

Melissa's Thought for the Month – February 2016

There are many thoughts suggested to me by the month of February. The one which stands out in my mind concerns the 22nd of February which “always” has been “Thinking Day”. Those of you who have any connection with the Scout & Guide movement will have heard that it is the birth date of both Lord and Lady Baden Powell. They did not want us to think of them particularly on that day but to remember all the members of the Movement all over the world.

I can think of many occasions when we have been to special gatherings. Sometimes we have had a meal. Frequently this included a suitably decorated birthday cake. Always we had a speaker with knowledge of or better still experience of our world wide links.

At Marshside Road we are very fortunate to have such able and willing leaders of the work among young people. I have very great admiration of the leaders of both Boys' and Girls' Brigade. We do not forget that they too are part of a global organisation. Kay's recent visit to Thailand is a very clear reminder of that fact.

The Brigades are very definitely associated with the Christian Church. It is always an inspiration to see them in uniform in Church on Parade Sundays. I have no doubt that their leaders wish, as we used to do with our Guides, that their families were with us every Sunday and that more still were there on the day. There is always a larger number who turn up to the weekday events. No doubt some belong to other churches which do not have the weeknight activities.

We can be very thankful that they do come. For others it may well be their only real experience of organised Christianity. This is where real “missionary” work is being done. Interest, curiosity and maybe gratitude for what their young people are receiving brings them along. The hope is that they find here real welcome and friendliness to say nothing of life changing inspiration.

The differences between the two movements are clearly subtle rather than obvious. Baden Powell envisaged a movement which was not more work for adults (except of course for the leaders!) but really as a game (mainly outdoors) for boys and girls.

Camp for us meant just that – living in a tent (mainly for a week) in a farmer's field. There had to be “solid shelter” available in case the field flooded or the wind was so strong that the guyropes pulled the tent pegs out of the ground. I have experienced both! I also know that the ground is much more easy on the hips than any floor boards. It is possible to wriggle an indentation to fit underneath the waterproof ground sheet. We, of course, at first made our bed of blankets, there were no sleeping bags used and one learned how to fold our bedding to fit.

Melissa.