

As part of our centenary celebrations, we continue looking back over the years at various noteworthy events and occurrences from our first century of existence. I hope you are enjoying these reminiscences. – Frank Woods

90 Years Ago ~ The Eastbourne Boy Scouts' Association *Official Yearbook* commenced publication in 1921, the year that "the Association shows signs of increased vitality and growth". A combined "Scouts and Cubs Rally" took place in the grounds of Temple Grove School, followed by "a march around the town in the Festival Week procession". The By-laws of the Local Association stated that "any person interested in the Movement shall be eligible for election as a Member" and that their annual subscription shall be "not less than 5/-" [25p]. Whilst "every Troop and Pack shall pay an Annual Subscription of 1d [$\frac{1}{2}$ p] per boy to the Local Association", all Commissioners and Leaders were *ex-officio* members and so did not have to pay.

75 Years Ago ~ In the Chairman's Opening Remarks at the 1935 AGM, Lt-Col. A. J. Strange reported that "Unfortunately we have received notice that we must quit our H.Q. in the Ordnance Yard. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Military Authorities who have been so kind to us up to date. A sub-committee of the Chairman, D.C. and Hon. Sec. are looking into the matter of a new H.Q." Later, in 1944, a Headquarters Fund was established which was topped up regularly – by around £50 per annum – until 1976.

65 Years Ago ~ With their having been no AGM in 1941 or 1942, the 1943 AGM commenced with the Chairman congratulating the DC, Lt-Col. W. J. Keen, on his appointment as CC also – a position he held until 1945, whilst remaining as DC until 1948; he also served as Vice-Chairman from 1943 to 1945! "There were no combined activities owing to the risk of air-raids", and by this time there were just seven Packs and five Troops active, whilst the other 15 groups remained "Dormant owing to War". From almost 1,000 members pre-war, our census figure for 1943 was just 248, with eight on service.

55 Years Ago ~ In October 1956 a fundraising Jamboree Market took place at the Eastbourne Town Hall where "Each Troop has adopted the nationality of a Scouting Country in order to create an International atmosphere"; the money raised allowed us not only "to send three Queen's Scouts and nine First-Class Scouts to the World Jamboree" (in Sutton Coldfield the following year), but also "to distribute £10 to each Group of Boy Scouts in the Eastbourne District" – of which there were 18!

50 Years Ago ~ As the District celebrated its Golden Jubilee with a week of Celebrations, the aim was primarily to raise funds for the recently

purchased Bushy Wood. In the Jubilee Souvenir Programme, DC Rev. Victor Hellaby said that although the Association had managed to afford the purchase, "it is estimated that at least £3,000 will be required in the next year or so" for buildings and utilities. The Programme includes an appeal for help at Bushy Wood which concludes "Let's go to it. In 2009 A.D. Bushy Wood will be not a mere camp site but a Landmark"! (So how's that for foresight!)

40 Years Ago ~ In the November 1971 *District Digest* DC Donald Love reports: "We are sorry that the District will be losing the active interest of one of our loyalist Vice-Presidents who is moving to Roehampton. Commander Davidson was our Treasurer for many years and our Vice-President for about the last ten." Lt-Comm. G. L. Davidson had in fact been our longest-serving Treasurer, holding office for some 24 years! He then served as a Vice-President for a further 12.

35 Years Ago ~ The November 1974 *District Digest* opened with an "important notice", namely that our Scout Shop would have to close by the end of the year, due to the owners of the Leaf Hall cancelling our lease, which also coincided with the impending retirement of Manager Cliff Fenner from the B-P Guild. The remainder of the stock was duly transferred to W. E. Coy & Sons Ltd, Gentlemen's Outfitters, at 150 Seaside, where proprietor Peter Goble had agreed to carry on the Scout Shop in conjunction with his own business.

30 Years Ago ~ In October 1982 Ron Backhurst finally retired as first Warden of Bushy Wood, after almost 24 years! Ron had given well over 50 years to Scouting in Eastbourne, most of that time as GSL and ADC simultaneously, and he had received the Silver Wolf in 1979. His successor was popular Irishman Pat Purcell.

25 Years Ago ~ The October 1985 Newsletter reported that "the amalgamation between the 5th and 25th Scout Groups is almost complete. The new Group will be known as 1st Old Town, and is under the guidance of G.S.L. Tom White." They were meeting in Motcombe School and had adopted the 5th Eastbourne scarf.

20 Years Ago ~ In 1988, which celebrated the 21st Birthday of Venture Scouting, we had four Units in the District, namely the "Fourth" (4th Eastbourne), the "WDZ" (who had just "transformed" to the 11th Eastbourne), the "Moles" (23rd Eastbourne) and "Long Man" (2nd Willingdon). The ADC(V) was Colin Fraser.