

Wing Boy Scouts

In July 1914 the newly organised Scout Association came to Wing. Given the Royal Seal of Approval in 1909, the Scout Association was created by Lord Robert Baden Powell. The Association was created when Baden Powell saw Cadets working under pressure during the 217 day siege of Mafeking, during the Boer War 1899-1900. The boys were used to support troops, run messages to outlying forts, help in the hospital and lookouts. 24 Cadets were awarded the Defence of Mafeking bar to their Queen's South Africa Medal. When Baden-Powell entered Mafeking in 1899 the Cadets under the control of Lord Edward Cecil, trained in drilling and rifle shooting, and were a valuable asset during the siege. Baden Powell used these Cadets as part of his book *Scouting for Boys* published in 1908.

In Wing Mr. Long, the local Headmaster, took on the task of Scoutmaster for the newly formed Association. 25 boys joined within the first month aged between 11 and 18. By March 1915 they had a new title of "Mrs. De Rothschild's Own Troop of Boy Scouts" but still under the command of Mr. Long. They were very active within the community and in April 1915 held a Bazaar opened by Mrs. Tarver, with a speech by Mr. Tarver and included a 'Large Rummage Sale Stall, Provision Stall, Household Ware, Scout work in photography, stencilling, mats, wood carving, preserved fruits, brushes etc. Also a fancy stall of Oriental Goods, Toys etc. and a sale of bedding and pot plants.' The highlight of the Bazaar would have been the demonstrations of 'sword-dance, jujitsu and Indian Clubs, and a play entitled "Scold, Scoundrel and Scout"'. The proceeds amounted to £20 towards their Summer Camp fund.

In May 1916 both the Schools and the Scouts suffered a blow with the call up of Mr. Long to fight, and the boys were left to organise themselves and keep going. They do this admirably until Mr. Frank Walker takes over in temporary charge of the Troop and they meet four nights a week. In February 1917 the Scouts gave a Whist Drive to raise funds to invest in the War Loan. Then in August they gave a Garden Party at the Vicarage with great success. Races and donkey rides were held in the paddock, tennis played all afternoon on the courts and the front lawn had a concert which even the Scouts joined in with singing a rendition of "Keep the Home Fires Burning". Dancing finished off the event with the Vicar commenting that 'we were glad to observe that they had lost none of the quiet grace for which Wing dancing used to be so famous for in days of peace and quietness.' Sadly the Scouts fell foul to the Amusement Tax, due to them printing the handbills, but they still made between £7 and £8.

The last entry in the Parish Magazines for the Scouts is a sad one. In December 1917 edition it is reported that Pte. Frank Page was killed in action not long after he had been sent to fight. A Memorial Service was held for him and his

Scoutmaster sent a wreath with the following words 'In loving memory of Frank, a true friend, a perfect Scout, fully prepared, who died for us'.