

1ST LEICHHARDT SCOUTS
145 BALMAIN ROAD
LEICHHARDT 2040
PO BOX 155
LEICHHARDT 2040

1ST LEICHHARDT SCOUT GROUP FOUNDED 1908

EXCERPTS FROM THE RECORDS OF THE GROUP FROM 1915 TO 1938

(Transcription of records collated by Allan Songberg,
Regional Adviser, South Metropolitan Region)

PART 3

1931

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Scout Hall Dances.

A regular Saturday night dance was conducted by the Committee to raise funds for maintenance of the Hall (The scouts & cubs fee of one penny per week barely covered cost of knotting rope.) The dance was attended by a few of the older scouts but the main support was from parents & friends. Mr John Morrison & Mr Miles were early MCs and later Mr G. Francis who provided corned beef sandwiches for the supper. Entrance fee was 6 pence which included supper. It is no wonder that these dances became a important feature of the Leichhardt Community during the Depression Years.

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The Jamboree in Godollo, Hungary was a great adventure for the 90 Australian scouts. They travelled by boat visiting Colombo, Aden, Cairo (The Pyramids), Naples, Rome, Venice. There were 26000 scouts from 34 countries. Wonderful Camp Fires, music, displays and fraternising. Following the Jamboree, the contingent visited Vienna, Kandersteg (Swiss), Paris and finally were guests of English & Scottish Scouts on a three weeks tour.

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Park Display Nights

During the 1930's the West Sydney District organised an annual exhibition of scouting activities in the Leichhardt Park oval in which 1st Leichhardt always took a major role. Demonstrations were given of signalling, first aid, stretcher drill, bridge and tower building etc.

However the exciting features which often attracted several thousand people were such events as: "The sinking of the Graf Spee" presented by the sea scouts, a Circus display of pyramids, gymnastics, club swinging, a huge elephant and a similarly constructed dinosaur with a flashing green eye. Another impressive item was The Investing of a Scout. It traced the important historical initiation ceremonies for the Ancient Druids, Athenian Youth, Red Indians, Knights of the Round Table, Australian Aborigines, and finally the actual pledge made by a scout as he joins the Brotherhood of Scouts.

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Lord Baden Powell
Visits Jamboree 1933.



Godollo
HUNGARY



1933
Winners
Les Hankin
Capt.

1934

Sporting Activities:

Soccer Football has been a popular activity for the Leichhardt Troop from as early as 1916. At first, challenge games were arranged but when the District Scout Competitions were run, the Troop entered several teams including one from the Cubs. Annual visits and return games were played with the Granville troop followed by scouts going to each other's homes for tea and returning for concerts and social programs at the respective scout halls. Granville scouts thought the Leichhardt girls were great and Leichhardt vice versa. Outstanding players during the 1920's were Stan Fox, Chas Criukshank, Rex Ladkin, Les Hankin & the Guthrie Brothers. A very good goalie was Jack Davies.

The West Sydney Athletic and Swimming Carnivals were always well supported. The Athletics were held in the Leichhardt oval. There was always great rivalry between troops, and weeks of training. Successful runners included Arthur (Nibbles) Morris, Bill Ashton, George Francis and the Reynolds' brothers. Jack Reynolds regularly won the high jump and went on to win the State title. Bicycle events on the grass track were always an exciting spectacle. One winner turned out to be the local telegram boy. A Slow Bike event had to be discontinued as many competitors could balance and remain on the one spot. A Scout Pace 'race' catered for the non-athlete. The winner being the closest to the mile post after walking & jogging for exactly twelve minutes with no help from the side lines.

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"We're not scouting just for fun. We've got our own work to do."

Meeting Nights

The weekly training night usually started with an inspection of uniform, marking rolls and collecting the weekly fee. Often staff drill or a troop demonstration, patrols went to their dens and the patrol leader and second taught the tenderfoot and second class tasks such as Knotting, Compass signalling, first aid. Kim's Game (memory training) and learning to understand scout law. For the last half hour, scouts reassembled in the hall for games. On another night of the week, usually the Friday, games were the main feature and uniforms were not worn. Games played were Snatch the Cap (Dog and Bone) Kidney Squeezer (Limbo Rock) Cock fighting, circular skipping (jumping a rope that is swinging from a central position) corner ball, dodge ball (played with a soft ball of old socks and indoor football played with a light medicine ball. At times table tennis was most popular.

Training for badges usually required special classes especially for the Ambulance Badge and the Fireman's Badge the latter meant several visits to the local Fire Station. The Mason's Badge was gained by scouts building the brick partition walls in the hall basement. Other popular badges were 'Cooks', Bookbinder, Reserves, Campers, Pathfinders and Handymans (many scouts painted the Hall front door and whitewashed the back wall.)

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Camp Fires

The memories surrounding Camp Fires will remain with many scouts all their lives. The fires were as huge as possible following the collecting of logs for several hours. Songs were sung and acted and individual items presented by first time performers who forgot their nervousness around the friendly warmth of the fire. Jimmy Coutts always had a good yarn to tell about Fishers Ghost or Dirk Hartogs Adventures in the South Seas. Songs well remembered were:

Hurrah for the Leichhardt Scouts are We
Boys Be Prepared & The Schoolboy Scout
Old MacDonald Had a Farm
One Man Went to Mow
Clementine
Waltzing Matilda
The Animals went into the Ark One by One.
Found a Peanut
Till We Meet Again (Scouts Version)
There was an old man came over the Sea
Old Black Joe (Tune: A Frog, he wood a-wooing go)
Good Old Jeff.
She Sat by the Window and played her guitar
Way Down Upon the Swannie River

The District Camp Fires at Waterfall, originally held at Leichhardt's site were real highlights (no pun intended). The opening 'Fires Burning' round was followed by choruses, the 'Eengonyama' war cries (Hold him down you Swazi Walla) etc. The Annandale Scout master Bill Carr gave unforgettable performances of 'Abie's Wedding' and 'Vot a Business is Yoy Yoy'.

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Saturday Outings

This slogan was emphasised

"Don't forget the OUT in ScOUTing"

The troop had a tradition of an outing (called a Parade) every alternate Saturday wet or fine. Transport was by tram or train. Abbotsford & Earlwood were still bush enough until about 1922, then Buffalo Creek, Baroma Park, Cheltenham and Yarra Bay, La Perouse became popular. Sirius Cove was always a highlight.

Activities at outings usually consisted of the first hour with scout tests; firelighting, signalling etc then a wide game, such as Stalking the Sentry, Attacking the Defence & Running Despatches. In the afternoon bush hockey or soccer football wound up the day.

Special days were planned for the Stew Cooking and Billy Boiling Competitions, Blackberry Collecting and The Watermelon Day.



The evening out at La Perouse Bay

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The Group Committee

A special tribute must be paid to the parents of scouts working behind the scenes on the Troop Committee who carried the responsibility of financing the costs for the Hall maintenance, insurance, electricity and major camping equipment etc. The scouts weekly fee of one penny barely covered the cost of rope for knotting and lashings.

The Committee organised bazaars, concerts, dancers and "Picture Show" nights through the generosity of the Marlborough Theatre proprietor. There was much personal giving by Committee members and many hours of work especially for the building and rebuilding of the Hall in Balmain Road.

During these early years names that are well remembered include Presidents E.A. Nicholls, F.G. Maguire and G. Francis, secretary William Morrison and the long serving treasurer Mrs F. Mealey. Also Joseph Fox for electrical work on the building and Mrs Lee for her faithful and every jolly services at fetes etc.

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Ladies on the Group Committee 1927

Na N.S.W. 0301

THE BOY SCOUTS ASSOCIATION

Incorporated by Royal Charter



Warrant

Don CLIFFORD W. TURNBULL

of LEIGHARDT, NEW SOUTH WALES

are hereby appointed **Scoutmaster** of the

1ST LEIGHARDT Group Reg. No.

of the WEST SYDNEY DISTRICT Local Association

in NEW SOUTH WALES

Imperial Headquarters, London.

Countersigned W. A. K. H. M. S. T. Chief Scout.

Chief Scout for NEW SOUTH WALES Dated 17TH MARCH, 1938.

Mayor leads community tribute

Mayor of Leichhardt, Alderman Les Rodwell, with the town clerk, Mr. E. A. Bassett, led the community tribute at the passing of District Scout Commissioner James X. Coutts.

There were several aldermen in the council delegation at the funeral last week of Mr. Coutts, which was carried out with full Scout honours. He was awarded the MBE by the Queen, and was a "Silver Wolf," Scouting's highest award.

Mr. Coutts was Commissioner of Leichhardt Scout District at the time of his death, a position he had held since 1946.

Mr. Coutts joined First Leichhardt Troop, the first registered scout troop, in April, 1909, where he was leader of the Wallaroo Senior Patrol.

In 1910 he became Assistant Scout Master, and on the resignation of the Scout Master he was appointed to that post in January, 1911.

SPECIAL DUTIES

During 1912 he was appointed District Scout Master of No. 6 Division of the League of Boy Scouts, and was one of the officials who organised the Baden-Powell Camp at Undercliff, Cooks River, during the visit of the Founder of the Scout Movement.

During August, 1914, he

was appointed Staff Scoutmaster to Scout State Headquarters, with special duties.

When the loosely formed Boy Scout League formed into the Boy Scout Association in 1914, Mr. Coutts took out a warrant as Scout Master of First Leichhardt, this being No. 1 in the Australian Boy Scout Association.

He was later appointed District Scout Master of West Sydney District, and during the next four years acted as Scout Master of First Annandale and First Stanmore Troops.

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SILVER WOLF

In August, 1918, on the recommendation of the Boy Scouts Central Executive, Baden-Powell awarded him the Silver Wolf, Scouting's highest decoration, which was presented to him by the Governor-General in 1920.

From 1919 to 1920 he served on the central executive.

With the late Mr. Larkworthy he was co-leader of the first corroboree of Australian Scouts, held at the Sydney Showground in 1922.

He was appointed District Commissioner of the West Sydney District in July, 1925, and during this period took part in the first training camp for Scout Leaders.

In 1935 he was awarded the Jubilee Silver Medal.

DISTRICT FORMED

On the formation of the Leichhardt District Mr. Coutts was appointed District Commissioner in 1946, and two years later was awarded the Boy Scouts Long Service Decoration.

James X. Coutts

*Vale @
20/7/69*



WE WILL REMEMBER..

JAMES X. COUTTS, M.B.E., District Commissioner, Leichhardt District, and a member of the Scout Movement since 1909, died on Sunday 20th July.

James Coutts joined 1st Leichhardt, the first registered Scout Troop in New South Wales in April, 1909 as Leader of the Wallaroo Senior Patrol.

He became Assistant Scoutmaster in 1910, Scoutmaster in 1911 and was appointed District Scoutmaster of the No.6 Division of the League of Boy Scouts in 1912. He was appointed "Staff Scoutmaster" to State Headquarters in 1914, with Special Duties, and his other service has included appointments as District Scoutmaster of West Sydney District, Scoutmaster of 1st Annandale and 1st Stanmore

Troops and Committee Membership of the Central Executive Committee.

He became District Commissioner of the West Sydney District in 1925, taking part in the first Training Camp for Scout Leaders and was appointed District Commissioner of the Leichhardt District upon its formation in 1946. His significant service to the Boy Scouts Movement was recognized by the Award of the Silver Wolf in 1920 and his contribution to youth within the community was subsequently recognized by the Award of the M.B.E.

James Coutts' funeral held at All Saints Church, Leichhardt, was attended by many members of the Movement in uniform.

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Anglican Church

Parish of Wauchope

THE REVD. CANON TREVOR AUSTIN
THE RECTORY,
P.O. BOX 71
WAUCHOPE
N.S.W. 2446
PHONE (065) 85 2019

22nd August, 1983.

1st Leichhardt Group
P.O. Box 155,
Leichhardt, N.S.W. 2040.

Dear Scouters Old and New,

I feel a great privilege to have been asked by my friend Cliff Turnbull to bring a Greeting to you as you celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the 1st Leichhardt Group.

It would have been great to attend the dinner and to meet some of the Old Scouts and those in Scouting in 1983, but because of parish commitments I am unable to attend.

I look back with Thanksgiving to my days in Scouting and as Cub leader which was the foundation of my work with young people in the days that followed.

I remember James X Coutts with much affection, he was a dedicated man to the Scouting Movement and greatly influenced my life.

As I write this letter many happy memories are brought back to mind including many for whom I had a great respect, Mr & Mrs Frances, Mrs Gee, Neil Glover, Keith Cottam, Cliff Turnbull and so many others.

To you who celebrate this great occasion look back with Thanksgiving to the past, remembering with grateful hearts Robert Baden-Powell who gave us the Scouting Movement and those who laid the foundations of the 1st Leichhardt Group. As you celebrate 75 years may you go forward into the future with confidence building on the past and facing all that comes both success or disappointment in the strength and teaching of all that Lord Baden-Powell based the foundations of Scouting.

May God bless all in Scouting, but especially on this occasion the 1st Leichhardt Group.

Hurrah! Hurrah! for the Leichhardt Scouts are we, for now and always.

Yours for ever in Scouting,

Trevor Austin

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