



Group Centenary

2013 - a momentous year for the 1st East Kilbride Scout Group as they mark their centenary with a number of planned events. A weekend camp at Auchengillan, in late May, involving all Sections with over 160 Beaver, Cubs, Scouts, Leaders and Helpers taking part, will certainly be remembered for a long time. The sun shone, there were no midges and one of the centre points of our year of celebration was a fantastic success.



The opportunity was taken at our amazing campfire to reflect on all those who had gone before us - back to the Groups formation in 1913. The 1st East Kilbride Group has been the subject of many mergers over the years with the 4th, 7th and 8th EK amalgamating with them many years ago.

A reorganisation involving all of the towns Groups in 2008 resulted in the 9th and 14th also merging with the 1st. In many cases lack of Leaders or accommodation problems or their cost, lead to these amalgamations.

It was the enthusiasm of those who started the original 1st Group in 1913 and the drive of all those dedicated Leaders, parents and young people from the 1st and all its merged parts since these early years, who have helped create to-days thriving organization.

As at May 2013 the Group run three Beaver Colonies, three Cub Packs and a Scout Troop. It has plans to start a second Scout Troop in the summer of 2013. Membership standing at 160, at the start of 2013, could be pushing the 200 mark by the end of this year.

The Groups Park Terrace HQ has seen a major refurbishment over the last few years. A spend of some £80,000 has completely transformed the 'old hut' built in 1968 into a modern HQ fit to carry on serving Scouting and the local community well into our second century. But let's look back at how it all began.

The Founding of the 1st East Kilbride Group

Eric Niven, in his book 'History of East Kilbride' writes on page 298:-

'The Boy Scouts - 48th Lanarkshire - 1st East Kilbride Troop' (for the record we are now badged the 53rd Lanarkshire).

"The first troop of Boy Scouts was started by Scoutmaster Charles Falconer in 1913. It met in the Parish Church Hall. Later the troop had its own Clubroom in an old garage (now demolished) in Parkhall Street, after removing to Lantern House, Strathaven Road. A pack of Woolfcubs, and later a troop of Rovers, was started, but upon the outbreak of the Second World War, the troop ceased its activities. The scouts drew their members from local lads of all denominations, but during WWII the Roman Catholics ran a troop for a time which met in a vacant shop - at 19 Hunter Street.

A section in the book on Girl Guides adds that they shared the garage in Parkhall Street, but in 1932 thanks to the generosity of Mrs Hutton, of Crutherland, Lantern House, was handed over to the Guides. Lantern House in Strathaven Road "remained the clubroom until it was requisitioned by the military at the outbreak of WWII and while the company carried on until 1947 Lantern House was never again occupied by Guides and later became the District Library".

Confusion over our Founding Year

The Group were formed in 1913 and not 1911 (the date on the Group Flag) which 'tradition' had us believe was our birth year. Eric Niven's account (from Church Records) and subsequent independent research confirm the 1913 date.

The 'Hamilton Advertiser' was the local source of East Kilbride news at the time. The following articles are taken from its pages. We are indebted to Chris Moffat, for this research and for passing over photocopies of the news pages – contents of which appear below.

Hamilton Advertiser

25th October 1913.

"A meeting was held last Monday in regards to forming a troop of Boy Scouts in the village"

15th November 1913

Boy Scouts

"The notice in last week's issue lacked clearness and completion of detail. The troop recently formed is the outcome of an interview held by the ministers of the three churches during the summer with Mr Charles Falconer, who has had practical experience of Boy Scout work in another district. All the ministers interest themselves in the training of Boy Scouts, and attending their weekly meetings whenever free to do so. The members of the troop only require to be connected with any of the local congregations. Mr Falconer, who acts as Scoutmaster, is aided by three gentlemen who discharge the office of assistant scoutmasters, viz, Messers Robert Anderson, John Weir and James Algie. The boys are keen and interested in their work."

22nd November 1913

The Boy Scout movement is now in full swing. The Rev. Wm. Jack M.A. is taking a practical interest in the corps, and under tuition of Messrs Falconer, Weir and Algie, much good should be accomplished.

10th January 1914

The annual united service of the three churches was held in the Parish Church on Sunday last. Rev. Robert McKinlay, M.A. delivered the sermon assisted by Rev. Wm. Jack, M.A. and Rev. James G. Liddell, M.A. There was a large turnout of the three congregations and a special feature of the service was the presence of the Boy Scout Troop who were in uniform under Scoutmaster Chas. W. Falconer, assisted by Robt. Anderson, Mr. John Weir and Mr James Algie.

Three further articles were recorded by Chris Moffat.

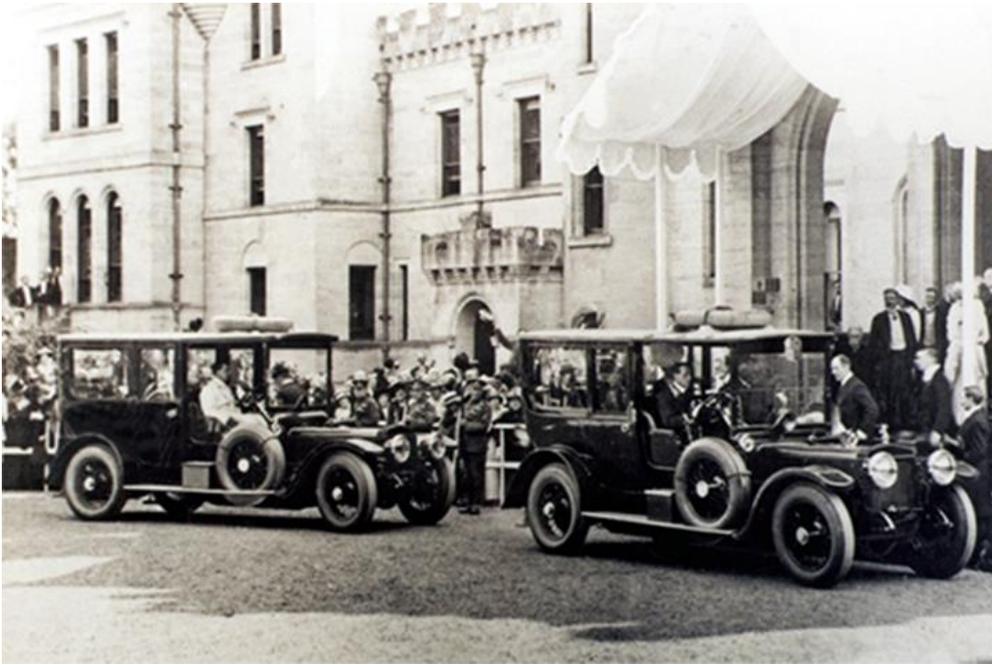
23rd May 1914

Boy Scouts

Mr. C. W. Falconer, Scoutmaster, reported at the weekly meeting of the Boy Scouts, having attended a meeting of the County Association at Hamilton in connection with the King's visit to Scotland, and that an invitation from Lord Newlands was extended to all the Boy Scouts in Lanarkshire to line the avenue at Maudslie Castle, (sadly demolished in 1935), on the arrival and departure of the King. The Scoutmaster also reported that all expenses in connection therewith were being defrayed by Lord Newlands. It was agreed the East Kilbride Boy Scouts be represented.

11th July 1914

On Thursday the local Boy Scouts, accompanied by the Scoutmasters, were doing duty at Maudslie Castle in connection with the Royal visit. They drove in machines from the village to the castle, which was a special drive, and much enjoyed by the youngsters.



King George. V Visit to Mauldslee Castle – 9th July 1914.



*Scout Master Charles Falconer c.1914 (at Troops first Camp)
Standing next to him - Hugh Begg, (who later became the village Blacksmith). Far right front row -
Andrew Moffat (who later owned the village shoe shop).*



Hugh Begg (centre) and Andrew Moffat (rt)

We move on a pace to 1925 when we again encounter records. In fact our 'archive' has Minute Books, invoices and accounts covering 1925 to the present day, albeit with some gaps, but these relate mainly to the period 1933 to 1953, when records are a bit 'thin'.