

The Scout Movement in Repton - a brief history.

The official Scouting movement is generally reckoned to have started when Baden-Powell held the famous camp on Brownsea Island in 1907 but unofficial Scout "Clubs" and small groups sprang up when Scouting for Boys was published. This may have been the case at Repton School, and there is a photographic archive from about 1922 (now in America) of what claims to be the 1st Repton Scout Group. This was probably actually the 1st Repton School Group and it seems this was not formally registered until 1928 and then as the 75th Derby Group. G F Fisher, the head master (later Archbishop of Canterbury) was "in control".

The real 1st Repton Scout Group was a village group and the Scout Master was the Rev L N Hodges who got his warrant on December 13th 1910. Melbourne beat us to it with a warranted leader in the August. However there is reference to a Repton Scout bugler in 1909.

Scouting waxed and waned over the years. At one time in the 1940s there were 3 groups – the village group (1st Repton) the prep school (112th Derby - presumably only a Cub Pack) and Repton School (75th Derby). But in the early 50s they more or less disappeared and scouting was only really resurrected in 1954 by Jack Harrison leading youngsters like Dave Beasley, Chris Hawkesworth, Mick Sharratt, Pete Ratcliffe and Vic Bamford. Around 1970, there was also, briefly, a Cub Pack at Foremarke School.

The group had not formally disappeared because as they were setting off for a camp, the Vicar, Rev Harcombe, appeared asking what was going on – no one had told him and he was Group Scout Master! There were numerous breaks in leadership in the next 5 years, but in 1960, after an 18 month gap, Dave Beasley got involved again and gradually the group grew. After the village hall burned down, they used the Court Room in Boot Hill, but acquired 3 workmen's huts from the construction of Willington Power station. After 16 years (in 1982) some grants, fundraising and much physical labour resulted in the current building formally opening. With this level of activity and success, the group became very strong with two Beaver Colonies a 40 strong Cub Pack, 44 Scouts and a thriving Venture Unit (later Explorers). However as is so often the case, leader numbers dwindled and around 2010, the group was very close to closing having got down to just the Beaver Colony. Mike Knowles became Group Scout leader and later Scout Leader and the Group has grown again with a strong leadership team now under Rebecca Auterson. It now has Beavers, Cubs, two Scout troops and a combined Explorer Unit with Willington.

There is a substantial box of material for the Repton Scout Group in the Village Archive, and photographs in the digital archive.



After the fire in the village hall and a period of meeting in the Court Room, these 3 workmen's huts provided a permanent meeting place. Note the pioneering poles stored under the building.



Trek cart en-route to camp.

All set up – with Dave Beasley at the far end. Note the mugs hanging on the tree.

