



3rd Hayling Group

8th January 2009

An appreciation of Irene Day from Hayling Scout Group

On behalf of everyone involved with 3rd Hayling Scout Group, I would like to offer this appreciation of Irene's interest and support for the young people of Hayling. For us, she was a very special person.

Irene's involvement with Hayling Scouts began in the early 1970s when she was book-keeper for the local builder John Derben. John was also Group Scout Leader at that time and he asked Irene if she would help form a fundraising committee, which she agreed to do. This committee was very active over a ten-year period, raising vital funds for the Scouts from whist drives, jumble sales, garden parties, carnival events etc. The success of the committee enabled the Group to invest in essential equipment and improved facilities, resulting in a significant growth in the size of the Group and the opening of new sections during the 1970s.

My personal contact with Irene started in the 1980s when I became Chairman of the Scout Group and it became apparent to me immediately that her particular interest was in helping the younger generation in their development and training.

Irene always wished to ensure that the Scout Group had adequate equipment and facilities to help the Leaders in their tasks. From time to time she would simply ask "What do you need?" and would then help to provide financial support to make it happen. Her interest and generosity was exceptional – and she invariably wished to remain anonymous. Her sole objective was the success of Scouting on Hayling.

Despite Irene's reduced mobility over the last few years, we were delighted that she was able to attend many of our Annual Awards and Presentations Evenings, and also our Gang Show held last year.

One particular event was special for Irene when we took her for a visit to a Scout camp near Aldershot in the summer of 2002. That particular camp was the 40th consecutive annual camp for Scout Leader Peter Goddard who Irene had known for many years, and for whom she had a particular fondness. A side of lamb was being spit-roasted over the fire and Irene sat under a dining shelter with the boys and ate the 'well done' food served on basic plastic and enamel crockery. She loved it! Irene later watched in amazement as

the boys made bivouacs in the woods. Memories of that day never left her and it regularly came up in conversations for years after.

Over the last few years, I would visit her regularly at her delightful bungalow on Hayling to update her on the latest news of the Scout Group – usually with a copy of our Newsletter *The Woggle* and maybe a few photos of Scout camps. We would chat about anything that came up – especially Sunderland Football Club! Often her good friend Jean would pop in with the *Portsmouth News* and the three of us would talk and have a good laugh together. These happy memories of Irene I will cherish.

Although the Hayling Scout Group has lost a great friend, the fruits of her involvement and support stay with us, namely a Group that is now the largest in Hampshire, with plans to open three new sections this year and a Headquarters now warm, dry and well-equipped to provide ambitious and exciting programmes for the young people of Hayling. We are grateful for Irene's long-standing association with our cause.

Dr Philip Blosse
Chairman
3rd Hayling Scout Group