

## The Story of White Hall Centre: Update, June 2016

White Hall Centre is a residential outdoor education centre near Buxton, Derbyshire. It opened in December 1950. A history of White Hall is in preparation. The manuscript for Part One, Part Two and Part Three has reached 150,000 words. I expect any further additions to these three parts to be small. Part Four is still seeking an author.

### Synopsis

Part One, 'Historical Background', covers the first half of the 20th century, with forays into the late 19th, setting the scene for Jack Longland's arrival in Derbyshire. Chapters 1 to 6 each take a theme from this period, before the existence of White Hall Centre. In looking at the growth of outdoor recreation before 1950, I differentiate between what adults were doing (Chapter 2 and 3) and what school pupils were getting up to (Chapter 4).

Part Two, 'The Formative Years', is more chronological, covering the first nineteen years of the centre, December 1950 – January 1970. A separate chapter is allocated to each wardenship or principalship. A brief summary of national developments concludes each of these chapters.

In examining the pioneering vision behind the setting-up of White Hall Centre in 1950, Part One and Part Two drill deeply into a beginning frequently mentioned in writings on outdoor education but seldom before examined in depth. They draw on many little-known sources. Mark Lambert, for example, has very kindly sent me a copy of an important early Longland article on the purpose of White Hall Centre. (Mark is presently working on a biography of Jack Longland and has access to Jack's private papers. Our two books are different, but they share a limited overlap.)

No-one will read this book without gaining new insights into and a more accurate knowledge of the centre that strongly influenced the development in the 1960s and 1970s of local-education-authority residential outdoor centres throughout the UK.

Part Three, 'Routine Adventure', covers the period January 1970 – November 1992, including the mountain-training dispute, a national issue that Jack Longland was involved in.

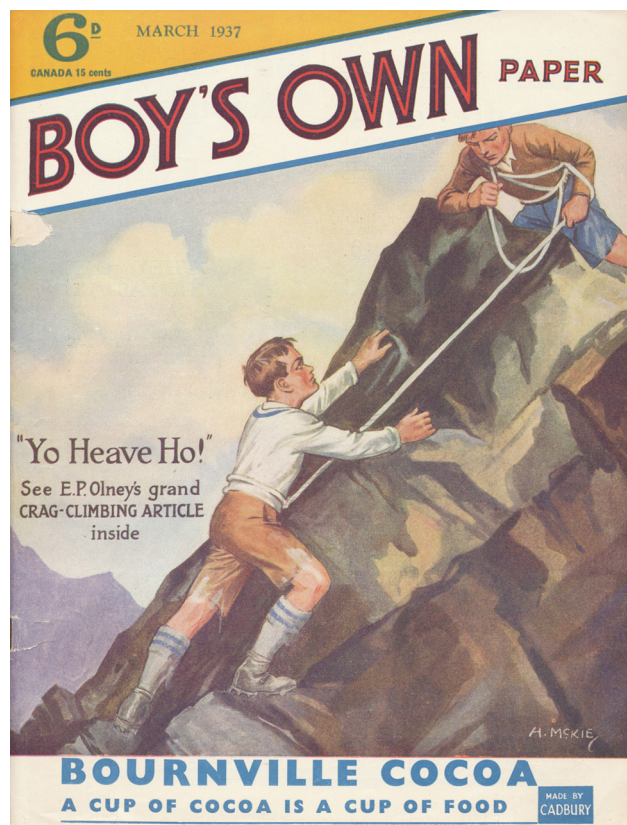
Part Four will cover a period of uncertainty, turbulence and change.

### Publication Arrangements

The original expectation that writing and publishing this book would be a nonprofit venture for the writer or writers and for the publisher remains intact. An

electronic version, with about 200 illustrations, will be freely available online.

There will be a niche market for physical copies of the book. Nowadays small niche markets can be served by print-on-demand arrangements. It is likely that physical copies of the book will be available by print on demand, able to be ordered through most bookshops, at a price determined by the printer and retailer.



Cover of the *Boy's Own Paper*, March 1937. E P Olney's article describes rockclimbing on Little Tryfan, 'an excellent practice ground for initiating a junior party into the use and misuse of the rope'. The florid account, by a writer who calls himself 'paterfamilias', is illustrated with three photographs.

## Chapter Headings, June 2016

### Front Matter

Title page, publication-details page, dedication or quotation page, contents page, and the introduction.

### Part One: Historical Background, 1880–1950

1. Jack Longland's Route to Derbyshire, 1905–49
2. Peak District Backstory, 1900–39
3. Messing about in Boats, 1865–1949
4. Boy-centred Adventure, 1880–1949
5. The War and a Youth-service Proposal, 1939–49
6. Consequences of Training the Soldiers
7. Purpose Statements and Mentions, 1949–50

### Part Two: The Formative Years, 1950–70

8. Peter Mosedale and Bandits, 1950–5
9. Mosedale Legacy: Different from Outward Bound
10. Geoff Sutton and Public Relations, 1955–9
11. Eric Langmuir and Skills Courses, 1959–63
12. Harold Drasdo and Tom Price on Enjoyment
13. Kim Meldrum and the Presence of Risk, 1963–9
14. 'Outdoor education? Don't know what you mean!'

### Part Three: Routine Adventure, 1970–92

15. Fantastic Freedom, 1970–83
16. At the Heart of Things: The Outdoor Pursuits, 1970–92
17. A Year's Courses, 1975–6
18. The Rocks and Vegetation and So Forth
19. The Mountain Training Dispute, 1970–80
20. Never a Dull Moment, 1983–92
21. Other National Developments, 1970–92

### Part Four: Change, 1992–2015

##. End-of-Century Uncertainty, 1992–2000

##. Chronic Turbulence, 2000–2010??

##. The Quicy Hytvnf, 2010–2015

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etc, etc

### End Matter

Appendices, abbreviations, acknowledgments and index.

### Author Needed for Part Four, 1992–2015

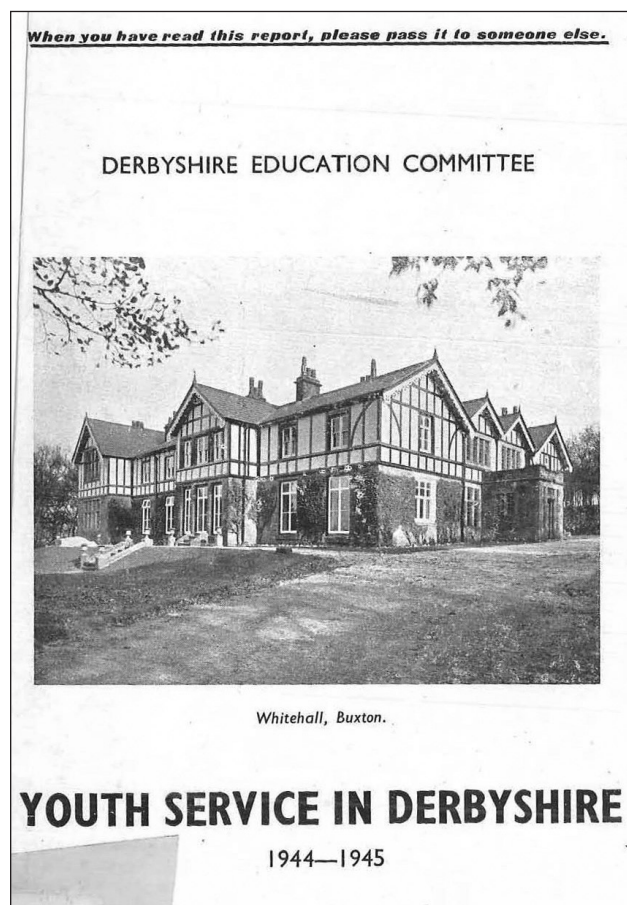
A year's searching for an author for Part Four has not succeeded, but this hunt for an author will continue. Something of the order of 25,000 to 50,000 words could adequately cover the main developments of 1992–2015.

Writing, editing and publishing Part Four could be a completely independent and separate project from Parts One, Two and Three, with minimal or zero involvement from me.

Alternatively, the author of Part Four could produce and send me a Microsoft Word document, which I could import into page-layout software and then reformat to match the design of the rest of the book.

### Plan B

Should no progress be made on writing Part Four, I may publish Parts One, Two and Three as Volume 1 of the history, leaving the period 1992–2015 to be covered separately in a Volume 2. If necessary, Volume 1 as described would stand alone very well, but this would be a last resort. With Part Four added, the story would be distinctly more complete and more informative.



This document reported that in 1944 Derbyshire's education committee had accepted in principle a recommendation from a sub-committee that one or two houses should be secured to serve as residential centres for the youth service for use immediately after the war.



### **Background to the White Hall Centre book project**

The idea of writing this book grew over several years, changing occasionally in detail but not in principle: August 2012: Bob Higginbotham, nearing his fortieth year at White Hall, first as centre cook and then as house manager, has the idea of collecting people's memories and assembling them into a book.

June 2014: Bob and Pete McDonald decide to set up a White Hall archive. They begin a search for archival material, distributing a circular to people who are possible contributors of memories or photographs or relevant documents.

November 2014: Bob visits the Derbyshire Record Office in Matlock and delivers a bundle of physical and electronic material to form the beginning of the archive.

February 2015: Pete starts the White Hall Centre book project, initially as an informal proposal for several voluntary authors to jointly produce a complete history of the centre, covering from 1950 to 2015. (The starting date subsequently creeps back to the end of the 19th century.) At this stage, it looks likely that the project will be a nonprofit undertaking and that the final version of the book will be electronic, probably an A4 PDF document, freely available. The estimated date of publication is 2020.

May 2016: The manuscript for Part One, Part Two and Part Three, covering the centre's origins and its first forty-two years, up to 1992, is nearly complete. The word count is 150,000 (the size of a longish novel). Many people have shown an interest in this part of the project. Several have helped by reading and commenting on the manuscript. Their responses indicate that the story is accurate and readable.

Below are some draft-readers' comments on Part One and Part Two:

Nick Longland, 5 October 2015: 'I think it reads very well.'

Mark Lambert, 31 January 2016: 'I am immeasurably impressed by "The Story of Whitehall Centre" – it's painstakingly and impeccably researched, very clearly and fluidly written.'

Ron Brightmore, February 2016: 'I loved your tone and found it all most interesting ... very well done mate.'

Wally Blake, 24 March 2016: 'I have been greatly impressed overall with the thoroughness of it, while at the same time, finding it readable and enjoyable even.'



<http://whitehallderbyshire-outdoors.org/gallery/>

'I wonder if I could climb that in these borrowed wellies.'  
The Duke of Edinburgh and Jack Longland, with Geoff Sutton behind, at Castle Naze, 21 November 1958.

### **Further Information**

A more complete chapter-headings outline, including subheadings, is available on request.

Pete McDonald, June 2016  
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