. On a previous visit to Hertfordshire in 1914 he had been invited to inspect the first County Rally. This was held at St Albans by the **CC Percy Everett**.



<<<< Hon. Alexandra Shackleton



The organiser **Alan Noake** (ACC Global Projects) for Kent Scouts has spent some years on this project and held the launch of **ReQuest 2021** at their HQ at Lower Grange Farm, Kent, in January 2020 to which **Colin Walker** and I were invited.

Alan Noake has selected a few specially selected people (including **Colin and myself**) to proof read the draft of the 180-page illustrated book - **SHACKLETON'S SCOUTS** that has taken 3 years to write about the original expedition and its' planned follow-up. It is gratifying that **The Honourable Alexandra Shackleton** (Granddaughter) has written the Foreword. She is much in demand, having travelled the World giving talks about **Sir Ernest** on a regular basis. **Colin and I** met her at the presentation in Kent and had a long chat about her work. The Penguin cut-out behind has been adopted as a mascot for the expedition and reproduced into many symbols on letter-headings, posters and badges.

I became aware that **Frank Sears**, a Hertfordshire Boy Scout from the Third Boxmoor Scout Troop, Hemel Hempstead had applied. He was too young to be a Cabin Boy but did enter the essay writing competition for the under 16 section, that was organised by the *Daily Mail*. Having contacted his descendants, I have written extensively about his interest in being considered, his invitation and visit to the ship *Quest* in 1920. I discovered he was 12 years old when he applied and he wrote a 250 word essay to explain why he should be chosen – along with several hundred other applicants. Of these, just 50 including **Frank** were chosen to attend the ship to meet with the **Captain, Frank Wild** and **Sir Ernest Shackleton**. **Frank Sears** died in 1956 and shortly before his death wrote his autobiography in which he devoted six pages to the competition and his experiences during his visit to *Quest*. I have now read this fascinating book **SHACKLETON'S SCOUTS** and have made some suggestions to the Author. I have also received my invitation to attend the unveiling of a plaque at Gilwell Park on 5 September and to the sailing of *The Lady Daphne* under London Bridge on 17 September. I have invited members of my Team plus some VIPs to these events but so far have had only one reply.

Frank Brittain

Hertfordshire Scouts Archivist and Historian

archivist@hertfordshirescouts.org.uk

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