

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

**100 Years Ago** ~ In the summer of 1911, a patrol of eight scouts from the Ratton Troop attended the great Scout Rally at Windsor; they went off early in the morning “in a Special Train crowded with Scouts”; having taken up their position they were inspected by the King, accompanied by Chief Scout General Baden-Powell; they returned home late that night.

**75 Years Ago** ~ In the Chairman’s Opening Remarks at the 1937 AGM, Lt-Col. A. J. Strange reported that “the Association has received a Legacy of £200 from the Estate of the late Mr Caleb Diplock of Polegate with which it is hoped to purchase a permanent Camp Site”. Amazingly, after some 14 years of legal wrangling and dispute by Diplock’s relatives, via the House of Lords, this sum had to be repaid in 1951!

**65 Years Ago** ~ In his Secretary’s Report at the 1947 AGM, H. K. Bagnall-Oakeley referred to the census, which showed that eight fewer Groups were still dormant and that the 13 active Groups contained 622 members (of “all ranks”), as against 25 Groups totalling 922 members in 1938 (*i.e.* before the war). The number of Scouters had doubled during the year, but “more were still required to man the dormant Groups and the new Senior Sections”.

**55 Years Ago** ~ At the 1956 AGM, it was announced that there would be a Memorial Service to B-P in Westminster Abbey on 23rd February 1957, “but only members with more than 25 years’ service could attend”. Also, “Sussex was going to take [accommodate] all the Canadians for the Jamboree [at Sutton Coldfield] – well over 1,000 would have to be entertained.”

**50 Years Ago** ~ In 1961, we received a request to support the Eastbourne Carnival in various ways, one of which was to assist at the Torchlight Procession by supplying five patrols, in uniform, each with a trek-cart full of sand, to be responsible for collecting discarded torches! We obviously did a good job, according to DC Donald Love’s first Annual Report, which says that “our ‘Fire Brigade’ trek-cart parties drew much favourable comment”. He also proudly reported that “The Carnival Entry of the ‘Bushy Wood Bogey’ won a First Prize and subsequently won similar awards at Hastings and Hailsham Carnivals.”

• In July 1963, the Chief Scout (Charles Maclean) visited the “great Sussex Camp” in Conyboro Park, Lewes, and the Eastbourne contingent comprised 255 Scouts and 305 Cubs, representing all Groups except one; DC Donald Love praised the District for “the standard of camping, the neat layout, [and] the smartness of the boys”.

**40 Years Ago** ~ Issue No. 1 of the new *District Digest* appeared, in July 1968, under Editor Ken Suckling. Previously, the “Local Association News Letter”, which has been published since the late forties, had been produced by the District Secretary of the time – H. K. Bagnall-Oakeley until May 1951, then Archie Page (Issues 22 to 100) until February 1962, then Enid Page (101–128) until the end of 1964. Finally, DC Don Love produced them (129–177) until the end of 1966.

• In September 1968, all Cubs, Scouts, Brownies and Guides were invited to take part in Eastbourne District Scout Council’s first Stamp Exhibition at Central Methodist Church Hall, where Mr Archie Geering would be exhibiting many rare Scout stamps from around the world; members of the Eastbourne and South Downs Philatelic Society arranged the event and acted as judges.

**35 Years Ago** ~ The July 1973 *District Digest* reports on a successful Cross-Country Run: “A good turnout – 41 runners from eight Troops – far more than in recent years. First-class organisation from the 6th. . . . The liquid hospitality after the run was much appreciated. . . . The boys enjoyed external refreshment in Ascham’s pool – while the Scouters found the 6th’s generous provision of internal refreshment more acceptable!” (*This kind hospitality certainly contributed to a good turnout of Leaders!*)

**30 Years Ago** ~ 1982 was “The Year of the Scout”, celebrating 75 years of Scouting, and we were delighted that Eastbourne Borough Council granted our request to create a floral display of the Year of the Scout badge at the Redoubt gardens during the summer.

**25 Years Ago** ~ July 1987 saw most of the District down on the beach with buckets and spades . . . yes, it was the first District Sandcastle-Building Competition! The 4th Eastbourne had been holding their own inter-patrol competition for a few years and someone (!) decided to throw it open to the District. . . . It really took off as a popular event for some 14 years, until the quantity of sand decreased to such a poor level. (*The trophy rests in the Lodge.*)

**10 Years Ago** ~ The big event of 1997 was our “1907 Day”, which took place, of course, on 19th July (19/07) at Seaside Recreation Ground; with an optional theme of “Scouting Through the Ages”, the idea, as well as fundraising, was “to raise public awareness of Scouting in the area”. The all-day event was opened by Desmond Llewellyn – “Q” from the Bond films – and there were over 50 stalls and sideshows, with all 13 Groups participating. A Giant Pushball Competition ran throughout the day, interspersed with performances from the Kingfishers and two guest Scout Bands.