

Heritage Thoughts for the Month (May 2018)

In May 1959, a County Camp was held at Verulamium in St Albans with the kind permission of the Earl and Countess of Verulam. There were over 3000 in camp and this was boosted by a day visit of 2000 Wolf Cubs. The Camp Chief was Deputy County Commissioner **Melville Balsillie**. The Chief Scout **Lord Rowallan** visited the Camp which was to be one of his last official appointments.

An unusual occurrence was that the County Medical Officer for Health, **Dr J. L. Dunlop**, suggested that the poliomyelitis vaccination should be made available to all Scouts in camp and this was accepted by the CC **Dr Leslie Pears**.



On 18 May 1959, the *Evening News* produced a limited special edition with the front page as a feature on the Camp. As this was also the year of the World Jamboree to the Philippines, **Dr Pears CC** (centre) introduced **Ken Foxcroft** (right), from Elstree District to the Chief Scout **Lord Rowallan** (left). Ken was the only participant to attend from Hertfordshire.

In May 1927, the Deputy Camp Chief for Training **David Francis Morgan**, expressed his concern to the County Executive that there was no dedicated training ground for boys and Leaders in the County. Very soon **Sir William Acland** offered 36 acres of his estate at Barnes Wood. The Executive accepted the offer and promised to consider it. In later years this donation was to become Harmergreen Wood Campsite.

May 1930 brought a sad end to the life of one of Hertfordshire's most admired Scout Leaders. At the age of 27, **George (Jim) Dymoke Green** died from septicaemia from a wound to his foot while teaching his Scouts axemanship. His coffin was conveyed by trek cart from his home in St Albans to St Albans Abbey by his Patrol Leaders, many of whom were in tears during the journey. His memorial Service was the first of only four ever held there for Hertfordshire Scouts to this day. Jim's funeral was attended by many organisations, his school (Winchester), and Scout VIPs of the time including **B-P**. His final resting place is in the family plot at Hatfield Road Cemetery. As a lasting tribute, a memorial Gateway was built at Gilwell Park by his friend, **Don Potter**.

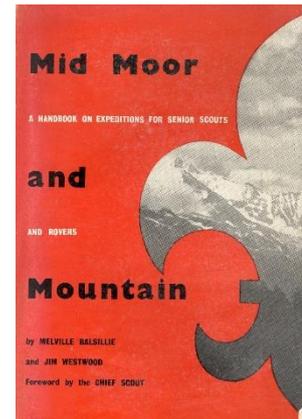


In May 2010, 80 years after his death, I organised a service of remembrance. This included representative of his old Troop (the Fourth St Albans) and Dymoke Green family members. The service was youth led. The gateway was fully restored in 2017 by the Thane Rover Crew of Gilwell.

On 1 May 1908 the first copy of the handbook, *Scouting for Boys* was printed. Within a year it had been reprinted four times. By 1909 it had been translated into five languages. In 110 years it has never been out of print and had become the fourth most read book in the world.

In May 1941, the Chief Scout **Lord Somers** set up a Post War Commission of 26 Scouters who were drawn from every Section. They included **Melville Balsillie** a 36-year-old District Scoutmaster from Wood Green in North London. There was also **F. Haydn Dimmock**, who was Editor of *The Scout* and **Charles Dymoke Green**. They were both Hertfordshire Scouters. The purpose of the Commission was to plan for the development of Scouting after the end of the war.

In May 1955 the book *Mid Moor and Mountain* was published. It was written jointly by **Melville Balsillie** and **Jim Westwood**. This book became a best seller and the substantial proceeds were directed to the development of the Well End Training Ground. Second-Hand copies are still available from the Heritage Centre. Unsigned £5, signed £10.



In May 1967, a letter was received from the **Revd Bob Harris** who until 1964 was the Rover Scout Leader of the Fifth / Thirteenth St Albans Scout Rover Crew. It was written to the editor of *Hertfordshire Scout News*, **Ken Johnson**, to inform that he had just been appointed DC of Mafeking in South Africa; where **B-P** had become a national hero in 1900 and had got some of his ideas to start the Scout Movement.

The Third Ware Scout Group that had been founded in 1911 opened their new HQ in May 1973. The ceremony was carried out by County Commissioner, **Tony Burgess**. When the Group arrived at its centenary in 2011, they held an exhibition in the Ware Town Museum. The event was organised by **Sarah Laverick** the CSL of the Falcon Pack. The exhibition was opened by **Paul Brenham MBE, DL**, County Vice President. He was assisted by Beaver Scout **Ollie Wade**, Cub Scout **Adam Knight** and Scout **Mathew Wing**.



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