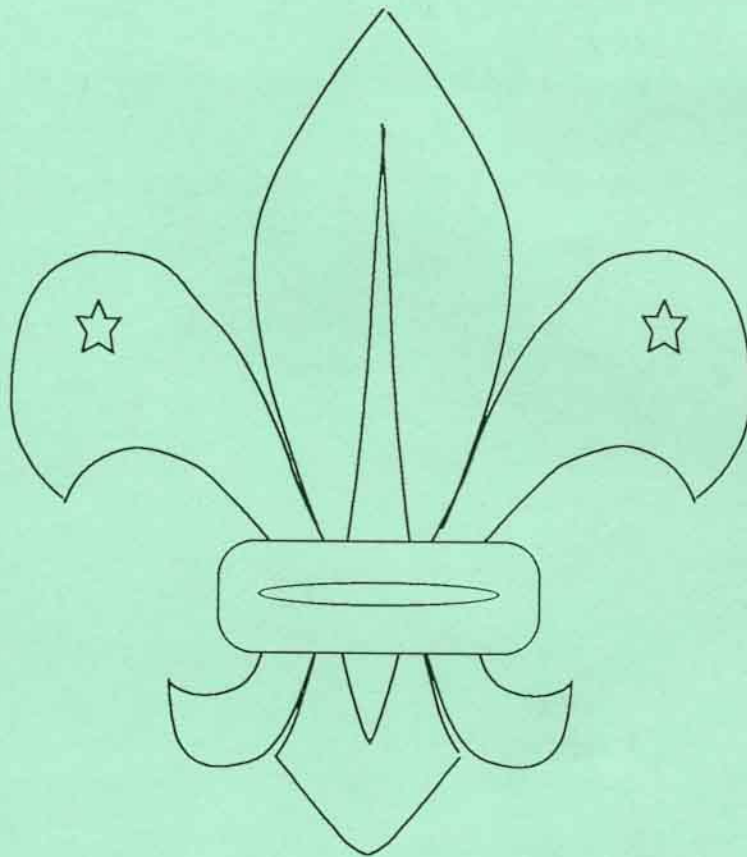


3rd Epsom (St Martin's) Scout Group

OFFICIAL HISTORY

1922 (and before) to 1992



PREFACE

This history has been compiled from such records as I have been able to find, such as St Martin's Church magazine, minutes of Group committees and AGM's and log books; some have been lent or given to me by those who have been associated with our Scout Group for longer than I have. My thanks are particularly due to the Collins family and to Leslie and Edith Clark; and to Janet Ellis for her work in putting this into type.

I have tried to be selective, especially in later years, with the aim of providing primarily an historical record of significant events but also to include some personal reminiscences which will give life to the times being recalled. Please, therefore, forgive me for any omissions: they may be through ignorance, fault of memory, lack of records or even through a fallible editorial judgement.

No doubt this record could be expanded and there may well be significant details which should be added. In particular, I would welcome details of events during the "missing" years of the 30's and war years. If enough are forthcoming, perhaps we can produce an up-dated second edition.

I hope you enjoy reading this history and feel that you then know a bit more about the Group's earlier years. They are certainly worthy of record as a tribute to all the boys and leaders who, supported by their parents, partners and friends have contributed so much time and effort to Scouting in the 3rd Epsom over 70 years. Let's hope the future will be equally memorable.

Dave Faulkner

Summer/Autumn 1992

General Introduction

Scouting started officially in 1907 after Lt. General Sir Robert Baden-Powell, hero of the Mafeking siege during the Boer war in South Africa, had written his fortnightly papers for boys which soon became the handbook "Scouting for Boys". His experimental camp of 24 boys from a range of social classes at Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour confirmed that his army scouting methods could be applied to interest and develop boys in peacetime. In fact, the boys themselves started Scouting, based on B.P's ideas and only later was the Scout Association set up.

The earliest records of Scouts in Epsom appear to be the 1st Annual Report of Surrey (Baden-Powell's) Boy Scouts for the year ended 1st November 1911. At that time, the Epsom Association stretched from Ewell to Bookham with 8 Troops containing 144 Scouts and 17 Scoutmasters. In 1912, there were 9 Troops with 187 Scouts and 17 Scoutmasters.

John Walls, who died last year (1991) and was in his illustrious Scouting career Scoutmaster and Group Scoutmaster of the 2nd Epsom (Christchurch) Group, and Assistant District Commissioner, District Commissioner, Chairman and President of Epsom District, recalled that in 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, he and a pal went to Fair Green at West Hill (just by the railway bridge) and saw the Epsom Scouts in camp during the school holidays. They were assisting the police in guarding that bridge and the one in Castle Road (off Dorking Road by the common) against possible German spies. Also, for most of the 1914-1918 war, there was a notice board, headed "Epsom Boy Scouts", with photos of boys in camp, in a barber's shop window at 141 High Street, Epsom.

Soon after the start of the War, most Scoutmasters joined up and everyone was involved in the war effort All Epsom Troops were disbanded and the Epsom Association ceased to exist.

Our Beginning

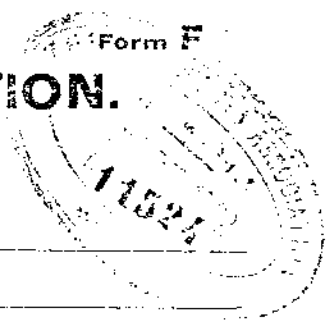
The actual date on which the 3rd Epsom (St Martin's) Scout Group came into existence is not too clear. We have for many years regarded it as 30th September 1922 and you can see a copy of the relevant registration form overleaf. It shows that the Rev. Arnold Falconer Dauncey (Curate of St Martin's Church) was Cubmaster (CM) with an Assistant, H E Whitely and 20 Cubs. It is significant that the form had originally been submitted by Sutton District and amended to Epsom, probably because Epsom split off and formed a Local Association (District) in its own right.

However, as early as September 1918 (just after the war), one of the Churchwardens, aptly named Miss D A Wish, had written in the Church magazine that "... we hope to start a Troop for boys attending our Church or Sunday Schools in October. We shall meet during the winter on Saturday evenings in the Parish Room." Indeed, a Troop, Registration No 3463, was registered under the Sutton Local Association as 24th Sutton in 1918 and this was later re-registered as 24th Sutton (St Martin's) at Scout Headquarters in London, when they started accepting registrations, as at 1st October 1919. The Troop was formally transferred to Epsom sometime between then and 30th September 1920 but later the registration was cancelled because no census return had been received.

This situation is supported by items in the Church magazine. "Boxing Day (1918) was given up to Scouts. In the morning we played a football match against the St Barnabas Troop and came off victorious with 7 goals to 1. The leaders met later on for a tea at 'The Den' our own room at The Cedarsafter which we retired to the Parish Room where we met the rest of the

THE BOY SCOUTS ASSOCIATION.

PACK REGISTRATION FORM.



County: Surrey
 Commissioner's District: Sutton District
 Local Association: Epsom

Instructions.—The Cubmaster is requested to complete 3 copies of this form and send them to the Hon. Secretary of the Local Association, who will forward them through the District Commissioner to Imperial Headquarters. The Pack will then be registered at Imperial Headquarters, until the following 30th September, and notification will be sent to the Cubmaster through the Secretary of the Local Association. One copy of the form will be retained by Imperial Headquarters, the second sent to the County Secretary, and the third returned to the Hon. Secretary of the Local Association.

Name of Pack: 3rd Epsom (St. Martin's)
(The complete official name of the Pack must be stated. Any subsequent alteration should be reported to Imperial Headquarters immediately.)
 Address of Pack Headquarters: Parish Church Room - The Parade - Epsom

(b) Is the Pack "open" or "controlled" by some Church, School, or Organisation (see Rules 2 and 75)? controlled
 (c) If "controlled," by whom? Epsom Parish Church

STRENGTH OF PACK. Officers.

Rank.	Name.	Address
L.M. (R)	Arnold Falconer Danney	"St. Mary's" - The Parade - Epsom
X.R.C.M.	H.E. Whiteley	70 The Palladium - Epsom
X	Nominations will follow	

[Handwritten signature]

Any special particulars with regard to the Pack, e.g.:-
 If it is confined to any particular religion, trade, works, etc.
 If it is intended for physically defective boys.

Number of Officers in Pack 2
 Number of Cubs 20
 Total all Ranks 22

Signed: Arnold F. Danney Cubmaster. Date: 30/9/22

Recommended by: Sutton District Local Association.

[Signature] Hon. Secretary.

Approved by: [Signature] District Commissioner.

[Signature] District.

FOR IMPERIAL HEADQUARTERS USE ONLY.
 Date of Registration by Imperial Headquarters } 30-9-22
 *Registered No. of Pack } 5116
* This number must be quoted in all returns and correspondence.

Troop and had a sing-song and an enrolment."

By August 1919, however, leadership was already a problem. Miss Wish, having started an excellent Troop of 28 boys, completely equipped, was now obliged to resign ("lack of time"). Troop parades had been suspended for a month until a temporary arrangement with a Scouter from Carshalton, Mr F W Clerke, earned a reprieve: he took a few of our boys with his own Troop to a fortnight's camp at Littlehampton. By December, Mr Roger de Wesselow had taken over as SM with Mr Trower as Assistant.

Into the 20's

In August 1921, Stanley Fenton, who had been running a Troop at Langley Vale, agreed to "revive" our Troop and by November it was meeting regularly at the Parish Room at 8 pm on Wednesdays. By the following February, they were using as a headquarters, a small harness-room in a stable-yard, lent to them by Mrs de Wesselow. The Troop, now under Scoutmaster Fenton, appeared to be thriving again: in March, they gave a Concert and Display at the Church Room, raising £10 for Camp Funds. At Whitsun, they attended the Surrey County Scout Rally and in early June, at the Vicar's suggestion, they took over the cellar of the old brewery (now the basement room of Church House), which had just become Church property: the room was converted to make it suitable for the boys to use at a cost of £45, raised by the 'Troop Patron', Mr Rogerson and friends, and let to them at the nominal annual rent of 1/- (5p)!

In August, the Troop held its first camp at Chattenden, Kent for a fortnight, thoroughly enjoyed by all the 30 Scouts and Cubs who attended it. At this time, Mr Etherington joined as Assistant Scoutmaster (ASM) and in October became SM. It is interesting to note that in the Church magazine for October 1922, there are the following regular meetings in the Parish Room (Church House):

Monday	5 7pm	Wolf Cubs
Tuesday	6.30 -8 pm	Girl Guides (3rd Epsom Company)
Wednesday	5.30-8 pm	Girl Guides (1st Epsom Company)
Thursday	5.30 -7.30 pm	Girl Guides (5th Epsom Company)
Friday	5.45 -7.30 pm	Guide Leaders (1st and 5th Epsom Companies)
Saturday	3.00 -4.30 pm	Brownies (1st Epsom)

At last, on 25th July this year, 1922, the Troop and Pack were formally registered at Scout Headquarters but still as 24th Sutton (St Martin's). The Troop registration was transferred to Epsom Local Association at the time of the annual census, 30th September (the date from which we have been dating ourselves!) but oddly enough, the Pack registration didn't follow until October the following year.

I hope you will allow me to digress slightly at this point to look at Epsom as a District. Mr C R Pagden, who lived in West Hill and had been Secretary and Treasurer of the pre-war Epsom

Association, came forward in 1922 to become Treasurer of 2nd Epsom (Christchurch) Group. When it was decided to revive the Epsom District Association, he produced a handsome sum of money that he had been keeping in trust since 1918 for just this purpose! The new Epsom District embraced Troops from as far apart as Worcester Park, Tadworth and Bookham but they were numbered consecutively, under the respective towns (when a Troop is disbanded and later reformed it takes a new number). The Group system combining Packs and Troops did not start until 1928.

Troops in Epsom have been as follows: 1st Epsom (St Barnabas) (disbanded), 2nd Epsom (Christchurch); 3rd Epsom (St Martin's); 4th Epsom (St Joseph's) (disbanded); 5th and 6th Epsom (Manor Hospital) Handicapped (disbanded); 7th Epsom (Methodist); 8th Epsom (St Barnabas) reformed 1928 and now merged (see under 14th); 9th Epsom (Epsom College) (disbanded in the 60's); 10th and 11th Epsom (Manor Hospital) Handicapped (disbanded); 12th Epsom (Congregational, later URC) (disbanded); 14th Epsom (St Joseph's) Air Scouts, reformed 1965 and later merged with 8th to form 8th/14th Epsom (St Barnabas' and St Joseph's); 15th Epsom (Kingswood House) (Cubs only -disbanded).

Now back to our own Group where, in common with others, the low birth rates nationally had affected the number of boys available to join the Cubs and later Scouts in the latter part of the 20's. Moreover, leadership difficulties were never far away. In February 1926 "we are so badly in need of a Scoutmaster for our Troop which has been revived but is languishing sadly. What is the matter with us?" On 14th February 1927, the Troop although only 10 boys was led by Rover Scout C Hewins but the following year it was re-registered and, together with the Cub Pack, formally became a Scout Group with a new Registration No 5911, which it still holds. The Annual Group Re-registration form of 30th September 1928 is shown overleaf: there were then only 6 Scouts, 10 Wolf Cubs and 4 Scouters!

By April 1929, before the end of the decade, the Troop appeared to be thriving again. They gave an entertainment in Church House involving charades, living cinema (directed by PL E King), a sketch and violin recital, and raised the grand sum of £7.5s.6d (£7.27p). The Troop were again using stables as their headquarters and had been presented with their colours.

The 30's and 40's

Very unfortunately, records of events over the next 14 years have not been traced. We do know that in 1929, Mr M B Smith joined as ASM, progressed to SM and GSM and in February 1946 eventually left as he moved to Devon. We also know, of course, that continuity was maintained otherwise we would not have kept our registration number 5911. It would be interesting to know the progress of the Group during the difficult years prior to and during the 1939 -45 War and perhaps details will emerge one day.

However, if we can now carry our thoughts forward to 1944, the meeting of the Group Committee on 17th February was informed that a post-war Commissioner had recently been appointed by the Scout Association (anticipating the end of hostilities) and had recommended that all Scout Groups:

- a) should have proper accommodation;
- b) must be much larger than pre-war; and
- c) should keep their HQ's open 7 days a week

It was agreed to form a Supporters Club, of parents and relations of Scouts, to keep close contact, to give moral support and to raise the necessary funds for a new headquarters.

THE BOY SCOUTS ASSOCIATION.

Form F.
15M | 8 | 28

ANNUAL GROUP RE-REGISTRATION.

AS ON 30th. SEPTEMBER 1928.

This form is only to be used for renewal until 30th September 1929 of registration already effected.

COUNTY Surrey LOCAL ASSOCIATION Epsom & District

NOTE :- The officer in charge of Group is requested to complete this form and return it not later than October 3rd to the Hon. Secretary of the Local Association (who will forward it, through the County Secretary, to Imperial Headquarters). The Group will then be re-registered until the 30th September 1929 and notification of this will be sent to the officer through the Secretary of the Local Association. Only Groups registered at Imperial Headquarters will be recognised.

Group Title as registered at I.H.Q. :- 3rd Epsom Troop, (St Martin's) I.H.Q. No. 15898

GROUP OFFICERS.

Warranted or on Probation: the latter must be starred *

Rank.	Name.	Address.
Group S. M.		
Scoutmaster	<u>E.G.R. Bright</u>	<u>25. Church Street, Epsom</u>
Cubmaster	<u>A.L. Moorcroft (Miss)</u>	<u>6 Mill Rd. Epsom.</u>
Rover Leader		
A. S. M.	<u>M.B. Smith *</u>	<u>South Lodge, Epsom College.</u>
A. C. M.	<u>W. Hodson (Miss)</u>	<u>48 Mill Rd. Epsom</u>
A. R. L.		

Enter in this space which, if any, of the following applies to the Group: Works Group, Deaf, Blind or otherwise disabled Scouts, School, Industrial School, Home, Orphanage, &c.

Those holding more than One warrant or Officers who are also Rovers should only be counted once.

NUMBERS.

Warranted :-

Group S.M.	<u>2</u>	Scouts	<u>6</u>
S.M. & A.S.M.'s	<u>1</u>	Sea Scouts	
C.M. & A.C.M.'s	<u>19</u>	Wolf Cubs	<u>10</u>
R.L. & A.R.L.'s		Rover Scouts	
* Total On Probation.	<u>1</u>	Rover Sea Scouts	
No. of Scouters	<u>4</u>	Total	<u>16</u>
		No. of Scouters	<u>4</u>
		Group Total	<u>20</u>

Signed E.G.R. Bright Group S.M. (or officer in charge).

Date 3.10.1928

Re-Registered at Imperial Headquarters on NOV 1928

New Number by AV

Accordingly, the Parents and Friends Association was inaugurated on 10th March,

In passing, we should note that, in spite of the war, there was a Troop of 34 Scouts, including 3 "King's Scouts", formed into 5 Patrols, including an Air Scout Patrol partly attached to the ATC (Air Training Corps); and that although a Troop Camp had not been possible, the Patrols had held their own camps and meetings in parents' houses. There were also 16 "very keen Cubs who turned up regularly".

In 1945, the year the war ended, the Troop had a Whitsun Camp at Headley and an August Camp at Hill Head. The GSM was keeping in touch with all the "Old Scouts" who had joined up to serve in the Forces: the Roll of Honour (presumably those who had died on active service) amounted to five. Scouts and Guides were combining for hikes, training, parties and sports matches. There was news also of "an excellent site released by Longhursts behind St John's where an HQ could be built. In the meantime, for £100, the existing buildings could be converted into good temporary accommodation." At the 1946 AGM, on 11th April, it was reported that Summer Camp would be in the New Forest~ that the Cubs and Scouts were corresponding regularly with French Scouts and their Scout Mistress(!) at Carpentras (four Scouts were to go and make personal contact)~ that joint training with the Guides was continuing~ and that the Parents and Friends Association had already raised £230, most of which was earmarked for the new HQ. Work had already begun in January making an entrance, removing a partition and erecting a fireguard, but even now a soon-to-be-all-too-familiar picture had emerged: "owing to the lack of labour, this work is progressing slowly and volunteers are needed at weekends". In July, some boys broke into part of the building and stole some of the gear but the police caught the culprits and everything was returned.

The SM at this time was Bob Warburg who, with his family, was destined to provide a strong influence on the Group and District. Bob had been a Rover Scout Leader in 1938, just pre-war and had lost part of a leg when an anti-aircraft shell burst in College Road during the war. The new GSM was Rev. Hugh C Warner, the Vicar, and he too played a very active and leading part in future developments.

36 went to Summer Camp at Brockenhurst where "Skipper, seeing a large billy of boiling water made the evening cocoa, only to find on investigating its unusual flavour that it was the one in which the meat had been roasted and was being cleaned out with soda!". Sea bathing at Milford was prevented by a gale and waves six feet high; and the store tent became airborne. At the Camp Fire opening, the leader declared:

"As the flames point upwards, so be our Aims;
As the red logs glow, so be our Endeavours;
As the grey ash fades, so may our Errors;
As the good fire warms the circle,
So may our Ideals warm the World."

In 1947, Bob Warburg married Angela, later to become Guide District Commissioner and while on his honeymoon near Lyme Regis found a grand spot for the Troop Summer Camp: the Scouts were already saving up their butter ration. Actually, ASM Eric Ransberg was in charge for the 10-day camp at Kingsdown, Kent, from where the Scouts visited Canterbury Cathedral, Deal, Dover Castle, St Margaret's Bay and the Walmer lifeboat; Bob and Angela Warburg visited for the camp fire and he resumed as SM in September.

About the same time, one of the senior Scouts went to the World Jamboree in Paris and another to a camp in Canada. Also, during this year, Leslie Branson, later to be ADC (Scouts) in Epsom, had been helping with the Troop: "we owe much to Mr Branson for the noble and keen

way he has been looking after the fortunes of the Troop during Skip's absence'

A new hut for the HQ was purchased and a priority building licence obtained but there were still delays caused by the Council Planning Committee and although the Vicar was keen to give the Scouts security of tenure no formal agreement had yet been drawn up.

The following year was one of expansion and development after the difficulty of the war years. It started with a joint meeting of Scouts, Cubs, Guides and Brownies, at which there was "an interesting ceremony" of four Cubs going up into the Troop. They were James Shackleford, Christopher Hogg, John Davidge and Philip Moore: the last two were to give many years devoted service to the Group. By May, "Cubs are going so strong here at St Martin's that we are contemplating starting two new packs, making three in all. Mr Frank Maynard is to become a second CM thus helping to cater for the hordes of small boys determined to become Wolf Cubs but for whom there is no room in the grand pack run by Reg Johnson."

Also this month, Lady Warburg, Bob's mother and a member of our Parents' and Friends' Committee handed over the title deeds of a "small forest" of 10 acres at Boidierhurst, Headley, part of the family estate, to the Scout Associations of Epsom, Ewell and Leatherhead to be a permanent camp site. Alderman Mann accepted the gift on the Scouts' behalf and thanked Lady Warburg for her generosity, which thousands of boys have subsequently enjoyed. The Troop Summer Camp near Charmouth, Dorset was more than usually wet. The SM, plus wife and dog, arrived first in a raging thunderstorm although the rain had stopped by the time the lorry, with boys and gear, joined them on the site. "Later, however, during the camp, the Owls were literally soaked to the skin before being rescued by the SM's car. "

Before the year ended, Senior Scouts were foffiled -a new Section intended to provide more challenging activities for older Scouts -with Hugh Morgan (son of Arthur the PFA Treasurer) and six others. Their leader was H R Hewer and they met at 3pm every Sunday.

Despite yet more delays on the new HQ -at one time all work was at a standstill because the licence to purchase building materials was refused by the Ministry of Works -it was possible to report. at the Group Committee Meeting in January 1949 that "The Hut is up. the roof is on and the windows ready for glass". Progress was being made. albeit very slow: in October. the hut was half completed and nearing the decorating stage. £650 had been raised in 4 years: not bad for those days. There were still appeals for more helpers for the few enthusiastic fathers.

Rationing was a feature of national life in these post-war years. Uniforms were difficult for parents to provide. 225 clothing coupons were received from the Board of Trade which helped but there was an appeal: "Scout shirts and shorts are badly wanted. Old Scouts, please let us have your old uniform. Today they are a fearful price".

In the Autumn, the Vicar, Canon Hugh Warner who had been GSM appointed Bob Warburg to take his place; Reg Johnson moved from Cubs to be SM and Grace Jackson "who comes to the work with wide experience" became CM. Troop meetings were now every Monday in Church House; and Church Parades on the 3rd Sunday each month were to be re-arranged by the Vicar so that Scouts and Guides would not find them too long.

It may be interesting to note that this was the year when Bob-a-Job Week was introduced. BP was always keen that Scouts should earn their funds, not beg for them, although in practice, then as now in Scout Job week, much of the money passes in the spirit of donation. Incidentally, Income Tax was then 9/- (45p) in the £ - a bit steep by today's standards.

The 50's

In spite of a change of leadership, when Reg Johnson had to resign as SM and Frank Meeks took over temporarily, the Scouts were active and successful. A Group magazine, called 'THE INSPECTOR' at 3d (2p) a copy, was produced by the boys led by the 4 PL's, R Burfitt, J Blackwell, J Sterckx and Michael Arthur. 8 Scouts went up to London one Saturday intending to visit the Scout Shop at 25 Buckingham Palace ("BP") Road, St Paul's Cathedral's Whispering Gallery, the Monument, RSS Discovery (the Scout training ship moored by the Embankment) and the Tower of London. Unfortunately they were all closed but they did visit Roland House, a well-known Scout house in Stepney. To complete a day's disappointment, they all got stuck in a lift at Waterloo Station!

At Easter, some of the Senior Scouts attended the Surrey Senior Scout Camp at Cob ham and met Lord Peter Baden-Powell, son of the Founder. In June, the Badgers won the District Camping Competition at the Forge, Headley: the patrol comprised R Burfitt, R Davies, J Davidge, P Moore and D Howard. Summer Camp was at Haywards Heath, led by 'Doc' Jackson (husband of Grace) now GSM (Bob Warburg was ADC) and Ian Weatherall, ASM and attended by 20 boys who played wide games with the 39th Brighton and visited that town.

The Cubs were meeting regularly in Church House, at 6 pm every Friday, run by Grace Jackson with the help of Mr Maynard, Mr Branson, Miss Silverlock, who had now completed 21 years service as Group Secretary, and 2 Scouts. Church Parades had moved to the first Sunday each month.

Incidentally, at this time, Alaric Toy was compiling an official Group History - where is it now I wonder?

In 1951, Lady Warburg died: she had been a keen member of the Supporters Committee and such a kind and generous friend to the Group and District. Summer Camp was again at Haywards Heath and the Collins family was starting to make a contribution to Group affairs: Jack and Jo were on the PFA Committee and Geoff joined the Cubs. Edna Broadberry as Akela with Beryl Dicketty ACM, took the Cubs to their first camp at Frensham and took Josie Collins as cook. The following year was a lean one: the Troop numbers fell to 16 Scouts in 2 Patrols and the 5 Senior Scouts were attending meetings at the 8th Epsom (St Barnabas) Group. Nonetheless, 22 Cubs went to Summer Camp.

At long last, in February 1953, the Hut was finished. It had taken a long time, the brunt of the work having fallen on 7 men, Messrs Blackwell, Burfitt, Caffyn, Meeks, Moore, Morgan and Ward; and there had been slow progress on the legal work involved in providing a lease. A Hut Wanning Party was held to celebrate although, even now, "chairs, etc are still lacking and it will need at least £50 a year to cover the costs of heating and lighting. Later, at the A GM of the PFA, the Chair passed from Mr Burfitt to Mr Knight; Arthur Morgan, Treasurer since the start was re-elected and Mrs Vi Whiskerd became Secretary, a position she was to hold successfully for 33 years. "GSM Dr Jackson led a rollicking sing-song round a glowing log camp fire, a work of art by the Senior Scouts".

In 1954, the Troop Summer Camp was at Marchwood, near Lyndhurst in the New Forest. Trek carts were a popular mode of transporting gear then but the camp finished with a loss of 18/9d (94p) because they could not get the trek cart on the train unless they arrived at Southampton station in time, and this involved the farmer taking them at a cost of 30/-d (£ 1.50).

In December Derek Hughes took over as SM with only 11 boys; and there were only 13 Cubs, the CM Miss Dicketty being assisted by Mrs Collins. The 6 Senior Scouts were now led by

Senior Scoutmaster (SSM) Jack Collins (JC) who organised and led a camping tour of the Black mountains in Wales.

The following year, the Senior Scouts had a week-end cycle tour of 172 miles to Folkestone, Dover and Canterbury before a more ambitious expedition when they did a very successful cycle tour of Northern France for 8 days, at a basic cost of £8. JC, whose brother assisted as official photographer, recalls that Ken Whiskerd (son of Vi) had very thin tyres which cut into the soft tar on the hot French roads and picked up tar and grit which had to be periodically scraped off. Nonetheless, he escaped without a puncture right up to Woodmansterne, only five miles from home! Regular meetings were on Saturday afternoons.

The Cubs with Edna Broadberry as Akela had a pack holiday at Wanborough (the first of very many) and included two boys from a residential school in Banstead. The cookers in those days were old-fashioned oil burning stoves -Jo Collins remembers them well because she had to cook on them! The Scouts camped at Hythe; near Southampton for an incredible cost of £3 each. They travelled, as usual then, by lorry with the gear and during the camp visited Southampton, Beaulieu and Brockenhurst.

Rovers re-started at the end of March with six members, and had meetings with talks by JC and Doc Jackson and a 20 Questions Quiz. The Hut, although in full use, was still not completely decorated. Heating was by wood-burning stoves - wood blocks and old railway sleepers being obtained from the Council. This was not very satisfactory and gas or electric heating was investigated.

The Group was growing bigger again in 1956 with 24 Cubs, 20 Scouts, 6 Senior Scouts, 3 Rovers and 7 Scouters, a total of 60 compared to 48 the previous year and 45 the year before that. The Cubs went to camp at Brockenhurst going by lorry, as usual; the quote by Astridge of £25 for the two-way journey was considered very high but half was paid out of Group funds. As Akela resigned, Jack and Jo Collins agreed to run the Pack "for the present".

The Scouts went to camp at Arundel in Sussex and the Seniors did a Cycle Tour of South Wales, staying at Youth Hostels, descending a coal mine and ascending a mountain. The Scouts went further afield too in 1957, to Pembroke, South Wales to camp with local Troops, while the Cubs again enjoyed the delights of Wanborough.

This was also the year of the World Jamboree at Sutton Coldfield, near Birmingham. Martin Speller and Peter Clark were part of Epsom District's representation and the Group also took part in providing home hospitality for Canadian Scouts before the Jamboree.

In 1958, the Seniors were busy building canoes -the start of a long tradition of canoeing in the Group -ready for a canoe camping holiday from Cricklade to Kingston. They also arranged a Cycle Treasure Hunt. The Troop Camp was held in the Lake District, led by Doc and Grace Jackson, assisted by Senior Scout Peter Clark. It was agreed that the Group should buy each Cub's first new scarf; Cub numbers had shot up to 43!. Weekly subscriptions at this time were Cubs 2d (1p), Scouts and Seniors 4d (2p) and each Scout earned about £5 a year helping the Group's wastepaper salvage collection. Rover meetings had been suspended because there was no Rover Leader.

The Group Committee now included Mrs Vi Martin, G F "Kim" Piper (later to be ASM), Frank Moore and Mrs Malings; Leslie Clark, a member for four years, was appointed Secretary, a position he was to hold for many years. There was some correspondence with the representatives of St John's Church because our Committee were concerned at the dangerous state of some old huts between our respective buildings, and suggested that they should be

demolished. This was eventually agreed and the work done by the older Scouts, under professional supervision: the salvaged timber was used to build a storage hut and another hut 20' x 10', donated by Ron Williamson, was also erected to be used for smaller Scout meetings. This hut was named, after one in a popular TV show of that time, "Hut 29" and acquired quite a personality of its own!

In 1959, Jack Collins, who had been SSM for the past 5 years now found himself also running the Troop and the 2 Cub Packs, with a stalwart band of helpers and assistants.

The 60's

Details are sparse of events during the few years 1959, 1960 and 1961 except that in 1960 Geoff Collins and Peter Clark joined the Epsom College Scouts' expedition pony-trekking in Iceland; and the Troop Summer Camp was at Lamberhurst, Kent, led by Derek Hughes. In 1961 the Camp was at Lyndhurst in the New Forest, led by Philip Moore as SM with Kim Piper and Brian Hughes. Josie Collins became Akela this year. In 1962, the Camp was at Plumpton, near Lewes in Sussex, run by JC with Doc Jackson and Kim Piper. Dave Faulkner, a prospective Scouter who had recently moved to Epsom, came to visit this camp and was directed by a young local to "the site with three elderly gentlemen" - they were very indignant but, well, age is comparative, isn't it?

Elsewhere this year, Geoff Collins and Peter Coombs were awarded the trophy for the fastest Junior Crew in a home built canoe in the Devizes to Westminster canoe race (of which more later). Their time was 23 hours 53 minutes.

This was also the year when the building of a new Scout "Hut" was first proposed, an exciting project that was to last about five years. A letter went out to all Parents saying that fundraising would need to be stepped up because only £700 was in hand and a further £1500, plus grant aid would be needed. As a first move, a new metal superstructure and roof were to be erected over the old building but it took, in fact, until the following year for this to happen and to complete one end wall. The work was, as ever, carried out by voluntary labour provided by Senior Scouts at first and later by parents and friends. The technical design and co-ordination of the building was masterminded by Geoff Collins, son of Jack and Jo, and a Rover Scout now qualifying as an engineer. Geoff was, and still is, a prime motivator of others to work together. His enthusiasm even persuaded Leslie Clark to ride pillion on Geoff's motorbike to visit Ron Williamson, Chairman of the PFA and get things moving. Shirley Moore (now Quemby - daughter of Frank and Marjorie Moore) kept a photographic record of building progress as well as making gallons of tea. Mr Palmer, father of a Scout, showed Geoff the trick of fixing large sheets of asbestos roofing. Alec Jardine gave architectural help and Ron Williamson, a heating and air conditioning engineer also gave technical advice as well as, with his wife, Sally, making strenuous efforts to organise fundraising.

£420 was raised in only eight months, and with a grant of £450 from Surrey County Council in 1964 the building work was able to progress steadily. It still took until the next year to lay the new floor between the walls of the new building and the old hut and the following year, 1966, the old hut was demolished and heating installed. There was great demand from the "young bloods" to help with the demolition but it was, very fairly, restricted to those who had helped on the construction work.

During these last two years, the usual range of Scouting activities had taken place. Troop Camps had been held at Ashmore Farm, near Salisbury, where Doc woke up one morning to find he had been lying, unknowingly in a shallow ditch which was filling with rain water; and at

Cathanger Farm, Petworth where a nearby Guide camp proved a distraction, too much so at packing up time. In December, Dave Faulkner took over as SM while JC moved up to be ADC (Cubs) but retaining an Assistant's warrant with the Group. In 1965, the Troop camped at Arne, Poole Harbour and visited Brownsea Island, where BP had held his first experimental camp all those years ago. This was another site where the Troop arrived in rain, Dave accidentally meeting his old Troop from East Grinstead who were just leaving.

1966 was another year of achievement. Not only was the new HQ virtually completed and the first Jumble Sale held there, but at Easter, Les Kingswood and John Davidge entered the famous Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race, 125 miles, for the seventh consecutive year and finished in 28 hours, 30 minutes, despite a damaged rudder, broken paddle and faulty hull. In 1963 and 1964 they had been awarded the trophy for the fastest crew in a home-built canoe. The race was, and maybe still is, one of the longest and toughest in the canoeing world involving canal and river sections, 77 locks round each of which the two man crews had to carry their canoes, loaded with camping equipment, clothes and food. Rigorous training, with support from parents, friends and a team involved time and travelling. During the race itself, Peter Clark (son of Leslie and Edith) and his support team followed the course by road to give the canoeists time checks, reports on race positions, to keep up morale especially during the night and provide emergency help if needed. The Seniors, led by Brian Hughes, manned an official check point.

During another race. at about this time. Geoff Collins and Brian Hughes. capsized their canoe in a mill stream during the night. Ironically. they had just parted from their support team who assumed that all was well. They managed to get themselves and the boat to the bank and were eventually reunited with the support team. And elsewhere, but also on water, the Senior Scouts led by Brian Hughes had a "holiday" on a narrow boat called Sandpiper from Rugby along the Grand Union canal. It was a strenuous and eventful journey through flights of locks and tunnels with frequent groundings.

Further success was achieved by the Cubs who managed to get three Sixes tying for first place in the District Inter-Six competition and thereby winning the trophy for the fifth year in succession.

During this year, when Leslie Clark became Chairman of the PFA, and through to 1969, fundraising to complete the HQ was proceeding steadily. There were coffee mornings, bring and buy sales, dinner and dance evenings and Christmas gift sales, held at the Myers Hall (then in Ashley Road) and at homes of parents and friends, notably that of Reg Fossey and his wife Molly in Oak Hill. This enabled work to proceed slowly but surely: the floor and plastering were done professionally, the main hall painted, plumbing and drains completed.

1967 was the year of the Advance Party Report, virtually unknown by the present generation but for those who were leaders or Scouts at the time, quite an upheaval. Out went the old Scout uniform of traditional Mountie style hat, khaki shirt, shorts and long socks with garters: in came, green berets, green shirts for the boys, blue for Sea and Air Scouts (khaki for leaders), long trousers for Scouts, older boys and leaders, ties instead of scarves for leaders (which after a fight stayed as "optional"), and no Scout staves. The ten Scout Laws devised by BP, the Founder, were revised to the present seven: the Promise was altered slightly; and for Cubs "DYB, DYB, DYB" and "DOB, DOB, DOB" in the Grand Howl were replaced by the more comprehensible but less dramatic "Cubs, Do Your Best" with the response "We'll Do Our Best". To top all this, Rover Scouts, which had already been reduced to an age limit of 24, were abolished and replaced by Venture Scouts with an age limit of 20; the Scout Fellowship was the non- training section for those over 20 who did not want to be leaders.

For some, these changes were too radical, too many and too sudden and splinter groups of Baden-Powell Scouts and Rover Scouts were formed, unrecognised and disapproved of by the Scout Association, and many still exist and thrive today. However, the intention was to bring the Movement up-to-date and to freshen up its appeal to contemporary boyhood: and, after an initial significant drop in numbers, the policy did bear fruit and Scouting took on a new lease of life.

Not much of note occurred with the 3rd Epsom during this year. The Troop camped at Path Hill Farm, Reading near the Thames. Parents Visiting Day was wet and in the evening when they had nearly all gone, a very muddy but enjoyable football match was played with teams wearing only swimming costumes. Doc Jackson's speciality at camps of this era was "the Commando course" with patrols moving from base to base to meet various challenges or projects. At this camp, Doc turned himself into a drowning man and floated down the Thames while each Patrol in turn tried to accurately throw him a lifeline: thankfully, he was a good swimmer! Meanwhile, back on site, Dave Faulkner was putting each Patrol across the rope commando bridge: all went well until Paul, halfway across, decided to jump off, let go and landed awkwardly and dislocated his elbow. There were no cars in camp so a real 999 call was made to summon an ambulance, great drama! Also this year, Josie Collins extended her activities to District Cub Scout Leader, retaining her *CM/CSL* warrant with the 3rd until 1969 when her son Geoff took over the leadership of the Woodland Pack. Jo remained *ACSL*, however, until she "retired" about 20 years later! 1968 was also memorable but for a quite different aspect of Scouting. It was the year of the Group's first Gang Show, staged with full Guide support at Church House to capacity audiences of 166 each performance. "Flying High" was the title song of the Show which included several Ralph Reader songs and sketches, including "The Colonel takes a bath"; and Brian Hughes recited "The Bricklayer" (still a popular monologue!).

The Group magazine was revived this year: "REPORT - of the Third, by the Third, for the Third" came out in March and June 1968. From its pages, we can learn that the two Packs were both meeting on Wednesdays, one at the HQ and one at Church House; that John "Dick" Whittington and Steve Elliot entered the gruelling Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race but had to retire after 50 miles and 104 locks; that Patrol Leaders, Brian Lee, Michael Noyes, Barry Coleman and Geoffrey Cooke, with others from the District, had a fascinating visit to Holland and were entertained by Dutch Scouts.

The 70's

In 1970, the Gang Show was repeated on a grander scale: "Up, Up and Aweigh" was produced at the Ebbisham Hall (Ashley Road, now Menzies) to a larger audience of 550 each performance. The programmes show that it was produced by Steve Morant, an ex-Scout who was studying at RADA and giving us his professional expertise. However, with just under a week to go to the opening, Steve was suddenly taken ill with appendicitis and JC took over the production at very short notice. This year also saw Leslie Clark hand over the Chairmanship of the PFA, to Harry Bratherton, although he remained a very active supporter.

On the Scouting front, the older Scouts, led by Ian Hudson and Dave Faulkner, went on a narrow boat expedition from Braunston, near Rugby. It was April and the nights were frosty; the days were also cold with a mixture of sunshine and snow. The boat had been converted into a floating dormitory which was adequate but very basic. The engine broke down twice in the first two days causing much frustration and delay; the crew were virtually stranded in the Stratford Canal by a leaking lock gate paddle which drained the pound above them during the night. And there were the usual groundings and mishaps: the barge-pole was broken while descending a lock and one luckless helmsman rammed the lock pier and spilt hot tomato soup all

over the boat's deck! Otherwise, it was a very strenuous but enjoyable week for all concerned.

Troop Summer Camp was at Matlock in a delightful site next to a river but so far from the road that the gear had to be transported across the fields by tractor and trailer. The main activity was canoeing and the weather was generally dry and sunny. Philip Aldred, a Scout with diabetes, was able to join his brother David, a PL, in camp each day from a nearby hotel. The soft alluvial soil was easy for digging wet pits - Roger Scudamore's was six feet deep!

1972 was our 50th Anniversary year and celebrated by another successful Gang Show, produced by JC. Entitled "The Sound of Voices" it featured, amongst many items "The Fairies at the Bottom of the Garden" by the heavyweight Venture Scouts, choirboy appearances by Roger Benke (as scene-change fillers) and a spectacular aircraft carrier setting for "Wings over Seaways" with projected film of an aeroplane taking off from the flight deck.

Ian Hudson was now SL and Troop Camp this year was at Llangattock, near Abergavenny, just inside Wales. The Troop arrived and set up camp but one patrol, digging the turf for their fireplace uncovered a round metal object suspiciously like a mine. All work stopped, the Police were called and then the Army Bomb Disposal Squad, much to everyone's excitement. It turned out that the field had been used for army manoeuvres and that this was a practice land-mine which had been overlooked in the clearing up. The rest of the camp was comparatively uneventful except for bringing back one young Scout from Abergavenny who was somewhat the worse for wear on cider. The canal which ran past the top of the site was ideal for canoeing and the bridge over it a focal point for wide games.

Records of the mid 70's are a bit sparse. John Collins was SL from 1973 to 1976. The Troop Camps were in 1973 at Roos Hall, Beccles in Suffolk near the River Waveney, a popular boating area; in 1974 at Broadstone Warren, the national Scout Campsite near East Grinstead, Sussex; and in 1975 at Wishanger Farm, Frensham where we camped beside a small river marking the boundary between Surrey and Hampshire.

1973 contained a sad event - the untimely death of Brian Hughes, still only in his late twenties. He had been CSL of the Downland Pack for the previous 4 years but had given a wealth of service to the Group as an Assistant Leader as well as using his skills as a joiner and providing lots of fun.

In 1976, after a break of four years, the next Gang Show was staged, this time in March instead of November as previously. The main feature was the construction of the nose-cone and wings of Concorde, the Supersonic aeroplane, as the spectacular setting for the finale. Richard Denyer took over as SL in time for Troop Camp this year which was at Shalfleet on the Isle of Wight; the journey involved a ferry crossing for the Scouts with coaches to Portsmouth and from Ryde to the camp site, while the van took the gear all the way. There was a severe drought and wood-fires were banned; canoeing, again a popular feature and expertly coached by Eric Huxter, was in sea-water in a little creek alongside the site. There was a mishap when Mark Furness had a billy of boiling water tipped over his leg but prompt action by Eric and Andrew Stevens, the two ASL's who emptied all the containers of cold water over Mark's leg - in spite of the severe water shortage - and then covered the wound with an airtight dressing before he was taken by Dave Faulkner (GSL) in an ambulance to hospital, undoubtedly saved him from serious injury or scamng.

The following year, 1977, saw a change in the way adult support in Scouting was organised. In our Group, such support had always been present and effective with the Parents and Friends Association, and to conform to the new philosophy it was reconstituted as The Headquarters Committee, with a new formal constitution, agreed with the Guides Commissioners. Peter

Lallem, Chairman, Vi Whiskerd, Secretary and Tony Starling, Treasurer, ensured continuity. The Group Council was also resurrected as a management support body for the Scout Group itself and the first meeting of the new Executive Committee took place on 2nd November with Leslie Clark, Chairman, Ann Clarke, Secretary and Graham Maskens, Treasurer. Largely because of these new more formal arrangements, which included regular meetings and the taking of minutes, there are more complete records of events from this time on. The Group now had a total of 131 members comprising 71 Cubs (Woodlands Pack led by Geoff Collins and Downlands Pack led by Hugh McGee), 45 Scouts (led by Richard Denyer) and 14 Scouters including Dave Faulkner as GSL. Dave was able to report, at the Group's AGM in 1978 that the Group "had had a fantastic year, the highlight being the Group Show 'Sing'". This had been another successful production by JC, with several original sketches and songs written specially for the show, as well as traditional numbers and music from popular shows and a cast of over 150. The customary continuity was provided by the "choirboys", Jonathan Rowley and Jamie Stainer.

Dave also reported that the Scouts had come first in the District Swimming Gala and the 5-A-Side Football Competition: the Cubs had come first and third in the District Inter-Six competition; three Scouts had achieved Chief Scout Awards and 14 Cubs their Gold Arrows. The Troop had also raised £136 for the (Queens) Silver Jubilee Appeal by a special conservation effort on Epsom Common.

It was agreed, at the AGM, that in future parents would themselves pay a lump sum for the annual capitation fee levied by Scout HQ (instead of the sections accumulating it from weekly subs).

Other good news was that the lease of the land from the Church had, after the usual negotiations, been renewed for a further ten years. The sad news was that Russell Brynolf, ASL, although in his early 20's, had suffered a heart attack and had to give up Scouting.

The HQ Committee was still, of course, busy raising funds for building maintenance. This autumn they combined with St Martin's Church for a Halloween Happening, a sort of Autumn Fair, the proceeds of which benefitted our funds by £500 and helped to pay for the redecoration of the HQ and new ceiling tiles.

1979 was a year of changes. On Scouting's International Front, the Jamboree which had been planned for Iran was cancelled because of the Islamic Revolution there. Instead, International Camps were to be held and our Paul Jansen was selected to represent the District in Toronto, Canada. Locally, Geoff Collins was appointed ADC (Cubs), but staying as CSL Woodlands for the time being at least. Richard Denyer resigned as SL to concentrate on Public Relations for the District and Andrew Stevens took his place. Graham Maskens resigned as Group Treasurer as he was being posted abroad and John Steven replaced him. John Futchter took over from Peter Lallem as Chairman of the HQ Committee.

A further change was the conversion of part of the old forge at the rear of our HQ site for use by the Ashley Venture Scout Unit, to which many of our older Scouts progressed. Having the Unit on the same site would be a psychological advantage and, indeed, over the years we have been of mutual help to each other. A separate lease was arranged between the Unit and the Church.

All Sections of the Group, which with 135 members was now the largest in the District, took part in "Cub Scout Venture (CSV) '79", a District Activity Camp in Hook Road Arena, the first of several such District Events. The Troop also camped at Buckmore Park Scout Activity Centre, Kent at Easter (where Andrew Stevens' go-kart broke as he took a particularly fast

comer) and at Perry Wood, Lingfield in the summer. The Cubs excelled themselves by coming first and third in both the District Swimming Gala and Sports competitions.

The 80's

The theme of change and innovation continued into this new decade. With a view to generating more income for the Group, a 100 Club was started by Hugh McGee who personally sold most of the initial shares and formed the committee to launch the Scheme. Over the subsequent years, in spite of fluctuating numbers of members, the Club has continued to provide a steady source of funds to pay for equipment, badges, leaders' uniform and training.

On the District front, it was proposed to amalgamate the two Districts of Epsom and Ewell, and views were sought. Our view was that, in the best interest of the boys, it would be better to stay separate; but we were in the minority and the amalgamation was effected the following year.

At the Annual Census in March, the Group numbers had risen to an all-time record of 144 which included an amazing 56 Scouts in eight Patrols and in the twelve months up to May, three Chief Scouts Awards and 13 Gold Arrows had been achieved. The Troop came first in the District Camping Competition and 24 boys and six leaders went to Biggin Hill to get experience of flying small light aircraft. Incidentally, subs were increased to 20p per week for Cubs and £1 per month for Scouts.

In October, Rita Collins took over from Geoff as CSL Woodlands Pack, having been an ACSL since 1963 and Andrew Stevens resigned as SL: as there was no replacement available Dave Faulkner (GSL) took over the running of the Troop temporarily. He was helped by Sue Evans, who had previously been helping with the cooking at Cub Camp and whose husband John was on the Group Committee.

This was also the year in which "You Can't Go Wrong If You're Right" the last of the series of 6 Group Shows, was performed. The title song was another of Ralph Reader's and again there was original material specially written including an adaptation of Fawlty Towers. At this time, the Ebbisham Hall was under threat of demolition ready for development of the new Ashley Centre, a point which recurred several times in the show with the Mayor in the front row of the audience. The show made a profit of £460 for Group funds.

1981 was designated 'The Year of the Scout' (by whom is not remembered) and for the Group was a year of consolidation and effort although there were still some changes about as Ann Norman took over as Group Secretary from Ann Clarke after 12 years, Terry Marks resigned as Quartermaster and Hugh McGee handed over the running of the 100 Club to George Mayne.

The Royal Wedding between Prince Charles and Princess Diana in July was a constant theme in all activities, especially at Cub camps. The Woodland Pack now had three handicapped boys, two with spina bifida and one deaf; and they had a new helper, later to be an ACSL, in Ann Fitcher. The Scouts had won the District Swimming Gala (again) and the Group was second overall.

The Troop were planning to go to Wales to camp near Monmouth and canoeing was again to be a main activity. A canoe trailer was urgently needed to help with transport: Richard Ascough (Senior), who was on the Group Committee, constructed a dual-purpose trailer where the 'tree' supports could be removed when not required. Co-incidentally, at the HQ, a new staircase was installed to increase the loft storage space and make room for the canoes, as well as new

tentage.

The following year, the Group celebrated its 60th Anniversary and at a Reunion Dinner in September, nearly 100 past and present members and friends saw photos, log books and souvenirs of former times. To mark the occasion, a special badge was suggested and the design eventually chosen was that of St Martin's sword cleaving his cloak which appeared at that time on the altar-cloth in the Church. This badge is still worn by all boys and leaders in the Group on their scarves. Credit is due to Richard Ascough (Senior) who saw through this suggestion to its fruition.

An unusual event this year was in April when Philip Aldred, ex-Patrol Leader but now a Director of Music at a Portslade (Brighton) College brought a party of 28 children and three teachers to Epsom for a concert tour. They used the HQ as a base for accommodation and some meals and arranged a special musical Troop meeting, based on a pantomime 'Ali Baba'.

Troop Camp was at Holmbush Farm, Horsham led by Dave Faulkner (assisted by Pauline, his wife, John Beckwith, ADC Scouts and Margaret, his wife): there was still no new SL but Dave resigned as DSL (three jobs were too much to cope with!). The HQ Committee's major fundraising event was a "Frost Fair" with a personal appearance by Jack Frost, and making £800 profit: this was the first of many such events over the succeeding years.

During the winter months '82/'83, a new car park was created between the HQ and St John's, with responsibility shared between ourselves and the Church, as part of the terms of the recently renewed lease. At the same time, a new path was formed at the side of the drive, which was also resurfaced; and a new drive to the Forge with: grass lawn at the side of the HQ. This all gave not only a safer, easier access but also a face-lift which was badly needed.

The catalogue of activities and achievements this year was particularly impressive -probably the best in the Group's history. Cub outings included the Royal Tournament, Boulogne, Battle, Thames TV Studios, BP House (London), Wookey Hole, Portsmouth Harbour, Wembley Stadium, Hendon Air Force Museum and the Christmas pantomime. The Downland Pack also raised £500 from a sponsored walk for Tadworth Court Childrens' Hospital and made tea, as part of National Tea Making week, at Capital Radio, Radio 1 and for the Chief Cashier at the Bank of England. The scouts visited Bognor, Wamham War Museum, went canoeing on the Wey Canal at Pyrford Lock and flying at Biggin Hill.

As for achievements in the newly enlarged District competitions, the Scouts gained first and second places in the Cross Country (Harvey Futcher was first overall), first in the Scoutcraft and first (yet again) in the Swimming; and the Woodland Pack gained third place in the Cross Country and the Downland Pack second place in the Cub Sports.

Our new QM was Mike Jones, an ACSL, who re-organised the stores and the system for issuing equipment. In September, Dave Faulkner resigned as temporary SL (after three years) and for a few months the Troop was run by Sue Evans and Steve Carter, who later became ASLs, with good help from the District Scout Fellowship.

1984, that year so darkly forecast in popular literature as the year of Big Brother, dawned on a much more practical and hopeful note. 18th January saw the first meeting of our new Beaver Colony with 18 boys, led by Joanne Fernandez, who provided the initiative for its formation in our Group. These were early days: Beavers were not officially a section of the Group and their programme, uniform etc. had still to be agreed and developed. However, there was plenty of enthusiasm and parental support right from the start: so much so that by October, there were no less than 30 Beavers and another 27 boys on the waiting list!

It was decided that our Beavers should have a uniform T-shirt to wear: this was navy blue with the St Martin's dagger and cloak motif in white. It was so attractive that it was adopted as 'informal uniform' by the whole Group and is still popular today.

On 24th October, HM The Queen came to Epsom to open the newly built Ashley Centre and the new Beavers, Cubs and Scouts of the District formed a large 'Guard of Honour': unfortunately it poured with rain but the shops did well!

During this and the following year, the Troop ran a very active programme. Sue Evans, at first "only" an ASL was in effect, and in due course became formally the Scout Leader, ably supported by John her husband (who in due course also became ASL). Canoeing continued and was a feature of the Troop's Summer Camp which was at the same farm in Monmouth as three years earlier. Sailing, mostly at Thames Young Mariners led by Matthew Suatt, also became popular and was added to the programme. The Troop's active involvement in District competitions -they were first again in the Cross Country -resulted in their coming fourth in the District Challenge Trophy. In addition, a new Scout Training programme was introduced with Pathfinder and Explorer Badges replacing the Scout and Advanced Scout Standard Awards.

Down at the HQ, a small team led by John Futchter, Chairman of the PFA and Richard Wing, refurbished and modernised the "Ladies".

The year concluded with the official retirement of Josie Collins after 30 years of service as ACSL, CSL, District CSL and Assistant with Beavers. The Mayor, Madeleine Catmur and Group Chairman Leslie Clark made presentations to her on behalf of the Group after the December Church Parade. However, Josie was heard to say at the time "You won't get rid of me as easily as that!" and seven years later she is still going strong!

1986 was a year of mixed fortunes. The Beavers had now stabilised at a reasonable 24 although they still had 14 on the waiting list. They were, however, now officially recognised as a training Section by the Scout Association.

The Woodland Pack of 30 boys had been without a CSL for a year as Rita Collins had had to resign: Doreen Pearson, who had been ACSL for nearly 20 years, now took over as CSL with Ann Futchter staying and Richard Ascough (Junior) arriving as ACSLs. The Downland Pack of 36 boys had problems because Hugh McGee, who had been ill, had to resign from CSL at short notice; Andrew Stevens, ACSL, took over but very soon was posted abroad; this left Vi Martin and Val Pearce as ACSLs to hold the fort, with help from parents. The Troop, however, was going from strength to strength under the enthusiastic leadership of Sue and John Evans with 34 boys: over 100 proficiency badges were awarded during the year. They also came first in the Swimming Gala, Cross Country and Under 13 5-A-Side Football Competitions. All sections attended the District Activity Camp called 'Mix '86' at Hook Road.

Mike Jones now had to resign as QM and ACSL as well as Gale Jones who had given many years' service as ACSL; Mike Pearson and John Evans became joint QM's. And, to complete the scene, all the lady leaders changed from green to the new khaki uniforms, like their male colleagues.

During the next year, the gradual process of modernisation of the HQ continued with a refitting and redecoration of the kitchen. Again John Futchter and Richard Wing were the prime workers. John resigned as Chairman of the PFA later in the year after eight years valuable service. His place was taken by Colin Wye, and Ann Chapman became Treasurer, replacing Tony Starling who had also given many years' service to this important job.

Another period of uncertainty lay ahead for the HQ. The lease expired this June and our landlords, the Vicar and Churchwardens of St Martin's, were undecided on what to do. They not only had a moral obligation but were very keen as our sponsors, to provide a home for us, either by renewing our lease or by helping to find another site. At the same time, the St John's building was in need of expensive repairs. However, the site was very valuable and sought after by developers who had offered, it was rumoured, up to £1 million.

The Church had to consider its position carefully. Various special meetings were held, some with the Vicar and others with Richard Ascough (Senior) a parent and former committee member and now a Churchwarden. One option considered was the construction of an extension to Church House with purpose- built hall and rooms for the Scouts and Guides to use as a Headquarters. These proposals and meetings dragged on for about two years and although there remained uncertainty about our security of tenure, nonetheless we remained in situ. Eventually, thanks mainly to a substantial legacy from a former Churchwarden, Albert Chandler, the Vicar and Churchwardens were able to decide not to consider the sale of the site as they had sufficient funds to repair St John's, and the lease was renewed for a period of 15 years. With security of tenure at last assured we could resume our refurbishment and modernisation and a schedule of work was drawn up, starting with the "Gents".

A major Scouting event this year was the World Jamboree in Australia. One of our PL's Andrew Townsend had been chosen as a District representative and returned after the event complete with boomerang, fly-swatting hat and photos to report on his many interesting experiences.

A sad event marked the close of the year: the death of Arthur Morgan who, as this history has shown earlier, was Group Secretary and Treasurer from the end of the war until 1965 and played a major role in the building of the original HQ during that period.

1988 was another major year of changes. At the AGM, Leslie Clark, who has featured in this history over nearly 40 years, was appointed as the Group's first President. His place, as Group Chairman was taken by Dave Faulkner who had been GSL for the previous 19 years; and his place as GSL was taken by Geoff Collins. A new Treasurer, David Smithson, was elected to replace Paul Bingham who had served several difficult years. Marie Nash, was the new Secretary. The Beavers also had a new leader in Rita Collins, replacing the founder-leader Joanne Fernandez; and to put the final seal in place, Sue Evans formally became Scout Leader.

The Downland Pack, which for the last year or so had been without a CSL now acquired Richard Ascough (Junior). Numbers were at a low ebb with only 9 boys, partly as a quirk of the birthrate of the relevant ages, Vi Martin had had to retire officially from ACSL the previous year after many years devoted service. With a lot of enthusiastic effort by Richard with Val Pearce and Rachel Townsend, ACSL's, numbers slowly began to rise again.

The Scouts had found an ideal camp site at Mellow Farm, Farnham for canoeing and pioneering. They also managed to send two boys to Discovery '89, an International Camp, as well as most of the 30 boys in the Troop completing the Discovery Challenge, for which a special badge was awarded. The Troop won the District Challenge Hike (Scout Section) and in the Cross Country, Paul Fernandez was overall winner and the Troop came third equal. A new Troop magazine was produced and all sections helped at the Church's Elizabethan Fair in aid of the Church Urban Fund.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme was now coming to the fore. With Rita Collins as a Co-ordinator, five Scouts and one former Scout gained their Bronze Award; more were being

prepared.

The 90's

This new decade started with so much happening that it is difficult to know where to begin.

The programme of the refurbishment and modernisation of the HQ was now in hand and work had already started. The total cost was estimated at £24,000 and towards this the HQ Committee had "saved" about £5,000 (mainly because fundraising had continued very profitably but little work had been carried out while the lease was negotiated); and the Church had generously donated £3,000. Another benefactor now appeared in the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Councillor Robert Lewis who although he had no positive connection with the Group (other than that the Mayor's Secretary, Maureen Chartres, was a former parent) adopted St Martin's Scouts and Guides refurbishment project as one of his Charities for his year of office. In return, Jane Melia, Secretary of the HQ Committee and Dave Faulkner, Group Chairman, served on his Charity Committee and helped with his fundraising programme for all the charities. One of the events in which we actively participated was the Mayor's Carnival Procession when we entered a float on the theme of the Mad Hatter's Tea Party: as well as the main characters, the float was escorted by Cubs and Brownies wearing outsize playing cards.

The final result of this mutual arrangement was a wonderful donation of £5,000 which was presented by Councillor Robert Lewis just after the end of his year, in 1991. (Another £186 followed a year later) At the AGM, he and Maureen Chartres were each given a Group sweatshirt as a token of our appreciation and a souvenir. This financial boost, augmented by some grants and our own continued fundraising, including two Summer Fairs, enabled the work to proceed, some of it to be done professionally and other work with voluntary labour.

The Troop excelled itself by three major achievements. First, Richard Bain was chosen as one of the District representatives to the World Jamboree in South Korea, with home hospitality in Japan. Second, the Troop were (joint) winners of the District Challenge Trophy for the first time: the culmination of a lot of effort and determination by boys and leaders. Third, five Patrol Leaders successfully completed their Chief Scouts Challenge, Chief Scouts Awards and Duke of Edinburgh Silver Awards before they progressed to Venture Scout Units. The Troop also took part in the "Go for a Million" national Scout challenge to complete various individual projects and raise £100,000 for Barnado's Homes.

On this high note of achievement Sue Evans retired as SL and became a District Scout Leader. After a hiatus of about nine months, John Hughes took over the SL's mantle.

The Cubs celebrated 1991 as their 75th Anniversary Year with a host of activities and a Fly the Flag challenge from the Chief Scout to find unusual locations: Downland Pack; who incidentally had now hoisted their numbers up to 30, managed to fly their flag on the BBC television programme "Blue Peter". Cubs in Surrey attended SPLATT, a large camp at Kempton Park.

Apart from the fact that Amanda Collins and then Lynne Vickers took over as Group Secretary, two other events occurred towards the end of this two year period. On 21 October 1991, Doc Jackson died. As this history has recorded, Doc, with his wife Grace, had been a leading figure in the Group's development from after the war until the late 60's. He will long be remembered with affection for his shrewd judgement and dry humour.

Finally the Scout Association announced that it had decided to admit girls to Beavers, Cubs and Scouts (they had already joined Venture Scouts some years ago). This move, prompted no

doubt by the general liberalisation of society, as well as the activities of the Equal Opportunities Commission, has caused mild flutters among the Scouting brotherhood and at the time of writing only a handful of girls have joined up locally. But what of the future? Perhaps, when this history is up- dated for the next major anniversary, the readers will look back and wonder what all the fuss was about!

APPENDIX

SCOUT AWARDS TO MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

Queens Scout	Peter Clark Geoff Collins Andrew Townsend	
Medal of Merit	Roland Jackson Jack Collins Josie Collins Leslie Clark Dave Faulkner Vi Martin Geoff Collins Vi Whiskerd	1968 1971 1975 1979 1981 1983 1990
Bar to Medal of Merit	Roland Jackson	
Silver Acorn	Jack Collins Josie Collins Leslie Clark Dave Faulkner	1976 1980 1986 1991