

As part of our centenary celebrations, we continue looking back over the years at various events and occurrences from our first century of existence. This series can also be found on [www.edsc100.org.uk](http://www.edsc100.org.uk). – Frank Woods

**90 Years Ago** ~ The Eastbourne Boy Scouts' Association *Official Yearbook* for 1924 states that "Although in a somewhat stronger position financially, we are still without a Central Headquarters", which it was considered "would more than anything else strengthen and consolidate the Movement in Eastbourne. A Publicity Sub-Committee of the Local Association has been appointed with this object . . . and we trust that their efforts may meet with success."

**70 Years Ago** ~ At the 1940 AGM, the Chairman (Lt-Col. A. J. Strange) referred to "the extra work which was being undertaken by the Scouts in War Time, chiefly messenger service and the collection of waste paper". He also mentioned "the loss of many Scouters and Rovers, many of whom had been called up".

**65 Years Ago** ~ In the Chairman's Remarks at the 1947 AGM, Col. T. Sutton expressed some reminiscences of his early days with the Scouts in Eastbourne about 1908 – he described their initial reception as "humorous at first, leading to respect".

**60 Years Ago** ~ In presenting his Report at the 1951 AGM, the Secretary, H. K. Bagnall-Oakeley, presented the census figures for that year and pointed out that "only one in five Cubs became a Scout". The DC, Vincent Allom, in presenting his Report, expressed "the 'extraordinary gratitude' he felt for the hard work done by Mr Bagnall-Oakeley, the retiring Hon. Sec.", who had completed some 15 years in office and was our longest-serving Secretary.

**50 Years Ago** ~ On St George's Day 1957, as part of the B-P Centenary and Scouting Jubilee Celebrations, we presented a seat to the town, which was positioned at the Wish Tower; the inscription carved on the back read: "This seat, presented in the Jubilee Year of Scouting, marks with gratitude the kindly support of Eastbourne residents ever since the formation of the first local Troop in 1909". In actual fact, that date was incorrect, as there had been a couple of local Troops Registered in April 1908. (*Unfortunately, the seat was removed in 2000, due to vandalism.*)

- Also in celebration of the B-P Centenary and Scouting Jubilee, "Eastbourne Scout Week" was organised, during May, in an attempt to express our appreciation to Eastbourne's residents for their support at the Jamboree Market the previous year and also during Bob-a-Job Week; according to DC Vic Hellaby, the idea was to let the public "see Scouts at work and at play".

**40 Years Ago** ~ The April 1969 *District Digest* contained a report from SAGA, which was the local joint organisation for Scouts and Guides; here's an extract: "Since SAGA was rejuvenated nearly four years ago, membership has increased to about 50. . . . Our February meeting was in the form of a Games Evening-cum-Disco with our favourite D.J., George Cole." (*Sorry George!*)

**35 Years Ago** ~ Saturday 19th April 1975 saw the Official Opening of the Hampden Park Scout and Guide Headquarters, with CC George Herbert and Guides CC Mrs P. Spicer jointly cutting the ribbon; DC Donald Love presented a Thanks Badge to Mrs Shandy Mathias who had led the fundraising.

- 1977 saw us all wearing the Queen's Silver Jubilee Badge, and in April the first meeting took place of the new Scout Fellowship, under Chairman W. L. Wilmshurst; the 30 members had previously been known as the B-P Guild.

- Also in April 1977, a District All-Night Wide-Game took place on Willingdon Hill, when no less than 117 Scouts and Leaders "enjoyed" a very chaotic sleepless night; entitled "Operation Moonfleet", the game started at 9 p.m. and finished at 6 a.m.!

**30 Years Ago** ~ The April 1978 *District Digest* carried details of the St George's Day Service at St Andrew's, Seaside, and announced that "For the first time in several years there will be a parade with a band"; the Assembly point was Winston Crescent and the parade would then "proceed in an orderly manner" to the church; Parade Marshall was ADC Ray Eldridge.

**25 Years Ago** ~ The first Annual Inspection of "Fourth Steel" took place in April 1987 – needless to say, on the 4th of the 4th! This was the steel band of the 4th Eastbourne, which had been forming during the previous 18 months; County Band Adviser Gordon Stoner inspected, and guests included His Worship the Mayor (Cllr Leslie Mason), Ian Gow, MP, and Jim Davidson from Headquarters – who used up a whole roll of film! As the only Scout steel band in the country, Fourth Steel went on to appear at the Gilwell Reunion, the Royal Albert Hall, and on TV.

**15 Years Ago** ~ In the Scout Fellowship Report at the 1994 AGM, Chairman Kath Brook recorded: "During the past year we have also taken on board a number of members from the now defunct CO-EX. . . . At the moment we refer to them as our First-Aid Section, for that is where their main skills and interests lie."