

Project: Scouting through the Decades: A Century of Adventure Respondent: Donna Bongartz Year of Birth: 1968 Age: 56 Connection to the project: Former Beaver Leader Assistant Date of Interview: 16 November 2024 Interviewer: Gillian Alexander Recording Agreement: yes Information & Consent: yes Photographic Images: Length of Interview: 21 minutes 50 seconds Location of Interview: Davidson's Mains Scout Hall Recording Equipment: Zoom H4n (internal mics)	
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Summary Time (from: mins/secs)	Time Coded Summary / Transcript	Transcribed Extract (from- to: mins/secs)
0.01 – 0.39	The Interviewer asks when the Respondent was born and where she grew up, then asks how she had been involved with the 30 <sup>th</sup> Craigalmond Scout Group.	
	“Well, I was actually born in Edinburgh in Gorgie. I lived there till I think I was about four. Then we moved to Whitburn. I went to Whitburn Primary from Primary One ‘til the end of Primary Four. And then I moved to Edinburgh, and we moved to Silverknowes in 1977, so I started at Davidsons Mains Primary in Primary Five and then I went to the Royal High. So, I've lived in this area since 1977.”	0.40-1.14
1.15 – 1.22	The interview moves on to ask how Donna came to be involved with the 30th Craigalmond Scout Group.	
	“Well, my older son was already at Cubs, which he loved, and my younger son - there's just about three years between them - he then realised that he could join Beavers. So, we put his name down, and it was a bit of a [waiting] list, so I volunteered to help, and Ross started at Beavers, and so I helped every week and brought my son to the Beavers as well.” <b>Interviewer:</b> So, you were an assistant?  <b>Respondent:</b> Yes.”	1.23-1.54
1.55 – 2.10	The Interviewer asks Donna to talk about what she remembers of a typical night, what the Beavers might do, and what she remembers as a Beaver Leader.	
	“Well, the kids came in, and they were full of beans and enthusiasm, catching up with everybody. They were really sweet, actually, quite well behaved. Normally, in a typical week, we tried to incorporate some kind of craft to calm them down, but we usually had a fun exercise or a sport like football to work off their energy a bit first.  And then, as I say, we used to try and do a little craft or if there was a special event in life, then usually one of the leaders would read up about it and then we'd have a little chat about what this festival or thing was and then tell the kids and then again, we'd just try to incorporate a wee craft into it, into the evening, or obviously if we were going to do something a bit more adventurous like a taster or a food - obviously we'd check with all the parents that there's no allergies and we sometimes brought in a food of that country or event and then we'd let all the kids have a little try and see if they liked it, so I mean we had an eventful hour! <b>Interviewer:</b> Do you remember anything, sort of traditions or ceremonies or songs or anything that would take place on each night?”	2.11-3.42

	<p><b>Respondent:</b> Oh, some of it is a bit of a blur, but we did try and get them to acknowledge that they were part of the Scout and Cub promise and things like that, yes.”</p>	
3.43-3.52	<p>What about things like ceremonies or traditions to do with badges or maybe when they moved up to Cubs, if they chose to do that?</p>	
	<p>“Yes, they could work towards a badge, and if they got it, everybody tried to make it special, and they got to come up, and I think it was usually Sue, our Leader, who would give them the badge, and everybody would clap and say well done, so there was an acknowledgement that they'd worked towards something. And then obviously when they'd got their badge then they'd get their Mum or Dad to sew it onto their wee jumper so I think they all enjoyed that and everybody gave them a clap and it was obviously something that they were able to feel proud of - that they'd done something for it - and at some stage got to put it on their wee blue jumper.</p> <p>Interviewer: Do you remember any of the badgers that they did?</p> <p><b>Respondent:</b> I'm a bit rusty on that one!</p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Do you remember if the young people were quite proud of getting their badges?</p> <p><b>Respondent:</b> Oh yes, yes, they were! And I remember the young people were quite proud of getting badges, and some of the parents were brilliant sewers, but I remember with my son Ross, he got a few and it took me quite a bit of time to get them all on his jumper and that was terrible, seeing as I was a helper!</p> <p>But no, when they came in the following week with it on their jumper and they were showing all their friends, so I think even they were extremely proud that they'd got their badge, and it was on their jumper, and they'd done something for that.</p> <p>So yes, I do remember them being excited and us being excited for them, because it gave them a wee sense of something and they did seem proud to get it on their jumper.”</p>	3.53-5.34
5.35-5.40	<p>The Interviewer asks if the Respondent remembers anything about the uniform they wore and whether the children were in specific groups or one big group.</p>	
	<p>“I think when we were there, it was a sky blue jumper they used to have in the Beavers, and obviously their little necktie. They didn't have to wear any particular trousers; they could wear their own joggers. Yeah, I remember [the jumper] was a sort of aqua blue colour.</p> <p>We tended to split them up into groups. I can't remember if they had any names for the groups but if we did activities, it was easier to split them up, because I think there were three of us, so it was easier to split them up into groups and then do games or an activity. It's easier when you've got a slightly smaller number of young boys to cope with rather than one big group! Then usually at the end they'd all come back together as a group, but we did tend to split them up if we were doing activities - it was easier to split them up into groups of, say, 10 and then come back later on.”</p>	5.41-6.51
6.52-7.01	<p>The Interviewer asks about planning activities. How many did they plan, and did they plan it all together as a leadership team, or did one person plan it for the year and give them instructions?</p>	
	<p>“No, in term time we tended to go round to Sue's house or Lizzie's and, we tried to have a structure for it, so we'd have a couple of hours, or whatever we could spare, and we'd go to one person's house and talk about the term and</p>	7.02-8.17

	<p>what sort of events were coming up within those months and could we do something with that?</p> <p>If there were, we would chat about it and maybe even have a reading segment where we tried to read up on something and then we'd say we could do that on such and such a night because that's close to it [the event].</p> <p>So yes, we did try and have a structure to it and some things would be ad hoc but for things like the Festival of Light or Chinese New Year, and other things that crop up like Friendship Day, if you read about them in calendars then you think you could do something with that for little kids about being nice to your friends, so we had a schedule term times that we'd try and stick to."</p>	
8.18-8.22	The Interviewer asks whether Donna ever did any camps with the Beavers or trips out.	
	<p>"No. My children went [on camp] and they loved it, but it was more their thing.</p> <p>We definitely did take the Beavers to a couple of places, not too far, like the park. I remember there was an event at Corstorphine. I don't think it was the zoo but there was something that was on that was relevant to that week, and we took them out and parents were happy to drive them, and we'd meet them at a set point, so we did take them out to a couple of places."</p>	8.23-9.18
9.19-9.40	The interview moves on to ask if, in terms of supporting young people in the community, there was involvement with other local community groups, maybe the church, the school or anything else within the community, such as a litter pick.	
	<p>"I think in my time we did have people coming round like St John's Ambulance showing the kids about first aid, even as youngsters, so I think that was important, so we had somebody come around to show them bandages and things.</p> <p>I do think we took them to the Fire Brigade along at Crewe Toll, so I do remember we got to take them there. I can't remember if they got to sit in it, but I do remember the guys showing them how their gear was laid out, so we did a couple of things like that, which they enjoyed.</p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Do you ever keep in contact with anyone from the Group?</p> <p><b>Respondent:</b> I've seen Sue a couple of times; she was the Leader. I've not seen Liz, but I think she moved away, to be fair. I have seen people that helped with the Cubs and the Scouts, and of course, living in the area for so long, I have seen the children that have grown up...you don't believe how time flies!</p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Do you feel that connection from their time at Beavers when you see them?</p> <p><b>Respondent:</b> Yes, and you know the faces, and they know your face, and you say hello. It's mainly some of the parents who will come and still say "Oh hiya" years later. I think that's a lovely thing, it's really nice."</p>	9.41-11.20
11.21-11.30	Were all the Leaders women and do you remember having any Young Leaders come along to help out with the Beavers?	
	"Yes, we were all women. I remember that the Scouts had quite a few young boy leaders who would help out but I don't think when we were doing it that we had anybody with the Beavers."	11.31-11.51
11.52-12.03	The Respondent then asked about the games that were played and if there were any favourite games that the children particularly enjoyed.	
	"Obviously, we had softball or dodge, you know, where you try and hit somebody, and then they had to sit out. And we would have one on that side and one on the other and they'd sort of run about, and they did enjoy all that.	12.04-13.06

	<p>Obviously Tig, it's not that big but you'd be amazed what you can do with a small space. And then even sometimes, Statues, where they'd have to stand still and not move, and we'd bring a tape recorder - you see, it is old! - and they'd have to stand still and not move.</p> <p>Then we'd have games where they'd use a bit more energy and then games where they had to be still.</p> <p>We'd definitely have football-type things, especially with them being mainly boys; they'd enjoy that. There were a couple of girls, I think, at the end, but certainly when we were there it was mostly boys."</p>	
13.07-13.10	Do you remember the girls coming into the Group for the first time?	
	"I'm not sure but certainly for the first couple of years it was only boys."	13.11-13.22
13.23-13.33	The interview moves on to ask about the Respondent's favourite kind of night when she was in the group, and if she had a favourite?	
	<p>"Not really, I just enjoyed the whole thing from the beginning.</p> <p>Given that I was a bit dubious when I said yes, but obviously once I got into the swing of the hour and it was part of your week's schedule as well, and when you'd seen the kids and their enthusiasm and mixing with their friends and when they'd got their jumpers on and badges on, just the whole aspect and then I suppose as well the community side of it because a lot of them knew each other from school and it feels still like a community in this area. And then having a giggle for the hour, I just have such fond memories of it; then seeing them growing up as well and enjoying their time here and then moving on up to the Cubs, so they're staying in the tradition.</p> <p><b>Interviewer: Do you think most of them moved on to Cubs?</b></p> <p><b>Respondent:</b> I think most of them did, I know my son did and so most of them did. So, they keep that with them and for whatever reason they enjoy it: the camaraderie, the whole idea, the friendships and just being in the Beavers and the Cubs and the Scouts, enjoying that side of things for boys and girls."</p>	13.34-15.02
15.03-15.12	The Interviewer asks if she remembers the Beavers taking part in the Gala Day parade or Remembrance Service.	
	"Yes, I remember about the Gala because we used to meet about 11 am in the village and they were quite proud of that as well, getting to wear their jumper on a different day of the week and walking through the village with the traffic stopped. Yeah, they enjoyed all that. I can't remember if the Remembrance Day was such a big thing, then as it is now, but certainly we did take part in the Gala."	15.13-15.50
15.51-16.05	The Interviewer asks about any memorable experiences or moments when she herself felt a sense of accomplishment as a leader.	
	<p>"You know what, probably not at the time because you're so busy. I did think sometimes that this was great fun, but it was actually a few years ago...I must have been cleaning out the drawer, and I came across my shirt and Ross's Beaver jumper and Kyle's Cub shirt, and I was just sitting at home, and the memories came flooding back.</p> <p>You think about seeing all these kids, seeing them every week on Monday and then it hit me that it was such a nice experience to have had that I probably didn't fully appreciate it at the time when you're doing your day-to-day life and that was part of my schedule for a few years. But looking back, it did make me smile - such a wonderful time - and as I say, I've still got the jumpers.</p> <p><b>Interviewer:</b> Do you remember what your uniform was like?</p> <p><b>Respondent:</b> Well, I had always had on a brown shirt and a woggle, and I think I just wore a pair of my own trousers. I've kept them all in a bag.</p>	16.06-17.50

	As i say, it took me a few years and then it sinks in what an important part of my week that was and then seeing some of the children and thinking about my own boys go up - they both went up to Scouts - and realising how great that was in their lives and how much they enjoyed it, and thinking I was a small part of that in other children's lives as well every week."	
17.51-18.00	You've almost answered my next question but how do you feel being in the Scouts has impacted your personal life, in some way?	
	<p>"Oh yes, I mean seeing my children, both of them, in the Beavers, the Cubs and the Scouts every week. Kyle, my older one, loved it and was here about 15 minutes early every week, what with me being here [too], he loved it. So, seeing them, and then obviously it being a part of all three of our lives I think, really, in some shape or form.</p> <p>They certainly loved it and I know, as I say, when I found those jumpers, I felt it was a great part of my life as well, and the fact that inadvertently I did help Ross get in there quicker!</p> <p>So, yes, it's impacted the three of our lives in a positive, lovely way when I look back on it."</p>	18.01-18.55
18.56-19.15	The Interviewer asks if she thinks the Scouts has changed in any way 21 years down the line - noting that a lot more girls have come in now - or other ways that she thinks it might have changed for the young people.	
	<p>"Oh yes, and I think positively as well. Obviously, when I did it, it was a lot of boys but whereas now, with more girls coming in, I think it's for everybody and that's for the better; you can come in, it's inclusive.</p> <p>I think it's always been a wonderful thing if your children are into that...the fellowship, the friendship. Camping and things as well, when you go away on trips, and, as I say, they're working towards badges and things and certainly for Scouts when they do more important badges and things, the Duke of Edinburgh and certainly it gives children a sense of responsibility, a sense of pride.</p> <p>I think it's something that is a wonderful tradition that we've got and for this area as well, to have had a tradition like that for a hundred years, is amazing!"</p>	19.16-20.33
20.34-20.47	Finally, the Interviewer asks if she has any other thoughts or memories about her time with 30th Craigmmond or any experience that she wants to finish on.	
	<p>"As I said, in this area we've had a Scouting group for a hundred years, some of the people that I've met that have helped with the group: parents, Scouts, people in the background that have helped make it such a long tradition and still hopefully thriving as a group.</p> <p>And when over the years things have been hard - certainly funding - probably at some stages it's been very difficult, but to see that we've had something in this area for a hundred years that the children still enjoy, and that we've still got people coming forward to help and lead...it's a great thing!</p> <p>And now, seeing the mural that we've got outside, it just brings it all to life: what a wonderful tradition to have and hopefully to go forward still, to keep going."</p>	20.48-21.43
21.44-21.50	<b>Interviewer:</b> Lovely, that's great. Thank you so much for your time and for sharing your memories with us today.	
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