



Project: Scouting through the Decades: A Century of Adventure
 Respondent: Dorothy Kidd
 Year of Birth: 1960
 Age: 60
 Connection to the project: Committee Member 2000s/2010s
 Date of Interview: 11 February 2025
 Interviewer: Gillian Alexander
 Recording Agreement: yes
 Information & Consent: yes
 Photographic Images: No
 Length of Interview: 23.27
 Location of Interview: Davidson's Mains Scout Hall
 Recording Equipment: Zoom H4n (internal mics)



Summary Time (from: mins/secs)	Time Coded Summary/ Transcript	Transcribed Extract (from- to: mins/secs)
0.00 – 01.04	<p>The Respondent is introduced and thanked for attending the Interview.</p> <p>She is asked where she was born and where she grew up, to which she responds that she was born in 1960 in France, just outside Paris, and lived there until she was 19, when she moved to Scotland to attend the University of St. Andrews.</p> <p>Her parents bought a house in Edinburgh, and she has remained in the city ever since, residing in Davidson's Mains since around 1996.</p>	
01.05 – 01.12	<p>The Respondent is asked how she became involved with the 30th Craigalmond Scout Group and the years that this took place.</p>	
	<p>“Michael was born in 1996, so at some time before he was six, I put his name down on the waiting list, so he became a Beaver as soon as he was allowed to when he was six - so that would have been in 2002.</p> <p>I think within the next couple of years, I would have joined the Committee originally, just as an ordinary committee member. And then when the then secretary, whose name was Gillian Simpson, resigned, I took on the role of secretary and to be honest, I can't remember how long I was secretary for, probably till about...my younger son was born in 1999, and both boys packed Scouting in in their early teens, they sort of lost interest, so possibly I might have been secretary till about 2010/2011, and then I stayed on as basically the hall manager.</p> <p>Initially, I coordinated bookings for the hall, managed the cleaner, and also, I've put in place the pest control visits, and I dealt with maintenance, such as the roof issues what with the reroofing, and we got new windows and things like that.”</p>	01.13 – 02.43
02.44 – 03.02	<p>The Interviewer then asked if there was a frequent amount of work taking place at the Scout Hall during that time, to which the Respondent replied that the work took place over several years as it needed to be done, but that some jobs, such as dealing with the bins, meant that she would be at the hall every week.</p>	
03.03 – 03.12	<p>The Respondent was asked what made her choose to join the Scout Committee.</p>	
	<p>“Oh, guilt, the reason, yeah, because you get told that there's not going to be a group unless parents pull their weight.</p>	03.12 – 03.29

	<p>Interviewer: So was that very much of the time that the leaders were reaching out to people in the community?"</p> <p>Respondent: Yes, definitely.</p> <p>Interviewer: So they were short of committee members at that time?</p> <p>Respondent: Yeah."</p>	
03.30 – 03.57	The Interviewer asks if there is anything she remembers about being on the Committee concerning any particular events, camps or problems that were being dealt with at that time.	
	<p>"Oh, well, the Centenary Camp, when they went out to Hopeton, I remember that was quite a big deal.</p> <p>There was quite a traumatic camp; in fact, when my son had a terrible cold, insisted on going - they were over on the West Coast. And I asked the leaders to get in touch with me if he wanted to come home, and unfortunately, they didn't, and then he developed a phobia of going away overnight, but he sorted himself out at night. So that was a little bit unfortunate, but he's sorted himself out now, but that's part of the reason that Michael packed in Scouting cause he never wanted to go on camps again after that."</p>	04.00 – 04.48
04.49 – 05.27	The conversation goes on to briefly discuss the Respondent's sons leaving Scouts as young teens, as they had lost interest.	
05.27 – 05.36	The Respondent was asked if, as a parent did she recalled any of the Scouting traditions that her sons took part in and the effect that that might have had on them.	
	<p>"I think the camps and looking after yourself and trying to be self-sufficient was great, was quite helpful. They also went to Earth Calling, that's right.</p> <p>I think that Scouting and that was what probably informed their interest, especially my younger son's interest, in the natural world, so I think that was really important.</p> <p>Michael, the older one, is really competitive, he was probably really into the badges, but I don't think it was really that big a deal. It was the social aspect of coming here and mucking about with his friends."</p>	
06.17 – 06.31	<p>The Interview goes on to discuss the friends her sons had at Scouts, which mainly consisted of people from their classes at school.</p> <p>She then talks about the friendships she made as part of the Scout Committee.</p>	
	"I met one of my very good friends here – Joan Grant; she was Andrew MacKenzie's Mum – she's been involved since she was a teenager. And then I mentioned Paul Furbank; he was on the Committee when I first joined, and then after that but, he came off the Committee but carried on helping with Scout Post. So, I was pretty heavily involved with Scout Post until Scout Post finished."	06.39 – 07.10
07.11 – 07.28	The Respondent was asked if she remembered the names of others involved at that time, to which she said - Debbie Pearce, Ed Mackay, Aileen Venables and Gillian Simpson.	

07.29 – 07.59	The Interviewer brings the conversation back to her sons and their badge work at Scouts, asking if she recalls any of the badges they worked towards. She remembers helping them with their sewing badge. She goes on to talk a little more about the kinds of things her sons did on Scout nights.	
	<p>“There was a lot of going to the park, bonfires...I did write a quiz for them – we did a quiz round central Edinburgh, walking around finding things, looking at buildings on the Royal Mile. I’ve probably still got that somewhere. As a parent, I went to some evening things with them. Did they go to Mary King’s Close or something like that? We went somewhere.</p> <p>So I just helped out in that way. But my main thing, after I stopped as secretary, was looking after the hall.</p>	08.00 - 08.42
08.43 – 08.45	The Respondent was asked if she recalled any community events.	
	<p>“We had quite a few coffee mornings. The Scout Hall was used for quiz nights for the Gala, but they weren’t the Scouts' Quiz – it was for the Gala.</p> <p>So mostly, it was Scout coffee mornings trying to raise money and bag packing, helped with bag packing as well at Tesco and Sainsburys.”</p>	08.45 – 09.10
09.11 – 09.19	The conversation then returned to the Scout Post, and she was asked what that entailed.	
	<p>“Basically, Scout Post was an Edinburgh initiative whereby the Scouts posted your letters – your Christmas cards within Edinburgh and some parts of the Lothians, 5p cheaper than the standard postage rate was.</p> <p>So, people deposited... brought their Christmas cards to the Scout Hall. And then with some scouts, older scouts, but mostly volunteer parents, the cards were sorted into postcodes, basically. Then they were collected here, then they were taken centrally, and we were using empty buildings at the Gyle that must have been organised centrally. Paul Furbank, who had been heavily involved with Scouts, he’s got two sons, again much older than mine; he was the coordinator for our Scout group. Scout Post would have coordinators, and presumably, they had meetings throughout the year to organise it.</p> <p>So, we’d all go to the central sorting place where we’d help sort them by postcode.</p> <p>That would take a few days, and then you would return to Davidson's Mains with the EH4 blah blah with the postcodes you were going to deliver to, which tended to be local, but sometimes there were some mistakes, so you’d end up on the other side of the city.</p> <p>And then families, because obviously, it did involve a bit of driving, theoretically Scouts, but with a lot of help from their parents, would be issued with several hundred cards for particular streets they were taking responsibility for, then you would have to deliver the cards, and you had to do it within a certain period. It was a huge undertaking, which is obviously partly why it's been stopped.”</p>	09.20 – 11.30
11.46 – 11.48	The Interviewer asked if it was difficult to arrange parent help in Scout Post.	
	“I don't think Davidson's Mains is the reason it was packed in, but citywide, it obviously.”	11.49 – 11.56

11.57 – 13.13	<p>The conversation continued to discuss the logistics of Scout Post, with the Respondent stating that when they collected the post, they did not do any pre-sorting but took it all to a central depot in the Gyle. There were two large office buildings on the site, which were not in use and featured tables where people sorted the mail.</p> <p>She was involved in Scout Post for around six or seven years, and it tended to be the same people who volunteered to help manage the group's part in this.</p> <p>She was then asked if she thought the Scouts enjoyed taking part in Scout Post.</p>	
	<p>“Oh, yeah, Scouts enjoyed doing it, but it was very parent-labour intensive.</p> <p>Interviewer: But it was quite successful in terms of raising funds?</p> <p>Respondent: Yes, it was good at raising funds. It was quite a nice community thing to do. Obviously, you’re doing it at a time of year also when you are really busy anyway, cause it is Christmas time [laughs]. We must have been doing it maybe in November and early December and probably finished in the first week of December, but even so, people were pretty busy.</p> <p>Interviewer: And, as far as you know, the cards all did get delivered?</p> <p>Respondent: Yeah, I only heard one incident where there was a bundle found somewhere...but no, no people were really rigorous about it.”</p>	13.13 – 14.04
14.05 – 15.40	<p>The Respondent couldn’t remember anything specific that the funds raised from Scout Post went to, so the conversation returned to her role on the Committee, and she was asked what her experience was like. She stated that she did not want to become a leader but was happy to be involved in a less hands-on role as the group secretary. She was then asked about any funding she recalls receiving for Scout hall maintenance, to which she thought the Heritage Lottery Fund had awarded a grant at some point.</p> <p>The Interviewer then asked how often the Scout Hall was let out to other groups.</p>	
	<p>“Yeah, it's weekly, so that was a dance group that would use it, so that was weekly, and they must have used it two or three times a week, I think. Then there would be birthday parties, and obviously, that would be sporadic, and that’s when one of us would have to come and open up and close up and get rid of the rubbish and stuff.</p> <p>Interviewer: So you acted as a keyholder to give access?</p> <p>Respondent: Yes.”</p>	15.41 – 16.06
16.07 – 17.37	<p>The Respondent was asked if these hall hires were profitable for the group, to which she stated that they didn’t make a large amount of money, but certainly helped. This money went into the maintenance fund and helped with expenses such as the leaking roof, pest control (due to a mouse problem), a regular cleaner, and an electrician whenever required.</p>	

	The Interviewer asked if this took up a lot of her time, to which she said she was working three days a week and had a little spare time.	
17.38 – 18.33	The Interviewer asks whether, even though her sons left Scouts early, she thinks they still enjoyed their time there. She feels that they both enjoyed certain aspects of it, such as going to the park, spending time outside, and doing things with their friends.	
18.34 – 18.49	The conversation moves on to discuss the Scout Leaders who were present at that time, noting that they provided a varied program.	
19.26 – 19.38	The Respondent was asked what she thought was the most significant challenge the Committee faced during her time there.	
	“I think the biggest thing was getting money in for the Hall painting and the roof, but we managed it; I’m sure there was some sort of Lottery money.”	19.39 - 19.49
19.50 – 21.09	She went on to discuss various projects that took place in the hall, including the painting of the hall, work on the windows, and a substantial amount of work done on the Scout Hall roof, which occurred when she was there. She goes on to mention that she had donated a CD to the project, which featured a photograph of the original Scout Group banner that used to hang in the hall situated above the hatch. This banner was taken down when the hall was decorated and donated to Edinburgh Museums.	
21.09 – 21.14	The Interviewer asks what she remembers about the Scout Centenary Camp.	
	Driving Michael out there, being really impressed by the site at Hopeton – in the grounds at Hopeton, it was lovely, with a view of the sea, and Michael obviously had a really good time. I might have helped the day before to take stuff out, I think. Then there was a commemorative stamp; you’ve probably seen that. Interviewer: Was that quite a big event? Was there quite a big run-up to it, that it was a hundred years and celebrating Scouting? Respondent: Yeah, I think there would have been for the Scouts, but obviously, I wasn’t at those meetings or involved with that.	21.15 – 22.02
22.32 – 22.38	The Respondent was asked if they would recommend Scouting or volunteering time to the Scouts.	
	Oh, definitely, yes. I mean, the boys obviously got a lot out of it at the time. I made, well, Joan’s one of my best friends; I made some good friends in Scouts, and I quite enjoyed pottering about looking after the Hall until it became a bit much and my mother needed a bit more help, so it became more onerous. When you don’t know the parents anymore that, it becomes harder to ask them to help out.”	22.39 – 23.16
23.16 – 23.27	The Respondent was then thanked for their time, and the interview concluded.	

