

Several of the boys had never had a holiday or seen the sea

Roy Battelle, of Spondon, looks back on his many happy years as a member of the village church's boys club and, in particular, their annual camps.



The Rev Barber in 1978.

WHEN the Rev Thomas Edward Morton Barber, affectionately known as TEM, arrived to take charge at St Werburgh's Church, Spondon, in early 1938, the clouds of war were looming large over Britain.

Having established a boys' club in his previous parish in Lincoln, Mr Barber soon got to work setting up a similar group at his new home.

As well as weekly meetings and various activities, one of the most popular aspects of the Spondon Church Boys Club was the annual camp. Last week, former member Stephen Best, who now lives in France, told how Mr Barber managed to organise a camp for 120 boys, in the summer of 1939, in the face of opposition from some parents and deepening concerns about the crisis brewing in Europe.

Here, Mr Battelle takes up the story of camps and other activities with the club. He said: "The two-week camping trip in 1939 was to be the first of many."

"The early camps were very uncertain due to the war years and not knowing if bombing, or even a German invasion, was imminent."

"But the camps became very popular because many of the boys had never had any time away from their parents and several had not even had a holiday before or seen the sea."

"Transport was by train from Spondon station and some of the destinations included Sidmouth and Combe Martin, in Devon, the New Forest, in Hampshire, Watchet and Minehead, in Somerset, and Gunnerside in

North Yorkshire. "Our accommodation was in bell tents sleeping two senior boys or tent leaders and three or four juniors."

"Meals were alfresco, unless wet, but summers then always seemed to be long and sunny."

"An advanced party of older boys erected the tents, dug the latrines and generally prepared the site ready for the rest of us."

"I remember that the vicar was always walking about with his customary pipe at full steam."

"Our cook for many years was Mr Dickens but help was also at hand because we were organised into tent working parties."

"There was wood patrol to keep the fire burning because there was always a pan on boiling, litter picking, pot washing, water patrol and, of course, spud bashing - it felt like we peed many hundred

weight!"

"Our sports activities were popular with competition between the different tents. "There was also a bedding and kit inspection, with everything being laid neatly outside the tent. This earned each tent valuable points."

"Late night camp fires were always a bit spooky because the vicar used to tell us all about his own ghostly experiences at the vicarage and also stories which made everyone keep glancing behind them, looking into the



Clockwise, from left: Roy is third from the left in this picture taken of boys outside the cook tent, possibly in 1949; the camp in August 1947; and a large group of boys and helpers posing for the camera in 1949.



Above: Spondon Church Boys Club members in 1944 when they were winners of the National Association of Boys Club sports competition and, right, at camp in 1949. Back, from left: Brian Bolton, Roy Battelle. Middle, Tony Coopey, Jeff Coopey and Albert Pointon.



Above: At Llanfairfechan camp in 1944 and, below, a club reunion in 1986. Back, from left: Ken Borrington, David Borrington, George Belfield, Keith Parker. Front, the Rev TEM Barber, Gordon Chambers, Larry Parrish, unknown, unknown.

ish for 48 years until his death in 1988, when some 1,000 people attended his funeral. "At that time, he was the longest-serving clergyman in Derby Diocese."

"He was a great guy and an inspiration to many young boys at an age when guidance was essential during those austere times."

● Were you a member of Spondon Church Boys Club during Rev Barber's years in charge? Did you go on any of the camps? We would love to read your memories, contact details below.

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ON THIS DAY

1972



LOCAL: Rolls-Royce announced a major reorganisation of its structure which was to involve the merger of its Derby and Bristol engine divisions and the creation of five new project divisions.

SPORT: Derbyshire replied briskly to Australia's total of 384-9 declared, reaching 66 for the loss of just Peter Gibbs by lunch at Chesterfield.

NATIONAL: The Duchess of Windsor arrived at Heathrow Airport from her home in France for her husband the Duke's funeral. She was met by his cousin, Lord Mountbatten.

1982

LOCAL: Rail union leaders were confident they had won a temporary reprieve for 600 workers who were to have lost their jobs in cut-backs at British Rail Engineering Ltd in Derby.

SPORT: Derbyshire teenage tennis ace Nicky Fulwood was preparing to face Wimbledon champion John McEnroe in the third round of a tournament in Manchester.

NATIONAL: America offered the Ministry of Defence an extensive supply of weapons as British forces mustered in the Port Stanley area for the decisive last stage in the Falklands campaign.

1992

LOCAL: Derbyshire's police chief John Newing acknowledged that his force was on the brink of being declared inefficient by HM Inspector of Constabulary Geoffrey Dear in a long-awaited report into the state of policing in the county.

SPORT: Derbyshire captain Kim Barnett voiced his concern at the bowling performance of Dominic Cork since his return from treatment for a groin injury.

NATIONAL: Shadow Foreign Secretary Gerald Kaufman announced that he was to stand down from both the Shadow Cabinet and Labour's National Executive Committee.

Now could be the time to invest in Beswick figurines

Charles Hanson



I AM often asked the question "What should I invest in now for the future?"

I often reply that hindsight would be a fine thing and, if we had all invested in good Chinese artefacts ten years ago, we would be sitting pretty now!

However, I do see market trends at first hand and can advise what is not selling well at the moment and what could be areas to invest in for the future.

One market that was at its peak ten years ago was that of Beswick bird and animal figurines. There was a collectors' frenzy which coincided with eBay really taking off, and some of the bulls and farm animal models were making £1,000-plus as collectors fought each other to buy them.

As the supply on eBay escalated and swamped the market, we saw a big decline in prices in the auction house. However, the quality of these figures, especially of the birds, is of such a high standard and the quantity is a finite one, that I think these would be a good investment at the moment.

John Beswick Ltd was founded in 1936 on Gold Street in Longton, Staffordshire. Prior to that it had been known as Beswick and Son and produced general ware to include dinner, tea and toilet ware. Five years later, Arthur Gredington was appointed as a full-time

modeller and his skill at producing realistic animals of all kinds started the factory on its way to specialising in these figurines.

Other modellers of note are Albert Hallam, who became head of the mould making department, and Graham Tongue, who began work in 1966 and became head modeller in 1973.

He modelled the piece which holds the world record price for Beswick, "Spirit of Whitfield", a model of Kruger, the last pit pony used in a

"If we had invested in good Chinese artefacts, we would be sitting pretty now."

Staffordshire mine. Only four models of this pony were made, one being given to Princess Anne. When one was auctioned, it sold for £2,750.

It is doubtful if you would find this model as a bargain at auction but Beswick birds abound. A Beswick magpie, designed by Albert Hallam, and a pair of Beswick turtle doves, modelled by Arthur Gredington, will be offered in our sale on June 21 and have estimates of £50-£70 and £80-£120 respectively.

Charles Hanson is manager of Hanson's Auctioneers, Etwall.



This Beswick magpie and a pair of turtle doves will be offered in Hanson's sale on June 21. The magpie has an estimate of £50-£70, while the turtle doves are expected to fetch between £80-£120.

Coronation parties. It may have been drizzly but it was still great fun!

MONDAY'S BYGONES PULLOUT TUESDAY'S TELEGRAPH

We revisit the 1950s. Ripley St John's football team in the spotlight.

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