

A HISTORY OF ROMFORD SCOUTING

(Part 2 1950 - 1979)



Originally Compiled by John “Bunny” Warren, *District Archivist*.

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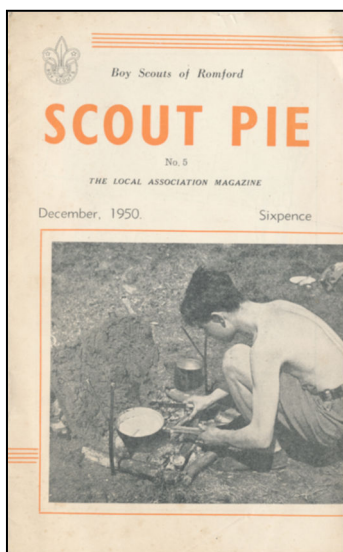
5 - THE NINETEEN-FIFTIES

OLD SCOUTS

In June 1948, Headquarters inaugurated the B.-P. Guild of Old Scouts and an exploratory meeting was held in Romford in October of that year. A local branch of the Guild got off to a good start, having a reported 40 members by October 1949, and in 1950 and 1951 they carried out various service tasks for the District such as stewarding at the St. George's Day Services and the Swimming Gala, and assisting in the arrangements for Bob-a-Job Week. However, by 1952 it was reported that membership had dropped from 65 to 13, and in 1967 the Guild was wound up altogether. It was not until the 'eighties that it was restarted under the name "Scout Fellowship" (see Chapter 8).

EXPANSION

Towards the end of 1949 the first houses on the new London overspill estate at Harold Hill were completed amidst a sea of mud, and in October 1950 Ted Butcher, formerly of the 3rd Gidea Park, opened the first of four Troops on the estate - meeting on the first evening under a lamppost, but afterwards in the estate contractor's canteen until the first school was built nearly two years later. Three Cub Packs were eventually started in this Group by A.D.C. (Wolf Cubs) Miss Phil. King (subsequently Mrs. Brown). Her method was to start a Pack, hand it over to a 'helper' who inevitably became Cubmaster before long, and move on to start another. A number of Packs in the District owe their birth to Phil. Her father, Mr. J. T. King (shoemaker of Victoria Road), was a stalwart supporter of the District in the background. There have been two long-serving leaders in this Group: one serving for 42 years and the other for 28 years as a Scouter and a further 12 as Group Chairman - but these are matters for a Group history.



1950 SCOUT PIE

This is an interesting snapshot of District life in 1950. Published by Romford Boys Scouts Association at the Association Office, 1 St Andrews Road, Romford. Bunny was the editor and Bill Archer the DC describes it as a district magazine "published in the hope that it will be the means of bringing closer together all sections of the Movement."

The photos appear to have been provided by Imperial Headquarters. As well as advertisements for local shops (Stones Boys' Shop in the Market Place and Barten LTD in South Street) it contains a report of 3GP's camp in Sicily, a report of the starting of 1st Havering's Rover Crew. A report of an archaeological dig outside Dunmow assisted by the 7th Romford troop and Rules of the Romford Volley Ball League.

Around the Groups reports that 8th Romford had launched a scheme to build their own headquarters, 3GP had launched a Rover Crew in 1949, the 7th and 12th camped at Brynbach Scout Campsite near Saron in Denbighshire in North Wales where they built a gate to "The Glen" and the senior Scouts climbed Snowdon in a gale. 4th Gidea Park held a summer camp at Shanklin on the Isle of White and the 1st and 2nd Romford represented the Scouts of Romford at the Boys Brigade annual Founders Day Parade on October 29th.

It also reports that "once again" Romford won the county swimming Gala

Two further editions of *Scout Pie* were published in December 1950 and June 1951 respectively. The second of these contained an article on "Caving in the Mendips" by Senior Scout J. Purton, 12th Romford, describing an activity which became very popular with some Senior Scouts in the District in the 'fifties and 'sixties.

In July 1950, Syd. Feldwick, A.D.C. (Rovers) reported a need for more blood donors and remarked that "some Scouters and Rovers had already been good enough to give donations".

1951 WORLD SCOUT JAMBOREE. AUSTRIA

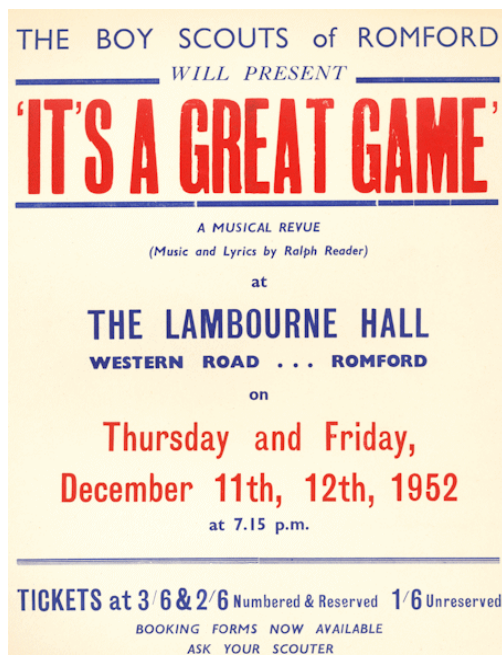
Four Scouts from Romford - D. Dear, 8th Romford, A. Green, 12th Romford, J. Ford, 13th Romford and one from the 7th Romford (un-named in the minutes) attended the World Scout Jamboree at Bad Ischl, Austria in August 1951. It is believed that our D.C., Bill Archer, was leader of the Essex Troop at this Jamboree.

Also in 1951, Rover Scouts from the District, in pursuance of their "Service" motto, erected a large number of temporary flagpoles at Chigwell Youth Camp in preparation for an international event.

In 1950/51 a District Senior Scout magazine existed edited by King's Scout Dennis Dear, 8th Romford, but no copies have been found. The magazine did, however, make a profit, and in May 1952 the sum of fifteen shillings (75p) was passed to the District for the credit of the Jamboree Fund.

In 1952, Eric Pattrick, formerly District Cubmaster was appointed A.D.C. (General Duties) with special responsibility for the Harold Hill estate. By that time there were two Groups on the estate, with a third about to be formed, in addition to the 4th Gidea Park catering partly for Harold Hill and partly for the Romford Council estate on the west side of Straight Road.

In December 1952, the District staged a Gang Show entitled "it's a Great Game" (Music and Lyrics by Ralph Reader) at the Lambourne Hall, Western Road. Memories include Syd Feldwick (A.D.C. Rovers) and other Scouters as fairies, and noisy competition from table tennis in the upstairs hall. £10.10.0 (£10.50) from the proceeds was donated to the Romford War Memorial Fund.



1953: THE CORONATION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Brian Denton, 12th Romford, (there may have been others from Romford) had a close view of the procession. Having spent the previous week delivering official letters to the various hotels in which foreign royalty and heads of state were stabled, on the day itself the Lord Chancellor had given his permission for the Scout messengers to line the pathway from the Abbey to the road, thereby getting an excellent view as a recompense for their services [Letter from Brian Denton, August 1996] Another Romford Senior Scout (unnamed in the minutes) was stationed in the Palace forecourt to assist in manoeuvring the royal coach.

Scouts sold programmes on the Coronation procession route and David Hart, the present District Commissioner (1997) but then a member of the 2nd Collier Row, has the following recollections:

We had a very early stall, my fellow P.L. Terry Williams and myself, as we had to be in London by 6a.m.! When we got out of the tube station it seemed that people were everywhere, many of them still trying to sleep on the pavement. It was, of course, raining, but this did not dampen the spirit amid everyone was in a happy mood. Our base was a Ministry of Health Building to the rear of Regent Street. We were briefed, given the programmes we had to sell and sent out into Regent Street to work. All morning we walked among great crowds, selling our programmes, and, after a break to eat our sandwiches, back we went.

There are many memories, but perhaps one of the most vivid was at the moment of the Queen's crowning, which was heard on portable radios and by the firing of gun salutes. The vast crowd stood and sang the National Anthem.

We were on the route back from Westminster Abbey to the Palace and had been told that we would probably not be able to see anything. Then, just before the procession was due, we were taken out and through the crowd to the front, between the R.A.F. men lining the route. We could not have had a better view. I will not forget the parade of servicemen from the Commonwealth, the well-known people in the coaches, and Sir Winston Churchill leaning out of the coach window and waving.

The end of the procession was drawing near with the coaches of members of the Royal Family. At last you knew that the Queen's coach was coming because you could hear

people singing the National Anthem. The singing followed the coach along and then, there it was. The Golden Coach with a young Queen, dressed in her robes of State with the Crown on her head. She held the orb and sceptre in her hands. Whoever could forget a sight like that? After it was all over we made our way home. 'Tired and damp, but remembering a day that will never be forgotten.

But for me it was not all over. As soon as I arrived home, I had to play the piano for our street party!



The Trek Cart Race – Raphael Park

As part of the local celebrations Romford Scouts put on a display of Scouting in Raphael Park. This included a trek cart race in which teams of Senior Scouts raced to a start line with a trek cart loaded with pioneering gear and rucksacks, constructed a (partly prefabricated) bridge, dismantled the trek cart and carried it over the bridge together with the rucksacks, dismantled the bridge, re-assembled and loaded the trek cart and raced to a finish line. Teams accomplished this in less than fifteen minutes. Wolf Cubs, Scouts and Rovers also took part and our entire display lasted 1½-2 hours.



3rd Gidea Park at Raphael's Park with their International Scouting Display.

The 2nd Collier Row Troop had gone to the trouble of constructing a raft from scraps of wood and tin cans for the Coronation Display in Raphaels Park but were told they were not allowed to use the lake.

A chain of beacons around the country was lit on Coronation night, and we were responsible for the Romford beacon in Bedfords Park. We also sold 1686 official Coronation programmes locally.

Correction: The display of Scouting in Raphael Park attributed above to the Queen's Coronation celebrations may have actually been in 1951, probably in connection with the Festival of Britain (but this awaits confirmation).

The 3rd Gidea Park archive contains an annual report for 1953 confirming attendance by the Group at "Coronation displays in Raphael Park and Harold Hill, building huts and setting up displays on International Scouting." The pictures reproduced here are from another document in the 3GP archives which includes a newspaper clipping describing a Coronation Display in Raphael's Park held by the Romford & District Scouts Association. The 1951 event the Bunny's original text mentions must have been a different event.



Romford Town Swimming Club organised a gals as part of the borough's Coronation Celebrations. The first four races were between School teams. The next four events were for Romford & District Scouts followed by a synchronised swimming display. This was followed by four events for Romford & District Guides and finally four events for Romford Town Swimming Club. The evening ended with a water polo match.

Later in 1953, a District Patrol Leaders' Conference was held at Gilwell. For some years in the Fifties a regular District Good Turn in the autumn was to rake up the huge quantity of plane leaves on the Training Ground at Gilwell, and this was generally incorporated into an activity weekend of some kind. Towards the end of the same year, the 1st Havering formed a "B" Troop, and the 6th Romford established a Troop at St. Mary's, Hornchurch, which was transferred to Squirrels Heath District later in the year.

A "St. Georges Day Reunion Supper" was held annually jointly with Squirrels Heath District until 1954 when it was decided to abandon it and invite Squirrels Heath Leaders to our annual Christmas/New Year Party instead.

In 1955 Syd Feldwick resigned as A.D.C. Rovers, and Vic. Vaughan, G.S.M. 8th Romford, was appointed in his place. Also in that year Phil. Brown resigned as A.D.C. Cubs and Eric Pattrick was appointed in her place. A year later, Rex Bradfield became A.D.C. (Senior Scouts) and John Moore A.D.C. (Scouts). Rex Bradfield resigned a year later due to work commitments.

Some German Scouts were hosted in Romford following the Essex County Jamboree in 1956.

SALVATIONISTS HAVE SCOUT TROOP

In 1954 local papers reported the reopening of the 4th Romford Scout Troop with the headline "SALVATIONISTS HAVE SCOUT TROOP" The new troop was sponsored by the Romford Corps of the Salvation Army. Bill Archer the then district commissioner of Romford presented the group with a new flag and a certificate of recognition to Major Reid of the Salvation Army and Scout leader warrants to Ian Greer and Peter Colquhoun. The previous 4th Romford troop was formed in 1946 but closed when the leader went abroad.

DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS

In 1955 the 1st Romford Group, having been given notice to quit the land on which Brownsea Hall II stood, considered the purchase of land at the end of Dunton Road, and to the rear of houses in Park Drive, but found that the cost of levelling the ground was beyond their means, and in November the District Executive asked to be given the option to purchase. The actual purchase at a cost of £255 (including indemnity insurance and fees) was approved by the District Executive Committee on 12th June 1956, and this land became the site of the present District H.Q. Following four years of work by teams of Senior Scouts, Rover Scouts and Lay Members led by Vic. Vaughan, A.D.C. (Rovers) together with work by Contractors, a headquarters building and separate toilet block

were ready for use late in 1960, and the first meeting of the District Executive Committee in the new building was on 8th November 1960.

From 1956 until about 1964, Essex Rover Scouts staged an annual Motor Rally, generally by night, although there was one daytime event. Romford Rover Crews invariably entered several teams in this popular event, and in 1962 we bagged five of the first ten places. Each year's winners were expected to organise the following year's event, which was quite an undertaking in view of the large number of marshals etc. needed. Motor rallies generally became too popular during this period and -following a period of regulation by the R.A.C. - finally died out in the Sixties because of the nuisance to country-dwellers.

Each year during the Fifties and Sixties assistance was given by Romford Scouts at the Romford Music Festival for which a letter of thanks was received from the Council each year.

TRAGIC NEWS

In August 1954 national and local papers reported the tragic yet admirably heroic death of an ex Romford Scout. Antony Leavy joined the 3rd Gidea Park troop in 1937 and went on to become a Kings Scout and gain the rare gold chord. He obtained a first class with honours, bachelor of science degree by the age of 20 and became the youngest holder in England of a Doctor of Philosophy which was awarded to him for research into the production of penicillin.



Tony Level top left on summer camp at Ballater in 1939

In the summer of 1954 Tony was working at the university of California as a research chemist where he had done a lot of preliminary work on the use of ACTH for treating arthritis.

Dr Leavy was climbing mount Olympus (7,954 ft or 2424m) which lies 65 miles west of Seattle when one of his friends fell into a crevasse and broke his leg. Dr Leavy volunteered to descend into the Crevasse and tied a rope around his friend to enable his successful rescue. Unfortunately Dr Leavy was exhausted by his efforts and by the time he himself was rescued he had frozen to death.

In September, scouts attended the dedication of a memorial bench near his former home in Heath Close.



Scouts at the Dedication Of a Bench to Tony's memory outside the entrance to Gidea Park Golf Club

GANG SHOWS

The 12th Romford Gang Show in 1945 and the District Show in 1952 have already been mentioned, but also in the fifties Group Gang Shows were presented by the 2nd Romford, 3rd Gidea Park, 13th Romford and 2nd Collier Row Groups.



3rd Gidea Park Cubs perform "Bashful Brownies" at a gang show during the 1950s.



The 3rd Gidea Park chorus line during the interval of a mid fifties gang show.

1957: SCOUTS SILVER JUBILEE



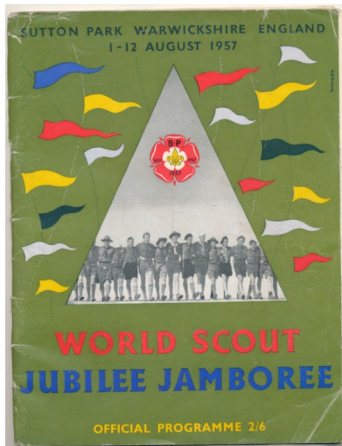
As host country, Great Britain had a large contingent at the World Scout "Jubilee" Jamboree at Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire, Twenty-eight Romford Scouts attended, mostly as members of Essex "B" Troop, led by our A.D.C. John Moore, 3 Scouters attended the associated Leaders indaba, and three Rovers the Rover Moot. A Reunion of Romford members attending was held in November 1958.



Scouting First Day Cover posted home from the Jamboree by G. Burr 2nd Dagenham (South Essex 'A' unit)

Nearly forty years on, David Lamb, then a Senior Scout in the 1st Harold Hill Group had these recollections:

If you were to plan a trip from London to Birmingham by train, travelling via Colchester and Ely would not be an ideal route. Yet in 1957 several hundred Scouts from Essex and London made this trip to attend the Jubilee Jamboree at Sutton Coldfield. Getting nearly thirty-five thousand Scouts from all over the world to one English station must have been a planning nightmare for British Rail: but they did it!



Jamboree Programme - G. Burr 2nd Dagenham

Each day there were displays in the main arena where demonstrations of Scouting activities were put on by various countries. One of the most spectacular was put on by the contingent from the United States. Hundreds of Scouts in authentic costumes performed Red Indian dances and then gave a demonstration of fire-lighting by the old method of rubbing two sticks together. The grand finale was lighting a fire using a tree trunk the size of a telegraph pole, held upright with guy ropes and then rotated backwards and forwards on a wooden board by two teams of Scouts hauling on a rope looped around the pole. It actually worked.



FRENCH WEST AFRICAN SKIFFLE GROUP - G. BURR



Contingent Handbook and book provided by Barclays Bank to explain the UK's pre decimalisation currency to foreign Scouts

One of the biggest pastimes was trading badges. The main road through the camp site was like an eastern bazaar with groups of Scouts trading and bartering. Many Groups, especially the Americans, had come with special trading kits of badges, scarves and woggles.



SOUTH ESSEX 'A' SUB CAMP - G. BURR

Following the Jamboree, over 100 Austrian Scouts were entertained in Scouts' homes in Romford. The programme provided included a visit to the Ford Works, a tour of the Brewery and a social at Wykeham Hall. Parts of the booklet given to the visitors were translated into German by Patrol Leader Roy Wilder, 7th Romford. Other members of the 7th Romford acted as interpreters.



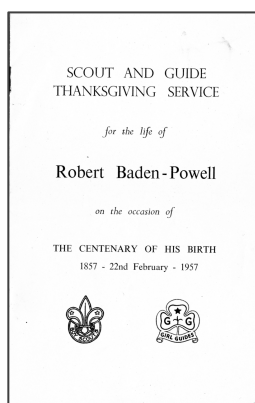
**The Romford District Contingent at the 1957 World Scout Jamboree.
From Patrick Young's (4th from left back row) Collection**

In celebration of the Jubilee, the District gave the Council a seat which was sited at the junction of Main Road and Repton Avenue. A photo of the

presentation appeared in the *Romford Times* for October 9th. Romford Council Parks Department mounted a floral tribute in Raphael Park.



The Main Road Bench with the Author John "Bunny" Warren standing centre surrounded by Scouts from across the district.



1957 was also the Centenary of B.-P's birth and Scouts from Romford took part in Thanksgiving Services both in Romford and at Chelmsford Cathedral. A copy of the Order of Service is in the District's archives.

By 1958, the 1st Harold Hill, already mentioned, having 56 boys in the Troop, formed a Sea Scout

Troop to absorb some of the eighty-strong waiting list. Late in 1957 or early '58, the 13th Romford Senior Troop constructed a substantial bamboo bridge across the foyer of the Odeon Cinema, South Street, to support the showing of the film "Bridge on the River Kwai". A photograph appeared in *The Scouter* magazine for April. 1958.

In 1959, the 10th World Scout Jamboree was held at Manila, Philippines. No Romford Scouts appear to have attended.

Since this is "mid-way" Chapter, the opportunity will be taken here to review a few subjects which have been ongoing throughout the years before resuming the year by year account in the Sixties.

BASIC TESTS

From the earliest days until the Report of the Chief Scout's Advance Party referred to in the next Chapter, the pattern of basic tests for Wolf Cubs and Scouts was as follows:

WOLF CUBS:

Tenderpad	Preparation for Investiture
One Star.	A metal star worn in the cap - "one eye open"
Two Stars	"Both eyes open"

BOY SCOUTS:

Tenderfoot	Preparation for Investiture
Second Class	"No boy will want to remain second class for long" - B-P
First Class	

following which the Scout could gain "cords" of various colours for gaining 6, 12 or 18 Proficiency badges.

Prior to the advent of Senior Scouts, the coveted King's Scout Badge was the province of the Boy Scout section.

Details changed over the years, but the tests remained substantially the same until 1966. As an example, the following are the tests a Boy Scout had to take *before investiture*, taken from the 1952 edition of "P.O.R."

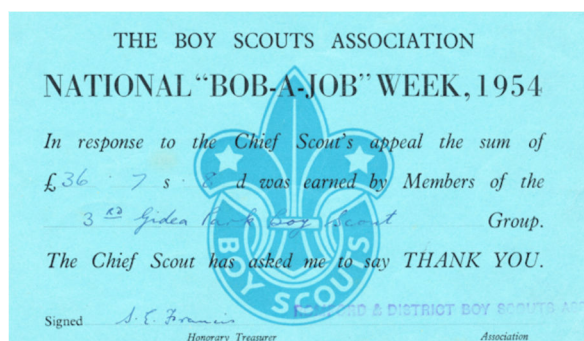
- (1) *Preliminary*. Know the Scout Law and Promise, and their meaning in accordance with his age; the salute as explained in Camp Fire Yarn 3 of "Scouting for Boys"; and the composition of the Union Flag, and how to hoist, break and fly it.
- (2) *Health*. Clean a wound, and make and apply a dressing.
- (3) *Observation*. Make the woodcraft signs given in Camp Fire Yarn 4 of "Scouting for Boys".
- (4) *Pioneering*. Demonstrate with rope how to tie the following knots: reef, sheet bend, clove-hitch, bowline, round turn and two half hitches, sheepshank; and explain their uses. Whip the end of a rope.

JOB WEEK

The embryo of Job Week was actually a single day towards the end of the 2nd World War to raise funds to send Scout Relief Teams into Europe in the wake of our advancing armies.

In 1949 the concept was reintroduced to raise funds for Headquarters, prior to the introduction of a Capitation fee (Membership fee from 1977), and each Scout and Cub was expected to raise a stated sum of money. It was originally titled "Bob-a-Job Week" - a "Bob" (for those whose childhood commenced after 1972) being a shilling (now 5p). However, when inflation started in earnest, it was found that some members of the public were taking the "bob" too literally (the author recalls two boys who spent three mornings creosoting a fence at Harold Wood for a bob each) and the name was changed to "Scout Job Week" as it is today.

At the same time, the number of houses unoccupied during the day was growing rapidly, which was discouraging for the keenest boys, and several Romford Groups experimented with "post boxes" where members of the public could "book a Scout" (or a Cub). These experiments do not seem to have lasted for long so can, perhaps, be regarded as not too successful.



A receipt stamped by Romford & District Boy Scouts Association for the 36 pounds, 7 shillings and 8 pence raised by 3rd Gidea Park Scouts

With the introduction of Capitation Fees in the sixties, Groups were given the option of continuing with Bob-a-Job - putting any surplus into their own

funds, or making good any deficiency - or raising the fee in some other way. Very few Romford Groups now exercise the option.

Apart from the money, Job Week does seem to have generated more press publicity than almost anything else we do - cartoonists have an annual field day - and "Bob-a-Job" has become almost as large a part of our national heritage as "Dyb, dyb, dyb".

ADULT LEADER TRAINING

Another ongoing aspect of Scouting has been the training of adult leaders ever since the first "Course of Instruction for London Scoutmasters" in 1910. One wonders if Messrs. Ashby and Mackness attended that course.

The pattern of Wood Badge training, as it came to be known, which is familiar to older leaders was as follows:

- a) A Preliminary Training Course, run by Counties and related to the particular section in which a leader intended to work. This was usually a weekend course, and on completion one could wear the "Gilwell woggle"
- b) A week in camp, at which one belonged to a Patrol or Six and took part in Pack or Troop meetings and activities with the Leader Trainers acting as Scouters. These camps were run mainly by counties, but also at Gilwell, which had the added benefit of being international. In the author's Patrol on Scout course 247 at Gilwell were a Ugandan, an American and a Swede.
- c) Another part - and for some the hardest - was written and was carried out by post in three stages, rather like a correspondence course. Candidates were invited to answer in writing questions relating to the running of their Packs, Troops or Crews tire books being forwarded to Gilwell who sent them on to a team of anonymous "Readers" - we had at least one in Romford - who added their comments and recommended the candidate for a 'pass' or - very rarely - recommended that the candidate should be given some help from his or her A.D.C.
- d) Finally, four months supervision locally from an A.D.C.

After all that, one was entitled to wear the coveted Wood Badge and many are the tales of the difficulty in getting those beads "in the old days". Nevertheless, District minutes are peppered with reports of leaders who had completed their training, so it couldn't have been *that* bad!

In later years the pattern of Leader Training has changed so many times, and is still changing, that it would be tedious to outline even the current procedure. Readers who want to know are free to try a "hands on" experience.

INTERNATIONAL TRIPS

The centre double pages spread of the June 1955 edition of The Scout consisted of a report of a camp in Malta undertaken jointly by the 3rd Gidea Park and Brentwood School troops.



During the 1950's the Brentwood School and 3rd Gidea Park troops had built up quite a reputation for foreign travel. In 1949, just four years after the end of the second world war they were camping in Switzerland. In 1951 they became the first UK troops to visit Sicily. In 1951 they camped at Abisko in Lapland which was at the time the most northerly camp arranged by any UK troop. In 1954 they became the first UK troop to camp in Greece, the Malta trip in 1955 was also the first by a UK troop. In 1961 they became the first UK troop to visit Tangier in Morocco, Northern Africa. During the period 1947 to 1951 3rd Gidea Park held at least one foreign trip each year.



APRIL 25th 1954 – SCOUTS ARE PRESENTED TO DIGNITARIES AT THE ST GEORGE'S DAY PARADE



Newspapers Covering The Jamboree From the collection of G. Burr 2nd Dagenham who attended the jamboree as part of the South Essex 'A' unit. The Jubilee Journal was published daily on site.

1959 AROUND BRITAIN

Jack Skillan, the writer of Rover Roundabout in the "Scouter" mentioned the 3rd Gidea Park Rover crew three times during 1959. This was due to their Expedition driving around Britain visiting both Lands End and John O'Groats and Climbing a mountain each day. Mountains climbed were

Day 1 - Yes Tor 2028ft & High Willhays 2039
 Day 2 - SNOWDON 3560 ft.
 Day 3 - SCAPELL PIKE 3210 ft
 Day 4 - BEN NEVIS 4406 ft
 Day 5 - BEN HOPE 3040 ft
 Day 6 - BEN MACDHUI 4296 ft
 Day 7 - KINDER SCOUT 2031 ft

The escapade also got mentioned in the Romford Recorder and Romford Times.

The team and Vehicle at John o'Groats



SCOTT LODGE OPENS

The issue of the national weekly magazine "The Scout" for the week ending June 27th 1959 contains an article written by P.L. Paul Ward of the 3rd Squirrels Heath Group (previously known as the 2nd Gidea Park) and a photograph. The article describes the 8½ years of effort required to build their own HQ off Upper Brentwood Road.

Once the land was purchased, the Scouts cleared the site before contractors were hired to construct the building. A first stone had been laid by Rev. Percy D. Beckwith who was the county Chaplain for Methodist Scouts back in September 1958

The hall had been opened on April 20th 1959 by Lieutenant Commander Peter Scott in memory of his father Robert Scott of Arctic Exploration fame. Sir Peter Scott was himself a bit of a celebrity having setup various wildlife trusts and helped fund the World Wide Fund for Nature and designed their famous Panda Logo. He also won Olympic Bronze for sailing at the 1936 Olympics.

The building was shared with the 2nd Gidea Park Guides & Brownies. Also present at the opening ceremony was the D.C. for Squirrels Heath Mr Brown.

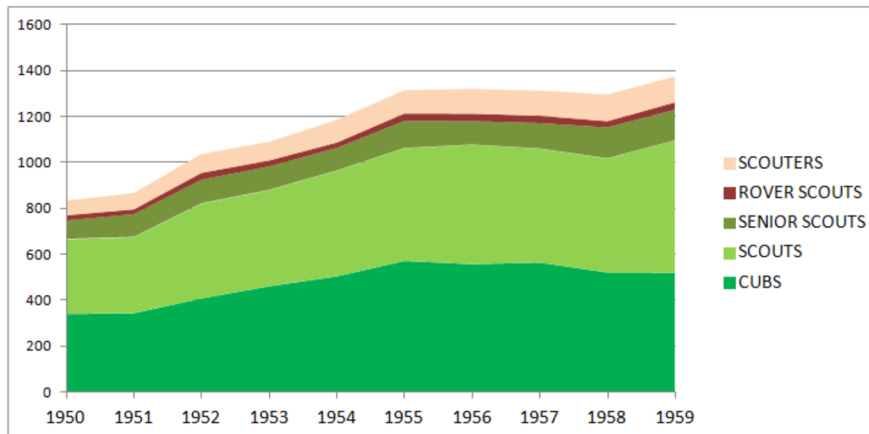
The same issue of The Scout also included an article by H. David Harwood about 3rd Gidea Park's camp in Sicily.



CENSUS FIGURES FOR THE FIFTIES

It is noteworthy that by 1955 our total membership had recovered from the loss of eight Groups to Squirrels Heath District eight years earlier.

	CUBS	SCOUTS	SENIOR SCOUTS	ROVER SCOUTS	SCOUTERS	TOTAL
1950	341	324	81	23	65	834
1951	345	329	100	21	72	867
1952	409	412	103	30	83	1037
1953	462	417	103	26	82	1095
1954	505	459	98	24	99	1185
1955	572	490	118	33	102	1315
1956	558	519	102	33	108	1320
1957	565	495	111	32	110	1313
1958	522	495	135	27	117	1296
1959	521	575	133	32	113	1374



The 1959 figures represent 11.16 boys per leader.
 Going-up ages:
 Cubs - Scouts: 11
 Scouts - Senior Scouts: 15.
 Senior Scouts - Rovers:
 Minimum 17.



A program for a May 1952 3rd Gidea Park Gang Show and a picture of the event.

6 - THE NINETEEN-SIXTIES

The 'fifties were the decade of Teddy Boys and Rock 'n' Roll, and while these trends caused alarm in the minds of some older folk, they were as nothing compared with the Mods and Rockers and teenage gang fights of the 'sixties. Nevertheless, and in spite of adult concerns over the state of the nation's youth, our numbers remained high during both decades reaching our all-time peak of 1374 in 1959, followed by 1356 in 1960 and 1362 in 1962. This trend is particularly noticeable in the figures for Senior Scouts - the age group which one might assume was most "at risk" - which reached their peak of 147 in 1962.

CAVALCADE

In September 1959, many Troops and Senior Troops took part in the "Cavalcade of *Youth*" organised by Romford British Legion at Romford Stadium, and this was to some extent a "warm-up" for a similar event in September 1960 when we surprised the audience by filling the arena with activity for the penultimate display. Lightweight tents were pitched, flagpoles constructed with staves, ballistas fired paper cannon-balls into the crowd, the Senior Scouts and Rover Scouts constructed an aerial runway (from a pre-erected scaffold tower), and as a climax, flags were broken at the head of the flagpoles then, as all lights went out, twenty small fires sprang up around the arena. All, including clearing the arena, in the space of twenty minutes.

In November 1960, the 2nd Romford organised a Night Cycle Rally for the District's Senior Scouts, and in January 1961, Senior Scouts from Romford, under the leadership of John Moore, A.D.C. (Senior Scouts) staged a display of "transporter races" at the Camping and Outdoor Life Exhibition at Olympia.

SERVICE

The 1st Harold Hill Group formed a Rover Crew in December 1959, and, since some of the members, as Senior Scouts, had assisted with Essex camps for handicapped Scouts, the Crew soon became involved in a major service project, namely the running of a Scout Troop at Trueloves, a Shaftesbury Society home for severely disabled boys at Ingatestone. This work continued until Rover Scouts ceased to exist in 1967 (see below) after which, Charlie Lawrence, Rover Scout Leader, continued the work as a Scouter in Chelmsford district. This Rover Crew also organised several night incident hikes, primarily for Harold Hill Scouts, in the Noak Hill/Navestock area. In 1960 nine Patrols from five Troops took part. Also in 1960, Rovers from various Crews in the

District acted as a security force during Guy Fawkes celebrations in Bedfords Park.

During 1963 three Romford Senior Scouts and the A.D.C. (Scouts) sold programmes on the route of Princess Alexandra's wedding procession. On St. George's Day, 1965, we erected and lit a beacon in Bedfords Park on behalf of the National Trust in connection with their "Operation Neptune".

BADEN-POWELL HOUSE

In July 1961, Ian Kirby, 1st Harold Hill, as both a Queen's Scout and holder of the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award, was a member of the Guard of Honour to Her Majesty the Queen at the opening of Baden-Powell House.

The following Romford Groups contributed funds for the building of the House and are recorded as "Founder House Groups" in the register kept at Baden—Powell House:

4th Romford, 12th Romford, 2nd Collier Row, 3rd Collier Row, 1st Harold Hill.

Long trousers became permissive wear for Senior Scouts, Rover Scouts and Scouters in 1961. In 1962, the District donated £100 from the proceeds of a Christmas Draw to the Freedom from Hunger campaign.

The Essex County Marathon has previously been mentioned, and in 1961 160 teams took part including 13 from Romford. (4th Gidea Park (3), 13th Romford (5), 2nd Collier Row, 2nd Romford, 3rd Gidea Park (2) and 19th Romford, most of them gaining pennants for being in the top twenty of their class.

THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

Nine members of the District were members of the British Contingent to the Austrian National Jamboree at Baden in August 1961. The boys are not named in the District minutes but are known to have included Sea Scout Patrol Leaders John Lamb and Alan Tremain, 1st Harold Hill.

The 11th World Jamboree was held at Marathon, Greece in 1963. Stephen Crutchley, 4th Gidea Park and B. Sheklake, 13th Romford, were our representatives.

In 1964, the 8th Skien Group from Norway made the first of a number of 4-yearly visits to Romford following Essex County Jamborees. They were accommodated in the homes of Harold Hill boys and leaders (later, when they added a Patrol of girls, with the aid of Harold Wood Guides) and the 1st Harold Hill have paid two return visits to Norway, in 1970 and 1975. The following extracts

are taken from the History of the 8th Skien Group, published 1995.

"To stay in an English home has been an experience for boys, girls and leaders. In the same way I think our visits to London have been. A world-city, overwhelming with big traffic and millions of people. Our Scouts still remember their visits to St. Pauls, Westminster Abbey, Madame Tussauds etc. (In Westminster Abbey we always have made a halt to pay homage to the memorial of Lord and Lady Baden-Powell in gratitude for what they did for the youth of the world)". And from another contributor:

"The camps in England will forever be special for the scouts taking part in them. Travelling abroad in the 60s was not so common as later. For many of the scouts these tours were the first meeting with the world outside Scandinavia. We got a good impression of English scouting combined with English daily life, culture and places of historic interest"

The 2nd Collier Row hosted about twenty Scouts from Iran following the same Jamboree in 1964, entertaining them to a Group picnic in Bedford Park, and a sightseeing trip to London.

In 1966 "The Old Gravel Pits, Chequers Road" (Crow Camp) were leased to the Association by Havering Borough Council. For a fuller history of Crow Camp, please refer to Appendix 3.

In September 1966, *"The Scout"* magazine, which had been a source of inspiration for many Scouts since 1908, ceased publication.

1966: THE CHIEF SCOUTS ADVANCE PARTY REPORT

In 1964, the Chief Scout (Sir Charles, later Lord, McLean) set up an "Advance Party" to examine every aspect of Scouting and make recommendations for bringing the movement "up to date". In an insert in *The Scouter* magazine in September 1964, the Chief Scout invited everyone, Scouters, Cubs, Scouts, Senior & Rover Scouts and lay members to write in with suggestions.

A report was published in 1966, and the following is a summary of some of the principal recommendations as they affected Groups:

- Scout Law simplified; Cubs to make a slightly altered version of the Scout Promise;
- Reversion to a three section movement comprising Cub Scouts (8-11), Scouts (11-16) and Venture Scouts (16-20). Rover Scouts therefore ceased to exist.

- Titles changed. "Boy Scouts Association" became "The Scout Association". Cubmasters became Cub Scout Leaders, Scoutmasters became Scout Leaders. Group Scoutmasters likewise became Group Scout Leaders.
- Uniforms changed. Khaki shirts/jerseys replaced by a green shirt for Scouts, beige for Venture Scouts and leaders; long trousers, already optional for Senior and Rover Scouts and Scouters, became normal uniform for Scouts and above. Woollen Cub jerseys replaced by lighter weight material.
- Badges changed. Cub First and Second Stars replaced by Bronze, Silver and Gold Arrows.
- Scout Second and First Class badges replaced by Scout Standard, Advanced Scout Standard and Chief Scout's Award.
- "Dyb, dyb, dyb" in the grand howl replaced by the words in full.
- Minimum Standards introduced (as in Rules 8.1(e), 8.2(g), 8.3(h) and 8.4(1) of the current (1995) edition of *Policy, Organisation and Rules.*)
- Retirement age for active leadership fixed at 65.

There were in all 409 recommendations (most of which were subsequently accepted) and it is beyond the scope of a District History to summarise them all, but a copy of the report is available in the District archives. Most of the changes took effect in 1967.

Venture Scouts inherited more from Rover Scouting than from Senior Scouts. Proficiency badges disappeared, likewise Patrols (and therefore Patrol Leaders). The programme became "unstructured" in accordance with youth service thinking at the time, and was intended to be planned by an elected committee. Many units, however, have failed to attain a large enough membership to make election practicable. Venture Scouts, however, have done a great deal in the "Service" tradition of Rover Scouts, and this will be referred to again in later chapters.

ODD THINGS THAT ROMANS WEAR

A Cub Pageant was held at the Albert Hall in 1966, and Bill Adams (then A.D.C. (Scouts)) and a team of helpers produced a Roman forum, complete with spears, shields, tridents and swords. Eric Patrick (A.D.C. (Cubs)) and helpers provided uniforms and "other odd things that Romans wear" [District Circular, July/August 1966]

In 1967 Bill Archer ("Badger") resigned as District Commissioner on appointment as Borough Commissioner and Peter Giles (from Ilford District) was appointed District Commissioner. One of Peter's first moves as D.C. was to promote the establishment of a District Scout Shop, under the

management of Syd and Margaret Feldwick, who have been mentioned earlier, in order to obtain a financial advantage from the new uniforms introduced by the Chief Scout's Advance Party. Unfortunately, probably due to tire financial restraints under which they were then operating, Scout Shops Ltd. were unable to supply adequate stocks of the new uniforms quickly, and this caused some frustration locally. In the long run, however, Peter's foresight resulted in the success story which is told in the chapter on the 'nineties.

The 12th World Jamboree was at Idaho, U.S.A. in 1967. Ron Symonds, 13th Romford, represented Romford, and was selected as a Patrol Leader. The five Scouts from Havering who attended received some attention in the local press, as they were kitted out in the new uniforms, the result of the Chief Scout's Advance Party Report. An interesting and detailed article by Ron appeared in the 13th Romford magazine later in the year, and is reproduced in full in a supplement to this history entitled "1967", available on request.

DIAMOND JUBILEE OF THE SCOUT ASSOCIATION 1967

Six Romford Troops took part in the Greater London North-east Diamond Jubilee Camp at Schmitburg, Germany, 50 miles south of Koblenz in the Rhein/Pfalz, near the town of Kim. Camp Leader was John Moore, Assistant County Commissioner (Scouts), formerly Scoutmaster of the 7th Romford and A.D.C. (Senior Scouts) for Romford, (and later to become County Commissioner). The Romford Troops which took part were the 2nd Romford, 13th Romford, 2nd Collier Row 4th Gidea Park, 3rd Havering and 1st Harold Hill).

The camp site was in a beautiful steep-sided valley with a fair-sized stream running through, and a mined castle (where the local German Scouts hold their investitures) visible on one of the heights. Reports by two leaders who were with their Troops are in the 1967 supplement referred to above.

Venture Scouts took part in an associated Expedition in which they left the train at various points en route, and hiked to Kim to join the Scouts for the return journey. A report by "Tig" of the 13th Romford is also in the 1967 supplement.

To celebrate the Diamond Jubilee, Havering Council Parks Department mounted an attractive floral tribute comprising a flower-covered tent (complete with Scout badge in flowers), and three model Scouts around a camp fire. At night the display was floodlit and the camp fire glowed. A photograph by Peter Giles, D.C., appeared in *The Scouter Magazine* in September 1967.

Cub Scouts Russell Turley and Simon Westley, 13th Romford, represented Romford at the Diamond Jubilee Thanksgiving Service in Westminster Abbey. The 2nd Havering hosted French Scouts from the XVth Pioneer Group, Angers.

CAMPING THROUGH THE AGES

Also in 1967 we took part in the Romford Home and Trades Exhibition in Oldchurch Park, at which seven groups displayed tentage appropriate to the seven decades of Scouting: 1907 Bell tent (2nd Collier Row); 1917 14' x 14' tent (1st Havering); 1927 Gilwell Hike Tents (3rd Gidea Park); 1937 Small Patrol tents (10th Romford); 1947 Bivouac tent (8th Romford); 1957 Bukta Patrol tents, (13th Romford); 1967 Hike tent with "A" poles and frame tent (2nd Romford). Cub Packs took it in turns to hold their Pack meeting at the ground on each evening the Exhibition was open.

A Cub football league started in 1967, 12 Packs taking part initially. A trophy was presented by Mr. Fred Feaver, 11th Romford. During the early 'sixties an attempt was made to restart air Scouting in the District, under the leadership of Mr. Ken Ward, but in 1967 he reported that it had not been too successful, but he hoped air activities could be encouraged as an activity for Venture Scouts.

A COURAGEOUS CUB

During 1968, Cub Scout John Bauldry, 10th Romford, was awarded the Chief Scout's Commendation for Meritorious Conduct for the courage and determination he displayed following a major heart operation.

IN 1969...

The first District cyclo-cross competition for Scouts was held at Crow Camp, becoming an annual event until 2013.

The 3rd Havering Group started at St. James' Church, Chase Cross Road, beginning with a Cub Pack. The first leader was Alan Gates. The early successes of some sections were noted in an earlier chapter, and it is appropriate here to record that this new Pack won the Cub section of the District Swimming Gala in 1970.

AND STILL IN 1969....

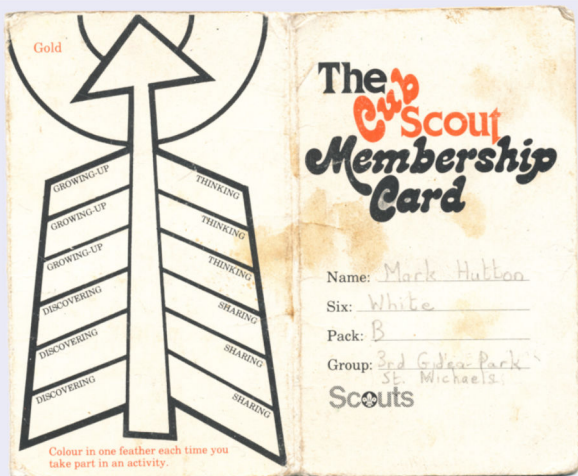
An Upminster leader 'with 45 years' Scouting experience' was reported in a full page article in *"The Recorder"* as saying that Scouting "hadn't much of a future".

The 1st Havering Cubs were praised by the Council for cleaning up the environs of the stocks and Whipping post on Havering Green.

The two surviving Troops at the Royal Liberty School (7th and 12th Romford) were merged, taking the title of the 7th Romford.

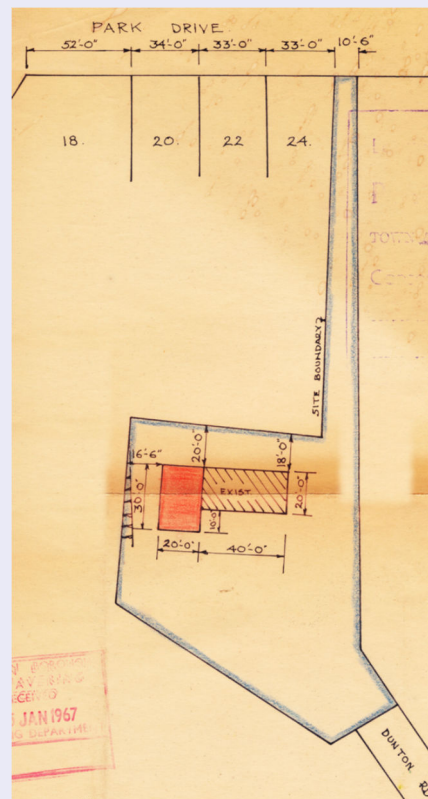
On behalf of his Church, Cub Scout Anthony Martin, 2nd Collier Row, presented a purse of money to H.R.H. Princess Anne for the Church of England's Children's Society.

In December, the first caravan at Crow Camp was destroyed by fire. This was the first of three to be lost in this way over the years.

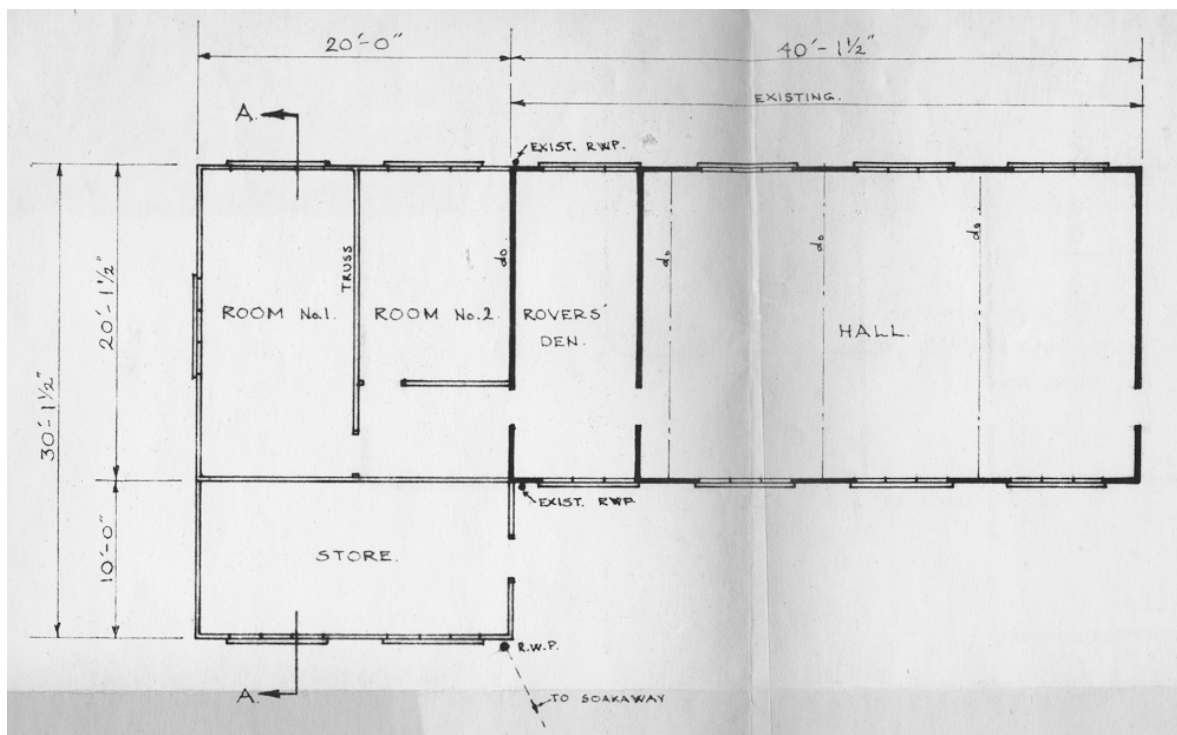


The Arrow Scheme was used for cubs from 1967 to 1990. This rather dog-eared version of Cub Scout Membership Card was introduced in 1977.

EXTENDING DISTRICT HQ



The above sketch dated August 31st 1966 formed part of plans submitted to the council as part of a planning application for an extension to the District Headquarters.

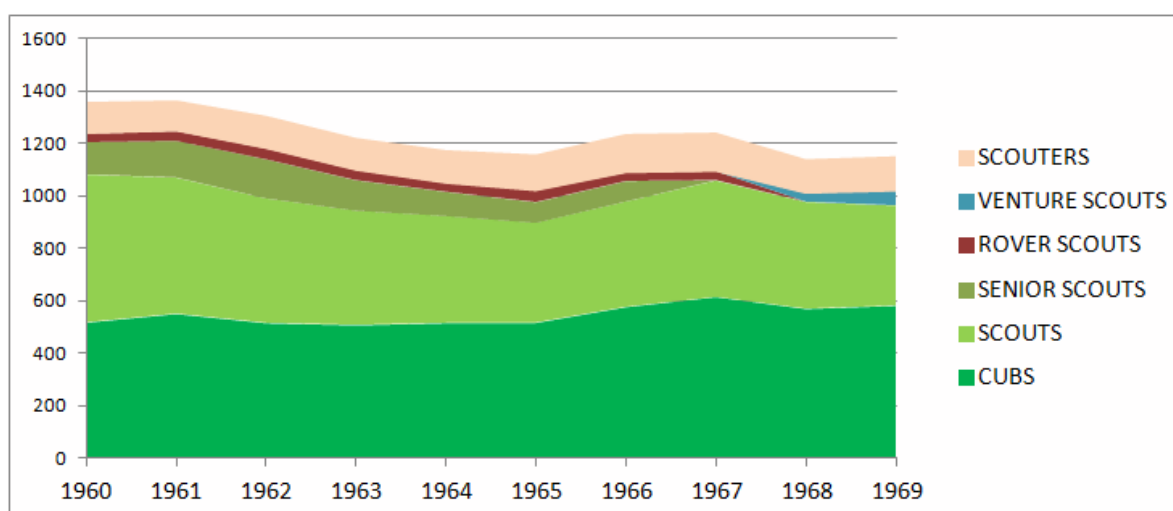


The main entrance to the District HQ at the time was the door into the Main Hall at the east end of the building. The extension consisted of an externally accessed store plus two additional rooms and a lobby area accessed through the Rovers Den.

Years later and after two further extensions to the south, the Rovers den was split into a kitchen part and a lobby part which was knocked through to the existing Lobby area between rooms 1 and 2. Those rooms were combined to form the current shop. In the early 1970s, the store room was reconfigured as the east end ultimately became the entrance corridor to the enlarged building. The North West corner of the store was given over to the shop as a changing room accessed from the shop. What remained was used as a store room and photocopy room.

CENSUS FIGURES FOR THE SIXTIES

	CUBS	SCOUTS	SENIOR SCOUTS	ROVER SCOUTS	VENTURE SCOUTS	SCOUTERS	TOTAL
1960	516	566	121	32		121	1356
1961	549	521	138	37		117	1362
1962	514	477	147	41		125	1304
1963	506	438	115	38		124	1221
1964	514	410	91	33		127	1175
1965	515	383	78	44		139	1159
1966	575	404	77	32		148	1236
1967	613	446 (Scouts & Snr. Scouts)		34		148	1241
1968	568	409			33	131	1141
1969	580	383			56	133	1152



7 - THE NINETEEN-SEVENTIES

Peter Giles, District Commissioner, suffered a stroke in August 1970, resulting in a long stay in hospital. Bill Adams was appointed Deputy D.C. until Peter resigned in 1971, later moving to Norfolk. Bill then became District Commissioner. Bill's Scouting days began in Edmonton in 1926; his first service in Romford was from 1952 as Assistant Scoutmaster in the 2nd Romford, and he subsequently served as Scoutmaster and Group Scout Leader, 2nd Romford, District Scoutmaster, District Press Secretary, A.D.C.(Scouts) and A.D.C. (Leader Training) before becoming District Commissioner.

ST GEORGES DAY PARADES

Early references to St. Georges Day Parades are patchy. The "celebration" in 1927 was referred to in Chapter 2; in 1935 the service was held in Trinity Methodist Church, in 1936 and 1937 at St. Edwards, and in 1942 at the Congregational Church (then in South Street). There are several subsequent references in District minutes without saying where the service was held, but there is little doubt that they circulated around various churches in the (pre-1947) District. After division of the District, the services settled down for a number of years in St. Edwards, the parade assembling in Junction Road, marching to the Church, and afterwards to the Town Hall forecourt, the salute being taken in front of the War Memorial in its old location in Laurie Square. However, because of the large increase in membership in the 'fifties and 'sixties, St. Edwards became very cramped and there was a proposal to hold the 1967 service in the morning in the A.B.C. Cinema, South Street, but this was not proceeded with. Following completion of the ring road in about 1969, assembly and the march past were held in the Market Place. Finally, in 1971, the service was moved to its present location in Main Road Baptist Church. Even there, there were accommodation problems for some years and in 1982 and 1983 the service was relayed to an overflow congregation in a back hall. It was decided not to repeat this in 1984.

The St. George's Flag which is used at St. George's Day parades was presented to the District in 1977 by Tony and Dorothy Jones.

INTERNATIONAL

The 13th World Jamboree was held at Asagiri Heights, Japan, in August 1971, Romford being represented by Christopher Webb, 2nd Collier Row, and Graham Layer, 7th Romford (R.L.S.). Graham was with one of twelve Troops from the United Kingdom. His immediate impressions, as

reported in the *Brentwood and Billericay press* (Graham lived in Brentwood) seem to have been mainly of "Typhoon Olive" which precipitated a wave of destruction throughout Japan, and which resulted in some Troops, including Graham's, having to be evacuated for several days. They were able later to return and dry out their belongings before setting out on a week-long tour of Japan. Graham was one of fifty British Scouts who were able to climb Mount Fuji (12,388). At nearly three times the height of Ben Nevis, this evidently takes some doing.

In the summer of 1971, the Counties of Greater London combined to arrange a Scout cruise to Scandinavia aboard the S.S. *Nevasa*, normally a school cruise ship. The 13th Romford received a mention in the article in *Scouting Magazine* in October 1971, for taking part "with their complete Troop of 28 plus four Scouters (including the ex-Cub Scout Leader who could claim that twenty-two of the party - including two of the Scouters - had been Cub Scouts in her Pack" During a hospitality stay in Malmo, Patrol Leader Andrew Filtness, 13th Romford, was offered a piglet as a present, and "with great presence of mind" he said "No!" Altogether, 40 boys and 16 Scouters from Romford took part.

In the District Circular for May 1972 David Hart (then A.D.C.(Cubs)) wrote an article entitled *How to Visit Canterbury and Buckmore Park via the Goodwin Sands*. This related to the intended Cubs' day trip to Calais in the previous month when the Hovercraft had to turn back in mid-Channel due to extremely bad weather. Plans were rapidly changed, the hovercraft operators having, very sensibly, detained our coaches which were therefore able to take the boys for sightseeing at Canterbury and activities at Buckmore Park (Chatham). A proposed trip to York by special train planned for the following year (and also open to Scouts) was cancelled for insufficient support.

In October 1972 the 1st Havering received an "honourable mention" in the District circular for rescuing a swimmer whilst canoeing at Thorpe Bay.

Cub Scouts' good turn for 1973 was to support the national "Save the Tiger" Appeal. During the early 'seventies Romford Venture Scouts helped to staff "Bridges of London" walks in aid of REHAB and in 1983 a similar event for Barnardos.

DEVOTION TO DUTY

Venture Scout John Marrable, 2nd Romford, was awarded the Cornwell Badge in 1974, "In

recognition of his high standard of character and devotion to duty under great suffering”.

IN 1975

Scouts raised money for the purchase of a lifeboat for the R.N.L.I. Nationally, nearly £100,000 was raised and a lifeboat named “*The Scout*” was commissioned in 1977 and stationed at Hartlepool. By 1996 the vessel was reaching the end of its useful life, and a further appeal was made - this time to all sections of the movement to raise funds for its replacement.

The 4th Collier Row Group started at Corpus Christi R.C. Church.

The 14th World Jamboree was held at Lillehammer, Norway. Romford was represented by Colin Lawrence, 2nd Romford and Martin Shorten, 2nd Collier Row who, on their return presented the District with an International badge and scarf.

A record number of 45 Patrols entered the Franklyn Shield Competition.

SIXTY YEARS OF CUBS.

1976 was Cub Diamond Jubilee year and Romford was linked with Poplar District for a number of activities, Poplar Cubs coming to join in our Scooter Rally, for instance, and Romford Cubs going to Poplar to take part in an “It’s a Knockout” Competition and a handball competition.

The District organised a Sponsored Walk in Weald Park in 1976 in aid of District and Group funds. 233 participants took part. A Canoeing weekend was also held at South Weald during the close season for fishing: in 1978 this event was transferred to the lake at Harrow Lodge Park.

1976 also saw the first of a series of Annual Dinner/Dances at the Masonic Hall, Shenfield, which took place annually until 1983.

BASIC SKILLS

Also in 1976, six Scout Leaders took part in a pilot exercise to improve training standards at Troop level. This was steered, rather than organised, by Ron Jeffries, then editor of *Scouting* magazine and Tony Bolton, Field Commissioner, in their capacity as members of the County Programme and Training Committee. The exercise consisted of six sessions with Scout Leaders, at one of which each was asked to bring an Assistant Leader and at one a Patrol Leader. Two of the leaders who took part later led a similar exercise for six other Troops. Reports and evaluations of both these exercises are in the District archives and anyone who cares to read them will, no doubt, be struck by the discovery, by nearly all the leaders, that Patrol Leaders and A.S.Ls can, and should, be given more responsibility.

A Scouters’ weekend camp was held in 1976 and some subsequent years at Thaxted, by courtesy of Peter Aylett, former Scoutmaster 7th Romford.

1977 was the Queen’s Silver Jubilee year and a special class at the Cub Handcraft Competition was to make a commemorative medal from foil. The District sent a message of Loyal Greeting to Her Majesty and the following reply was received:

*To the Cub Scouts, Scouts, Venture Scouts, Scouters and Lay Members of the Romford District,
I am commanded by The Queen to write and thank you all for the good wishes which you sent to Her Majesty on the occasion of her Silver Jubilee.*

*The Queen was deeply touched that you should remember her at this time, and I am to tell you that your kind message has given Her Majesty great pleasure. I am to send to you all the Queen’s most sincere thanks.
Kathryn Dugdale, Lady in Waiting.*

The 4th Havering (Rise Park) Group opened at Havering Road Methodist Church in this year. This Group only had a short life, closing in 1984.

The Chief Scouts Advance Party had replaced “Star” awards for cubs with a three-stage arrow scheme - bronze, silver and gold - and in 1977 the tests were revised to give Cubs greater choice. The revised scheme was known as The Developed Arrow Scheme, and was again changed in 1990, resulting in the present scheme of Cub Scout Award, Adventure Award and Adventure Crest Award.

Extensions to the District Headquarters were carried out in 1977, providing inside toilets, an office for the District Commissioner and a room for the “District Team”, and the old toilet block was converted into a store with funds arising from the closure of the 7th Romford Group.

ACTIVITIES

In 1978 150 Scouts attended an Activity Day organised by Alf. Reeve, 3rd Collier Row, in Bedfords Park. The County Chess Championship for Cubs was mentioned for the first time and Romford Cubs started the practice, continuing today, of holding District heats to select a team to enter the County event.

HOLIDAY-TIME SCOUTING

Also in 1978, County sponsored a “Holiday-time Scouting” scheme for Cubs, Scouts and friends. Three headquarters - District, 1st Harold Hill and 2nd Collier Row - were open during the days throughout August, manned by retired leaders and lay members who were armed with a vast number of cards bearing ideas for “things to do” to be given

out as appeared to be appropriate for the age and interests of those youngsters who turned up. 132 boys attended at District H.Q., 140 at Collier Row and 24 at Harold Hill. Overall the response did not seem commensurate with the time spent by the operators, and this experiment was not repeated.

A national Good Turn in 1978 involved Scouts in "Tune a Radio Week" to help elderly and housebound people to re-tune to new radio wavelengths. The B.B.C. provided stickers to be put on radio sets and instructions, but in spite of publicity by the B.B.C. one Romford Troop found very little demand for the service. They did, however, receive a certificate.

Also in 1978 twenty Canadian Scouts were billeted in Romford and were entertained to a coach and river trip to Windsor, a camp fire at District H.Q. and a 4-day camp at Perry Wood led by Dennis Rolls, then Scout Leader, 2nd Collier Row. Unfortunately, the Canadians in Romford did not have a leader with them, and discipline presented some problems.

"CONTINENTAL COACH JAUNTS"

Social activity for leaders and partners was catered for in the late seventies by a tour of the Dutch bulb fields in 1977, followed in 1978 by a Rhine Cruise, in 1979 by a visit to Remagen and in 1980 Rheims, Paris and Rouen. These were arranged by Roy Walker, A.D.C. (Scouts). Nick Hilton, District Treasurer from 1996, but then a leader in the 13th Romford has these memories:

Many of the older members of the District will recall with amusement a few of Roy Walker's 'Continental Coach Jaunts' for anyone in the District ... daft enough to go. Like most things in life, the first time is usually the most memorable. On this occasion the first trip was a '24 hour affair' comprising a visit to the Dutch bulb fields, Kirkenhoff Gardens, Amsterdam Central, including a voyage on the canals, and a tour of other well known areas of the city. As an added bonus, we were allowed four hours free time on the Saturday night, before rendezvousing for the journey home.

By the way, we left D.H.Q. late Friday afternoon and joined the most crowded boat from Harwich, with what seemed to be coaches from every town and city in the U.K., all with the same idea. En route we had breakdown on the other side, much to Roy's embarrassment but to the amusement and sense of adventure of many of us. This required a change of coach, which the ever resourceful lad arranged promptly - well, without too much delay. We arrived borne in the early part of Sunday afternoon and you will realise it was not only a fun 24-hours but an endurance course as well.

Naturally we were whacked out, but had a great time.

Another time was a trip to Remagen which was definitely a bit up-market - almost middle class - where we had hotel accommodation. Within half an hour, the proprietor of the hotel pointed out, in no uncertain terms, that the fuses had blown. More accurately he said "---- British have always got to plug in their tea makers as soon as they arrive using their own adaptor plugs". The same weekend, whether by accident or design we shall never know, the local Fire Brigade were celebrating their centenary and with the visiting brigades, not forgetting their brass bands, the beer flowed like the upper part of the River Nevis in spate. There were also trips up the Rhine with other various activities of a sight-seeing nature to be enjoyed apart from the visits to buildings of architectural and aesthetic interest (after all, Joan was with us) and the inevitable 'Vineyard Enlightenment Tour' ... "That hillside is Piersporter Michelburg!!"

The 'Blois weekend' to France was another memorable trip. We had an excursion to Le Chateaux Chenoneaux and witnessed a performance of 'Son et Lumiere'. On this trip, most of us visited the Biayeux Tapestry; enhancing our historical knowledge. The visit to the Normandy invasion beaches and all that entailed was poignant for all of us. Thank you, Roy and Joan, for giving us those happy memories, which I doubt even memory will ever forget.

CUB COUNTRY

In 1979 Cub Scouts launched "Cub Country" to aid community projects in Nepal. This arose from the desire of the Nepalese government to broaden the range of crops grown by the peasant farmers. The plan was for Nepalese Scouts to go into the villages to teach the farmers how to cultivate the new crops, and British Cub Scouts raised the money, for seed and so on. Special badges were sold (a cloth one for uniform, and a large button badge for mufti) and some Packs held special fund-raising events to swell the fund.

The total sum raised in the United Kingdom was £165,000 of which £1291 was from Romford.

VENTURE SCOUTS

In 1979 a District Venture Unit was formed to cater for boys from Groups with no unit. Membership had risen to eighteen by 1981. Throughout the Seventies Venture Scouts from the District were involved in assistance at Buckingham Palace Garden Parties, attendance at the Cenotaph Remembrance Day Service, attendance in 1976 at the Founders Day Service in Westminster Abbey,

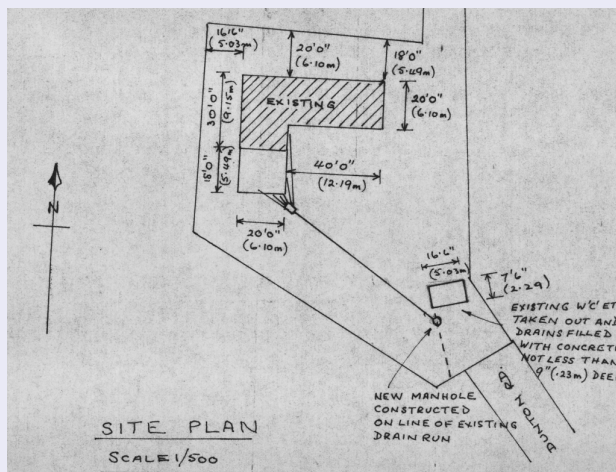
marshalling floats at Romford Carnival, and assistance to the Lions Club with their charity fund-raising events, thus following in the "Service" tradition of Rover Scouts.

A World Jamboree was due to be held in Iran in 1979, but due to the political situation in that country it was cancelled and international camps held instead in Canada, Sweden, Switzerland and U.S.A. I have found no record of any Romford Scouts having attended any of these.

An astonishing ninety-seven per cent of Scout Patrols were reported as having taken up the District Commissioner's challenge to complete various tasks during a six-month period in 1979. Details for 1979 have not been found, but in 1980 the challenges were:

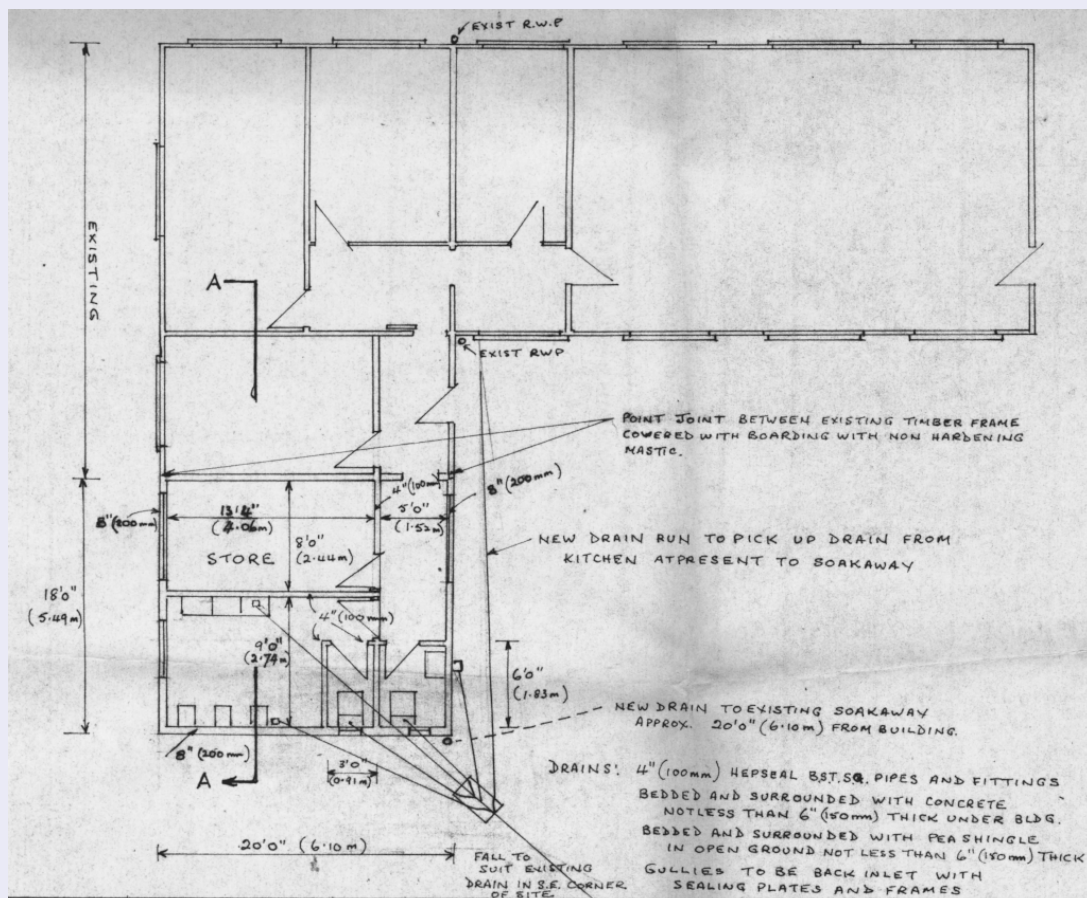
- 1) Record a tape of an entertainment;
- 2) take an active part in Romford Carnival;
- 3) eat out in an unusual place;
- 4) A weekend carp with a log book.

EXTENDING DISTRICT HQ AGAIN



Plans for further extensions to the District HQ were submitted to the council on the 26th of September 1974. The existing external toilet building was to be replaced with new toilets as part of the main building and a new store room which later became the DC's office. This was when the 1966 store room was split into the entrance corridor and a smaller store.

The old outside toilets became a separate outside store building.



CENSUS FIGURES FOR THE *SEVENTIES*

The Sixties and Seventies were good decades for Cubs, with an average of 545 boys per year in the Sixties, rising to 602 per year in the Seventies. Scout numbers had, however, started to decline finishing the decade with 354, compared with our peak of 575 twenty years earlier. Venture Scouts have never been as successful here, numerically, as Senior Scouts despite the wider age range and female members.

	CUBS	SCOUTS	VENTURE SCOUTS	ADULTS	TOTAL
1970	551	419	51	176	1197
1971	595	396	65	171	1227
1972	602	387	69	167	1225
1973	560	382	84	160	1186
1974	563	370	88	159	1180
1975	592	377	61	165	1195
1976	677	378	63	191	1309
1977	633	354	73	198	1262
1978	653	354	50	193	1265
1979	594	354	59	191	1210

Figures for adults include Instructors and District Officials for whom a membership fee is paid.

