Golcar Scout Group

Once upon a time, a long time ago, in fact, all the way back in 1951 there was a young man called John Ripley.

John was a teacher in a far-away place called Halifax but was a Golcar lad through and through. He lived down Leymoor Road, he also helped at Golcar Baptist Church as a Lay Preacher and at the Sunday School too.

One day John came up with an idea that the children of Golcar might quite like the fun and adventure that he'd heard Scouting could offer, but he didn't know that much about it.

So, he asked around and discovered there were 6 boys from church, who fancied finding out more.

Luckily for them all, the Festival of Britain was held in 1951, and there was a Scout and Guide Rally held at Greenhead Park. So, John and the lads went along to have a look, and they liked what they saw so much, they got permission to start a new Scout Group on 23rd July 1951 – the 4th Huddersfield Golcar Baptist Scout Group.

Now Leaders uniforms were the same as the scouts back in those days, so people in Scouting all dressed like me –
Shorts, shirt, a special Group necker with its very own colours so everyone in Scouting knows where I'm from. This is John's actual necker, along with his wood beads and woggle which show he had attended his training course at the home of Scouting – Gilwell Park, near London.

And this is John's very own Scout staff, where he has carved all the Scouting things he did on as a history of his Scouting. The staff is also a ruler which is marked in the old measurements of feet and inches and has many uses. The final obvious thing is my hat, John's hat, which is designed to keep both the sun and the rain off.

John found a friend called Reuben Linfoot, who volunteered to be his Assistant Scout Master, and between them the Group grew and was very active, with hikes, trips and camps away, while meeting every week at John's house on Grange Road. They soon needed a much bigger space to meet, so they moved into a workshop where the old Picture House was on Leymoor Road.

By this time, younger boys were hearing how much fun Scouts were getting up to and were very keen to join in, and so The Golcar Cub Section was born in 1954, with the Cubmaster being a man called Ken Standley.

Now the people of Golcar were very happy about this as the all the children in Golcar had the chance to become a Cub or Scout and learn how to look after themselves and work and play as a team of friends.

And then one sad day in January 1960, John, who by now was a young dad with two very young children, suddenly became very ill and passed away, everyone was very shocked and sad.

Ken stepped up to look after the Scout Group, and he did a great job at that for over 20 years.

In 1968, the UK Scout uniform changed along with all kinds of wonderful badges and fun new ideas.

The time came when the numbers of children in Golcar Scouting fell, along with the number of adults. The Scout Group started to struggle and was threatened with closing down. A new kind of Leader needed to be found. A man called Craig Ellis came along to take over the Scouts, and numbers soon began to grow again. Craig became the Group Scout Leader, like Ken and John before him. New adults joined along with even more children, and the Group rose, and grew to be the biggest Scout Group for miles around.

The people of Golcar were always very keen to have a Scout Group, unfortunately, they didn't really want it as a next-door neighbour, so the Group travelled around from building to building around Golcar for many years, until after a long hard struggle, the Scout Group took over ownership of where we now stand – the Golcar Scout & Community Centre. And to make sure we looked like we were here to stay, we carved our badge in stone, and it's still there for all to see, just by the front door.

Now while all the over eight year olds were able to have all the adventures of cooking in the wild and having the time of their lives, the younger children of Golcar still wanted in on the act as well. So Beavers were invented for 6-year-olds upwards, which provided crafts, play, learning and adventure – complete with sleepovers and parties for all. Not wanting to be left out, Scouting recently opened its doors to 4-year-olds as well in the latest adventurous world of the Squirrel Scouts.

Craig ran the Group for 20 years until the time came for him to handover to a new team of Leaders – Duane and Anna Laverick. As he stepped away from leading the Group he was awarded the Silver Wolf, the highest award for exceptional service to Scouting in the Community, and the first ever to be awarded to a member of Golcar Scout Group.

Many adults have given up their valuable time over many years to help all those young people gain the skills needed to be good people, who can look after themselves and work well with others. Fantastic fun and adventures are always just around the corner, and are available to anyone aged four or older, just come along and the Group will welcome you to the largest Worldwide youth movement in history – Scouting, where everyone can live happily ever after.

The End