

More memories of Miss Tweedie the popular Girl Guides leader

By Dan Shaw



The original OGS Guides flag still in use in 1961. On the left is Jane Madeley but the girl on the right is unknown



Dorothy Tweedie's collie dog Flash at his first camp at Beer in 1958

TWO weeks ago (October 2) we printed a picture of a very popular Girl Guides leader, Miss Dorothy Tweedie, who ran two companies, the 16th Wolverhampton St Barnabas Guides and the Oldbury Grammar School Guides, as well as teaching at the school for more than 40 years.

The picture showed a presentation and we wondered where it had taken place, Wolverhampton or Oldbury, and if anyone could name those shown.

That picture has prompted Jan Seward of Oldbury to record some of her memories of Miss Tweedie, who she has previously written about in our pages back in September 2004.

Jan writes: "Reading the article with memories of Miss Tweedie and her home 'The Crest', I realised that it's 10 years since I wrote about my memories of lifesaving with her on Beer beach at the annual Oldbury Grammar School guide award in Oldbury. It doesn't look like an Oldbury com-



21st birthday of Guiding at Trentham Gardens, 1931. Dorothy Tweedie sits on the wall beneath the light coloured flag



1957 OGS Guide camp at Beer. Standing from left, Miss Stallard, Miss Tweedie and Miss Coxill. Sitting with Pat the dog, Miss Pugh, Miss Speed and Miss Pine



Oldbury Grammar School uniform



Oldbury County High School Girl Guides and St Barnabas Guides name tapes

camps. I have long been researching and collecting memorabilia of the guides and the old Langley and Oldbury guide district.

"When Miss Tweedie registered the 1st Oldbury Secondary School Girl Guides in 1923 they were, in fact, the first company in the then unformed district of Oldbury in the Stourbridge Division of Worcestershire. Born in January 1901 she would have been just 22. The company flag, which was probably dedicated the same year, was still in use until she retired, although the name changed twice the flag did not! I have a photo that shows it in 1961. It was quite different to those used at that time!

"Miss Tweedie's first lieutenant was Miss Eileen Holder and the first two patrol leaders were Olive Farrow and Connie Black. Olive became Mrs Olive Downs and will be remembered by many as a commissioner and district camp organiser in later years.

"The presentation in the earlier article must be in Wolverhampton, as the guide is wearing 1st Class, Little House Emblem badges and All Round Cords. She is probably receiving her Queen's Guide award. Also, it is unlikely that Miss Tweedie would have been presenting an

pany at that time, maybe it is St Barnabas? OGS wore striped school ties and sometimes school blazers with the Oldbury guide district. Just in case someone complains, I should add that the boater hatband is not original - we used standard ties and mine is on the winter velour, the tie in the centre being a prefects tie (1960/62)

Loft

"The garage loft at the Crest will be remembered by all the cadets and patrol leaders who annually repaired, packed and unpacked equipment before the camp at Beer. Miss Tweedie always treated us to a generous afternoon tea on these occasions and introduced us to 'Polly Tweedie' the parrot who could imitate the dog!

"There was always a collie, the first one which I remember was Pat; a later collie was Flash. They always came to camp with us and they were both beautifully behaved, and it was long before Health and Safety was introduced!

"The earliest OGS photo that I have to date was taken in 1931 at Trentham Gardens, Staffordshire, when the 21st birthday of Guiding was being celebrated. Miss



Do you recognise anyone in this Girl Guides presentation in Wolverhampton?

Tweedie had organised a swimming display on the lake. From earlier research notes which I received from Olive Downs, I believe that both OGS and St Barnabas were present. Miss Tweedie is sitting on the wall in the centre under the light coloured flag. Does anyone know which standard is in the centre, Worcestershire or Staffordshire?

"When the company became Oldbury County High School Girl Guides it wore the largest name tape in my collection and St Barnabas wore an unusual navy and red one. They are both extremely com-

itive!

"During the war years guides were encouraged to help the war effort even though meetings were often difficult during the blackout. A newspaper cutting which I received recently says of OGS, 'A splendid spirit was shown by the guides', when led by Miss Tweedie they held a sale of work which raised £100 towards lifesaving equipment for the fighting forces.

"Similar sales continued annually until Miss Tweedie retired, and patrol stalls

became extremely com-

memories of the company indeed of any Langley Oldbury companies which no longer exist I would like to add them to my collection which I plan to leave in the area at the moment."

Please share your memories and we forwards them to Jan. E dshaw@blackcountrybu .co.uk or write to us at Cradley Heath office.

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