



MAY 1991 No. 363

THE OFFICIAL BULLETIN
OF LETCHWORTH AND BALDOCK
DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL

ST. GEORGE'S DAY PARADE.

One of the finest sights in Scouting is to see a church packed with Scouts for the St. George's Day Service. This year there were over four hundred present for the service in the beautiful church of St. Mary's at Ashwell. It made a very special occasion for us to renew our promise. Our thanks to the Revd. Patrick Bright for conducting the service and helping us prepare it with such enthusiasm. Also thanks to the Leaders and Cubs/Scouts from Ashwell who were involved in the service. The collection will be donated to the Soraksan Fund to send Scouts from the Third World to the Jamboree. We were pleased to welcome Colin McIntyre as County representative. Finally well done to John Chapman for marshalling the Parade so successfully.

DISTRICT AGM. TUESDAY 14th. MAY.

Please turn up in large numbers at St. Mary's Church Hall, Baldock. 7.30pm for 8.00pm.

MRS. MARGARET RINGROW.

At this years 7th. Letchworth AGM. Margaret Ringrow resigned as Treasurer after thirty-one years service at the Group. John Wright, Group Chairman presented her with a crystal vase and a bouquet of flowers, and Bob Williams, thanked her for her outstanding service to the Group. Scouting depends on the contribution of lay members and the commitment of Margaret Ringrow is a shining example to us all.

BEAVER SCOUT CHALLENGE.

The eldest eight boys from each of the six Colonies took part in this years Challenge, which comprised of a General Knowledge Quiz and a Scavenger Hunt. Our thanks to Fran Maciver (Beaver mum), for setting and running the Quiz and to the Nortonbury Service Team, for organising the Scavenger Hunt. The Trophy was won by 4th. Letchworth (Tuesday) and the runners up were 4th. Letchworth (Friday). Well done to them, and to all the Beavers whose enthusiasm made this a very enjoyable afternoon.

8th. LETCHWORTH CUB SCOUTS ADOPT A CUB.

By earning £40 doing odd jobs, 8th. Letchworth Cub Scouts were able to adopt a three month old Brown Bear Cub at Whipsnade Zoo. This is part of the World Conservation Badge. They are visiting it in July. At this time he or she has no name, but I am sure it will be something appropriate. Well done boys.

ARTS AND CRAFTS. NORTONBURY, SATURDAY 27th. APRIL.

Although the entries were low this year, the standard was very high. Again the Beavers were the highest entrants, Collages their favourite class. The Judges were very impressed, this year we asked Lesley Lewis ADC. Cub Scouts from Hitchin and Sally Stratton Beaver Leader from Stotfold to help, they both enjoyed it and went away with lots of ideas. The Cub Pack entry was an Anniversary Flag - to be flown at District Camp and the individual Cub entry was a Birthday Card, depicting 75 years of Cub Scouting.

Rosemary Brenham, wife of our County Commissioner presented the Trophies with very complimentary remarks.

How can we attract the Scouts and Adults ?. If anyone has ideas please let us know.

The final results were :-

Scout Fellowship Trophy for Beavers	- 1st. Baldock (Tuesday)
Blaxland Trophy for Cub Scouts	- 1st. Ashwell
Watson Trophy for Scouts	- 1st.3rd. Letchworth
Eaves Trophy for Adults	- Janet Bitmead
Plinston Trophy for Group	- 1st.3rd. Letchworth

GOLD ARROW AWARD DAY.

Eighteen Cubs and Scouts enjoyed their special DAY at Nortonbury on Sunday 28th. April. They were given lunch, cooked by Chris Parr and Gill Taylor and treated to a rough and tumble by the District Service Team. Keith Davies presented the Certificates.

There should have been 32 boys. What happened to the other 14 ?

GANG SHOW.

Don't forget there is another chance to see the Gang Show on 10th.11th. May at St.Mary's School in Baldock. Tickets from the Mayflower in the High Street.

DISTRICT SWIMMING GALA.

The date has been fixed for Monday 15th. July at Letchworth Swimming Pool. Put this date in your diary. Details will follow later.

SCOUT FELLOWSHIP.

May 25th. Garden Party at Laurie Cooks.

June 23rd. Treasure Hunt. For details contact Maggie Letch. 675197.

GANG SHOW 1991

When commissioned by the District Commissioner to write a piece about the Gang Show, I had to agree, if only to save Bob a job. I think he wants an objective criticism from an outsider's point of view, so I will try - but it is hard to be unbiased when one's own Gang Show neckerchief is dated 1957 and full of memories that can't be washed out.

After last year's Brave Try following the fire disaster, I went to the 1991 show on the Saturday night, hoping to find that things were back to normal. And they were.

Let's have the bad news first. Almost all the Gang Shows I've seen (including London ones produced by Ralph Reader himself) have had the occasional sketch that creaked enough to make you cringe. This year's nominations in this category are "Rural England" and "The Night Before", both agonizingly slow and unfunny. This is not so much a criticism of the performers as of the dreadful material.

Moving up the scale, the opening number was not quite as encouraging as it might have been. We could hear all the words (bravo!) but by the last night of the show I expected a little more oomph from everybody. A bit of this would also have helped in "Seasons", which was a great idea but too slow and oomphless until the winter arrived!

That beautifully painted woodland scene was well worth seeing three or four times, and I look forward to meeting it again next year - with others. My congratulations go to the "Fairies at the Bottom of Your Garden", who proved that girls are just as good as boys in this kind of soppy thing, although my ancient memory suggests that boys used to be much funnier dressed in frillies. Times do change.

And yet some unalterable truths remain: one being that Cubs steal scenes. "Wild West" reaffirmed this. The small chap in the huge sombrero made the whole effort of coming out on a wet evening thoroughly worth while, and the tallest one (Dan the thingummy man) had the sparkle of star quality in his eye. Keep them in the cast, Mr Producer, and don't let them ever back out.

This brings us to the noticeably weak representation of older Scouts, Venture Scouts and Rangers. If only a few more of these can persuade themselves to join in the fun in future, a lot of that oomph will be back in the right places. It was certainly there in "Circus" - quite the best item in the show, with everything happening at once in all directions, excellent costumes, lots of colour, movement and speed. Was that only a piano accompaniment? I got the illusion of an entire circus band! It really oomphed:

How could they follow that? Well, the Beaver Scout Leaders did it, in their beautiful "Beaver Meeting" duo with a nice resemblance to a Joyce Grenfell style. It was fresh and funny, just the right length, and of course right up to date!

"Clippie Marlene" (who should have been Marleen to rhyme with Stotfold Green) was incredibly out of date, despite the neat substitution of Hoppanstoppers in the revised lyric. Bus conductresses are probably an extinct species, so one hopes this thirty year old parody will now be stuffed in a museum. And yet we had that wonderful "Jamboree" songs thirty four years old, lively and appropriate again for the Cub Scouts' seventy fifth anniversary. This was very well done, wrapped around "The Morning of Your Life" by that ancient Scouter who has actually been in every Letchworth & Baldock Gang Show since 1955. There's stickability for you!

We can't do without these old folk - the ones who might still remember what "Free and Frippence 'Apenny" means, but who gave such oomph to its new inflated translation as "Fifty Pence in Coppers".

Thank you, Gang! You've been making memories all right. Please go on doing so for a long, long, long, long time.

KJ

DISTRICT DIARY.

MAY

8th. 1st. Ashwell AGM.
8th. 1st. Baldock AGM.
8th. 1st.3rd. Letchworth AGM.
10th. 4th. Letchworth AGM.
10th. 8th. Letchworth AGM.
10th. Gang Show. Baldock.
11th. Gang Show. Baldock.
11th. District Cub Scouts First Aid Competition.
12th. Beavers - Lea Valley.
13th. Cub Leaders Meeting. 31 Lordship Lane.
14th. District AGM. Baldock.
15th. 5th. Letchworth AGM.
25th. Fellowship Garden Party.

JUNE

4th. 12th. Letchworth AGM.
7/8/9 District Cub Camp.
12th. District Team Meeting.
13th. District Executive Meeting.
21st. Jamboree Barn Dance. Ashwell.
23rd. Fellowship Treasure Hunt.