

Project: Scouting through the Decades: A Century of Adventure Respondent: Douglas Davidson Year of Birth: 1948 Age: 77 Connection to the project: Cub and Scout in the 1950s/60s Date of Interview: 2 February 2025 Interviewer: Ben Scoles (& Gareth Alexander) Recording Agreement: Yes Information & Consent: Yes Photographic Images: Length of Interview: 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)
0.00 - 0.43	The Interviewer introduces the project and asks the Respondent to confirm their details for the record, and then asks where they were born and grew up.	
	"Was born in Glasgow and left Glasgow when I was almost nine. And moved to Silverknowes / D Mains at the end of 1956."	0.43 – 0.56
0.56 – 1.06	The Interviewer then asked about how she was involved with the 30 th Craigmmond Scout Group.	
	"I must have got involved with the 30th Midlothian, as it was known, in 1957, and I think I, somehow, lost interest or there were other things around for me, and I think I was here until 1961. So, it's these three years that my memories, recollections, will be talking about."	1.06 – 1.39
1.39 – 1.43	The Interviewer asks about strong memories from then.	
	"Well, yes, there was the old hall up opposite the chip shop and it was two cottages that had been knocked together and there was at least one meeting a week in there in the evenings. And... of course, my big memory and I was reflecting on it when I came into town today - I live down near Peebles and of course, when you come up to Leadburn - you've got a wonderful view of the Pentlands, (The Pents) and right from, a way South down Bigger way to Caerketton and Allermuir, above Swanston, and the sun came out on Caerketton and Allermuir and I thought that was a good omen. And a big memory, was being taken out there, I think, on the back of a lorry, one winter's day, and we went, I had my wellies and a patent leather jacket on, I remember. And we trudged through the snow and got up to the tops and then we used the piece of equipment we'd all been told to take with us - an aluminium tray, which you have to use to slide down the hills, that's a vivid memory. And that was the start of the outdoor part of being with the Cubs, as it was then."	1.43 – 3.17
3.17 – 3.40	The Interviewer queries if it was just Cubs or if there were Scout experiences as well, but the Respondent thinks it may only be Cubs before the discussion moves on to talk about camping.	
	"Yes, I had lots of experiences of camping, down in the Borders, in	3.40 – 4.38

	<p>Midlothian and camping, in fact, there were County Camps, they were called then - they were competitions, where you were judged on how you had pitched your tent, and your cooking abilities over the wood fire. How you had dealt with... the toilets etc and digging them out, all these things you learned about, to a standard.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yeah.</p> <p>Respondent: Which I used until about six or seven years ago, when I handed in all my kit to the Scout group here - my tents, etc. so that they might be used."</p>	
4.38 - 4.44	The Interviewer enquires about the kit and the Uniform.	
	<p>"Black shoes, I had a thing about having my shoes polished, and I always being pointed out, <i>'why can't you be like Douglas?'</i></p> <p>But it was just a habit, that had been put into me by my mother. probably, that, shorts and a shirt and a jersey, we had, I'm sure it was a green jersey and a cap. That's all I can remember.</p> <p>And of course, in time I had all the badges, I took any badge that I could. Yeah."</p>	4.44 – 5.25
5.25 – 5.30	The Interviewer enquires about any badges the Respondent remembers being achieved	
	<p>"Well, I must have learnt about cooking, which wasn't a problem because of the way I was brought up. But I do remember cycling. I got my cycling badge. So that puts me at the late 50s - because I remember the Christmas I got, a proper bicycle. Interviewer: Did you enjoy cycling then as a kid's, was it what you did? Respondent: Oh, which I still do it., I'm in the midst of planning this year's holidays up in Orkney - which I've done in the last couple of years. Interviewer: Road biking? Respondent: So, yes. I like cycling on the road or a cycle track. I'm quite happy and I learned about confidence on the roads because of the Cubs the way you were trained, making space for yourself. I know there are different times I remember, for example, in 1959, the day of a General Election - a group of us all cycled down Queensbury Road to South Queensferry. Can you imagine nowadays? I don't know maybe 10, 12, 15 of us, but we had confidence in what we were doing Interviewer: You got taught how to do stuff like confidently and well through the Scouts. Respondent: Yeah"</p>	5.30 – 5.49
6.53 – 7.08	The Interviewer moved the conversation on to leaders and friends who he remembered	
	<p>"Well, there was... I can't remember his surname, but he was referred to as Captain Enks, I'm sure you'll be able to find out about that. He wasn't a major. And I always wondered about that because you weren't supposed to keep your military rank unless you were a major, but you'll surely find out.</p>	7.08 – 10.12

	<p>Interviewer: So was the Scouts kind of a way of kind of uh almost a way of kids like progressing towards the army and adults who had come out of the army like training kids almost.</p> <p>Respondent: Well, I don't know for a fact if anyone from that group went into the army. I don't think I do think that came up at all, there was nothing militaristic at all, I would say. Not at all.</p> <p>Interviewer: Just a time for you to meet up with your mates. Now there were some, excuse me, I wrote down some names, you asked about names that. [Rusling papers] I remember... There was a Harvey Young. He was a good friend of mine -he lived down in Silverknowes. There was a Gavin Rintoul. I remember him. He lived over, is it? not Hill End, but...</p> <p>Interviewer: Hill Park?</p> <p>Respondent: Hill Park. Donald McSween – McSween of the haggis fame and David Engels, he lived at the foot of Lauriston’s Farm Road These are the, I think, the only names I remember.</p> <p>Camping wise - I'm sure that we went camping to Stobo, down near Drumelzier way, between Biggar and Peebles, and we didn't camp out in tents. It was in a hall. I'm sure.</p> <p>And also in Stow, which is down the road to Gala from Edinburgh. But your other researchers might say that’s nonsense because with the skills I had, it seemed natural just to go camping.</p> <p>Interviewer: yeah, did the leaders...</p> <p>Respondent: Just nothing to do with the Cubs, but you had all these skills. So, there were the County Camps, the official camps, but I wrote down, at the time this same period of time, I was going camping in Cramond Island, out in the Bathgate Hills and in time, all over, uh, all over Scotland, and it all stems from...</p> <p>Interviewer: The skill she learned here</p> <p>Respondent: Yeah.</p> <p>Interviewer: So, the skills like that Scouts taught you kind of just let you do whatever you wanted in your free time like go and like stay places with your mates that you otherwise wouldn't.</p> <p>Respondent: Yeah, Very much so.”</p>	
10.12 - 10.19	The Interviewer asks about games	
	<p>“No, I... I think many people had misgivings about me - I just like camping. Okay, I've stopped it, but I just like being... under canvas.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yeah, in the outdoors.</p> <p>Respondent: Or with a roof over your head in a hall or in a hostel. I do remember being at, I've written it down – up at the Hermitage at a Youth hostel. The building’s still there. I remember going there once. So that would have been in late 50s, early 60s.”</p>	10.19 – 11.00

11.00 – 11.10	The Respondent is then asked about a routine evening.	
	<p>““Yes. Well, you would get into your sixes. Is that still the case? Interviewer: Oh, yes, or in patrols</p> <p>Respondent: In your group down on the floor, and whoever was in charge of that night would tell you what you were about that evening, and I can't remember any more than that, really.”</p>	11.10 – 11.30
11.30 - 12:15	There were questions about ceremonies and staying in touch with any friends without any recollection, so the conversation moved on to Community involvement	
	<p>“Well, the answer to that might be, that we had a Scout cart, and I can remember going up to the big houses at Barton. Interviewer: Oh, yeah. We, every year and you always got good results there... At the servant's door, of course, very much, the back door. But that's all I can remember. yeah”</p>	12.15 – 12.45
12.45 - 12.58	The Interviewer asks to expand on that about community projects.	
	“No, no, I have a feeling that the way of thinking, then, was to involve young boys in regular activity, with a view to going outdoors and it didn't go much beyond that, but that's just a feeling I have.”	12.58 – 13.16
13.16 – 13.25	The conversation then moved on to talk about the Gala and Parades.	
	“There's a photograph which I saw which is a picture taken out at the Green, and it's dated 1959, and in the front of it, there was someone from the 1960 Gala. It was a chap in his servant's finery. Well, I did that in 1960 so, and there was another year, when I carried the flag, which you can see in the photograph and had the harness on etc so I'm guessing it was in 1961 that I had the harness because, I had hardly been there in 57, 58. So that might tie in with what other people say. So, there are photographs, there's one big photograph of that time, but I have a feeling it might have disappeared forever, because I am regularly looking at photographs to do with my own family history. But there may be other photographs that appear, if you put out the message.”	13.25 - 14.56
14.56 – 15.10	The Interviewer asks about the honour of carrying the flag	
	“Yeah, that's the very word, I was going to use. Yes, I would say I was very pleased with myself to be carrying it. So presumably I'm at the front. You see, I actually liked, I wasn't forced to go to, the Cubs, I actually liked what was on offer.”	15.10 – 15.29
15.30 – 15.51	The conversation returned to camping.	
	<p>“I always preferred camping under canvas, and I don't have to be doing anything. No, if it was poor weather, so poor that it wasn't worth going out, I was quite happy.</p> <p>Interviewer: And when you were staying in like tents on the canvas, did you like go to any Scout jamborees like nowadays some of the Scouts in Switzerland</p> <p>Respondent: No, I was never at a jamboree. The most would have been these County Camps; they might involve Scouts groups from out with this immediate area. But they were quite serious events - you had to be on your toes for the weekend.</p>	15.51 – 16.50
16.50 – 17.12	There was a brief mention of challenge badges and chief awards.	

17.12 - 17.28	The interview moves on to talk about how Scouting has impacted on the respondent's person life	
	<p>“Well, as I said to you earlier. That first visit up to the Pentlands, introduced me to the hills because, whilst I was very used to the outdoors, farms, et cetera, and animals because of my family background I had never been up hills before and that's continued to this day, and tomorrow I'm arranging a hill trip down in the Borders, it so happens. So, it stayed with me my whole life.</p> <p>Interviewer: Kind of gave you a new like hobby or something like this.</p> <p>Respondent: Yeah, I've been up most of the big hills in Scotland. I'm not a Monroist or a completest but...</p> <p>Interviewer: Ben Nevis?</p> <p>Respondent: Oh, yes, yes. In a white out!”</p>	17.28 – 18.24
18.24 – 19.33	There is a brief chat about modern scouting.	
19.33 - 19.40	Any other thoughts about the 30th that could be shared?	
	<p>“Yes, there was one thing I remember - there used to be a chip shop in D'Mains, which was behind where the Chinese restaurant was, it's up for sale, I see. The old chip shop was behind there, and then the Corby cafe opened and it was a ridiculous sixpence for a poke of chips. I wrote that down as an abiding memory. It was sixpence! When you were used to threepence - it was a fortune! But that's what we always did after we meet, we go for a poke of chips with sixpence. Yeah, two and a half pence, by the way.</p> <p>Interviewer: Two and a half pence. Not like nowadays.</p> <p>Respondent: Yes, I'm sure [laughs]</p> <p>Interviewer: Any other thoughts?</p> <p>Respondent: Let's see, the hermitage just came to my mind as I was coming in. I'm sure there'll be other things that come to mind. Here's one thing I can remember strictly, I really remember having... this was under a roof, maybe a village hall - we've got palliasses - huge 200 weight sacks, which were quite common in farms then they were that size. And we had to stuff them with straw. The palliasses - and that was a bed for the night.</p> <p>Interviewer: Oh, you used them as a bed?</p> <p>Respondent: I can remember that. Something tells me that was down Stow way, which I mentioned earlier</p> <p>Interviewer: Down in the Borders?</p> <p>Respondent: Yeah.</p> <p>Interviewer: When you went to the Borders, I guess, - were like a lot of your activities in the Borders or...</p> <p>Respondent: Well, it was somewhere relatively near - so Midlothian...I have a feeling, there's another thought that came to my mind, Middleton just south of Dalkeith, I'm sure we had camps down there County Camps.</p>	19.40 – 23.26

	<p>So again, you might be able to corroborate with other people within an hour from here.</p> <p>Interviewer 2: One question I had was, if you were going down to the Borders quite a lot, how would you get there?</p> <p>Respondent: Well, it's not even a memory, I have a feeling that we used to go down there on the back of a lorry. Obviously, without seat belts, crash helmets or anything like that again other people will be able to back me up on that.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yeah, but like health and safety wasn't too much of a bother?</p> <p>Respondent: No, I've got to say it, plus all of our kit.</p> <p>Interviewer: Oh yeah, of course.</p> <p>Respondent: I think pulling the kit together, I think, was that kind of job that was done by the staff, as it were, Scout leader and assistants I don't think we have responsibility for that, at all. But, having said that, one of my skills is organising things like that. My work, I would take groups away. So, it's possible that I was involved, but I can't remember."</p>	
23.26 – 24.12	There was one last brief discussion about young leaders, before the Interview concluded and the Respondent thanked for giving his time to the Project.	
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