

HERITAGE THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2021.

The news that **Barbados** has attained independence from Great Britain reminded me of the several holidays I spent there.

I remember one year in particular when our mission was to trace a loan Scout from that Country who was invited to join the Hertfordshire Contingent to the Jamboree in Marathon, Greece in 1963. I had contacted the Barbadian Scout Association prior to leaving the UK and was pleased to receive a reply and a promise to call for us at our hotel the next day to take us to the North of the Island to attend a St Georges Day Service. We arrived to find the church was filled to capacity with Scouts and Guides.

The Commissioner who made contact was **Ursula Braithwaite** and was the equivalent of our ACC (Leader Training) at the time. She soon involved us in an organised tour of the Island, introducing us to several other Commissioners and inviting us to Assembly at her School where she was Head. Later in the week we were introduced to a College Lecturer **Ken Pile** who was also a former Scout Commissioner. He took us to a Rum bottling factory and other places of interest, many of which seem to be staffed by his former pupils. He took us to his home that was made entirely from timber where I was fascinated by his collection of books and photo's. This included one taken of his Commissioners Training Course at Gilwell. I was engrossed by this photo as our very own Field Commissioner **Arthur Martin** was on the Team! "Oh, do you know Arthur?" Ken exclaimed! This set us off on another topic of conversation.

I was invited to a Trainers Meeting that was held at the School where I was able to share some of the Training Methods and styles we had developed in Hertfordshire. I believe these gave their Team some new ideas. On another evening I attended a Troop meeting at St Wilfrid's, a Private School where I was invited to give a talk to the Scouts about what Scouting was like in Hertfordshire, the first Scout County in the World. The next Sunday we were invited to a Church Parade of the Bridgetown District Scout Council in the South of the Island. At all these meetings the Adults and Scouts were uniformly dressed as the smartest I had seen anywhere. We tried extensively to find the Scout who attended the World Jamboree to Marathon in Greece but he was not traceable through the existing network.

Cub Scouts from Harpenden have been active in providing a free Christmas card delivery service for more than 40 years. They normally expect to deliver around 3-4000 cards. These are collected from special post boxes in the town. Each Saturday they are sorted into rounds and are delivered the next day. The originator of the scheme, current organiser and former DC **Rikki Harrington** states that he is not aware of any similar scheme. This is an entirely free service in Harpenden. (Extracted from the County Newspaper *the Herts Advertiser* 09/12/2021).

Hertfordshire County Scout Council

County Headquarters: Well End Activity Centre, Well End Road, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire WD6 5PR

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

My visits around the County this month included a visit to a Scouting family in the tiny Hertfordshire village of Clothall. **Helen**, the Lady of the house is a local GSL. She explained that her father **Douglas Giddings**, was a former member of the famous 25th South West Herts Group in Watford. Observing all the Covid rules, I was invited in for coffee and shown a remarkable collection of press cuttings of Hertfordshire Scouting events. These included a full front page of the *Evening News* devoted to the 1957 Hertfordshire County Camp on the Verulam Estate in St Albans. As an 18-year old ACSL and recently appointed as County Quartermaster based at Well End, I recall attending the 1957 County Camp as a new member of the County Team and was invited with my colleague **Freddy O'Hare** to join with other members of the Team for lunch in a private marquee. This involved working with several greats of the County - **Graham Wallis, Harold Warren, Bert Moreton, Sir David Bowes-Lyon, Sir George Abbiss, Commander P.W. Kent, Cedric Bickerton, Melville Balsillie, Arthur Barton-Smith, Dr Leslie Pears, David Bickerton, Jim (Joe) Westwood, Dr Fred Wrigley** and many others. As County Quartermaster, my duties involved frequent attendance at Well End to furnish to the needs of Boy, Senior Scout and Adult Leader Training Courses. I eventually became involved in taking sessions, planning and later was left to organise and programme some of these Courses on my own. It was my privilege to be appointed a member of the County Leader Training Team from 1963-2003 (a 4 Wood Bead appointment). I was originally appointed County Archivist and later, following my recruitment of a team of Archivists, became County Historian.

Frank Brittain

Hertfordshire Scouts Archivist and Historian

archivist@hertfordshirescouts.org.uk

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