

## 1950's commentary - 12th Portobello (RHS) Scout Group

The commentary on the 1950's is somewhat hampered by a lack of reports mid-decade in Schola Regia about the Scouts. Akela was very busy describing Cub Scout programmes and achievements, but between 1954 and 1957, Scouts reports are sparse.

The 1950's commenced with the usual round of fund-raising activities (including a visit from the Newhaven Fishwives Choir), and news that the Group is joining the BP Guild - an organisation still very much active in 2022. The Guild largely caters for former scouts and others who may be interested in contributing to the Scouting community. A Saturday evening club with canteen facilities was started at Tower Street.

1951's reports opened with the message that as the 21st anniversary of the Group's founding approached, "All sections are up to full strength". The 1951 camp was held at Kelso.

1952 commenced with a 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Ball in the Assembly rooms (flyer on right), when the ticket price was 12 shillings and sixpence. The event commenced with whist (?) at 7.15pm, followed by dancing from 8.30pm to 1.30am. No mention is made of food, beverages or transport, and no account of the event appears



to have been recorded. The 1952 Christmas bazaar at the Junior School (intended to reduce the deficit on the Tower Street memorial hall) raised £350 (£11,000 in 2022 values) – a considerable sum.

The planned 1952 summer Norwegian visit was postponed until 1954, and a group summer camp was proposed. No further information is available about either the 1952 or 1953 camps, but the 1954 event was at St Mary's Loch. Extensive reports are available on the Cubs progress, including news of a colour film made by a parent of the Cubs activities, which would be interesting if still available. There are also many references to fund-raising events, the main target for which was the upkeep of the Memorial Hall.

The 1955 Christmas Schola Regia report including a note about the Cornwall badge (for bravery) being awarded to Murray Watt, a Cub who suffered grave

illness.

1956 saw the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wolf Cubs being added to the movement, and a commemoration service was held in St Christopher's Church in Portobello.

Gordon McConnachie's excellent photo library shows camps - 1955 Clovenfords, 1956 Kailzie and Fordell Firs, but no reports are available. The 1957 Sea Scout camp was held at Loch Etive. 'Smiling Along' (a Scout and Cub-Scout musical revue) was presented in the Junior School Hall, with several performances to packed houses.

1958 reports include the troop retaining the District Shield, and that the summer camp was held at Darnhall Mains, Eddleston (photo on left above features Willox, Thomson, Yellowlees and Sprigg), when a certain 'Horace' made the first of many wraith-like appearances. Troop Leaders were Ian Hutchison, Derek Addison, Sydney Wardrop and Rob Lawrie. The Sea Scouts also had a busy programme – including taking 'Aptera', their 35-foot motor yacht to the Clyde via the Forth and Clyde canal – the report said that in 1957 they had reached as far as Tobermory! The troop was at full strength with 36 scouts in 6 patrols, the Wolves, Falcons and Bulldogs leading the way with the Buffalos and Wolves close behind (what about the Kingfishers?).



The Rover Crew restarted after a 10-year absence, with the School providing a den in no 4 Regent Terrace. Projects they had undertaken included selling programmes at the tattoo, erecting memorial gates at Bonaly, visiting McLachlan's brewery, and the Scottish Daily Mail printing press. The Royal visit on 4<sup>th</sup> July included displays by Cubs, Sea Scouts (canoe building) and Scouts, with a splendid photo of the



Queen with 'Hammie' and Johnnie Small (shown above left)

1959 reports include the planning of a reciprocal visit and camp to Sweden, which sadly was cancelled later in the year, necessitating the rapid organisation of a camp nearer to home. The camp (at Coulston Estate near Gifford) was a great success – the photo shown on the right features scoutmaster Derek Addison with Stuart Yorston, John Elvin, Ivor Hall, Gordon McConnachie, Stuart Cruikshank and Alex Anderson. The troop won the district shield for a third consecutive time, and Miss Rhind and Mrs Tweedie retired from Cub service.