

# BEYOND THE GRAVES

Volume 8, Number 2, April 2013

## SPOTLIGHT ON YOUTH

### THE NEED FOR YOUTH GROUPS

Since the mid nineteenth century a real need for organised youth groups had been identified. 1844 was when the first organisation whose sole aim was to address the needs of young people was founded, the YMCA, set up by George Williams and the YWCA followed in 1855. In 1878 the Girls Club Union was established. William Alexander Smith founded the Boys Brigade in 1883 and the Girls Brigade was established in 1893. Robert Baden Powell famously started the Scouting movement in 1907. In the beginning most of the youth groups were attached to Christian organisations but were usually also open to all people, not necessarily just members of a particular church. At first the venues tended to be church buildings but later purpose built and community halls appeared. As the twentieth century progressed the Forces started their cadet corps, army, navy and air, and also medical associated groups were formed, Red Cross Cadets and St John's Ambulance Juniors. In the late 1950s the 'teenager' was born, associated with the word 'delinquent' and this led to a government report outlining the need for organised activities for young people. The youth service was created and for the first time youth centres and fully paid full-time youth workers began to appear. Now almost two centuries later the purpose of youth groups has never really changed; to encourage young people to socialise; to introduce them to interests and hobbies which will help them in future life; and to keep them off the streets!



### RYDE YOUTH CLUB

Ryde Youth Club, in the High Street at the junction with Well Street was originally built in 1901 as a Wesleyan Chapel but has now been used as a Youth Centre for longer than it was a chapel! Subsequent generations have spent or misspent their youth in this building! Many organisations held meetings, hosted events and raised funds. The venue was also hired out by many other individuals and groups for a variety of entertainments.

MEET YOUR FRIENDS  
at  
**Ryde Youth Club**  
97 HIGH STREET  
WINTER SESSION

Activities include—  
FENCING - CANOEING - FOOTBALL - BASKET BALL  
GYMNASTICS - WEIGHT TRAINING - BADMINTON  
TABLE TENNIS - SNOOKER - NETBALL - HOCKEY  
PHOTOGRAPHY - DRAMA - ART - MUSIC - DISCUSSIONS  
FOREIGN TRAVEL

**DANCING and SOCIALS**

Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme for Girls and Boys

Membership open to young people between 14 yrs. 9 mths. and 21 yrs.  
Club Leader: Mr. R. J. Sexton. Tel. Ryde 2416

*Isle of Wight Times 19 October 1961*

**Youth Centre Dance** - Including £20. 4s. 7d realised through a lucky numbers competition, the 69 Club raised £110.4s.7d. at a dance in aid of the Aberfan Appeal, held at Ryde Youth Centre on Saturday. There was a capacity attendance and the use of the hall was donated by the members' committee under the Youth Leader. Dancing was to the Cherokees, and many Island business houses provided competition prizes. (*Isle of Wight Times 3 November 1966*)

**Cookery and Clothes** - Members from the Ryde and Bembridge youth clubs enjoyed a fashion show presented by "Dorothy Perkins" of Ryde, at the Ryde YC on Thursday. Teenagers' garments were modelled by Miss Julie Whale, Miss Ann Duckworth, Mrs Pauline Roberts and Mrs Jackie Eldridge, and a commentary was given by Mrs Jean Pugh. Music and lighting was arranged by John Barnes, a senior member of the Ryde Youth Club. Run in conjunction with this show was the second in a series of cookery demonstrations sponsored by the Southern Gas Board and arranged by Mrs D M Boulter, Home Service Advisor of the SEB.

**Youth Club Week** - Total profit from the special events organised by members of Ryde Youth Club during National Youth Club week was over £80. The functions included a ballroom dance, a "beat dance", a folk singing evening, autumn bazaar, coffee morning and competitions. Members also did a great deal of hard work to raise money by individual effort, such as a car washing service. Seventy per cent of the money raised will be retained by the club, and the remainder will go to the National Association. (*Isle of Wight Times 29 November 1966*)

## MONICA PLATER



During 1910 Baden-Powell gave the girls, who had asked him to form a movement with 'something for the girls', the name of Girl Guides, with the name of Guide coming from a famous corps of soldiers with whom Baden-Powell had worked whilst serving in India. These first girls were known as Baden-Powell Girl Guides and Agnes Baden-Powell (Baden-Powell's sister) was made their President. These Girl Guides learnt signalling, campcraft and First Aid and these skills were very much put to use during World War One.

One of the pioneer leaders of the Baden-Powell Girl Guides was Monica Plater. In 1913 Monica, then living in London, received a letter from Agnes suggesting that the few Girl Guides she had in her Company at Barnes could join with those in Hammersmith. This letter is preserved in the Girlguiding IW archives. Later in her Guiding life Monica was a Guider at Pax Hill, a training centre for Rangers and Guides, and later still she moved to the Isle of Wight and continued with Guiding here until the 1960s. She was an expert on traditional campcraft and ceremonies.

1948 saw the first of the County Cadets on the Island. These older girls were Guiders in training. They wore Guider uniform with white ties and had white bands around their hat brims. Mrs Carr of Carisbrooke was the first County Cadet captain on the Island. By 1950 there were Cadet groups in Divisions with Miss Plater running the one at Ryde. In 1954 Central Wight Cadets were registered and in 1957 North East Wight had a group with Mrs Yelland as Captain. By 1964 once again it was time for a County Unit and Mrs Morgan of Cowes was Captain to girls from all over the Island.

1957 saw the centenary of the birth of the founder, Lord Baden-Powell. Celebrations took place across the World and Island Guides were given places at International camps at Windsor and in Switzerland. Four Island Guides travelled to Windsor and Janice Bennett from Shanklin went to Switzerland. Ranger Sally Rosenthal was an orderly at the Windsor camp and a special day-trip to the camp on 6 August was undertaken by 180 Island members. This was in conjunction with Southern Railways and organised by Miss Thirkell and a highlight was the presentation of a tent to Her Majesty The Queen as a gift for Princess Anne. This tent was Island made by Miss Plater who at this time was DC for East Wight, a post she held for about ten years, as well as being the Captain of the Seaview Guide Company.

In 1960, 11 Island Guides and leaders travelled to St Paul's Cathedral, London on 23 July for a Thanksgiving Service at which members of the Movement from around the world attended. After the service the Guides, in their various coloured uniforms and with their Standards, lined the steps of St Paul's Cathedral and the forecourt. Mrs Twining (County Commissioner) said it was a "Wonderful spectacle and a most moving occasion". On the same day the RC members of the Movement held a service at Brompton Oratory with Miss Plater representing the Isle of Wight.

*Article written by Suzanne Whitewood 2013 and reproduced with her permission.*

*Photograph of Monica Plater taken in the 1950s when she was at Pax Hill, courtesy of Girlguiding IW Archive.*



## SNIPPETS FROM LOCAL PAPERS

The unusual title "Christmas Crackers" was used by the St John's area Scout and Guide groups to describe a combined bazaar and entertainment organised by parents' committees and held at the Weston Hut on Saturday afternoon. Shortly after opening time the hall was packed almost to bursting point. (*Isle of Wight Times* 6 December 1962)

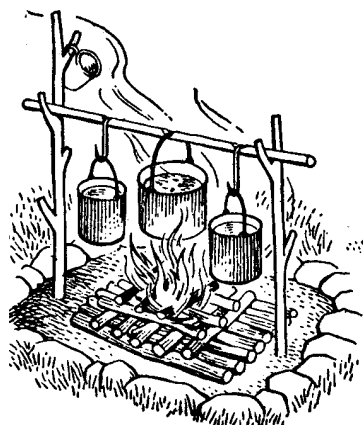
Parents and friends of 5th Ryde Holy Trinity Guide Company joined with the guides for a "thinking day" ceremony. The programme opened with a "flying-up" ceremony of two brownies from the 5th Ryde Pack, Janet Townsend and Janice Kingman, who were received into the company. The evening concluded with community singing. (*Isle of Wight Times* 7 March 1963)

## 1ST RYDE CUBS AND SCOUTS 1949 – 1955 BY ARTHUR WILLIAMS

I belonged to the 1st Ryde group who were distinguished by their old gold coloured scarves, part of the uniform which was stocked by Bulls the gentlemen's outfitters next to the Star in the High Street, Ryde. Other groups had different colour scarves, 2nd Ryde (Admiral Calthorpe's Own) black and white, Trinity maroon and grey and Binstead green and yellow.

When I joined the cubs we were located at the chapel in Prince Street but later moved to share the newly built East Wight District Head Quarters in Lind Place. The cleat for the flag halliards on the building came from the old Royal Yacht Britannia which was deliberately sunk in 1936 at St Catherine's Deep on the instructions of the late George V. The 1st Ryde Scouts also had a building at Players beach which was reached by passing through the golf course via Lovers Lane. 2nd Ryde Sea Scouts had their boathouse further to the east on this same beach.

The scoutmaster was Bert Collis and his wife was Akela for the cubs. They lived in Lind Place and Bert was also in the Ryde Fire Brigade, ending his career as Station Officer. They had a black Alsatian/Labrador cross called Chad who was a big favourite with us all.



We engaged in all the usual scouting activities including obtaining proficiency badges and bob-a-job week. At one time we were taught boxing by a Mr Cook who was employed in Ryde Cemetery and lived in the Cemetery Lodge.

We also went camping both locally and on the mainland. We went at one time to Kemphill Farm off Stroud Wood Road and pulled all our gear there on two trek carts. On another occasion we camped at Brookwood on the banks of the Basingstoke canal. Brookwood was famous for having the overflow cemetery for London and was served by the Necropolis Line which ran from Westminster Bridge Road Station to its own branch line into the cemetery.

Our accommodation consisted of bell tents which leaked if you ran your finger down the inside while it was raining and all our meals were prepared over open fires. In the evenings we did actually sit round the fire and sing before, as these were pre sleeping bag days, retiring to sleep in beds made from folding blankets in a way which would not come undone.



### SNIPPETS FROM LOCAL PAPERS

**Cubs Outing** - Under the leadership of the Cub Master (Miss M E Holland), the 2nd Ryde Pack visited London on Friday week for their annual holiday. At the Imperial Headquarters they visited BP's room, and the Scout Museum, and had lunch in the Scout Restaurant. They also attended the pageant "Boy Scout" at the Royal Albert Hall. After the show they saw the Coronation decorations and floodlighting. (*Isle of Wight County Press* 20 June 1953)

**Night Hike** - Three patrols of the 5th Ryde Scout Group competed on Saturday night and Sunday morning in a night hike covering 15 miles from Ryde through Ashey, Knighton and Havenstreet. About 20 scouts took part under Scout Master E E Warne, and the winners were Seagull Patrol, under P/L Roger Warne, with 37 points. Second was Woodpecker Patrol under P/L Geoffrey Henning, 35 points, and third, P/L David Tiller's Bat Patrol with 34 points. Senior scouts also took part in the hike. (*Isle of Wight Times* 28 March 1963)

**Norman Adventure** - A dozen teams of scouts from the Island were pitted against 11 from Bournemouth in the Norman Adventure, held in the New Forest. The six best teams from the two Island districts, east and west, competed in the annual ten mile night hike, for the Commissioner's Trophy. The 1st Ryde-Binstead team were victorious and completed challenges including building a tower, jousting and compass work. (*Isle of Wight County Press* 28 February 1986)

**Fund raising** -The 5th Ryde (Holy Trinity) Scout Group organised an impressive programme of fund-raising events, the first, a full size fair and gymkhana, which was staged at Ryde Airport on Tuesday. Organisers hired a full scale fair complete with dodgems and sideshows and combined it with a gymkhana which attracted over 100 entries. (*Isle of Wight Times* 3 August 1961)

## GIRLS' LIFE BRIGADE / GIRLS' BRIGADE

The Girls' Brigade was originally founded in 1893 in Ireland. The modern organisation was formed as the result of the amalgamation of three similarly structured organisations in 1964 - the Girls' Brigade of Ireland (1893), the Girls' Guildry of Scotland (1900), and the Girls' Life Brigade of England (1902).

Ryde had a 1st Ryde Girls' Life Brigade, based at the Congregational Church in George Street. The 2nd Ryde GLB/GB met in the Congregational Church, Haylands, later moving to the United Reformed Church in Upton Road. Today the 3rd Ryde GB meets at the George Street Centre, George Street.



1ST RYDE GIRLS LIFE BRIGADE  
MEETING PLACE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH GEORGE STREET  
PHOTO TAKEN PARTLANDS FOOTBALL GROUND ABOUT 1940

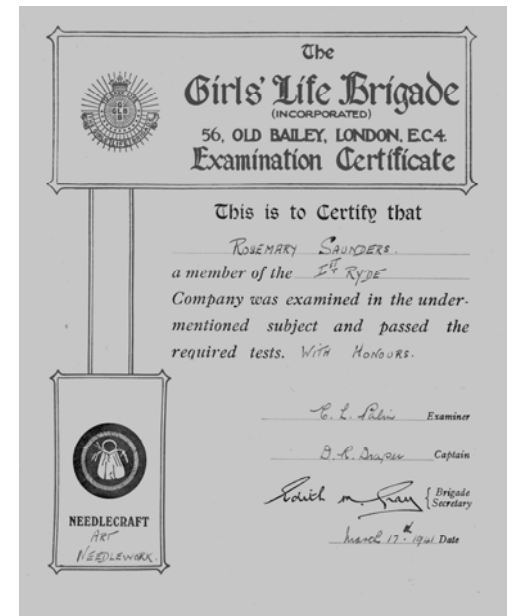
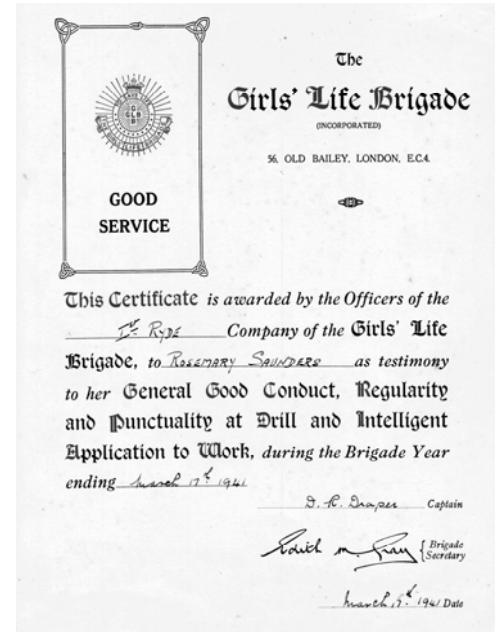
BACK ROW	LT NORA REED	SENIOR DOROTHY HICINS	CAPTAIN DRAPER	LT SARA SAUNDERS	JOAN	JOYCE SILBEN	GWEN
MIDDLE ROW	MARGA JEAN NINCAT	DORREN JOHNSON	JOYCE WELLS	MARGARET JAMES	ILSA YOUNE	JOAN DOLLERY	FOUNTAIN MOORE YOUNG
FRONT ROW	SADPH FRANCIS	PHYLLIS WILKS	PHYLLIS AYRESS	BERYL FIELD	MARGARET JAMES	MARY CELIA WHITNEY	ROSEMARY SAUNDERS
FRONT ROW	JUNE FOUNTAIN	SHEILA WILKS	EILEEN HOLLS				

The photograph above shows the 1st Ryde GLB about 1940 taken at Partlands Football Ground. Thanks to Bubbles for the certificates and photo.

**Annual Display of 1st Ryde GLB** - The 1st Ryde Company of the Girls Life Brigade held their annual display on Saturday at Ryde Youth Centre. Congregational Minister, the Rev Carl Hannam, company chaplain, was the chairman, and the awards were presented by Mrs Pritchard, company president. Among the items were exercises by the cadets, team games and physical training to music performed by juniors and seniors, country dancing and club swinging by pioneers. Members of the British Red Cross Society trained a group of the older girls in first aid, who demonstrated how to attend to casualties injured on the beach. Several items of handicrafts were on show, including trays, baskets, leather purses, pictures, embroidered chair backs, tray cloths and cushions.

To close the evening's entertainment, the captain, Mrs J McComb conducted an enrolment and promotion service. Four cadets and four juniors were enrolled, three girls promoted to seniors, and two to pioneers. (*Isle of Wight Times* 13 June 1963)

**Girl's Brigade** - The last of the monthly events organised in aid of the 1st Ryde Girl's Brigade uniform fund took place at Ryde Youth Centre, in the form of a concert given by the Ryde Borough Band, under their conductor, Mr R Hayles. Vocal Soloist was Anne Glassey, and the band's guitar group, under Mr Treconin, played and sang folk songs. (*Isle of Wight Times* 18 May 1967)





## RYDE SEA CADETS

Sea Cadets date back to the Crimean War when sailors returning home from the campaign formed Naval Lads' Brigades to help orphans created by the conflict who ended up on the back streets of sea ports. The first Sea Cadets unit was established in 1854 at Whitstable in Kent. By 1899 Sea Cadets received Royal recognition when Queen Victoria presented the Windsor unit with money for uniforms. There are now 400 cadet units in the country whose core purpose is to celebrate Britain's maritime heritage and contribute to its future development by supporting young people as Sea Cadets. The Ryde Sea Cadets Unit, TS Royal George, was founded on 2 November 1962.

"Ryde unit No 510, of the training ship Royal George, Player Street, scored an outstanding success recently when they won the Sea Cadet Corps southern area guard drill competition." The final stages of the competition took place at St Martin's Barracks, Folkestone, and units competing were Ryde, Hastings, Medway Towns, Margate, Fareham, Poole and Maidenhead. (*Isle of Wight County Press 12 October 1974*)



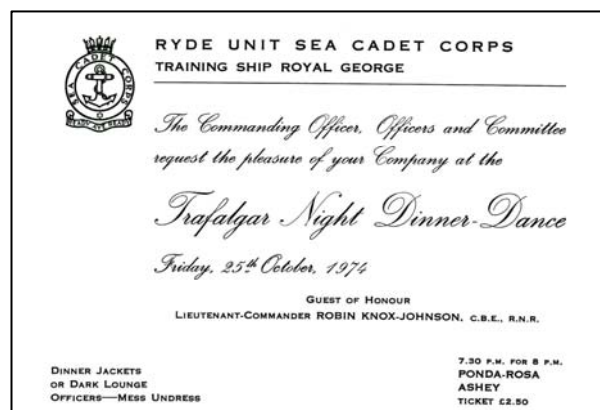
*Practice for the Drill competition.  
Photograph by Isle of Wight Weekly Post.*

The inspecting officer was Southern Area (SCC) Officer Commander R D Bamford, RN, who also presented the trophy to the winning unit and took the salute at the march past. The trophy, a 1916 .303 Lee Enfield, had French polished wooden parts and chromed metal working parts, mounted and inscribed. "The name of the Ryde unit will appear on the first of an annual series of winners' shields to be attached to the impressive trophy". The 12 Ryde cadets put on a display which prompted one of the Royal Navy's most experienced guard drill instructors to comment "Not just good – excellent. I would be proud to have these Ryde sea scouts on my parade ground at any time."



Guest of honour at Ryde Sea Cadets Trafalgar Night dinner was Robin Knox-Johnston (second from left). He is seen with the new commanding officer, Lieut B Wilkinson, and boys who formed the guard of honour.

(*Isle of Wight County Press 9 November 1974*)



His (*Lord Mountbatten*) visit to the headquarters of the Ryde Sea Cadet Corps unit TS Royal George was a way of saying "thank you" to cadets who staged a guard of honour during the Queen Mother's Island tour in May. He presented medals won by the unit's drill squad in the organisation's southern area guard championships in 1974 and 1975, and presented Cadet Richard Howard, from Newport, with his leading seaman rate. (*Portsmouth News 23 September 1975*)

Guests of honour at Ryde Sea Cadets Trafalgar Night Dinner were Sir Alec and Lady Rose. Sir Alec is signing the visitor book watched by members of the Corps. (*Portsmouth News 25 October 1975*)



## MEDICAL GROUPS



The juniors' section of the British Red Cross officially began in 1924. It promoted good health, service to the sick and suffering, and the development of international friendship and understanding. Poppy Higgin (nee Lakeman) was a Red Cross Cadet and attended meetings in the basement of Ryde Youth Club. She wore a general Red Cross badge and their Junior Section badge. She was a Cadet for two or three years until leaving school and starting nurse training.



The photograph shows Poppy in 1953 with Arundel Close prefabs in the background.

St John Ambulance had their own hall in Newport Street. They also had a Cadets Section. This hall was used by other groups for events as well.



**Brigade Parents Meet** - The annual meeting of the Parents' Association of Ryde Division St John Ambulance Cadets, held on Wednesday week at the St John Ambulance Hall, was well attended. Principle business was election of the officers for the coming year. (*Isle of Wight Times* 12 April 1962)

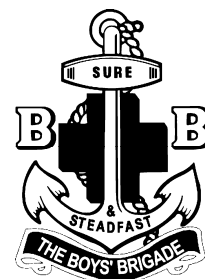
**Ambulance Work Model** - Great interest has been aroused locally by the working model of ambulance men at work, which has been on exhibition at the Galleon Restaurant, Union Street, on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week. The model shows what happens immediately after a disastrous railway accident and how members of the St John Ambulance Brigade deal with the casualties, carrying them to waiting ambulances on stretchers. The model, 4ft, 7ins, by 7ft 3ins, has much animation. During the exhibition Ambulance Cadets were busy distributing pamphlets demonstrating the magnificent opportunities the organisation offers to youth. The exhibition goes to Sandown today (Thursday) and will tour the Island for a period of three weeks.

(*Isle of Wight Times* 20 April 1950)



## THE BOYS' BRIGADE

The Boys' Brigade was founded in Scotland by Mr W A Smith in 1883 to develop Christian manliness by the use of a semi-military discipline and order, gymnastics, summer camps and religious services and classes. In 1903 Robert Baden-Powell became vice-president of the BB and used it alongside initiatives in schools, particularly Eton, to promote the idea of scouting and outdoor pursuits based on those of the military for boys. The Boys' Life Brigade (1899) was one of many similar movements formed as 'clones' of the Boys' Brigade. Later the Boys' Brigade united with The Boys' Life Brigade.



**Boys' Brigade** - Many parents attended the first enrolment service of the new Boys' Brigade Company at Ryde Baptist Church on Sunday evening. The service was conducted by the Minister, the Rev Idris Jones, who besides being Company Chaplain is the acting Captain. The officers enrolled were Lieutenant (Mrs) Vivien Cooke, Junior Section; and Lieutenant Michael Horner, Company Section. There were 16 members enrolled in the Junior Section and 15 in the Company Section. The lesson was read by the Rev A Bernard, of East Cowes, prospective president of the Island Battalion BB, and arrangements were in the hands of Mr Colin Phillips, Battalion Secretary.

(*Isle of Wight Times* 5 June 1969)

**This magazine contains only a small sample of the youth organisations we have researched in Ryde; to see much more please visit our 'Spotlight on Youth' Exhibition at Ryde Library from 20 April to 4 May 2013 (open during normal library hours).**