

Summit Post

12 Aug '91

HAPPY DAYS WITH THE 189

BOYS' Brigade members from all over the world will meet in Aberdeen this summer for an International Camp in Hazlehead Park.

It will highlight modern activities like abseiling and water sports, but the more traditional BB routine of morning worship and tent inspections won't be forgotten.

The camp also marks the the centenary of Aberdeen and District Division BB.

The event prompted ANDY CAMERON to recall his days in the BB.

THE OTHER DAY, perusing my extensive library, in amongst the dusty first editions of The Broons and Oor Wullie books, under a pile of Beano and Dandy annuals, I came across a book by some dude called Dickens.

His first name was Chick, I think, and the book would appear to be about Glasgow and Edinburgh. A Tale of Two Cities, but I never read it because it didn't have any pictures in it.

Why was it there? On the front is a badge with the letters BB on either side, and the words Sure and Steadfast engraved thereon.

Inside the front cover is a label which spoke to me from the dark distant past — "Presented to Sergeant Andrew Cameron for Proficiency in Indian Clubs. 1957".

My three children had a right good laugh as I explained what Indian Clubs were.

Elliott thought I was trying to land a fighter plane on the deck of an aircraft carrier. Spencer thought I'd taken suddenly unwell. Jennifer simply asked, "Dad, what's a Sergeant?"

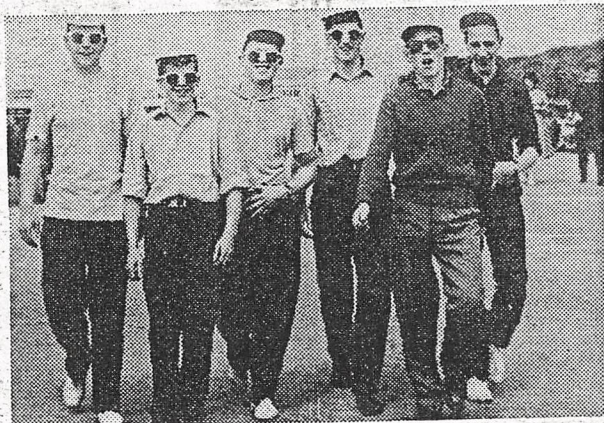
Well, that was it. I had to check my trousers for a magic patch. I was transported back 42 years to the BEGINNING.

IN THOSE dark days after our fathers had shown Hitler whit was whit, us little infantrymen were volunteering for the Lifies — the Life Boys were the first stage of an adventure that would take us through childhood to adolescence and manhood.

What a journey. Every Friday from September to June we'd be there with the navy jumper, navy blue top hose and the brass badge on our breast to go with the Life Boys sailor hat.

Shoes had to be polished, and we had to take our sannies for the games.

I met my first love in the Lifies. Miss Howie was a leader, and she was just wonderful. Whatever she said, you can be sure I jumped to attention and did it. A bit like I do with Norma today!



■ One from the Cameron photo album. Jazzy specs were all the rage for Andy and his buddies at BB camp back in 1958. In case you don't recognise him he's second from the right.

I can feel my chest expanding as I write when I recall the night I was promoted. When the white cover went on the hat and the lanyard went round my shoulder I wouldn't have called the King my uncle.

Soon enough the Boys' Brigade beckoned. At last we would be with the big boys. We could wear long trousers, and walk gallus.

Truthfully though, I preferred the Lifie uniforms to the BB one. I always felt the wee pillbox hat was like a pea on top of a dumpling. The haversack was awkward, and the belt was murder on the new Burtons' Italian suit.

THEY SAY that at least once in your life you meet someone who sets you on the right path. For me that man was Alec Montgomery, Captain of the 189.

Alec was the epitome of what a BB Captain should be. He had no favourites. We were all the same in his book.

There were so many great summer camps then, but the ones at Macduff in Banffshire were the best. Us city boys thought it was on Mars!

Remember, living in Rutherglen in 1953 wasn't Las Vegas. Anybody who'd been to Rothesay was a celebrity. Anyway, off we went to the frozen North. It was the greatest time of our adolescent years. It was just magic.

Try to picture a bunch of city boys in the throes of growing up. All at the stage where you begin to realise that even if lassies canny play fitba' there were other things they could

dae — dance for instance.

Problem was, ask any of us to dance and we were fitless.

Enter Andy Mitchell, one of the officers. A rotund man of equal height and girth and as light on his feet as a feather. Andy took each of us in turn and taught us the slow foxtrot, the quickstep and the modern waltz.

Now we were ready to show the young maidens of Macduff a thing or twelve. The Town Hall was jam-packed with guys on the right side of the hall and dolls on the left.

After a couple of dances to weigh up the talent we all positioned ourselves opposite the darlin' of our choice.

"Take your partners," said the bandleader. He might as well have said "CHARGE!" for that was what we did! There was boadies everywhere. I finished up dancin' with the Quiet Man.

The Quiet Man was my pal! Dapper Dan was dancing with the Guzzler. Dimples was dancing with The Moon Man while Next Time Broadley was whirling Eddgaaa around the floor.

I've used nicknames here, but if any of the old boys are reading this at least they'll recognise themselves. In the 189 naebody had a real name.

The memories I have of my time in the 189 are of the best. I wish every youngster could have similar ones to savour.

Those who attend the camp in Aberdeen this summer surely will.

So will my own two sons some time in the future. They're both in the Cubs!

FLOYD PAUL

PAUL HUTCHISON Slessor Square, Dundee vouch for the fact a dog is man's best friend.

Paul (24) is diabetic, heavily on a regular diet and medication.

One morning he took a tumble. His alarm clock had woken him and his medicine due.

For Paul, this was a desperate situation. Unless he had an

Where bagpipes are banned

WHERE WOULD we be without computers?

Wherever you turn screen and keyboard — schools, homes, shops.

But it seems computers strain, too. All manner upset them.

Smoking has been banned in offices because smoke can damage computer circuitry.

Same with electrical goods as hair-dryers and electric

Many companies have strict rules from eating or drinking at the desk. Even the smallest crumbs sandwich can wreak havoc.

But the wackiest computer rule of all is a set of bagpipes.

When homecoming troops back at Edinburgh Airport, there was a piper to welcome them from the plane.

He wasn't allowed to play in the terminal building — the airport computers are allergic to the pipes!

Why not a birdiga



Have you heard the one about the