

Bedford Divisional Scout Association

33. Grosvenor Street

Bedford

H. Wells Esq.

9<sup>th</sup> Oct: 1972

9, The Graylings,

Putnoe,

Bedford.

Dear Ken,

Thanks for your letter and for passing note on to Mr Fawthrop.

I will contact David Bacon as you suggest (my last letter was sent to Mr Bannister). I am working on Burnyan at the moment and enclose information gleaned so far. I suggest the small exhibition includes Troop or District Magazine efforts (I have one or two, Burnyan I believe produce one and there are yours - which I have at the present moment and I may say I have found them very interesting and useful)

You will notice I have still used

county numbers. This is because my records only go as far as when the Division was finally separated into Districts. I am hoping the two Groups will supply their own history for the latter years.

Will keep you informed of progress.

Yours Scoutingly  
Gordon Turner

When Scouting came to Bedford way back in 1908 there were no such things as Local Associations (which did not arrive until mid-1909.) Imperial Headquarters did not exist, but a London Office was put at the disposal of the Founder (in 1909) and Troops were registered but not on the same system as the present day. Group registrations (and Re-registrations) that bug-bear of the Group Scout Leader at Census time, did not commence till 1919, after the first World War. Local Associations, as already stated, came in 1909 and undertook the registration of Troops.

It was December 1909 that County Organisation was found necessary to cope with the rapidly growing movement. Bedfordshire's first County Commissioner was Major James Deane of Goldington Bury, and the first County Secretary Mr. W. Ebbutt (who was also Local Association Secretary).

From here we can look at the general organisation, concentrating on the development of the Bedford Local Association (which was registered at Imperial Headquarters in 1920 - although, of course, in existence much longer).

To many Scouts and Scouters it was difficult to differentiate between District and Local Association. In Bedford - up to the time of the 'dis-solution' this was understandable because the Bedford L.A. was the only L.A. in the District (Mid-Bedfordshire) so there was, generally speaking, no difference. The correct designation of a Group would include :-

Headquarters Registration number;  
County Registration number;  
District (Mid - Bedfordshire);  
Local Association (Bedford and District);  
Group Registration number  
Group Title.

Small wonder that the Group Scout Leader dreads Census time, but what about the L.A. and County Secretaries who have to supply the information for, not one but sometimes twenty-six Groups (as there were in Bedford L.A. at the time of 'dis-solution'). In some places, Luton for instance, they also had Town (or L.A.) numbers.

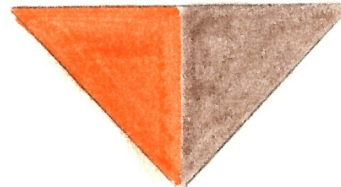
The Boy in the Troop or Pack, however, does not worry so much about the L.A., to him the all important unit is his own Group, so we will look at the organisation at Group level.

There are no recognised or 'fixed' Recruiting Districts; A Church Sponsored Group will nominally have its Parish but it is quite probable that an Open Group and even another Sponsored Group of another denomination may operate in the same area. A School Sponsored Group can draw from anywhere providing the boys attend that school. An "Open" Group does not even have this proviso. But there times when it is necessary to allocate some 'areas' or 'Districts' for Groups to work in; examples being 'Bob-a-Job' (or its present equivalent) and any Public services which are allotted to Troops. (and it was found very necessary when splitting up the Division and Districts). The simplest way is to take the area surrounding the Group Headquarters, but even so it is not always so simple as it sounds, as we sometimes find during 'Bob-a-Job' Week where areas often overlap.

In attempting to trace the history of individual Groups it has been found very helpful to work by 'districts' and for convenience we will start in the town centre - in what was originally designated as Bedford North-East. We will call this area (bounded by High Street, Mill Street, St.Cuthbert's Str; Goldington Road, Newnham Avenue and The Embankment) North-East 1.

The oldest surviving inhabitant is 90th.Beds.(Bunyan), continuous since 1929 and still going strong, but we will look briefly at some of the earlier registrations:-

6th.Beds: (St.Peter's Moravian) Sponsored Group (Troop reg: 3 Oct: 1925 - 14242; S.M. F. H. Tysoe. Pack reg: 21 June 1927 - 9639; G.M. Miss Helen M. Wesson. Registered as a Group - 4956 - in 1928. One of the original Groups. Frank Tysoe was G.S.M.) H.Q St.Peter's Moravian Hall  
Troop disbanded June 1930  
Pack " February 1933.



22nd.Beds: (Mill Street Baptist) Sponsored (or Controlled) Troop; meeting in Baptist Church Hall. S.M. Herbert M. Gale (Warrant 1915). The Troop operated prior to 1914-18 War and most of the way ~~through~~ through it but apparently disbanded in early 1918.

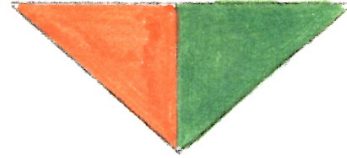
65th.Beds. (St.Cuthbert's) G of M. Sponsored Group, H.Qrs - St.Cuthbert's Hall.  
Troop reg: (184) 1908 (or 09)  
Pack " (105) both at L.A. level.  
One of the first I.H.Q. registrations  
(1st.October 1919) S.M. & C.M. A.J.Lambert.



Registered as a Scout Group in 1928 (I.H.Q.Reg: 4969) - one of the 'originals'. After a long and distinguished career ( 37 years - surviving two world wars) was regretablely disbanded in 1946-7 year.

90th.Beds:(Bunyan Meeting) Sponsored (Baptist-Congregational) Group. I.H.Q.Reg: 9629 (28th.March 1929).

Colour of Scarf: Orange/Dark Green  
diagonal.



Headquarters: The Cellars, Bunyan Meeting,  
Castle Lane, Bedford.

Originally registered as an Open Group, with Mr. F. Stan: Smith (a former Scoutmaster) as Acting Group Scoutmaster and Miss Winnie Barbour Cubmaster. This was actually a Wolf Cub Pack only.

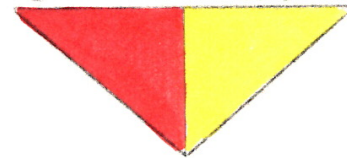
When Mr. W. T. Nye, a Church Deacon and a former Boys' Brigade Officer, came to Bedford he was eventually persuaded to change his 'creed' and started up a Scout Troop, taking over from Mr. Stan Smith as Group-Scoutmaster. In 1932 the registration was changed from "Open" to "Controlled" (or "Sponsored") and has remained as such.

There was, however, an earlier Registration (No.7501), an "Open" Troop being in existence in 1920. (Scoutmaster F. Stanley Smith and, later, Assistant Scoutmaster Albert H. Howe). A Wolf Cub Pack was also registered (NO.3665) with Miss W. M. A. Tomlyn (ex 1st.Beds:) as Cubmaster and Assistant Cubmaster Kenneth Blick. This Troop discontinued in 1924 but the Pack continued till 1925 before disbanding.

In over forty years unbroken service the Group has built up much history and tradition and, of course, is still building it. Some of this, compiled at Group level is being included herewith.

115th.Beds:(Newnham Methodist) Sponsored Group. I.H.Q.Registration No. 33890

18th.April 1958. Originally registered as an Open Group (C.M. A. W. Lay) This was a Cub Pack only. A Troop was added later the same year.



Headquarters - Newnham Methodist Church.

During 1964 (2nd.April) registration was changed to 'Sponsored'.