

FOREWORD.

These notes are supplementary to the Local Scouting History recently compiled, which dealt with Scouting in general in the Bedford District but not with individual Groups. The records are constructed from the official ones available in the Bedford Local Association archives at the time when the Bedford Division was finally divided into two autonomous Districts.

There may be much repetition, which is indeed unavoidable, and the Troop (or Group) histories are by no means COMPLETE. Each is responsible for its own internal records. (Some Groups have kept excellent Log Books since their commencement; others unfortunately have kept none).

In the period of transition (approx: 1960 - 1968) the status of 'District' and 'Division' became very confusing. At first - as experiment - 'Bedford and District L.A.' was split into four 'Divisions' - N.E; N.W; S.E; and S.W. each with its own A.D.C. When eventually it was officially divided into two (North and South) Divisions, each with its own District Commissioner, but still administered by Town Commissioner and District Executive, it was known as 'Bedford ('Sub-County' or 'Town') District. Finally the titles were reversed to 'Bedford (County) Division' and Bedford North and South Districts. Thus it remains - with the exception that the Districts are now 'self governing' and the only function of 'Division' is to co-ordinate joint activities and deal with such matters which still come through to 'Bedford L.A'.

Much of the early history, as already stated, is incomplete and being added to as new facts come to light and although this record terminates in 1968, where known, more recent notes have been continued.

Assistant District Commissioners
and District Officers

Major D. Firth - 1931
 H. W. Liddle - 1931
 H. Parrott (Rovers) 1926 - 32 (Scouts 1932 -
 F. S. Smith (Scouts) 1927 - 1937
 M. F. C. Willson (Scouts) 1929 - 31
 Miss A. Knight Watson (Wolf Cubs) 1930 - 31
 Miss B. E. Hedley (" ") 1927 - 37
 F. W. Kuhlcke (" ") 1932 - 40
 R. T. Rolfe (Rovers) 1928 - 50
 R. D. T. Hamilton (Scouts) 1934 - 36
 W. T. Nye (Scouts) 1935 - 50
 F. H. Loosely " 1937 - 50
 W. Ellicock (Rovers) 1937 - 46
 Miss D. Hands (Wolf Cubs) 1935 - 40
 H. Coy (Scouts) 1937 - 39 (S.W. Div) 1956 -
 F. J. Cummins (Special Duties) 1938 - 51
 R. W. Turner (Rovers) 1946 - 52
 Miss E. Trapp (Wolf Cubs) 1945 - 49
 J. J. Voyce (Senior Scouts) 1946 - 47
 J. W. F. Dew (Senior Scouts) 1947 - 50
 Mrs. J. Dew (Wolf Cubs) 1948 - 51
 E. C. Brown (Scouts) 1948 - 50
 A. N. S. Thompson (Senior Scouts) 1950 - 1956
 W. F. Gaunt (Scouts) 1950 - 52 (South) 1952 -
 Miss M. Furlong (Wolf Cubs) 1939 -
 Miss M. Kingston (Wolf Cubs) 1954 -
 Rev. D. D. Hart (Rovers) 1950 - 56
 K. Wells (Rovers) 1952 -
 S. V. Gaunt (Senior Scouts) 1952 -

P.T.O

C. E. Dryden (Outlying villages) 1952 -
 Miss J. Hulse (Wolf Cubs) 1952 - 53
 G. Strong (N.E. Div.) 1956 - 60
 C. L. Hawker (N.W. Div) 1956 - 57

Additional to

90th.Beds: (Bunyan) Group

When a Group is building on an earlier foundation there are often gaps in the Group records, consequently unwritten tradition and verbal details passed down through the years at times appear confusing and conflicting, but when considered carefully they are not always really so.

No doubt there is some tradition (or ressam) for every Group's Colours (neckerchief) but this is more often than not lost in the passage of time. Bunyan's registered colours are "Orange/dark green diagonal. (Prior to World War II neckerchieves were square - not triangular as the present-day ones - so it was possible to divide them diagonally. Some Groups would actually have two points showing).



There are at least two 'explanations for this :-

The first is a rather vague reference to 'Scout Green' and an early connection with the Onesters - who of course wore green scarves (in fact most of Bedford's older Groups had some connection with the Onesters). That the early Troop had these colours is borne out by a report from one of their (or its) old Scouts - "We had the use of the cellars under the Bunyan Meeting and we painted the wall in our Troop colours, yellow and green" (which also apparently did not meet with the approval of the Church Authorities).

Then there is Mrs. Steers' claim (see report overleaf)

Conflicting? Not really. Green has always been the traditional 'Scout colour' and it was the colour chosen by the 1st.Beds: Troop, thus preventing any other Troop in the District from registering the same 'colour' (A ruling at that time, but since relaxed). The 2nd.Beds: chose Green and khaki and - as will be seen - Bunyan's neighbours, St.Cuthbert's had 'Green with Red border'. It would appear quite natural, therefore, to choose 'scout green' halved with 'cub yellow'. Which, it would seem, is just what happened when Mrs. Steers started up the Pack again in 1930, for they were two most inexpensive colours (a matter for great consideration in 1930)

Some considerable time after the second World War when Scouting was settling down again, amongst the many new trends was for a Group to have its own Headquarters. Actually this was not new - it had been in the rules since the early days, but up to World War II very few Groups had their own buildings, and were considered very fortunate if they had exclusive use of any building. Sponsored Groups did not have to worry so much because it was the duty of the Sponsoring Authority to provide H.Q. and most of them did so. Some Groups, given use of existing buildings, converted them to good use. One such Group was 90th.Beds. who have converted the cellars of Bunyan Meeting into an admirable Scout headquarters. (When the present Group restarted in 1929 they were allowed the use of one of the Schoolrooms as the cellars were unsafe - another indication that the earlier Troop had used the cellars).

Group Historical Notes - Part I - "The Early Thirties" by Winifred Steers (née Barbour)

In the early nineteen-thirties the only Youth Organisation in the Bunyan Meeting for young people was the Young Peoples Society - ages from 17 years upwards, the earlier Scout Group having died through lack of Leadership. I was a Sunday School Teacher, teaching boys from 8 - 9 years at Bunyan Meeting and also an Assistant Cubmaster at St. Cuthbert's Church Pack.

Mr. W. T. Nye, a Deacon recently arrived at Bedford from Brighton, offered at a Church Meeting to start a Boys Brigade Company, and I was asked to assist, but being dedicated to Scouting, I refused, but offered to start a Cub Pack, eventually this was found acceptable to the Deacons and the Church Meeting. With Mr. Nye's blessing the Pack was reformed, and he was made Deacon responsible at that time.

We met in the Senior Schoolroom (now the lounge) and there were four sixes, we kept the original number of '90th Beds' and I chose Gold and Dark Green for the neckerchiefs which my mother made on her sewing machine. I kept the uniform as inexpensive as possible, as in the 1930's there was not much money for luxuries, such as special uniforms for children, so they wore navy blue shorts and jerseys, which they usually possessed and their green caps and garter-tabs and the neckerchiefs.

Some of my early recruits were Harold and Ernest Askew, Leslie Morris, Sidney and Bert, and Peter Crawley and we had some very happy times, camping out for the day on Cemetery Hill and along the River Ouse at the Slips - fire lighting and tracking, etc., which the boys thought great fun. We entered for the County Sports and won the Totem Pole each year and went to all the County Rallies at Westoning Park and Ampthill Park. The Womens' Guild gave us our Cub Flag, which was dedicated at Morning Service by Rev. Ralph Turner and the Kings Colour I think we inherited from the original Pack. We were not allowed to meet in the cellars, as they were considered unsafe and used as a store.

By the time of my marriage in December 1933, some of the boys were ready to go up to the Scouts and some Stagsden Bunyan Boys cycled into Bedford and so I became a Temporary Scoutmaster as well, until Mr. Nye was persuaded to become Scoutmaster and Mrs. Nye, Cubmaster. The Cubs formed a Guard of Honour on Bunyan Meeting steps on Boxing Day, 1933, when I was married to Reg Steers, an Assistant Cubmaster with the Pack during 1931-2.



Bedford and District Local Association

District

Commissioners

A. F. BROWN - 1930

C. W. GURNEY 1931 - 1932

SIR CHARLES C. BOWRING 1932-1939

Col: H. T. CRAIG 1939

F. Stanley SMITH 1939 -

F. W. KUHLCHE - 1950

JOHN W. F. DEW 1950 - 1966
TC
1961 - 1966

C. J. WOODGER 1966 - 1967
TC

L. J. PESTELL 1967 -

North

S. WARD.

A. W. BARRETT

K. WELLS

South

L. J. PESTELL

E. LORD.

E. PANKHURST

D. BARNES.

L. A.

Secretaries

E. W. EBBUTT { 1910-1920
1922-1923

S. C. Moreton 1921

F. S. Smith 1923 - 1924

E. R. Smith. 1925 - 1926

D. Paisley 1926 - 1927

W. BERRALL 1927 - 1937

A. H. Tingey (Assistant) 1929-1936

N. S. G. Allen. 1937

F. MARSHALL 1937 - 1945

Miss B. E. Hedley {

F. W. Kuhlicke { 1945 - 1946

X. E. Norman (1946)

W. Cheeseman 1946 - 1948

C. E. DRYDEN 1948 - 1952

R. W. TURNER 1952 - 1961 -
Div

S. E. Cherry (Assistant) 1957 - 1961

North

Miss D. HANDS

K. H. MARKS

South

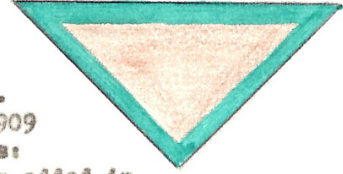
Miss K. GODDARD.

F. E. WALKER



The somewhat nebulous district (N.B.2) enclosed (nominally) by DeParys Avenue, Park Avenue, Polhill Avenue and the north side of Goldington Road has usually had one large Troop (or Group) and the tradition - if such it is - still persists. In the very early days it was the -

2nd: Beds: (Bedford) Open Troop. Formed in 1908 by boys from Bedford Modern School - three patrols, Bulls, Foxes and Hounds - at the same time as the Onestres. In the latter months of that year Mr. L. H. Langdon became Scoutmaster and in 1909 registered at I.H.Q. as the 2nd.Beds: (Regn: No.183). A Wolf Cub Pack was added in 1922 (Regn. 5700).



When Mr. Langdon eventually retired Captain F. P. James took over as Scoutmaster, in fact when the Troop was first registered in the 'new' Local Association in 1919 Capt: James was in charge.

Apparently too the membership had changed from Modern School to Bedford School boys (before either of the Schools officially embraced Scouting).

In 1928, on the introduction of the 'Group System' the 2nd: Beds. registered as a Group (Regn: 4953). But by this time both schools had adopted Scouting so the membership of the 2nd.Beds: (Captain James' Troop it was then known as,) had fallen very low.

The Group, however, continued until 1933 when, through the prolonged illness of the G.S.M. it was disbanded.

Group H.Q. was 9, Oaklands Road, the home of Capt: James.

5th: Beds: (Bedford School) Sponsored Group. Registered as a Scout Troop 27/11/21 (I.H.Q.Regn: 9169) and as a Group in 1928 (4955). A Pack does not appear to have been registered until 14/10/29 but a Rover patrol functioned successfully for a while in 1928.



The Group had grown so large by 1929 that a second Group :-
8th. Beds: (Bedford School) was registered (Reg: No.10656. 31/12/29.) which had the same Group colours in reverse. Both Groups numbered well over 50 in each.

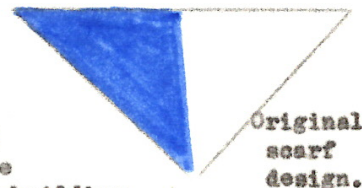


In 1931, however, this second Group was amalgamated with the 5th.Beds: as "A" and "B" Groups.

After a very distinguished career the Group dissolved during 1952 - 53.

37th. Beds: (St. Andrew's) Church of England, Sponsored Group. Registered 1st. August 1956 (M.Q. Reg: 32745)
G.S.M. John Evelyn Mayne, 43, St. Michael's Road.

The Group first had their headquarters in St. Andrew's Church Hall, St. Edmund Road, but in 1959 had to look for alternative accommodation and eventually found a site on the old 'cycle track' and started building their own Hut. This was almost finished when, in 1960, it was blown down. However, a new start was made and the new headquarters was opened in 1961.



Original
scarf
design.



Present
scarf
design.

St. Andrew's has had a good record in competitions and in 1957 carried off the County Scout and Group Flags.

When Mr. Mayne left Bedford Mr. A. W. Barrett took over the Group and was in charge at the time when they went into the Bedford North District. St. Andrew's are still going strong. (Recently they had another mishap when their Hut was burnt down but once again they set to and soon had another built).

On the original Warrant for 'BEDFORD & DISTRICT LOCAL ASSOCIATION' (Dated September 1920) the Outlying Districts and Villages (on the North-east) coming within that Administration were GOLMOUTH, BATON SOCON, GOLDINGTON, GREAT BARTFORD, RAVENSDEN, RENNOLD, and WILDEN. As to whether Troops actually existed in ALL these places is not recorded but records do show that there were Registrations at :-

40th. Beds: (Baton Socon) which was in existence at the time when the Group System came into being. (Registered as an Open Group - I.H.Q. Regn: 4967). Not much was seen of them in Bedford and in 1934 the Group was transferred to the St. Neots Local Association.

64th. Beds: (Roxton) Open Group - Wolf Cub Pack - was registered in 1938 (I.H.Q. Regn: 19701). Headquarters - Roxton School. In the early stages assistance was given by the 15th. Beds. Rover Crew but throughout the war the Pack was kept alive by its one Scouter - Mrs. E. M. Smith.

Disbanded in 1948.

105th.Beds: (Putnoe Methodist) Sponsored Group. (I.H.Q.Reg: 33593 - 25/11/57

Putnoe, of course, is now a district of Bedford but there was a time in the not too distant past that - what there was of it - was considered quite distinct from Bedford and, if anything, part of Goldington.

However, when the Scout Group was started in 1957, by Mr. & Mrs. I. K. Drake, it was registered as an Open Group and as 'Putnoe'. It was in 1963 that the registration was changed to 'Putnoe Methodist' and the Group became Sponsored. Always one of the larger Groups, at one time it had two Wolf Cub Packs and it has always done well in County Competitions.



136th.Beds: (Renhold) Open Group, Registered 18th.May 1962 (Reg: No. 36087)

Headquarters - The Village Hall.
G.S.M. Mr. A. W. Polhill (later succeeded by Mr. H.A.J. Jackman)

An earlier registration was the 21st. Beds: (Renhold) which was in operation before the first world war and was represented at the first County Rally in Bedford in 1913. Apparently however, it did not survive the war period.



143rd.Beds: (Brickhill) Open Group (Reg: No.36801) Has the distinction of being the last Group to be registered at Divisional level. Actually the Division had dissolved by the time the registration was complete, so they can also claim to be the first full registration under the Bedford North District. Which is very appropriate for the Group started in a new development area and is developing with the Estate.



118th.Beds: (Holy Cross) Goldington. A Roman Catholic sponsored Group (Wolf Cub Pack) Registered 3rd.June 1960. (Actually functioned for a while previous to this under the registration of 41st.BedsVB" Pack.

For a while in 1960 a Scout Troop was also in being.



These four Groups, with

20th. Beds: (St.Mary's, Goldington) were all going strong at the dissolution of the Division and, according to all reports are still operating in the Bedford North District.

20th.Beds: (St.Mary's, Goldington) Open Scout Group. Registered 3rd.November 1947

I.H.Q.Regn: No. 25663. Scarf :- Gold.

Headquarters - Church Hall,
Goldington Green.

One of the largest Groups in the County,
complete with Parents' and Supporters'
Association.

Generally reckoned to be one of the oldest Groups in the County, some concern and surprise is often expressed that it has a post-war registration when in fact several references have been made to a Goldington Troop, going as far back as the very early days of Scouting. Actually Goldington, like several other of the real 'old timers' has had a chequered career. (Even so it is sufficiently 'aged' to have an Imperial H.Q. registration, Headquarters having dropped the 'Imperial' from their title several years ago).

Its first official registration in the Bedford Local Association was 23rd. March, 1923 (I.H.Q.Regn: 11102) when the Troop was started by Miss Stella M. Dillen of Howbury Hall (probably one of the first Lady Scoutmasters in the county - or the country). The Troop met in the Wing Room Goldington. Their neckerchieves were then Royal Blue.

But this was NOT the first Goldington Troop; it was really the revival of a previous effort. The real beginning dates back to 1910. In the January of that year Mr. Eric Walker from the London Office (later I.H.Q.) came to Bedford and stayed with Major James Deane, of Goldington Bury. Major Deane became the first County Commissioner and Scouts were soon in being at Goldington. Why then has the L.A. no record? Actually I.H.Q. registrations did not commence until 1919 and any records before that have been passed down through County or Troop level (The Bedford L.A. - although existing - was itself not registered until 1920). In 1913 the first major County Rally and Display was held in Bedford and one of the Troops present was the 20th.Beds:(Goldington). Unfortunately, however, shortly after this came the first world-war (1914-18) and, although Scouting survived, several individual Troops were forced by circumstances to disband. Goldington was apparently among them. The Troop, as we have read, was revived in 1923. This registration lasted until 1925, when it was again disbanded. (In these early days village Troops were often kept going - and going well - by one Scouter but when that Scouter left the Troop would disband until another came along - which could be weeks or years). In the case of Goldington it was 1932 (although a patrol from Goldington is reported - by another Troop now operating in South District - as being in existence in 1926. They mentioned the name of Patrol Leader Sid Harlow and the scarf as being blue with white border. Which proves that some Troops DO keep records).

In 1932 Commander J. C. Fison (The Cottage, Church Lane, Goldington) re-formed the Troop, which was duly registered on 24th. November of that year. (I.N.Q. Regn: 14684). Shortly afterwards a Wolf Cub Pack was added and soon a strong Group was in being. Headquarters was the Church Hall, Goldington Green, as before, but this time the registered Colours (Neckerchief) was Maroon.

The Group continued to thrive but again (in 1937) through Scouter trouble (or lack of Scouters) they had to disband.

The present Group was started (again by a Lady Scouter - Mrs. F. Manning) as a Wolf Cub Pack. But this time 'outside' assistance was forthcoming from two of Bedford's Rover Scout Crews - 1st.Beds: and 15th.Beds. (The Crews did not exactly delegate Scouters, but Alf Pulley of the 1st.Beds: started a Troop, and George Strong ex-15th.Beds: took over as Group Scoutmaster - and he was eventually succeeded by George Mathers of the same Crew).

Goldington was one of the Groups taking part in Building projects and after a fine effort by Group and Parents and Supporters' Association their present Headquarters, near Goldington Green was opened on Monday 20th. May, 1963, by His Worship the Mayor of Bedford (Alderman A. C. Dawes).