

Jamborees of the Past



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Shortly after the start of Scouting in 1908, its rapid and unexpected spread in countries outside the British Isles caused Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the Founder of Scouting, to realise that a get-together of Scouts of all nationalities must sooner or later be organised. But any ideas he may have had were stifled by the outbreak of War in 1914.

In 1917, the Tenth Anniversary of the first Scout camp on Brownsea Island, it had been hoped to hold some kind of celebration to mark the event. Things being as they were it was decided that an "Imperial and International Jamboree" be held as soon as circumstances would permit. As the War finished in 1918 it was decided to hold it two years later in 1920. Incidentally, a similar position was reached when it was decided to hold the 6th World Scout Jamboree in 1947, two years after the Second World War.

1st World Scout Jamboree - Olympia, London, England, 1920



The 1st Jamboree was quite an occasion; nothing like it had ever before been attempted, and it took a lot of courage by B-P and his team of organisers to make it the success it undoubtedly turned out to be.

The 1920 Jamboree would bear little resemblance to the World Scout Jamborees of today. The most outstanding difference would be that the first Jamboree was held indoors, at Olympia in the heart of London. The great Olympia arena had to have a foot of earth and turf laid especially to enable the Scouts to pitch tents! A camp site in the middle of the metropolis is difficult, if not impossible, to find and a camp of 5,000 Scouts was, therefore, set up in the Old Deer Park at Richmond, whilst the rest slept at Olympia ready for the following days' performances.

In the great side halls at Olympia various exhibits were on show, even a tent was something of a novelty in those days, and demonstrations of

handicrafts by Scouts and Wolf Cubs went on non-stop. So it was that the first World Scout Jamboree became more of a display and exhibition than a get-together camp.

What had begun as a Scout celebration turned into a great demonstration of international goodwill. Towards the close of the Jamboree a tribute was paid which was not a scheduled part of the programme. In the great arena packed with Scouts and in the presence of many thousands of spectators, B-P was spontaneously acclaimed by the boys as "Chief Scout of the World" - a title which no government or King could confer and one which lapsed on his death.

At the closing ceremony B-P gave a parting message, as full of meaning today as it was on this historic occasion. Here is an extract:

"Brother Scouts. Differences exist between the peoples of the world in thought and sentiment, just as they do in language and physique. The Jamboree has taught us that if we exercise mutual forbearance and give and take, then there is sympathy and harmony

If it be your will, let us go forth fully determined that we will develop among ourselves and our boys that comradeship, through the world wide spirit of the Scout brotherhood, so that we may help to develop peace and happiness in the world and goodwill among men".

A number of lessons were learned from this first Jamboree and these were carefully noted for future guidance. An indoor display limits the activity and prevents a full demonstration of Scouting, which is an outdoor Movement. It was also realised that above all else, a Jamboree is a means of developing a spirit of good comradeship between the boys of many nations and the more that aspect can be stressed, the more successful a Jamboree becomes.

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2nd World Scout Jamboree - Copenhagen, Denmark, 1924



The 2nd World Scout Jamboree was held near Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1924. The Jamboree camp lasted for seven days and was

followed by seven days of remarkable hospitality in the homes of the Danes. Five thousand Scouts from 35 nations assembled for a week under canvas, the first time such a huge camp had been planned. A special Rally was held which was honoured by the presence of Their Majesties the King and Queen of Denmark. The Jamboree proved a great success and once again Scouting had shown the world something new.

3rd World Scout Jamboree - Arrowe Park, Birkenhead, England, 1929



The 3rd World Scout Jamboree, the coming of age Jamboree, was held at Arrowe Park, Birkenhead, in 1929 and celebrated the 21st Anniversary of the publication of Scouting for Boys. Thirty five

countries were represented by 30,000 Scouts, plus another 10,000 British Scouts who took the opportunity of camping in the vicinity. It was certainly the greatest assembly of international youth the world had ever seen up to that time. Two things stand out from the Arrowe Park Jamboree - the numbers and the mud. It rained so much that the clay soil could not absorb the water and the site soon resembled a sea of mud.

4th World Scout Jamboree - Godollo, Hungary, 1933



The 4th World Scout Jamboree was held in the Royal Forest of Godollo, 11 miles from Budapest, and was attended by 25,000 Scouts from 34 nations.

It was notable for the excellent weather. The assembled Scouts were thankful for the shade which the trees of the Royal Forest afforded. Scouts who attended this gathering will remember particularly the pleasing sight of B-P making his rounds of the camp site on a magnificent brown charger. It was also most noticeable that the whole Hungarian nation had co-operated to make the event a success.

5th World Scout Jamboree - Vogelenzang, Holland, 1937



This Jamboree is remembered more particularly as the last Jamboree which B-P was able to attend before his death in January 1941. Queen Wihelmina opened the Jamboree and before her were assembled 27,000 Scouts from 51 countries - including 8,000 from the British Empire.

B-P was 81 when he attended this Jamboree and in his message to Scouts of the World he said:

"I... am nearing the end of my life. Most of you are at the beginning, and I want your lives to be happy and successful. You can make them so by doing your best to carry out the Scout Law all your days, whatever your station and wherever you are...Now goodbye. God bless you all! God bless you all!"

It was as though he knew that he would not be able to attend another Jamboree and was giving his blessing to the Scouts of many nations.

6th World Scout Jamboree - Moisson, France, 1947



What B-P could not have known was that in such a short time the world would again be plunged into conflict. The Scouts throughout the world thought of their Jamborees which should have been held in 1941 and 1945. It is significant that with the end of the War in 1945 plans were immediately laid for a Jamboree to be held in 1947, and France, so recently liberated, invited the Scouts of all nations. Despite the overwhelming difficulties which confronted the organisers the "Jamboree of Peace" was a tremendous success.

Twenty five thousand Scouts from more than 70 different lands gathered on the flat, rather open site on the banks of the River Seine. Peace and goodwill emerged stronger and more virile than ever.

7th World Scout Jamboree - Bad Ischl, Austria, 1951



This Jamboree, held 4 years later, took place in a country still suffering from long years of hardship. For this reason the 1951 Jamboree in Austria was termed the "Jamboree

of Simplicity". The site was a golf course set amongst the picturesque mountains in the Salzkammergut region not far from the little town of Bad Ischl. The Jamboree was organised by voluntary Scout Leaders in their spare time, and the Austrian Scouts worked on the site for two years to save costs and ensure the amenities of a Jamboree campsite.

Numbers were limited to 15,000 and none will forget the first night when, as a welcoming gesture, the Austrian Scouts lit beacons on the tops of each of the mountains surrounding the site. All in all it was a tremendous achievement by a country still under military occupation.

8th World Scout Jamboree - Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada, 1955



This was the first World Scout Jamboree to be held outside Europe. The setting was beautiful rolling parkland, at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Canada. 11,000 Scouts attended this great gathering which was notable for the number of contingents which crossed the Atlantic by air to attend - 1,000 from the United Kingdom alone. The most outstanding feature, however, was the tremendous hospitality accorded to the Scouts by the people of Canada. Not only did they raise money to help Scouts from the "soft currency" areas, but they welcomed them and lavished friendship and understanding wherever they met.

9th World Scout Jamboree, The Jubilee Jamboree - Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire, England, 1957



To celebrate the Jubilee of the Movement and the Centenary of its Founder B-P, a combined Jamboree, Scouters' Indaba and Rover Moot was held in Sutton Park - a beautiful natural park of 2,400 acres. Thirty three thousand Scouts from 90 countries camped for 12 days in weather which ranged from a heat wave to a storm which flooded parts of the huge camp site. Many thousands more took the opportunity of camping in the surrounding countryside. Opened by H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester, visited by Her Majesty the Queen and the Prime Minister, Mr Harold Macmillan, and closed by the World Chief Guide Olave, Lady Baden-Powell, it was the first Jamboree held in England to have its own commemorative postage stamps. One special aspect was the overwhelming hospitality offered

to the participants by the people of the UK, both before and after the event.

10th World Scout Jamboree - Laguna, Philippines 1959



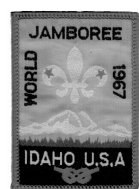
The first World Scout Jamboree to be held in Asia, it was attended by 12,000 Scouts from 69 countries including a carefully selected contingent of 105 from the UK which made the outward and homeward journey by air. The trip cost each British Scout £300, raised in various ways.

11th World Scout Jamboree - Marathon, Greece, 1963



Held on the plain of Marathon, scene of the famous battle in 490 B.C. between the ancient Greeks and Persians. The Jamboree was attended by 10,394 Scouts from 89 countries, the largest contingent being 1,498 Scouts from the UK (20 chartered aircraft took part in this, the biggest UK Scout airlift ever). The trip cost each British Scout £85. Attending the Jamboree every day was H.R.H. Crown Prince Constantine, Chief Scout of Greece. Other members of the Greek Royal Family including the Greek King and Queen visited the 11 day event. Sir Charles Maclean, Chief Scout of the Commonwealth, attended the Jamboree and at a special ceremony presented H.R.H. Crown Prince Constantine with the United Kingdom's highest award for Scouting, The Silver Wolf.

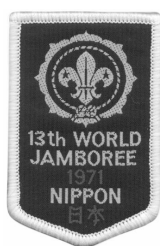
12th World Scout Jamboree - Farragut State Park, USA, 1967



With its theme "For Friendship" the 12th World Scout Jamboree attracted 12,000 Scouts from over 100 countries including 1,300 from the UK, the largest contingent from outside the North American Continent. For the UK Scouts, dressed in their smart new uniforms, it was a highlight to their Diamond Jubilee year. Amongst the distinguished visitors were Olave, Lady Baden-Powell (widow of the Founder of Scouting), and Hubert H Humphrey, Vice-President of the United States. Memorable features of the camp included a reconstruction of Baden-Powell's Brownsea Island camp, the specially stocked fishing area and other water

activities. Also, a visit to a real wild-west rodeo and a repeat of the very successful "Friendship Wide Game" introduced at the Greek Jamboree in 1963.

13th World Scout Jamboree - Asagiri Heights, Japan, 1971

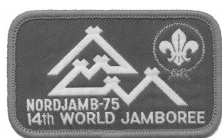


Set in the foothills of Mount Fuji, the 13th World Scout Jamboree will be considered by many to have been aptly numbered, for it attracted an unwelcome visitor in the shape of Typhoon Oliver! The 20,000 Scouts, including 437 Scouts and Venture Scouts and 49 adult Leaders from the UK,

found themselves amidst a sea of black mud and buffeted by high winds for close on three days. Conditioned previously by camping in "typical British summer weather", many of the UK Scouts were able to last out the trying conditions and help their less fortunate neighbours in the waterlogged 800 acre camp site.

Despite the typhoon, the Scouts managed to carry out many of the planned activities including a World Scout Forum, expeditions up Mount Fuji and an International Evening with displays of national skills, dancing and song.

14th World Scout Jamboree - Lillehammer, Norway, 1975



His Majesty King Olav V opened "Nordjamb '75", as it became known, in July 1975 in the presence of 17,000 Scouts from 94 countries.

The British contingent, led by Lord Baden-Powell, was 1,624 strong and included Scouts from Branches in Bermuda, Hong Kong and Rhodesia. This Jamboree was a fine example of international co-operation on the part of the five Nordic countries responsible for its organisation. The happy relationships that developed were in large measure due to the warm hospitality given to almost every visiting Scout in the homes of the hosts. As well as traditional pursuits such as hiking, orienteering and camping, this Jamboree included in the programme several activities involving modern technology.

World Scout Jamboree Year – 1979

The 15th World Scout Jamboree was scheduled to be held in Iran in 1979. However, the regime of the Shah of Iran was toppled in a revolution and the Jamboree was cancelled. The year was

designated 'World Scout Jamboree Year' and, at very short notice a series of camps were organised in various parts of the world so no one missed out on an International experience.

15th World Scout Jamboree - Kananaskis Country, Canada, 1983



"The Spirit Lives On" was the inspiring theme of the 15th World Scout Jamboree held in Kananaskis Country, an area of Provincial Park, 4,000 feet up in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, 80 miles west of

Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

1,345 UK Scouts were amongst a total attendance of over 15,000 Scouts from nearly 100 countries. "The Spirit Lives On" was certainly in evidence in the great amount of international good-will pervading the Jamboree and in the warm hospitality of the Canadians.

The backwoods location was given added realism through the intrusion into camp of bears, moose and other wild life from time to time!

16th World Scout Jamboree - Cataract Park, Sydney, Australia, 1987



Held at Cataract Park, a specially constructed Scout tent town situated on a 160 hectare site near Sydney, this was the first World

Scout Jamboree to be held in the Southern Hemisphere. Under the theme "Bringing the World Together", 16,000 Scouts from over 80 countries attended the Jamboree with around 13,000 more in attendance on "visiting day".

The 850 strong UK contingent included 18 Ranger Guides (the first time Members of The Guide Association have taken part in a World Scout Jamboree), Mrs Betty Clay, daughter of the Founder, and 11 members of the Baden-Powell family, 9 of whom are direct descendents of B-P. The opening ceremony of the Jamboree, which took place at midnight on 31st December 1987, was the first official event of Australia's Bicentennial celebrations.

17th World Scout Jamboree - Mount Sorak National Park, South Korea, 1991



'Many Lands One World' was the theme which brought together 16,000 young people from more than 130 countries in the beautiful Mount Sorak National Park. The location was a few kilometres from

the disputed border with North Korea and some 200km, or six hours by road, from Seoul, the capital city.

The United Kingdom Contingent was made up of 1,407 people including just over 50 representatives from the Guides. As part of its contribution, the U.K. transported a replica Brownsea Island camp to re-enact Baden-Powell's 1907 experiment in Scouting. It became the most photographed and filmed event at the Jamboree.

The Jamboree started with bad weather. Rain and flooding provided major problems. The opening and closing ceremonies were masterpieces of showmanship designed to rival those of the Olympic Games. U.K. Scouts also experienced home hospitality in Korea and Japan and a stay at a luxury hotel.

18th World Scout Jamboree - The Netherlands, 1995



This Jamboree took place on reclaimed land near Droten, in Flevoland. Over 2,800 participants from the UK formed part of the 28,000 strong event, enjoying the superb weather and vast range of activities.

The theme was "the future starts today" and a major attraction was the Global Development Village, with Scouts from all over the world keen to share experiences and learn more about other peoples' ways of life.

Lighter entertainment was provided by various walk-in fun activities and stalls at the Plaza, in the middle of the Jamboree Site.

Everyone was impressed by the superb organisation before, during and after the Jamboree. A new standard was established for World Scout Jamborees of the future.

19th World Scout Jamboree - Chile 1998/9



From 27 December 1998 to 6 January 1999, the first Jamboree to take place in Latin America was held at 'Picarquin' in Chile's central zone, famous for vineyards and orchards, approximately 70 kms south of Santiago. A total of almost

31,000 participants took part from 157 countries.

With a theme of 'Building Peace Together' this Jamboree was quite different from those of recent times and reflected much of what is typical of Scouting in South America. Activities were patrol orientated and included a 'Day of Service' where the patrol helped in the refurbishment of facilities in local villages, and 'The Earth That Provides' which saw participants visiting typical Chilean industrial and agricultural centres in the area close to the Jamboree and hikes of varying standards. There was also an enormous 'Global Development Village' and a memorable New Year's Eve party.

Many new initiatives were used throughout the 10 days of the Jamboree, such as on-site supermarkets using a debit card for food purchases and every participant's details being stored electronically.

The UK Contingent was the fourth largest, with only Brazil, Argentina and the hosts having more participants, and totalled 1,982. This figure included participants from across the UK and also 3 Scouts and their Leader from the Falkland Islands, who may never be so close to a Jamboree again!

20th World Scout Jamboree - Thailand, 2002/3



'Share our World, Share our Cultures', promoting peace and international friendship through challenging activities, thought provoking cultural experiences and simply being together

bought together 30,000 Scouts at Sattahip, Chonburi Province, Thailand from the 28th Dec 2002 – 8th Jan 2003.

The UK Contingent was 3000 strong and enjoyed a Thailand experience where they toured Bangkok and celebrated Christmas in style. The contingent included two patrols – one from the Solomon Islands and one from Malawi.

The Jamboree site was divided into four villages (named Indian Ocean, Arctic Ocean, Pacific Ocean and Atlantic Ocean) and each village was divided into six sub-camps (named after various seas). The site was sandy with daytime temperatures hitting 40 degrees.

Major attractions included 'Face the Waves' (the site benefited from being on a beautiful sandy beach), the Global Development Village, Crossroads of Culture, Our Heritage, City of Science, Community Action day, Explore Nature and the Tournaments.

During the closing ceremony the Jamboree Flag was handed to the UK in preparation for 2007.

21st World Scout Jamboree - United Kingdom, 2007



"One World, One Promise" was the theme for the Jamboree which took place from the 28th July to the 8th August 2007 at Hylands Park, Chelmsford, Essex. 40,000 participants from around the world attended making it the biggest Jamboree yet experienced.

The opening ceremony was attended by Prince William and the Duke of Kent.

The site was divided into 5 Hubs. These were Tropical, Ocean, Mountain, Island and Desert.

On the 30th of July around three hundred Scouts left the Jamboree site to travel to Brownsea Island where they took part in the Sunrise Ceremony to celebrate the start of Scouting 100 years before when Baden-Powell held an experimental camp on the island to test out the scheme of Scouting.

During the Jamboree period 42,000 visitors from 73 countries went to Hylands Park for the day.

At the end of the Jamboree the participants and staff gathered in the arena for a show featuring music and dance and to end there was a fireworks display. Chief Scout, Peter Duncan, and a UK Scout handed over the World Flag to the organisers of the 22nd World Jamboree which is to be held in Sweden in 2011.

The theme for the next Jamboree will be "Simply Scouting".