

WHEEL AND WOGGLE

News and Views of The Fellowship of Scouting Rotarians R.I.B.I.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ROTARY CLUB OF STOURPORT

On the 13th September 1997 the Deputy Chief Constable of West Mercia formally opened a new Scout Headquarters building for the Mid Severn Sea Scout Group in Worcestershire.

When Rotarian Harry Morris learned of his forthcoming appointment as President of the Rotary Club of Stourport he challenged the Club to make possible a new Headquarters for the local Group. Three years and £56,000 later the project was completed.

The Chief Scout was unable to be present at the opening ceremony but sent a letter to be read out . A copy of which follows.

Dear Fellow Rotarians,

I was delighted to learn of the exceptional part played by the rotary Club of Stourport in the building of the new Headquarters for the Mid Severn Sea Scouts. The amount of money raised by the joint committee in such a short period is outstanding and all those involved are to be congratulated.

On behalf of the Scout Association I thank the Rotary Club for the major part which they have played in the project. I also know that your support was not confined to fund raising and that Members devoted a significant amount of time and expertise to many other aspects of the scheme.

I am certain that your efforts will be amply rewarded when you see the young people of Stourport, both Scouts and Guides enjoying the new facilities for many years to come.

With thanks and best wishes,

George Purdy.

CHIEF SCOUT.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted that Rotarian David Roberts has joined the Rotary Scout Fellowship Executive Committee. David is a keen Rotarian with strong Scouting connections not the least of which is his wife Lesley who is Scout County Commissioner for Oxfordshire.

Rotarian Laurie Hilditch has also joined us as the new District Liaison Officer for the Rotary Fellowship for District 1250. His address is 72 Fairfield Gardens, Portslade Brighton, East Sussex, BN41 2BJ. If you know of any Rotarian with a Scouting background in District 1250, who is not a member of the Rotary Scout Fellowship, Laurie would be delighted to know so that he can begin work recruiting!

It is with considerable pleasure that we welcome the following Rotarians to the Fellowship since the Summer.

| | |
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| Eric G. Clarkson | Filey |
| Walter R.C. Butler | Cookstown |
| David Lampert | Porthmadog |
| Michael R. Smith | Exeter Castle |
| Derrick F. Knill | Tiverton |
| Graeme E. Bullock | Sidmouth |
| Roy F. Chapple | Seaton |
| Basil D. Pidgeon | Bideford |
| Leslie G. Knight | Axminster |
| Terence E. Roche | Bideford Bridge |
| Laurie C. Hilditch | Brighton |

HAVE YOU A CONTACT ?

The members of the Executive have been approached to assist with the creation of the International Fellowship of Scouting Rotarians in Europe and Africa and quite separately to assist with the creation of a Branch of the Fellowship in South Africa.

To do this it is necessary to contact Rotarians with a Scouting background. If you know of any Rotarians in Europe or Africa please send their names, addresses and if known the names of their Rotary Clubs. Alternatively, if you prefer, you may ask them to contact the Chairman (Tom Cryer) direct but this is not the preferred option as it is more time consuming and less likely to happen!

NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER

Our Treasurer Keith Edwards has recently changed his telephone number to 0121 241 3399. his address remains the unchanged.

SETTING UP A TRUST FUND

Recently we received interesting details of a Scout Trust Fund established in Hertfordshire which we thought would be of interest to members and which might convince them of the desirability of doing something similar. The Rotary Scout Fellowship Executive takes no responsibility for this article or any legal ramifications. Legal advice should be sought locally before attempting such an exercise!

FRIENDLY REMINDER

LIFE MEMBERSHIP
SUBSCRIPTION TEN TIMES ANNUAL SUB
CURRENTLY £75.00

SUBSCRIPTIONS 1998 - 99

Members are reminded that Subscriptions for Rotary Year 1998-9 Are due 1st July 1998. Please send your Cheque for £7.50 to the Secretary to avoid the expense of further reminders when subs are due. Members joining after 31 March 1998 are covered for 1998/9 and need not take any further action.

Norman Hyde Scout Trust Fund
and how and why it happened.

I suppose that Hitchin and District is much like any other Market Town with a few villages within a six or seven mile radius.

I would imagine that there are many other similarities with other Districts including the perennial cash, and cash flow problems.

In Hitchin we have had representatives at every World Jamboree since 1929 and the District has traditionally raised about one third of the cost to support this. This has depleted the District Kitty to such an extent that it takes about three years to get over it and lo! its time for the next Jamboree.

It was in 1963 that it was first mooted that a special Jamboree Fund be established, and it was, but there was very little put into it, and in hard times any balance was used as a source for borrowing purposes.

It was in 1996 that I received a little windfall that I had never expected and with it I opened a bank account in the name of the Trust Fund.

The target was to raise £10,000 that would never be available for use except as capital. It was projected to produce £400 - £500 income per annum of which £200 - £250 would be reserved each year for World Jamboree representation, making £900 - £1000 available every fourth year.

The other £200 each year to be allocated to the rapidly rising costs of 'competency certificates' for leaders undertaking specialist activities.

The first appeal was made through fifty letters to the local Scout Movement and produced an immediate response, and a reluctant response from others who hoped to see the fund established as a Charity before they contributed.

I sought a potential chairman for the Trustees who whilst supportive was not connected with the movement.

He in turn found three others and a first meeting was called in November 1996 when a draft deed was discussed, amended and adopted. It was coincidental that all were Hitchin Rotarians.

The deed itself was modelled on the Rotary Trust Deed and when first submitted to the Charity Commission, was rejected. The subsequent amendment of three words resulted in acceptance and registered charity status was granted in February 1997 and backdated by Inland Revenue to September 1996.

An appeal to the members of the Chamber of Commerce was then launched together with some individual letters to Lions, Rotary, Round Table, etc..

For those of you who are statistically minded donations were:-

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|------------|---|
| over £1000 | 1 |
| £ 500 | 1 |
| £ 250 | 6 |
| £ 200 | 1 |
| £ 100 | 4 |
| £ 50 | 2 |

All outgoings were donated so that at the first AGM, the treasurers report showed a closing balance of expenses nil, donations £5072. A month later the balance approached £6000.

Other income was generated from the collection at the St. George's Day parade, Jumble sales, sponsored walks etc. but the principle donor was the Inland Revenue who contributed approx. £950 in tax refunds on the first 8 items listed above.

The deed which I prepared may now be regarded as a model for any Rotary Club that wishes to follow Hitchin's example and promote a Trust fund to support Scouting (or indeed any other project) in their locality.

Copies may be obtained (upon a donation of £10 to the Norman Hyde Scout Trust Fund) registered charity no. 1060945

I would like to think that this little contribution might encourage other Scouting Rotarians to support their local District in a similar way. If I can help please ring me on 01462 459617.

The Author joined the Scouts in 1938 became a Kings Scout in 1943 and joined Rotary 1959 and apart from leading troops in two World Jamborees, in France and Idaho, has held active posts as ASM, GSL, ADC, DC, ACC and acted as architect for Lochearnhead, Coetmor Mill, Orchard Farm, Whernside and Longridge and served on HQ, County and District Committees.

In 1992 he participated in Moscow 92 and promoted the Rotary effort to send "Starter Boxes" to St. Petersburg. He holds the Medal of Merit and L.S.D. Also P.H.F.

Presently he serves on the District Scout Council as Grants Officer, having twice served as President and now as Vice President.

In Rotary he was President of his club in 1970-71 and held most posts except Treasurer, as well as four years as District Extension Officer forming seven new clubs.

In other fields he was JP for 20years being deputy chairman, Chairman of the Licensing Committee and Chairman of the Betting and Gaming Committee during the 1980's, Chairman of the General Commissioners of Income Tax from 1972 to 1997.

He was or is Trustee of six local Charities serving as Clerk for another.

He has bred a Queen's Scout, a Chief Scout Award holder and two girls, his only grandson and one granddaughter are following fathers and grandfathers footsteps.

WELCOME

BY THE CHAIRMAN

A Happy New Year to you all!

How quickly these "New Years" come around and how quickly "New Year Resolutions" are broken. Last year was one in which I resolved to do a great deal within the Fellowship and some of it was done but a daughter in law suffering from cancer (now clear) and a sister in law suffering from terminal cancer which has now come to a blessed release changed the options somewhat so here I am again resolving to promote the Fellowship harder in this my last year as Fellowship Chairman. Since taking Office the Fellowship has grown and a strong Executive Committee has emerged. At our AGM in 1998 we will be seeking approval of a recommendation that there should be an Office of Chairman Nominee to shadow the last year of a Chairman's term which should be in future a maximum of three years. To avoid all Officers having to retire at the same time there will be a further recommendation at the AGM that the Secretary and Treasurer should each be eligible to serve for a maximum term of five years. In this way new blood will be brought on to the Executive Committee. Now that membership in RIBI has passed the hundred mark we feel able to extend the possibility for Office to any member of the Rotary Scout Fellowship and nomination forms for Office will be sent out before the AGM this year for Chairman Nominee who would serve for one year before succeeding to the Office of Chairman. In future years nominations will be required for each of the Offices of Treasurer, Secretary and Chairman Nominee.

There being rather a lot to cram into this Issue the Editor has only left me room and time to sign off, which I do with greetings and best wishes to you all.

Tom Cryer.

HELP REQUIRED

THE ROTARY CLUB OF ST ALBAN'S PRIORY (DISTRICT 1260) are helping with a Youth Camp to be held in Herts/Beds in July. Finance for the Camp (about £7000) has already been promised from Rotary but the Club are seeking to find a way of bringing to the UK Four Bulgarian Scouts who would not otherwise have the chance to travel.

Two thoughts spring to mind immediately : Members of the Rotary Scout Fellowship might care to assist financially. If you feel able, cheques should be sent to the Fellowship Treasurer, Rotarian Keith Edwards, at his home address, 19 Chestnut Drive, Erdington, Birmingham B24 0DN. made payable to the Rotary Scout Fellowship. Early contributions will be especially welcomed in view of the date of the camp and the need to be able to tell the Bulgarian Scouts they can participate. PLEASE HELP IF AT ALL POSSIBLE - THANKS.

The other thought is that there may be an International Scout Event in your District. Would help from Rotary be of value?

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'It had been a truly wonderful trip with the jamboree being the icing on the cake. Listening to the Unit chatting, they were actually as moved as I was. It was very humbling that these people should be so grateful for us doing so little. They deserve to succeed and I shall pray that they do.'

WHAT ABOUT THE SCOUTS?

To many people, Bulgaria may not be the first place that springs to mind for a Venture Scout Unit expedition. However, Tudor Venture Scout Unit, from Watford, in Hertfordshire, enjoyed a two-and-a-half week expedition this summer which included a visit to the fourth ever Bulgarian Jamboree. The visit gave them a chance to see and experience Scouting's re-emergence after many years of Communist rule. Here Ed Messenger, the Venture Scout Leader, shares a few of his thoughts on the jamboree and highlights some of the Bulgarian Scouts' aspirations for the future...

Re-establishing Scouting

'The jamboree in Bulgaria was the country's fourth — apparently the others were pre-second world war. The people we met, who are the ones actively trying to get Scouting on the go, are old men who were Scouts before the war. They have been having talks with people from the World Bureau, in Switzerland, to get official recognition. They had hoped to have visitors from a number of countries including France and Russia. The French did attend earlier in the week but no-one else had turned up and we were left with a feeling of deep gratitude on their part that someone from so far away had bothered to go to see them, and in truth I was a little overwhelmed and embarrassed by it.

'Two people in particular spoke with us at length about Scouting. They were Miroslav Dimitrov (President) and Noubar Kerestedjian (former National Training Commissioner). Miro is a wonderful man who is eighty years-of-age and, by the way the Scouts greeted him at the camp fire, must be something to them like Baden-Powell himself. He has energy that a man half his age would love to share. He joined the Scouts in 1926 and continued until it was banned in the early 1940s. His title of President effectively means he is their Chief Scout.

'Noubar is a mere youngster at 70. He has a daughter living in Swansea

and an English son-in-law and travels to Britain fairly often. He speaks perfect English and, consequently, most of my information was from him. Miro himself spoke no English and, although we conversed through an interpreter, by the very nature of things the conversation was not that deep.

'We did on another occasion talk at length with his grand-daughter who spoke French and had been at a French University. My conversation with her was more general than Scouting orientated. Noubar is engaged in writing a Patrol Leaders' Handbook at the moment and I offered to send him anything I could from the United Kingdom. He has received a great deal of good information from Switzerland but the problem was adapting it to the conditions that prevail in Bulgaria.

'Democracy and the style of government in Bulgaria is nowhere as cut and dried as we are led to believe. Whilst democracy has a strong foothold in the big cities, in the countryside this is not so. We were asked why we came to Bulgaria when it is so dangerous. A young girl Scout aged about fifteen told me that Communist gangs go around beating people up and the police are more sympathetic to the gangs than to the citizens. We saw no evidence of anything like that but as we were told the same thing on more than one occasion, we can only presume that the report was accurate.

'I was interviewed, through an interpreter, by a young lady Scout Leader, who was the publicist for the camp and works for the local radio station as a journalist. Her main angle was to find my views of Scouting in Bulgaria. At the time we were wandering around the site, seeing Scouts tackle an assault course. It could have been anywhere — in fact it looked almost like the Hertfordshire Green Beret competition back home!

'She also interviewed me as we were leaving, asking what I thought was the difference between Scouts in Bulgaria and in England. We had just spent 24 hours being besieged by Bulgarian Scouts and I told her that there was no difference as we are all Scouts and

part of the same family. That is the way I see it but, of course, the difference was summed up by Noubar when he said "thank you for coming and letting them see British Scouts in the flesh as there is no chance in the foreseeable future of them coming to visit you."

'I was talking to a Leader who is a forty year-old engineer who can not get employment and there is no social security payments in his field. He is working for the Sofia Mountain Security (equivalent to our mountain rescue) on call for 24 hours a day and seven days a week. He is paid 8,000 leva, about £30 per month.

'Of course, one has to take this into perspective that everything is very cheap but this is low pay by any standards. He just gave a resigned grin on being told that our flight to Bulgaria was 55,000 leva. I can only say that 40 years of communism will take much effort to overcome and not a little time. I was left with the impression from Miro down to Dinco (a little lad that boosted our football team) that these people will have no little part to play. They showed the kind of spirit that humans have when adversity is put upon them. I hope that doesn't sound too condescending because that's the way I see it.'

What about the Scouts?

'What of the Scouts themselves? We arrived at Kazanluk station on the overnight train from Varna at 2.30a.m. and had to sleep in the waiting room until 6.30a.m. when the first bus departed. We were awoken by the local constabulary jostling our feet with rather long evil looking sticks. When we eventually got on the bus, it took us out into the countryside and left in what seemed to be the middle of nowhere. So where was the jamboree?

'A sweep search revealed some tents about half a mile away. Surely this wasn't the jamboree? It looked nothing like one, particularly to one lad who had been at the previous World Jamboree at Dronten. We began to wonder what we had let ourselves in for...

'There was a marked reluctance on all our faces since this was nothing like we were expecting. I tried to hide my disappointment and reminded the Unit that we'd been invited so we must go.

'The camping field was a derelict army base and we had to climb over a fence because we could not see a way in. As we approached the site we saw a crowd moving towards us. It was just like "Doctor Livingstone I presume" and the welcome was no less, I'm sure.

'They had thought that, like the others, we would not turn up. We pitched our tents and at flag break we handed over a pennant which Watford Council had given us for the occasion. Our Union Jack was also flown from the flagpole. After the train and the floor of the station I did not commit us to anything straight away, but we were invited to watch teams going through a series of bases involving signalling (Morse and semaphore), compass work and a number of bases involving commando course type things.

'The whole thing was run very well and all the Unit came round well which, under the circumstances, was more than I could have asked for.

'We then returned to our tents and there we sat. Grumbings started about no one wanting to know us, but just as we were beginning to think that perhaps we had

made a mistake they (the Scouts) started to wander over in ones and twos. There ensued a wonderful afternoon of discourse, swaps and just general chatting. This was what it was all about — Scouts from five different towns in Bulgaria meeting and making friends with Scouts from the United Kingdom.

'Later in the afternoon, a football match was arranged between us and the lads on the nearest site. It was a very competitive game but all played in good humour, especially when their supporters said the ball had gone over the by-line as they scored the best goal of the game.

'Full time came with a draw and so the "golden goal" was played for and scored by us. The evening meal passed and the camp fire beckoned. Not really our scene, but in the interest of things, we went along.

'One or two of the songs seemed familiar. One about a man with a farm and animals. Mira's party piece was a lot like *I am the music man...* It was somewhat unlike camp fires as I remember them with no beginning or end. It just seemed to happen and then stop. It was all sung to the accompaniment of a lad with a guitar.

'They sang McCartney's *Yesterday* which they told us was what they sang when the Communists fell. My Assistant and I slipped away with the staff for a drink leaving the Unit to fraternise.

'Perhaps this was the best session for assessing their chances of getting Scouts going in Bulgaria. These youngsters would have been between fifteen and eighteen when the communists fell from grace. They have learned Russian at school, often under duress, and sometimes English as well. They all, without exception, said they hated Communism but it was the way they were brought up. They are all asking questions of life and seemed almost like ships without rudders.

'So, what's the difference between Pioneers and Scouts? Several told us that they had been in the Scouts for just a few weeks. There is no tradition of Scouts and this is the greatest problem to overcome. There were a few who had been in Holland last year for the World Jamboree and others who wanted to go to Chile for the next one. This, of course, brings up their biggest problem — money. One girl said her mother would have to work for two years to earn what the trip had cost us.

'The following morning it was time to move on. The weather was quite the worst of our trip — so bad that Noubar said we must feel quite at home! Many of the Scouts had been bussed out to various activities and so we were pleased to leave. Word was brought that Miro wanted to see us at the Headquarters building. He gave us a speech, via an interpreter, saying how grateful they were that we had made the effort to see them and presenting us with badges and things. I responded on our behalf, gave a short interview to local radio and off we went with something of a lump in the throat.

'It had been a truly wonderful trip with the jamboree being the icing on the cake. Listening to the Unit chatting, they were actually as moved as I was. It was very humbling that these people should be so grateful for us doing so little. They deserve to succeed and I shall pray that they do.'



Ed Messenger

WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU AT THE
R.I.B.I. CONFERENCE
BRIGHTON 16TH TO 19TH APRIL 1998
NOTICE OF A.G.M.

The AGM of the Rotary Scout Fellowship RIBI Branch will take place at 4pm (subject to Conference timetable) at the display stand in the House of Friendship on Saturday 18th April 1998.

All Members are welcome.

It will be recommended to the AGM that there will be a new Office of Chairman Nominee. The holder to serve for one year. It will also be recommended that the tenure for Office for Chairman should in future be for three years maximum and for Secretary and Treasurer for five years maximum.

The present Chairman has agreed to serve for a fourth and final year to cover the interregnum if this is the wish of the AGM.

The Executive Committee will nominate Rtn Tony Freeman for the Office of Chairman Nominee. Any other nominations should be submitted in writing to the secretary not later than March 29th. with a signed agreement that the nominee is prepared to serve.

OFFICERS

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| CHAIRMAN. Tom Cryer. 86 Cottage Lane, Marlbrook, Bromsgrove. B60 1DT | Tel 0121 445 5077 |
| SECRETARY. Brian Kimberley. 43 Hither Green Lane, Redditch. B98 9BN | Tel 01527 591307 |
| TREASURER. Keith Edwards. 19 Chestnut Drive, Birmingham. B24 0DN. | Tel 0121 241 3399 |
| EXEC. MEMB. Edward Robinson. 22 Green Banks Ave Leeds. LS18 5RX | Tel 0113 2586302 |
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| EXEC. MEMB. Antony Freeman. 10 Aubreys, Letchworth, Herts SG6 3TZ | Tel 01462 676865 |
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