

HERITAGE THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH of February 2021

One of the most important Scouting anniversaries falls on 22 February. This was originally known as *Thinking Day*. This national Scouting and Guiding Day of remembrance was thought up by the Girl Guides in 1926 as a remembrance of the anniversaries of **Lord and Lady B-P**. They shared this as day their birth date. The anniversary is often celebrated with a church service (in Hertfordshire at St Albans Abbey or nationally at Westminster Abbey, on the nearest appropriate date). A decision was made at the fourth Girl Guide / Girl Scout International Conference held in the USA that the delegates highlighted the need for a special International Day. This would be when the Scouts and Guides of the world would “think” about the worldwide spread of Scouting and Guiding and give thanks and appreciation. In 1999 at the 30th World Conference held in Ireland, the name was changed to “*World Thinking Day*” in order to emphasise the global aspect of this special day.

I have been informed of the “Going Home” of **Glenda Ann Lockwood**. This is a lady who was not known to me, but worked with the Scout Group and the District at Bushey Heath for many years. I would appreciate if someone from the District, who knew **Glenda**, is able to send me a profile of her Scouting life so that these can be entered into the County Obit File.

I have been contacted by the daughters of **Gerald Milstead**. He has “Gone Home” aged 93 at his home in Ringwood. They have sent some additional material that **Gerald** had put on one side for me. **Gerald** was invested as a Wolf Cub in 1935 and as a Boy Scout on 28 May 1939 at Whitsun Camp when he was 11. Before he moved away from St Albans, he gave me a number of his photographs and certificates. It is noted on his enrolment card by his Cub Leader that his character as a Wolf Cub was excellent. He was formally a member of the Sixth St Albans Scout Group where he became GSL. He also had a leading role in resurrecting the St Albans District Gang Show in 1972. (The St Albans Gang Show had its first performance in 1939 when it was attended by Ralph Reader. That show was produced by **Norman (Tiny) Fellows** of the London Gang Show. He was assisted by **Cyril Swinson** who was Chairman of the Company of 10 and Verulam Players. The Musical Director was **A (Uncle Mac) Mackintosh**, a veteran of the London Gang Shows and the Boy Scout Albert Hall Productions). **Gerald** was I remember very well liked within the District as an ADC and was expected to become DC had not the County poached him to become Deputy CC to **John Bennett** in 1984. Due to the restrictions on travel, I was regrettably unable to attend his Funeral at Poole Crematorium.

Another letter from **Bear Grylls** (Chief Scout) appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* during the month. He was inspired to write following reference to a letter earlier in the week that was published 100 years ago from **Robert Baden-Powell**, aimed to promote “Cooperation between Schools and Scouts.” **Bear** wrote at length to advise that this work continues today and that many Scout Groups do still operate within schools. Also that the Scouts are still one of the world’s most remarkable character building factories.



A photo of **Robert (Bob) Williams** (84) who was a former DC of Letchworth & Baldock District 1988 – 2001, appeared in *The Daily Telegraph*. He was receiving a COVID -19 vaccination at Robertson House in Stevenage. According to the District Newsletter Co-Ordinator, This image was widely circulated throughout the UK and the World. Bob was a former member of the Group Committee of the 7th Letchworth Scout Group where he served as Chairman. He later became a Member of the District Executive.

Hertfordshire County Scout Council

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The County Newspaper the *Herts Advertiser*, included three pages referring to memories of the St Albans Gang Show as it could not be staged as a normal Gang Show production this year. The item also included interviews with Producers, Gang Show legend **David Barker**, and his replacement **Hermione Drew** who took over in 2013.



The last visit to Well End with my Team was Wednesday 18 March 2019 when the site closed. Since then all donations to the Archive Cabin and Heritage Centre have been diverted to my home and are stored in my dining room. (This method of donating can continue or I can collect by arrangement). My wife is asking when she can have the room back into use? I have asked the County Chairman **Michael Shurety** if it might be possible to do a transfer to Well End without involving anyone else. Understandably he has reluctantly refused. However, he has helpfully offered the services of **Doug Stack** to call at my home and collect the several boxes of artefacts during one of his many security visits to the site. Some of the items are shown here.

One of the people who contacted me during the month was **Ray Vassie** of Harpenden Scout District. He was asking about former national icons **John Thurman** and **John Sweet**. As I keep the profiles of all famous Scouts at home I was able to copy the information he required. I did have the pleasure of listening to **John Sweet** while he was Field Commissioner of Hertfordshire, when he spoke at a PLs Training Course at Well End in 1952. He remains in my memory as a prolific and inspirational speaker and as a contributor to *The Scouter*, *Scouting Magazine* & *The Scout*. He died in 1991. I also met with **John Thurman OBE., JP**. He was appointed the youngest and third Camp Chief of Gilwell Park in 1943. At this time Gilwell Park was still under the control of the Military and **John** ran his first Wood Badge Course in Hertfordshire in 1947 at the Well End Training Ground as it was then called. I first met him at Gilwell Park in 1956 when I camped at Gilwell with **Freddie O'Hare** in the snow while working towards our QS Awards. **John** also paid 2/3 visits to Well End in the 1950s at the invitation of the Warden, **Bert Moreton** when I was County Quartermaster and **Freddie** was Assistant Warden. **John** became famous as a Scout traveller. He ran Leader Training Courses all over the World and died in 1985.

Frank Brittain

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