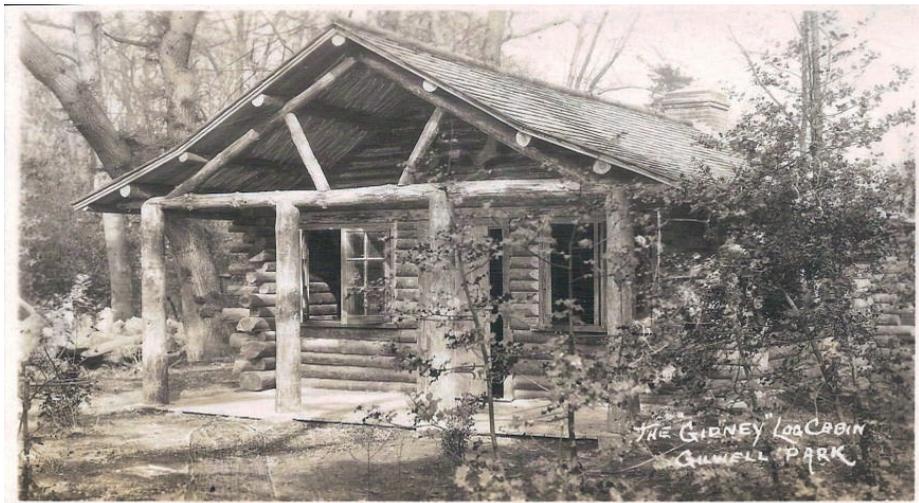


# Scout and Guide Stamps Club BULLETIN

Volume 58 No. 4 (Whole No. 336)



This rare postcard of the Gidney Cabin at Gilwell has no attribution and is postally unused but, penciled on its back, is the information that the photograph was taken by Howden Wilkie in 1932.

*(See "Colin's Corner starting on Page 19)*

JULY / AUGUST 2014



## Editorial

Well, here we are again - camping season in the UK and, whilst I'm not in a position myself to join in with the activities nowadays many of my colleagues here are attending Jamborees or simply taking their Scouts to camp. Our local Active Support Unit has built up quite a reputation for running catering and bar facilities and is in demand from several of the local Jamborees. I think that they have actually chosen to support the Norfolk Jamboree - NORJAMB - which is held in the Norwich area.

For my part, my wife and I have just completed a 10 day cruise around the British Isles which has enable me to finally visit the Neolithic site of Scara Brae in the Orkney Island and Betty to achieve her ambition of visiting the island of Tresco, along with its gardens, in the Scilly Isles. Both of these turned out to be, if anything, better than expected and well worth the visit. Other sites visited included Invergordon, Kirkwell, Stornaway and Tobermory in Scotland; Dublin, Guernsey and Honfleur in France (which was a really quaint and beautiful place). We were very fortunate with the weather which was absolutely glorious throughout, with temperatures high enough for us to walk around in short sleeved shirts.

We are now resting and trying to take life a bit easy before we travel out to Australia at the beginning of September to see our eldest son and his family. We were last there four years ago and they made a visit to the UK three years ago so our three grandsons have grown up quite a bit since we last saw them.

I hope you all have a good summer.

Terry Simister

### **FUTURE COPY DATES**

September 21st and November 16th. Please send copy, including photos, electronically - where possible.

### **FUTURE MEETINGS UPDATE**

**As mentioned before we are still intending to hold regular meetings in the UK during the Stampex and Thematix Exhibitions each year.**

**The next of these will be at**

**Autumn Stampex: 17th - 20th September with our meeting on 20th.**

Melvyn is away camping with his Scout Troop and he has asked me to send his best wishes to everyone with the hope that those who are also at Camp have a very enjoyable time and come back fully refreshed for the challenges ahead.

.....or words to that effect!!!

*Unofficial photo of Melvyn and his Scouts in camp*



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SUBSCRIPTIONS are now overdue for the new year which started on 1st April and these should be sent to the Membership Secretary. Don't forget that if paying by PayPal there is a small surcharge of 3.5% to cover our costs.

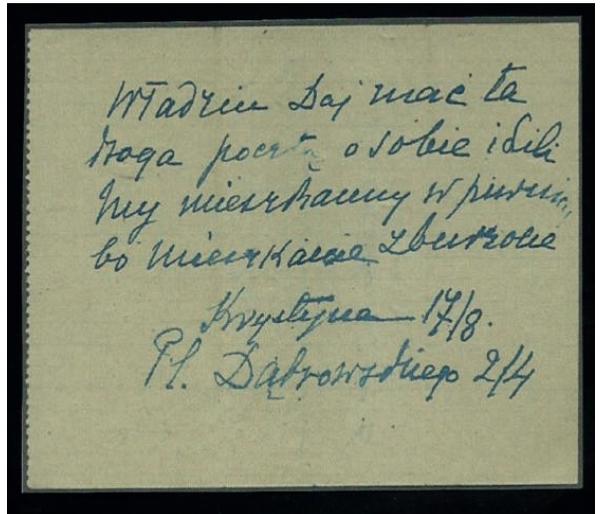
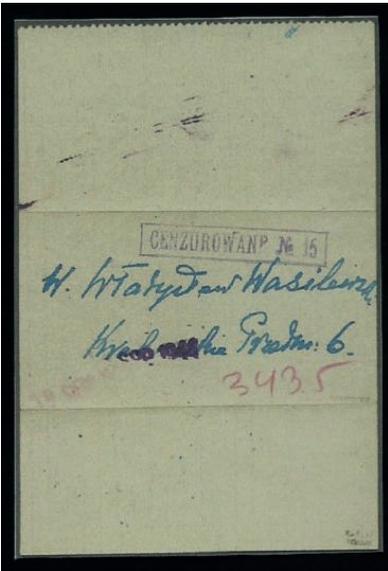
	POSTAL SERVICE		ELECTRONIC SERVICE	
TYPE	1 YEAR	5 YEARS	1 YEAR	5 YEARS
<b>UK INDIVIDUALS AND SECTIONS</b>	£18	£85	£12	£55
<b>EUROPE AIRMAIL</b>	£21	£100	£12	£55
<b>REST OF WORLD AIRMAIL</b>	£26	£125	£12	£55
<b>JUNIORS ALL WORLD</b>	£6	NOT AVAILABLE	£5	NOT AVAILABLE

## John's Jottings

by John Ineson

Much has been written about the centenary of the start of the 1st World War, and in many countries, museums have displays about this event. It is also now 70 years since the Warsaw Uprising which commenced on 1st August 1944, and was a struggle by the Polish Home Army to liberate Warsaw from German occupation. The Uprising was part of a nationwide rebellion, and was intended to last for only a few days until the Soviet Army reached the city. The Soviet advance stopped short of entering Warsaw, as Stalin disliked the Poles and wanted the city to fall to the Germans. With the city in ruins, resistance against the German forces continued for 63 days until the Polish surrendered on 3rd October.

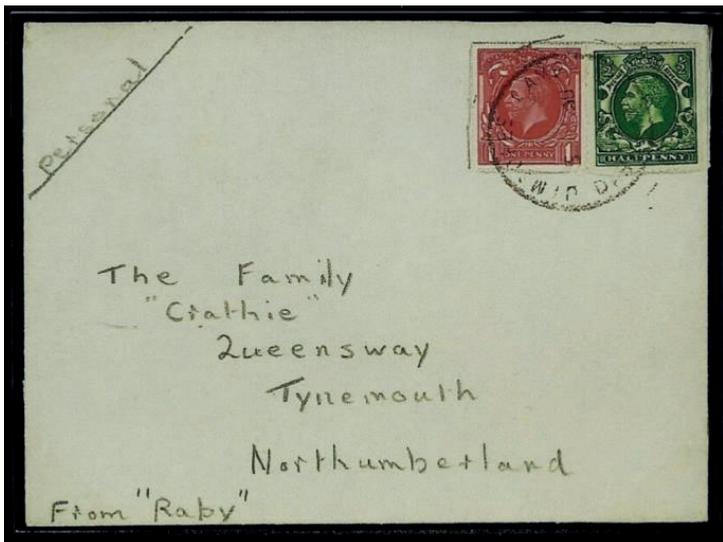
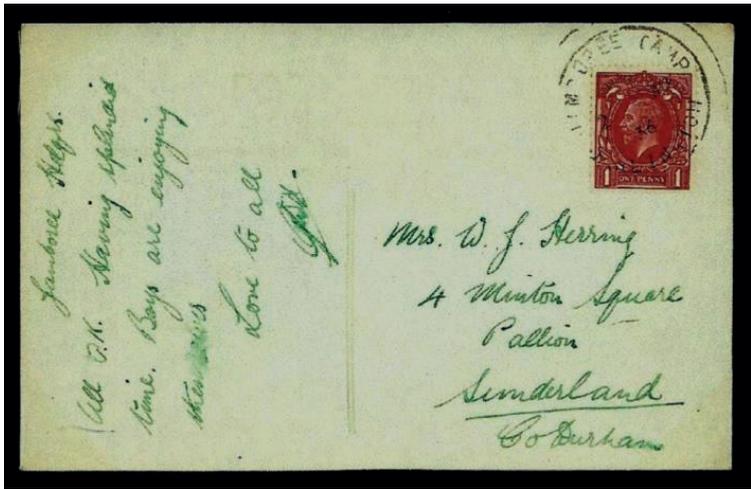
The Polish Scout movement was very active underground during the German occupation and being very well organized, undertook with great efficiency, the difficult task of establishing



military communication channels. The Scout authorities also realised the essential need for the civilian population to communicate with their families in other parts of the City, so the Scout Field Post was established. The first postal service was set up by a group of Scouts in Warsaw Central-South on the 2nd of August 1944, and operated a limited delivery only within that district. On the 4th of August, the Scout Headquarters decided to organize a full postal service for all parts of Warsaw. In addition, seven more sub-post offices were opened and as many as 40 post-boxes were placed in different locations throughout the City. Due to the isolation of some of the Polish held parts of Warsaw, the only available means of communication was through the sewers under the streets. During the first month of the uprising, the Scout Movement exclusively ran the Field

Post, with the head sorting office mainly employing Girl Guides. The daily intake of between 3.000 to 6.000 letters was routinely sorted and on a peak day of 13th August, the intake reached about 10,000 letters! The illustrated item (without the Scout circular cachet but with Censor mark No 15) and the reverse with a message, was recently sold by Gartner Auctions in Germany and made €780 (£650. US\$ 1040)

I missed the Cavendish sale held in the UK in June when two examples of the very scarce 1936 Darlington Jamboree cancel were offered in auction. Both a postcard and the extremely rare cover (of which only one other is known) were sold. I understand from the auctioneers that both items were purchased by two different private buyers. It was noted in the catalogue that a similar postcard was sold by them in December 2000 and sold for £1265 including buyers premium.



At the end of June, I had the pleasure of spending a day in Vaduz, Liechtenstein. I was staying with friends in Switzerland, and Liechtenstein is only just over an hour's drive from their home. Vaduz is a charming place dominated by the Prince's Castle set high over the city (a very small city!). On one of the pedestrian walkways there are a series of pictures of stamps set into the pavement, leading up to the main Post Office. It gives a lovely effect, and is very colourful. Of course, I got to thinking about stamps, Scout ones in particular, and it occurred to me that Liechtenstein was only the third country to depict Scouts on their stamps. Hungary 1925 and Romania 1931 and 1932 had only been earlier. Liechtenstein's Child Welfare issue of 21 December 1932 depicted Prince Francis with Scouts on the 30Rp stamp. The 20Rp stamp shows his wife Princess Elsa with girls in national costume. The designs were taken from photographs at an event



on 30 August 1932 in the grounds of Vaduz Castle.

Scouting in Liechtenstein was first registered in 1931, and the Girl Guides in 1932. Perhaps the girls in national costume were Guides in the making and uniforms had not been produced at that time?

I have two postcards from the event which took place in August 1932. One is an original (I believe) and the other was a reproduction produced for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Scout Philatelic Exhibition in Ancona, Italy on St. George's Day 23 April 1970.

Liechtenstein's Scout Movement was started in 1931 following a visit from members of the 10<sup>th</sup> Finchley Scout Group from north London. The members of this Group wore

kilts and were known as the “Scottish” Scouts. I have an envelope addressed to Scout D.Underwood, 10<sup>th</sup> Finchley with typed label “Lager der Schottischen Pfadfinder, Vaduz, Liechtenstein, also a postcard showing members of the Group at the gates of Vaduz Castle. Another postcard in my collection shows the Group with its pipe band outside their headquarters being visited by Sir Percy Everett, Deputy Chief Scout Commissioner. This is dated 16/8/38.

In the early 1950`s, I was a member of the International Scout Club, and one of the Scouters wore both the British and Liechtenstein Scout badges on his uniform, and a kilt. Unfortunately, I didn`t discover his identity at the time, but now believe him to have been the Group Scoutmaster.



Later, in 1953, Liechtenstein had the distinction of producing the first stamp depicting Baden-Powell as Chief Scout of the World. This issue of four values in sheets of 20 with decorative borders was made on 4 August 1953 for the 14<sup>th</sup> World Scout Conference which took place in Vaduz from 8 to 13 August. The host of the Conference was Prince Emanuel, grandson of Prince Francis who was pictured on the 1932

stamp.



The next issue from Liechtenstein commemorated the Centenary of the birth of B-P and 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of World Scouting in 1957. Two stamp se-tenant in sheetlets of 12, one of which shows a caricature of B-P – which you either like, or you don`t! These

sheetlets were numbered 1 or 2, probably No.2 is a little scarcer to find.

No more issues until 1981 which the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Liechtenstein Scouting was commemorated with one stamp.



1982 – we were all getting excited about the Youth Organisations issue by Royal Mail on 24 March, which would for the first time actually depict Scouts and Guides. Four values were issued: 15 ½p Boys` Brigade

19 ½p Girls` Brigade

26p Scout and Cub Scout

29p Girl Guide and Brownie

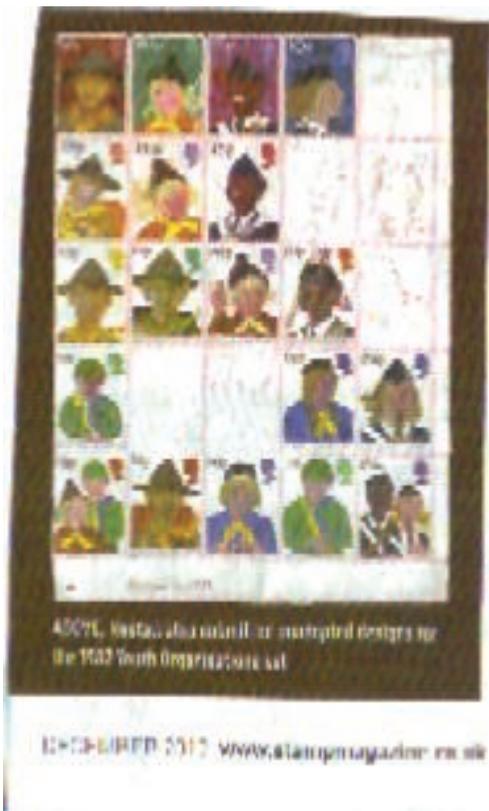
Designs were submitted by many artists, the eventual designer being Brian Sanders and the stamps were printed by Harrison & Sons Ltd in sheets of 100 with central gutter. Our Bulletins in 1982 were typed and photocopied by a printer, consequently the illustrations were fairly basic. The designs of the stamps which were shown in the July/August 1982 Bulletin showed the Scout value as being 22p, this was later revised to 26p.

There were 10 first day cancellations on 24 March and a large number of cachet covers and cards were available. Also in our May/June Bulletin we were able to reproduce some of the unaccepted stamp designs. At the end of 2013 “Stamp Magazine” reproduced the unaccepted designs by Andrew Restall. We have not shown these before.

1982/3 was designated “The Year of the Scout” which commenced on 22 February 1982 and continued until the close of the 15<sup>th</sup> World Jamboree in Canada. In particular, the “Year” commemorated the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of the Boy Scout Movement at Brownsea Island in 1907, and the 125<sup>th</sup> birthday of Robert Baden-Powell on 22 February 1857.

“The Year of the Scout” gave many countries the opportunity to issue stamps in honour of Scouting and Baden-Powell. Altogether about 100 nations and territories issued stamps, some with miniature sheets, and some as late as 1984. At the time, of course, it was the biggest influx of Scouting stamps, and altogether

probably doubled the number of issues available for Scout philatelists.



Tony Manson of Ontario, Canada and currently Vice-President of SOSSI has sent me copies of two envelopes which had been sent into the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Jamboree Camp at Arrowe Park in 1929. Both were addressed to Theodore Dorman, Scoutmaster of Troop 26, American Contingent, and had been posted in Birkenhead and London respectively.



Tony quotes from our Club's Postal History Monograph written in 1978 by Jimmy Golton and Reg Morris that "The inward mail was handled by the camp staff and they dealt with some 40,000 to 50,000 items per day." As Tony remarks regarding this quotation "I guess these two examples are not so special!" Certainly, more letters were written at that period – in the days of few telephones, no mobiles

and computers. But this seems to an extraordinary amount of mail sent into the Jamboree. On checking the World Jamboree Souvenir Handbook, I can quote "on many days no fewer than twenty-five thousand letters were dealt with. One day twenty-six bags of letters and fifty-two bags of parcels in addition to two hundred and fifty-nine registered packages and three hundred telegrams claimed attention.



Letters addressed `Scout Tom Smith, Arrowe Park` did not facilitate business, and of such there were many, although never more than two hundred and forty remained on hand."

So I do not know where Jimmy and Reg obtained the figure of 40,000 to 50,000 (inward) items per day. How many have you seen? In my collection I have one – from Denmark. John Ineson tells me he has two.

For the first dozen or so Scout Jamboree's held in New Zealand there was always a Post Office presence. In those days, the Jamboree started early January and went for a full 10 days excluding arrival and departure days. The Post Office then also had the Post Office Savings Bank which many school children had special savings accounts handled through their schools. So at the Jamboree the Post Office was there offering full postal, telegraph, and savings bank services, usually manned by Scouters who worked for the Post Office. This meant the Jamboree Post Office opened hours that suited the Jamboree programme, and public holidays were irrelevant. From the collectors point of view, this meant POSB counter cancels used instead of a postal one for registered receipts, being able to queue up and get registered items processed and fully utilise the services normally available, but from the temporary office so unique items simple to produce with some validity.

Over the New Year period of 2013/2014, the 20<sup>th</sup> New Zealand Jamboree was held at Manfeild Park in Feilding. This site has now been the venue for 3 Jamborees, 1984 and 2005 being the predecessors. The Jamboree had a move in day of the 28<sup>th</sup> December, a Sunday, with the opening ceremony held that evening, and activity programmes starting the following day and a closing ceremony on the evening of 5<sup>th</sup> January, also a Sunday, and moving out day on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January, a total of 10 days.

Over this time span, there were 2 public holidays (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> January) and 3 weekend days (28<sup>th</sup> December, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> January) when there is no postal service available. With only half the 10 day period having postal service, what options were in Feilding. You can bring your own cards and stamps, and try and find a street posting box nearest the campsite to deposit them in. If you took that option, what would you get on your cover. Mail from any postal outlet or street box nowadays go to centralised mail centres, the appropriate one for Feilding is the Manawatu Centre in nearby Palmerston North where the mail would get a machine cancel with currently used text "*Carried by New Zealand Post 410-09 (a date) Got a Question ? Visit [www.nzpost.co.nz/help](http://www.nzpost.co.nz/help)*". No mention of Feilding in that slogan, and you need to know that the Manawatu Mail Centre uses the code **410** as there are no place names on the mechanised cancelling systems in NZ.

Apart from the street posting boxes, there is in Feilding a Postshop agency in the "Take Note" Bookshop at 9 Goodbehere Street in the town centre, and nearby, the Feilding Delivery Branch at 17 Manchester Street. The latter is where the local delivery staff come to collect the mail they deliver around the town, so that leaves the "Take Note" bookshop as the only place where you have any chance of getting perhaps the counter cancel with the name Feilding in it for cancelling your mail.

Those who attend a Jamboree of course, are there for that event and with a full programme have little chance to get into the town centre just to get items cancelled. It is not like the old days where the Post Office was on-site and open in the evenings and during meal times so you could sneak out for a bit to arrange for your collecting requirements to be satisfied !

In the beginning of 2013, the Director of Communications for the Jamboree, Jane Hansen, approached the National Scout Museum (NSM) for information on the” lazy letter” designs that had been produced for some earlier Jamboree. These are postcards or lettercards where the sender ticks boxes for predetermined messages rather actually needing to write anything. The NSM produced a short report showing 3 differing distinct types used over the years going back as far as 1938. The report also raised a number of issues and proposed a solution to those, namely the easiest to produce would be in postcard form, but having those they would also need to provide stamps and somewhere to post them from.

The recommendations took advantage of new trends, by proposing the use of a CAL stamp, (Customised Advertising Label) and selling these with the cards, It also recommended approaching NZ Post for a special postmark. The recommendations were forwarded to the Jamboree Organising Committee who did approve them, and subsequently NZ Post also agreed to provide the postmark.

**The CAL Stamp**

Getting a CAL stamp is pretty straight forward, go onto the NZ Post website, drop a design into the template there, pay your money by credit card, and a few days later the courier delivers your stamps. They are produced at the Stamps and Collectables Centre in Wanganui. They are cautious with copyright and I did get an email back asking for proof that I had the authority to use the event logo.

We decided the Jamboree logo was probably the most appropriate thing to have on the stamp, but it needed modifying as the original was in black and Manfeild Green. A black logo would not be appropriate for taking a postmark, but as you tone down the black into grey, the green goes very “dirty” and weak as a colour, so adjust the green and it becomes too different. A lot of playing around and in the end a reasonable colour solution adopted.

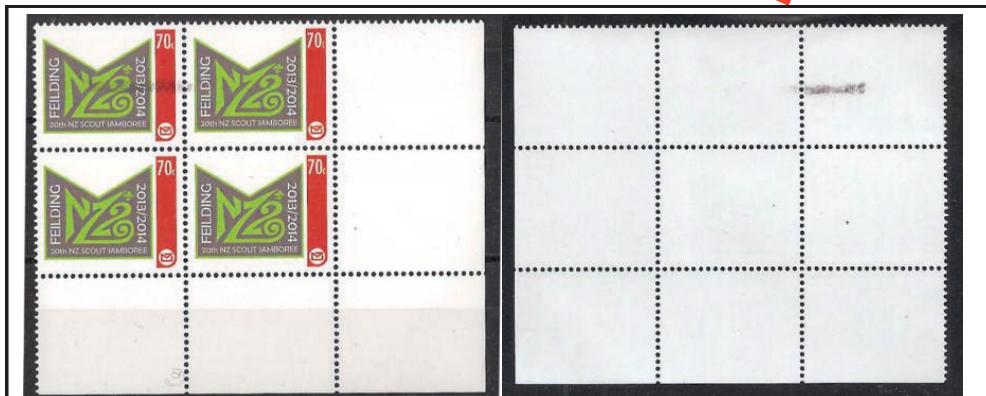
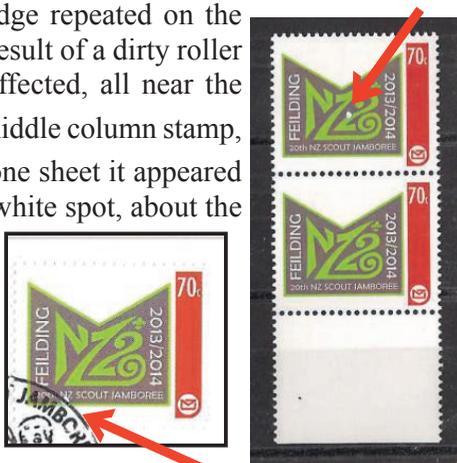


*Four of the experimental colour options played with in the process of determining the right CAL option*

2500 stamps or 50 sheets were ordered during November 2013 using the horizontal template, on gummed and perforated paper. Pre-orders were taken and these accounted for 11 sheets, and those orders were not distributed until late January 2014. The remaining sheets were taken to Feilding on 28th December and then made available there at the event. They were initially sold singly with bulk amounts of CAL's not being available till the 6th January and at the end 2.5 sheets (say 120 stamps) remained unsold, which have been subsequently used on a mail-out for Scouting.

NZ Post reproduce all CAL's issued in a calendar year in an annual year pack. In this pack they get printed se-tenant. They also produce First Day Covers with these sheetlets of CAL's on them with a date of 31 December 2013. However, these packs don't normally come out till late February or March. By getting the Jamboree CAL printed in 2013 but not used and officially postmarked until 6 January 2014, there will no doubt be some confusion over the real issue date when the Year Pack is issued by NZ Post.

Of the 50 sheets, there were some imperfections. The most repetitive imperfection was a dark smudge on the stamp. This smudge repeated on the gummed side, indicating it was probably the result of a dirty roller in the printing machine. Nine sheets were effected, all near the bottom in the 9<sup>th</sup> row, 4 sheets it effected the middle column stamp, 2 sheets effecting the 4<sup>th</sup> column stamp, and one sheet it appeared between column 1 and 2. Two stamps had a white spot, about the size of a perforation hole. These also were found in the 9<sup>th</sup> row and in the middle column, potentially caused by the paper punched out in the perforation process lying on the paper when it went through the printing, and subsequently falling off leaving the white hole. *Right; The two stamps with "white dot"*



*Front and back of a block of 4 showing the "smudge" flaw probably caused by a dirty printer roller*

## The Postmark

NZ Post generously approved our application for a postmark in March 2013, but the design was not carried out until October. The concept was to show some youth in the postmark as that is who the event is for. With the CAL using the logo and the postmark the Scouts it becomes a consistent package. The date selected had to be from one of the 5 days during the event when postal services were operating. The 6<sup>th</sup> January was selected as being the last day. The arrangement with NZ Post was that mail to be postmarked would be collected and kept at the Jamboree and then delivered to the Feilding Delivery Branch before midday on the 6<sup>th</sup>. We were warned that the supervisor of the centre was due to retire on 31 December so we would be dealing with a new person to the role. The mail was taken at the appointed time and there was some confusion, but quickly sorted by a couple of phonecalls.

The mail went from the Delivery branch to Stamps and Collectables in Wanganui. Unfortunately, a mix up there (summer holidays) meant they were not postmarked until Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January. From there on that day the mail was sent across to the Manawatu Mail Centre to be put into mail system for distribution to all the addressees.

The delay in postmarking was a little unfortunate as many Scouts hit the Facebook pages complaining where their Jamboree postcards went. The idea of getting the next generation to use the postal system worked by the sales made, but the delay backfired a bit ! Nevertheless, the support of NZ Post was appreciated.

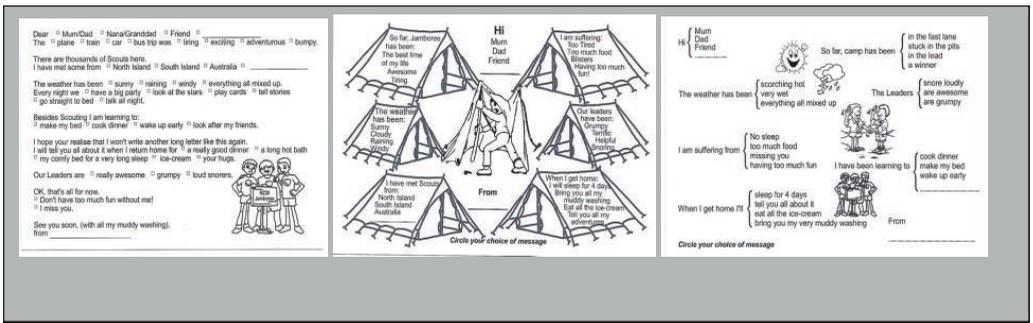
*Right;  
The original sketch and  
finished artwork for the  
postmark based on an image  
from the postcard design*



## The Postcards

The postcards were produced by the Jamboree Media team. There were 3 “lazy-letter” options produced with a common address side design.

*(See top of next page)*



## More Mail

One NZ collector produced his own covers to cover to cover his local Scout Contingent (Marlborough Zone) going to the Jamboree. 11 covers were sent to Feilding for postmarking on 29th December since the Jamboree opened on the 28<sup>th</sup>. His covers were stamped at the Feilding Delivery Centre on the 24<sup>th</sup> December and were returned before the event even started. The Delivery branch datestamp is not one designed for postmarking so not only an incorrect date, an generally unsatisfactory result. His response was to send another 12 covers to the Manawatu Mail Centre who then postmarked them with their circular datestamp on 6th January, so the last day.



An American collector saw publicity issued for the pre-orders for the CALS and the postmark and sent 2 covers address to the author at the Jamboree. Incoming mail to Jamborees is usually hard to acquire, but unfortunately the author wasn't at the event and the mail from the US arrived late. The covers received postmarks from the local Postshop agency, one dated 8 January, the other 9<sup>th</sup> January (assumed to be in and out) and the yellow and black self adhesive "Return to Sender" label type PO1404(08/09) applied. It is interesting to note the datestamp is misspelt "FIELDING TAKE NOTE". The sender used the author's Christchurch address so when returned the items travelled from Feilding to the Manawatu Mail Centre and then down to Christchurch.

(See illustration on rear cover)

## Conclusion

Times have changed, and getting mail sent, processed, and delivered is continually changing. The traditional summer holidays, which for us in the southern hemisphere occurs around the Christmas/New Year period, make a significant impact on options for a philatelic commemoration during this period.

However, there are also changes that have provided other options to allow us to commemorate this regular national Scout event with a reasonably genuine philatelic item. The use of the CAL stamp is one of these. By creating an item to send (the postcards), provided a specific and special stamp to pay for the postage (the CAL), careful selection for a suitable date, holding outgoing mail in camp until the last day and then putting it all in one go into the mail system, we believe we did achieve a good philatelic commemoration which may not be the same as traditional times, but was a good use of the current system

*(Note; Stamps and Collectables was once known as the Philatelic Bureau, and is part of NZ Post.) Also thanks to Tony Lester of Blenheim and TP McDermott of Westchester USA for sending me covers which formed part of this article.*

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Scout collage on Postcards

Alex Hadden

Here is an interesting collage created by a series of 10 postcards printed by the Marchal Scout Museum in Switzerland. The original picture was by O. Denizard in 1914. Each postcard gave some details of one of the Scout Collectors meetings (#1 to 10) held in various countries from the 1<sup>st</sup> in Bullet, Switzerland in 1983 to the 10<sup>th</sup> in Geneva, Switzerland in 1991. The other locations were (in order) France, Luxembourg, Great Britain, France, Australia, Denmark, Italy and Great Britain. Since these are all mint, I have no idea as to whether there was a special cancel. I know when I was at the Australian one (immediately after the World Jamboree), the interest was mainly badges. Does anyone have these used?

*The collage is reproduced in full on the next page of this Bulletin*



## The Don Potter Challenge

Regular readers will know that my brief is to encourage members to 'Look Wide' in the use of the material to illustrate their collections, particularly other paper ephemera such as postcards, cigarette cards, letters etc. My 'track record' of around 40 articles for this publication will show that they do usually manage to include at least one stamp! As far as I know, Don Potter does not appear on any stamp, but I am certain that some of his works and associated events will have found their way onto postage stamps, though unfortunately not British ones. The challenge then is for you to supply me with scans of any philatelic material related to Don to add to the postcards and press photos etc as used below. Extra bonus points will be issued for stamps illustrating a link NOT listed below! The scans, with acknowledgments, will be published in a future issue of the *Bulletin*.



Donald Potter was born on April 21st, 1902 at Newington, near Sittingbourne Kent. His father was a school teacher and, though not a wealthy man, was able to send Don to private school. One of his school reports was prophetic:

*Though by no means good at his books, he should do very well in later life. His character is developing along the right lines. He is fitted for an out-of-doors life.*

Don joined Newington Scouts when still only eight and, by one of those amazing Scouting coincidences, fell under the influence of an outstanding Scoutmaster, none other than E E (Josh) Reynolds, who was also Don's English Schoolmaster at the time. Reynolds was to become the editor of *The Scouter*, the Official Historian of the UK Scout Association. He was the innovator of 'Bob a Job', the founder of the Scouts International Relief Service and also the Scoutcar Races.

The Potters moved to Chingford, Essex, very close to Gilwell Park, when Don was 13. At that time, during WWI, the privately-owned Park was without residents and much overgrown. He left school in 1917 to work in a munitions factory in near-by Enfield, a job he detested. In 1919, W F de Bois MacLaren presented Gilwell Park to the Scout Association. Don, with his Troop, which must have been one of the nearest to Gilwell, was invited on a regular basis to help with the clearing-up. He was absolutely delighted to be offered a job as a permanent member of the full-time

staff at Gilwell and was on hand, aged 17, to assist in the first ever Wood Badge Course which was held in the Park during September of that year.



1919 1st Wood Badge Course. Helper Don Potter on seated on ground to right, (no hat).

B-P gave each of the participants two beads from his Dinizulu necklace to mark the fact that they had finished their training. When these beads began to run out, it was Don that carved the replicas that were given to later generations of Wood Badgers.



*The cropped image opposite is of Don Potter from a postcard captioned: **3. Carrying Axes**, published by the Scout Association. The full image shows another Rover standing by Don's side carrying an axe over his shoulder.*



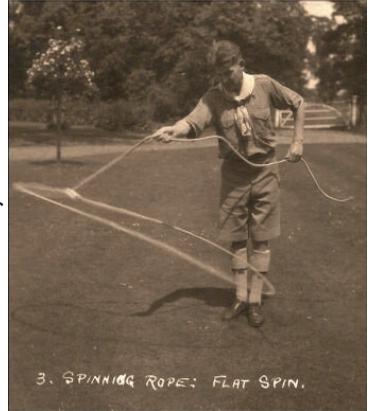
**A REAL SCOUT.**—There is a real Scout—an outdoor, experienced backwoodsman—at Gilwell Park, Essex. Don, as he is called, is here shown using a Borneo blowpipe.

By the age of twenty, Don Potter was recognised by B-P himself as a craftsman of distinction. He camped at B-P's house at *Pax Hill*, Bentley, in Hampshire and undertook carving commissions for the Founder, utilising fallen *Pax Hill* oak trees said to be 1,200 years old. Don was brought to the attention of readers of the *Scout Magazine* in the September 26th 1926 edition where he was described as *A Real*

*Scout* - an outdoor, experienced woodsman. He is pictured blowing a 'Borneo blowpipe'.

A month later *The Scout* again featured Don, describing him as *Troop Leader Donald Potter - A Chingford Scout*, picturing him carving a font for a local (Chingford) church from a piece of 12th century oak, one of the many pieces of Don's work that still exists in the locality.

When Don saw the cowboy Tex McLeod give a demonstration of rope-spinning at a London theatre he was entranced, and invited Tex to visit Gilwell. By the end of the year, Don was more than proficient himself and was later to co-write a book on the subject, *Rope Spinning with a Special Chapter on How to Use the Lariat*. He was in constant demand to give rope-spinning exhibitions himself, including a star spot in one of Ralph Reader's early Gang Shows and during the visit of the Prince of Wales to Gilwell. The Prince was there to accept a statuette of a Bison to commemorate the role of an unknown London Boy Scout in the founding of the Boy Scouts of America. Exhibitions of Don's rope spinning abilities were to continue, at home and abroad, until Don was in his nineties!

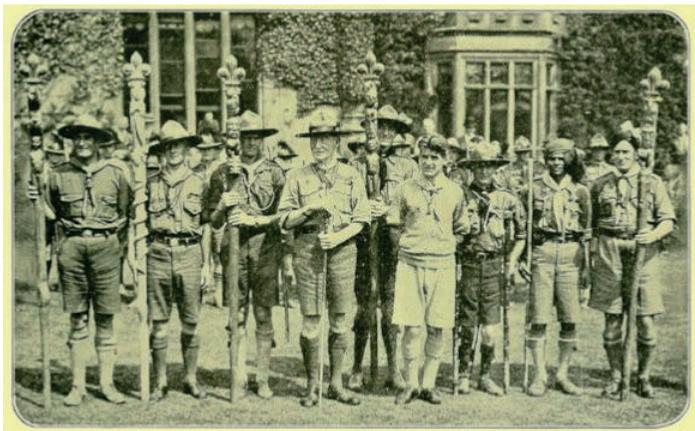


*Above: Don Potter rope spinning, a detail from a post card, also numbered 3, published by the Scout Association*

For the 1929 World Jamboree Don was commissioned to make totems for the five British Dominions Australia, Canada, India, South Africa and New Zealand. Each totem was surmounted by a Scout fleur-de-lis and had carvings appropriate to the dominion concerned. On the back of each totem were the words *Friendship Jamboree 1929 R.B-P*, originally written by the Chief Scout and then deeply incised by Don. The totems were presented by the Chief Scout at the Jamboree at Arrowe Park, Birkenhead.

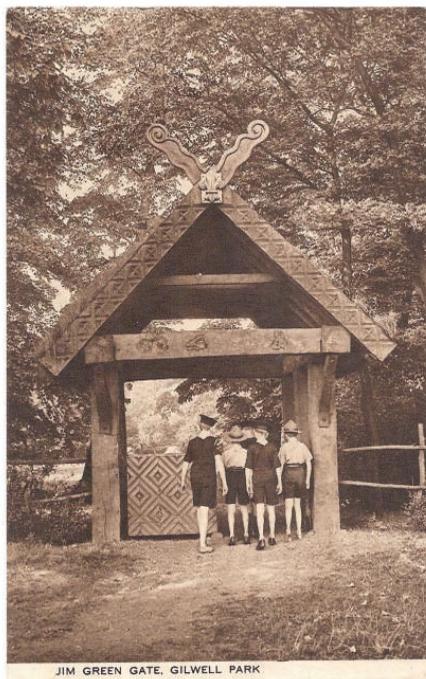
This photograph, (top of next page) showing all five totems, came from the official Jamboree Souvenir Handbook which gave full credit to Don for his work, describing him as *Mr Don Potter, the Scout Carver of Gilwell Park Training Centre, Chingford, Essex*. The totem Don carved for the Dominion of Canada is safely preserved in its National Scouting museum

Frank Gidney, Gilwell's first Camp Chief, was a big influence on Don, lending him his own wood-carving tools and encouraging him to take on ever more ambitious projects. It was fitting then that his protégée Don Potter should in his honour build a traditional Canadian log cabin, which was opened in 1930 by B-P, two years after Gidney's death. *(See postcard on front cover)*



Above: Postcard of Don's Leopard Gates circa 1920s. Don refurbished the leopards on the top rail of the gates (the gate handles), not long before he died.

Opposite: Postcard of the Jim Green Gateway which was constructed by Don in the style of a Maori arch in 1930. Jim Green was a Hertfordshire Scoutmaster who died at the age of 29. The horizontal fascia at the base of the triangle contains images of woodcraft symbols.



Don's prowess as a carver became more widely known. He met Jacob Epstein who had studied in Paris with Rodin. In 1931, on the advice of his old Scoutmaster Josh Reynolds, he approached Eric Gill, with a view to becoming his apprentice. Gill was an engraver, designer of typefaces and sculptor, who had carved the Stations of the Cross in Westminster Cathedral. He offered Don a six month's trial, but Don stayed as his pupil for six years. During this time, Don's experience widened as he worked under Gill's direction and he was able to undertake commissions in his own name. Importantly, he was also able to meet and be influenced by other leading sculptors. In 1934, Don began to take on his own pupils and worked at Oldfield School in Swanage, Dorset

In 1941, he started to work at Bryanston, one of the foremost Art and Craft schools in the country, and was a member of its staff for 41 years! The list of his associates and pupils whilst he was at Bryanston is impressive - Sir Terence Conran, founder of the Habitat furniture design shop empire, is amongst many who rank Don as the major creative influence in their lives

Don married in 1945, and he and his wife Mary had two children, Anne, born in 1947 and Julian in 1952. Anne recalls that her father learnt transcendental meditation in the 1960s and practised it on a twice-daily basis. She is convinced that this was a contributory factor in her father's longevity.

Don never forgot his Scouting roots and was a regular visitor to Gilwell. He was given three major commissions by the Scout Association, the Memorial Stone on Brownsea



H. R. H. THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, K. G. UNVEILS THE B-P STATUE. JULY 12th 1961

Island, the larger-than-life-sized statue of Baden-Powell outside Baden-Powell House,

London and a large granite bust of The Chief Scout for the Dominican Republic (This surely must be on a stamp?) No one could be better qualified to have undertaken this work. Don not only knew B-P well but, as a Scout, had an understanding of what The Chief Scout meant to his Worldwide Movement. There can be no doubt that Baden-Powell would have approved as he had often publicly recognised Don's artistic abilities.

Like his old master Eric Gill, Don never signed his work and so most people viewing his sculptures at Brownsea or B-P House will have any idea of the identity of the sculptor, or his Scouting links.

Don Potter died aged 101 in 2004, having just completed another woodcarving! It is with some pride that I learnt that Don's daughter, Annie Singleton, had read him my potted biography of his Scouting life and so he was aware of the affection and respect in which he was still held.

Readers may be interested to learn that, following the fund-raising by the author in America the original American gifted 'Quaker Style' furniture in the Gidney Cabin was restored in 2012. Last year the Yorkshire Contingent of the 2nd Gilwell Scout Group which continues the Rover tradition of Service within the Park, completely renovated the cabin, replacing some of the 80 year old tree trunks supporting the roof, which has been completely replaced, clad in the same specification Canadian cedar shingles. The original fireplace has been rebuilt and provided with a glass fronted 'stove', much reducing the fire risk, and the old electrical system replaced with appropriate lighting. The cabin is now provided with a permanent display of its history. Don Potter's creation to Frank Gidney's memory will be an enduring feature of the park for many decades to come.

For a full account of Don's life see:

*Don Potter: An Inspiring Century, by Vivienne Light.*

# SCOUT & GUIDE STAMPS CLUB

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See Page 16

## Experience of your Scout time!

Message on front & below:

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20<sup>th</sup> New Zealand Scout Jamboree - Manfeild Park - Feilding

*The complete product, postcard, CAL stamp, and postmark for the 20<sup>th</sup> NZ Scout Jamboree*