

Recently seven of the 1<sup>st</sup> Weston Green (All Saints) Rover Crew members from 1956 celebrated their 50 years of friendship. The reunion was organised by Michael Downing, ex. Rover Scout Leader, ably assisted by Bernie Boston, both members of Ember Manor Lodge No 4740 and the West End Sports and Social Club. Our day started at Garsons Farm as \*Derek Richardson, very kindly had provided a tractor so we could re-enact our 1956 'Anymore for the Skylark' photo, albeit wearing long trousers for fear of frightening the natives, whilst \*Ben Thompson armed with the latest top of the range digital camera took a selection of photographs.

After all the exertions of climbing on and off the tractor the Golden Oldies were in need of liquid refreshment so they were driven to the Sports & Social Club for a few glasses of pop and afterwards it was just a gentle stroll along the road to their final destination, The Prince of Wales for a delicious and sumptuous dinner. Special thanks have been extended to Derek Richardson (Director) and Ben Thompson of Garsons Farm for all their help and assistance in ensuring our visit was a resounding success. The owner of a 30ft Genoa yacht has suggested a day trip next year around Chichester harbour or an adventure on the high seas to the Isle of Wight, so the Golden Oldies now have lots of time to practice 'showing - a - leg', and getting into shape to haul up the main brace and winding up the winches, oops winches!



*Original Skylark photo taken by Michael Downing*

### Historical note

Sadly the Rover section was abolished in the 1965 Advanced Report and despite many outcries was never reinstated. It is certain that in this section the Association enlisted many keen and loyal members, and its chronic shortage of leaders in the ensuing years was as a direct result of this action of abolition. *Extract from 'A short history of its life and progress' of the 1<sup>st</sup> Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group, by Alan Groves.*

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR ...

**Eric Gale writes:**

"I was most interested to read Colin Hedger's 'Life and Times', which corresponded with my own. I remember Tommy Seed, the Headmaster of the Esher CoE School, who ruled us with a rod of iron (and willow canes!). I can see him now, sitting in the classroom making willow shopping baskets, which he used to sell to the local shops. We would gather the willow from the woods on our afternoon nature walks. I remember the first ever Whitbread Gold Cup in 1949, "Much Obligated" won. He beat the hot favourite "The Mandarin", a grey. I backed the winner and persuaded my father to have a £1 win at 16/1. My father used to employ me on race days, as well as local people, including my old Headmaster, Tommy Seed. My two favourite jobs were the photo finish, when called I would stand below the photo camera box in the Members Enclosure and wait for about 7-10 minutes while they developed the finish photo. It would be lowered down to me in a basket and I would run down to the judge waiting in his box. I also stood by the Royal Box when Royalty was coming and when the royal foot touched the ground I would hoist the Royal Standard. On one occasion Winston Churchill was sitting there. I look forward to the reunion".

### Scouting careers:

**Michael Downing**  
Rover Scout Leader  
Retired from Scouting  
1965

**Alan Grove**  
Group Scout Leader  
Assistant District  
Commissioner  
Venture Scouts and  
Warden at Polyapes;  
Awards: Medal of Merit  
and Bar  
Retired from Scouting  
2000

**Stephen Lodge**  
Group Scout Leader  
Award: Medal of Merit  
Retired from scouting  
1992

**John Fairclough**  
Currently Quartermaster;  
1<sup>st</sup> Malden Scouts.



*Photograph— by Ben Thompson (from left – right) John Fairclough, Michael Beaney, Paul Dodd, Alan Groves, Michael Downing (White shirt & blue jacket), Bernie Boston and Stephen Lodge, (wedged between the tractor bonnet and wheel). Those with sharp eyes might notice there was need of a ladder!*



*The 'Golden Oldies' enjoying a drink at the local West End Sports & Social Club. (Photograph by Bernie Boston)*

