

## Shannon Cup Competition (29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> May 1965)

### Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May 1965

The Shannon Patrol met outside Finnart hall this afternoon at 1 PM. It consisted of:-

T.L and P.L.	Robert Crawford	(Fox)	(Robin)
Second	Alex Aitkenhead	(Seagull)	(Mowgli)
1 <sup>st</sup> Scout	Robert Morrison	(Kingfisher)	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Scout	David White	(Falcon)	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Scout	Jim Barr	(Curlew)	
4 <sup>th</sup> Scout	John Martin	(Curlew)	

We were transported to Everton by the cars of Al and Oz, arriving about 2 PM. At 2:50, the patrol leaders were called into the presence of the examiner, Mr Alexander, and were told the programme for Saturday. At 3PM, the patrols formed a horseshoe (12 patrols in all after some late arrivals) and we picked sites. We were very fortunate in getting second choice. We were able to pick a good site reasonably close to the parade ground from which the bell was easily heard and from our proximity to the water tap gave us more time for washing dishes and dixies to brilliant brightness.

After pitching the tent, I led the whole patrol up the back of Everton to collect wood and luckily we were able to bring down enough to do us the whole weekend. After tea, consisting of sausages, beans, tomato soup and instant whip with rhubarb, we were summoned to the parade ground by the examiners infernal bell, which he always rang while we were in the middle of some delicate operation. On arriving at the parade ground, we were immediately plunged into the first of the weekend's tests. We were given three knots which we were to identify. One was a reef knot, one a thief knot and one a Granny knot. The 70<sup>th</sup> and one other patrol were the only ones to do this test correctly. We were then told that a pack of cards were scattered throughout the campsite. The patrols were to spread out and search the site. One pip was awarded for an ace two pips for a two, three Pips for a three and so on up to 13 pips for a king. The seagull Patrol ( this is the name we choose because their flag was the cleanest), found 18 pips, but many patrols did not get any. The maximum number was 38 found by the First Gourrock. The cards were mostly hidden around tense and kitchens.

The patrols then formed a semicircle while Mr Alexander briefly showed us 24 objects. This done, he proceeded to name the objects one by one and told us to put the colour of the objects down on a piece of paper. We managed to do this to our own satisfaction but the results were not announced.

The next stunt was given out immediately. The patrol leaders were told to hide their patrols as near to a staff, stuck into the ground at any position one wished, as possible. Points were taken off for any members of the patrol seen by the examiner while he stood upright against the staff. The average distance between the nearest scout scope to the staff and the scout farthest from the staff was then

measured and more points were awarded the lower the average. I hid the patrol under an overhang and put the staff on top of the overhang with the result that our average distance was the shortest.

This completed, we were given a message to decode while one of our number (John Martin from our patrol) was removed. In the middle of decoding the message, the code of which we were unable to break, the bell rang and on arrival at the parade ground we found John lying on the ground with a notice, 'ON FIRE', pinned to his collar. We wrapped him in kilts etc and rolled him around on the ground while treating for shock. We then immobilized as much of him as possible and transported him by makeshift stretcher to the examiner.

We rounded off the day with campfire at which each patrol had to produce one sketch, 1 mime, one choral item and two solos. Our patrol accomplished this fairly well and after campfire retired to pit. Lights out were at 11 PM but, although we were quiet by then, many other patrols seemed still to be active from which I believe they lost points. During the day, at teatime especially, we were able to make quite a few gadgets which stood us in good stead on Sunday.

### **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May**

We were given instructions that points would be deducted from any patrol with a member up before 7 AM, so at 7 AM precisely the seagull patrol arose. At eight a.m., our breakfast of porridge, bacon and rolls were cooked and eaten and Jelly prepared for lunch. We spent the next hour feverishly preparing for inspection which was programmed for 9 AM. We swept the kitchen out with a home-made broom, washed and dried all dishes and dixies, pulled out the groundsheet, brailed up the tent, washed ourselves and changed into F.S.U. (Full Scout Uniform) from the knees up. David White then illustrated our log which had been written up the night before by Robert Morrison. We also laid out clean shoes, which we had brought for the purpose, at the bottom of the groundsheet. This saved valuable time which would have had to have been spent cleaning our muddy boots. Actually our hurry was unnecessary because, although at 9 AM we were called down to the parade ground, we were not inspected until 9,40 and had plenty of time to put the finishing touches to the tent and kitchen. We were told of the first stunt of the day while on the parade ground, and it was a tricky one—the building of a coracle - not a raft but a true coracle of which we were given all day. Once it was ready, we were to tell the examiner who would come to the swimming pool to watch the launching.

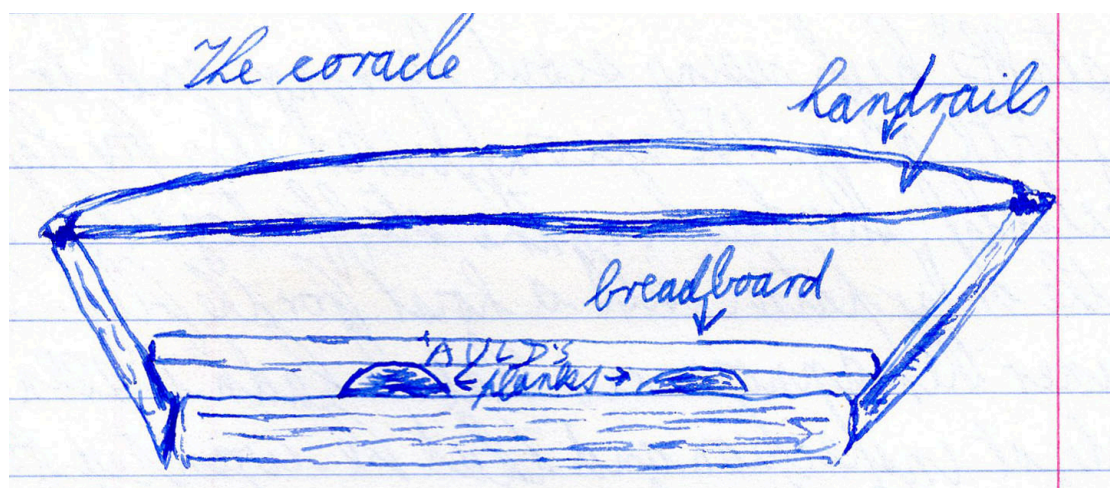
Soon after we were inspected, we were called for a Scouts Own in the little wooden erection used as a church at Everton. Mr Alexander, the examiner, took the service.

Given no more time for coracle building, after changing back into normal camp dress, we were again summoned to the parade ground for the second of the day's series of stunts. We were told to build a flagpole three staffs high, using scout lashings and to erect it stably with guys. We accomplished this fairly satisfactorily, sheer lashing the staffs together, and were the only patrol with a hoist for the flag. The examiner then announced that he hadn't seen many gadgets at inspection and that he wanted four per patrol on the parade ground in 20 minutes. This entailed some hard work, but we managed to produce a Dixie

rack, a plate rack, a shoe rack and a basin stand. Meanwhile, we manage to get some work done on the coracle and also started cooking lunch so that we would have lunchtime free from the interruption of the examiner's bell for coracle building. We were all called to attend the launching of the first one or two coracles which were all miserable failures. The first Gourock's looked as if it was going to be successful although it was not a true coracle, merely an upturned table, but as soon as their sailor stepped in, water started flowing in over the sides and, despite his frantic efforts to bale it dry, it slowly disappeared from view and sank gracefully to the amusement of all except the first Gourock.

For the next stunt, we were told to build a sundial. We pointed a staff north, set it to an angle in the ground for our latitude and marked off times round it on the ground. Unfortunately, we put the 6 a.m. and the 6 PM on wrong sides, but after the examiner had been round we realized our mistake, changed the lettering to what it should have been and called him back to point out the correction of the mistake. By this time, we had reached lunchtime and, as our lunch, mince, potatoes and jelly with peaches, was ready we were able to get off to a good start.

Lunch finished, we proceeded with the building of our coracle. We built it by laying a large log to act as a keel and nailing smaller logs onto each end. We then put handrails between the smaller logs, nailed a breadboard between them and fitted stabilisers, applying Into between the Breadboard and the Keel. It is illustrated opposite. We then filled it with capes, but when, later in the day, we launched it, it sank when David White, our sailor, stepped aboard. However, when the scouters arrived (Al, Oz and skipper) to collect us and watch the presentation, they gave us permission to use the groundsheet and with this over the bottom of the craft and up the sides, it was very easy for David to make the stipulated two crossings completely dry. Actually, it was so seaworthy that both skipper and Oz, at the one time, were able to make two complete circuits of the pool dry.



After lunch, and before the launching of our coracle, were another series of stunts. We were given six envelopes with Mr Alexander's name and address on each in a different hand and from the envelopes we were to state the sex, the age

and the occupation of the writer. This was largely a case where guesswork took over, but we were not told the results, so we do not know whether our guesses were accurate or not.

The PL was then called away from the patrols to do senior work with the aid of one member from the patrol, leaving the second in charge of the rest of the patrol. We, the patrol leaders, had each to make a strip map of the perimeter of the site with all compass bearings at corners noted down. We then had to put a piece of paper below the map, put a pin in at the first point, turn are strip map until it pointed in the direction of the first compass bearing, put the pin in at the second point, turn the strip map in the direction of the second bearing, put the pin in at the third point and so on until on the piece of paper below the map we had a circle of pinpricks which we had to connect up. This, of course, gave the map of the perimeter of Everton. In practice, the pinpricks never do join, but the map, with the most nearly joining wins. The scale we used was 50 paces to the inch.

While I was accomplishing this task, the patrol, led by Mowgli, had to write their names woodcraft style i.e.

Handwritten names in woodcraft style: PL M, J, LXXR.

boil water in a paper bag, identify some knots, and have one of their number walk a certain distance in exactly 1 minute. They were successful in everything except the walk in one minute, at which they came second. After this, in the successful second launching of the coracle already mentioned.

Time was now finished and the Shannon cup Competition 1965 was drawing to a close. All that remained was to fill the tent, clear up the kitchen site, wash and change into F.S.U. This done, we took all our kit down to the parade ground and shortly afterwards Mr Alexander rang his bell and the patrols formed up in horseshoe formation to hear the result. We were delighted to hear him announce that 70<sup>th</sup> Renfrewshire had come in first with fifth Rendfrewshire as runners-up. This is the first time we have won the Shannon Cup since 1956.

After dismissal, the cup was filled with lemonade from Everton store at the expense of the Scouters, and everyone in the patrol had a drink. We then had a game of football with the Plebs of Everton before loading the gear into Bob's van and ourselves into the van and Al's car. We stopped in Inverkip for more celebrations on the way home.

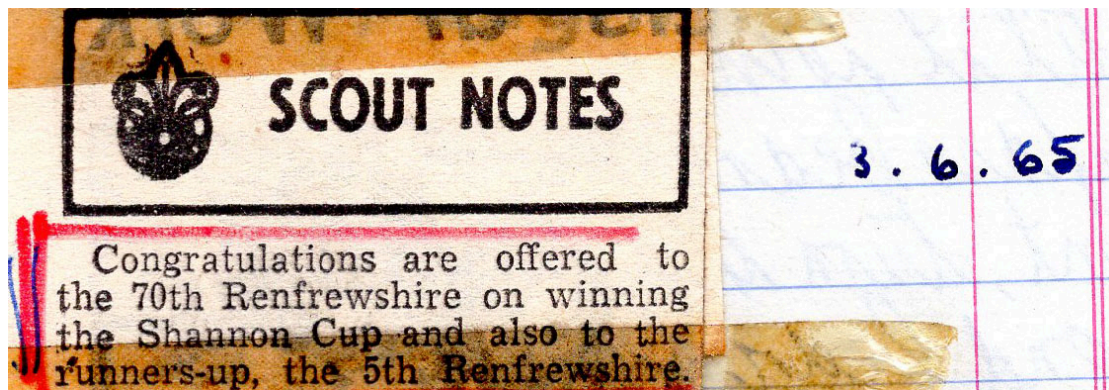
**Weather Note:** Saturday was a beautiful sunny day and on Sunday we had no rain although there was a bit of cloud about.


**Report written by Robert Crawford** (Troop Leader and Patrol Leader of the Fox Patrol)

**Later comment from SM RK Millar**

"An excellent log with a wealth of information which should prove very useful to future teams."

Additional Extract from the Greenock Telegraph



 **SCOUT NOTES**

3.6.65.

Congratulations are offered to the 70th Renfrewshire on winning the Shannon Cup and also to the runners-up, the 5th Renfrewshire.