

## Scouts honour one of their own – April 2008

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Members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cheam Scout Group forms a guard of hour at the funeral of former scout leader Ron Wilkinson at North East Surrey Crematorium on Tuesday May 6.

Mr Wilkinson had been associated with the scout movement since 1939 when he joined the 38<sup>th</sup> Portsmouth Rover Sea Scout Crew and was later scoutmaster of the 61<sup>st</sup> Portsmouth Scout Troop.

Having moved to Sutton in 1953 to continue his career in the civil service, he became involved in scouting again when sons Andrew and Derek joined the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cheam.

He was group scout leader in 1962, when the group acquired the lease of a piece of land behind Dudley Hall, Stonecot Hill, and made a major contribution to the planning, design and construction of the present headquarters there.

The opening on St George's day 1967 was the proudest moment in his scouting career. Poignantly, he died on St George's Day aged 85. He was awarded the Scout Medal of Merit in 1970 and was for a time assistant district commissioner for leader training. Another proud moment came in 2002 when the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cheam appointed him their patron.

Mr Wilkinson retired from the civil service in 1983, having been promoted to surveyor of customs and excise in 1973. Shortly afterwards, his wife Dot had Parkinson's disease diagnosed and he became her carer, supporting her illness. Typically, Mr Wilkinson became involved in the local carers' association at this time.

It was also around this time that his interest in photography was rekindled, this interest dating back to 1935 when his mother "bought" a Box Brownie camera, having saved up enough Black & Green tea labels.

He Joined Sutton Camera Club and was appointed a vice-president in 2002.

He used digital projection methods from the beginning of 2002 and was made licentiate of Royal Photographic Society (RPS) for his efforts, the first such award by the RPS for digital projection.

He was also an active member of the Morden and Mitcham group of Civil Service Retirement Fellowship and until the Greater London Surrey branch of the fellowship closed in 2002 he had served at different times as branch chairman and branch secretary.

Mr Wilkinson was married to Dot, who died in 1990, and leaves two sons, Andrew and Derek, daughters-in-law Rosemary and Grace and grandchildren David, Robert and Punkie.