

Dialect warning !

*David Gray was brought up in Gatehouse but now lives in New Zealand.
He is proud of his Gatehouse accent, as is clear from his written words.*

Scouts Belfast Trip ex David 'Sam' Gray

It was the early 50's when the Gatehouse Scout Troop went overseas - tae Nothern Ireland ! - true-tae a scout camp at Helens Bay, halfway tween Belfast and Bangor. We were joined by some Borgue scouts and mony a lifelong freen was made. It all began yin Seterday mornin marching up the High Street frae Rutherford Hall tae the toon clock and on tae Campbells bus - the tents and gear went on the back o Jek Fitz's truck - son Willie drivin and off tae Dromore Station. PC Korky was i/c, Puffer was 2nd i/c ,assisted by Plug Crone (young Geordie), Jackie Campbell and feel sure Leo was involved.

Trip was a HUGE event for us all - some o the lads had never been past Creetown or CD. Off on the Paddy tae Stranraer an on tae the ferry cross tae Larne and a smashin diesel train tae Helens Bay.

Forgot to mention the ferry we went on was the Princess Victoria - some years later lost on the same crossing with tragic loss of life.

Part of us seeing the big wide world were trips to Belfast - one was to visit the Gallaghers cigarette factory and watch them making millions of fags. Another was to Harland and Wolfs shipyard - huge and noisy. The highlight for most of us were trips on a wee train to Bangor with its huge horseshoe bay and promenade - and a trip on a boat to go twice roon a large submarine depot ship. After all that it was hame again tae auld claes n purridge. Julian and I still talk about it.

Weel folks thats it the noo - frae the twa o us tae the twa o you hae a merry christmas and a guid new year.

Feel free tae pass on my scout tales - tell them Julian kens a lot mair - he minds all the names o the new tents we got frae Blacks o Greenock!

Some months before oor trip we did a trial run tae Balgary Glen up frae Palnure - for o weekend. I mind us all hikin up tae the top of Cairnsmore of Fleet - all taken with the debris frae some ww2 crashed planes.