



West Highland School of

ADVENTURE

THE DOCKLAND SETTLEMENTS

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HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER

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ADVENTURE TRAINING – the aim behind it

In these days it is widely agreed that our national system of formal education needs, in the case of adolescents and particularly boys, to be supplemented by the provision of opportunities for the development of character. This applies especially to qualities of self-discipline and endurance; the capacity to face hazards, difficulties, hardship and emergencies of all kinds; also the ability to co-operate with others in worthy enterprises, and acceptance of the obligations of service to one's fellows. These qualities are more than ever necessary in the world of today.

That this statement is true is shown by the great success of the schools established on outward-bound principles, and the many training or adventure courses set up by various enterprises over the past few years. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is every year introducing more boys and girls to this type of experience. Starting with 7,000

boys in 1957, the Award Scheme in 1963 attracted 43,300 boys and 19,600 girls as new entries. The demand is rising, and provision is not sufficient to meet it. Moreover, demand will undoubtedly continue to rise. The National Economic Development Council, set up by the Government in 1962, has emphasised the need for more training, including character training, for young entrants to industry. Its report on this subject has been very well received and its recommendations are being implemented by the Industrial Training Act 1964.

In the light of these conditions, the Governing Body of The Dockland Settlements decided in 1963 to open the West Highland School of Adventure at Applecross in Ross-shire on the property of the Chairman of their Central Executive Committee, Major John Wills. After nearly a year's preparation the first course started in April, 1964.



An expedition climbing one of the great mountains north of Applecross. The leading boy carries a rock-climbing rope.



ABOVE LEFT Assembling for an expedition. Instructor can be seen with maps on the left. Part of the School, Hartfield House, is in the background. **ABOVE RIGHT** A view of the rock-climbing mountains from the "Top of the cattle" on the Applecross Estate looking south to Loch Kishorn. This illustrates the wonderful country in which the School is set. **BELOW** An expedition sailing to Skye. These sailing expeditions go far afield and are undertaken in all weather conditions providing the weather is judged to be safe. Instruction is given on chart work and elementary navigation. The old-fashioned sailing rig is designed to give the boys the maximum amount of work to do. Deep-sea fishing is also carried out from these boats.





Hartfield House forms the School buildings, and is the old Dower House of the Applecross Estate. It contains the boys' recreation rooms, dormitories, bathrooms, etc., kitchen and pantries and various instructional rooms and offices. The Warden and his family occupy one wing.

THE LOCATION



Applecross is situated in Ross-shire on the west coast of Scotland opposite Skye. It is about 80 miles from Inverness and some 15 miles north of Kyle of Lochalsh, the terminus of the railway from Inverness and of the Skye Ferry. As can be seen from the photographs in this booklet, the scenery is of a beauty and grandeur unsurpassed in the British Isles. The Applecross peninsula covers 80,000 acres and offers ideal facilities for sailing, canoeing, swimming (including instruction in life-saving), rock climbing, hill and moor trekking, light-weight camping and expeditions. Expeditions are not confined to the Applecross peninsula but range much farther afield. Weather permitting, each course ends with an expedition lasting up to eight days, partly by sea and partly on land.

Accommodation is available in Hartfield House, on the Applecross Estate. It contains the boys' recreation rooms, dormitories, bathrooms, etc., kitchen and pantries and various instructional rooms and offices. The Warden and his family occupy one wing. There is a fully equipped sick bay for the Matron. The local Doctor and the District Nurse live in the village nearby, and are readily available if required. All Permanent Instructors are fully qualified in their own particular fields of training and the whole staff appreciate that if boys are to derive the maximum benefit from their course, they must be given every opportunity to use and develop their initiative.

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THE SCHOOL - its objects

The objects of the course will be:

to encourage and foster the spirit of adventure whereby boys may achieve strength of character through the pursuit of testing experiences and challenges under skilled supervision; to instil self-confidence, a sense of teamwork and an awareness of the individual's endurance;

to give boys the opportunity of showing initiative and developing the qualities of leadership, compassion and the community spirit;
to introduce new activities to the boys, which if pursued by them after leaving the school, will give them a fuller, more enjoyable or interesting way of life.

TRAINING - the programme in outline

The normal course is of 26 days. The main outdoor activities comprise sailing in naval type cutters, canoeing, trekking, light-weight camping and rock climbing. Instruction is given in life-saving, first-aid, seamanship and map-reading. Opportunities are provided for more cultural activities, such as nature study discussion groups, public speaking, educational films, musical appreciation, etc. Each boy is issued with a log book, in which he is asked to keep a detailed day-to-day record of what he has done and thought.

On arrival, after a medical examination, each boy has a private interview with the Warden, when he is asked to accept the training conditions, i.e. no smoking or drinking and full co-operation with Instructors and Staff.

The Course is divided into watches with an Instructor in charge of each watch. After a few days the Watch Captain is elected by the boys themselves and changed weekly. Under the Instructor he is responsible for the discipline and efficient running of his watch. Boys mess together, and do all their own washing up and make their own beds. When away on outdoor expeditions, where they camp two to a tent each night, in all weathers, they prepare all their own food.

For the first week, the staff concentrate mainly on getting the boys fit, taking them for periods of physical training, cross-country running and

round the full-scale obstacle course. During the same period the boys get their first lessons in sailing, rowing, canoeing, life-saving, first-aid and map-reading.

During the second week there is an all-day map-reading exercise and an all-day cruise in the cutters. Then comes a four-day hill expedition. All this leads up to the major project of the course, the 8-day amphibious expedition, which takes them to many parts of the highlands and islands.

The Warden holds regular meetings with the Instructors to discuss boys' individual progress. At the end of the course every boy who is considered to have fulfilled the training conditions and made reasonable progress is awarded a badge which is graded either "honours" or "merit" or "membership" depending on the success the boy has himself made of the course. A confidential report is prepared by each Instructor on each boy and this is collated by the Warden together with his own remarks and sent to the boys sponsor a few days after the end of each course. These reports have already proved of considerable value to headmasters and parents and the officers in charge of new entries into the armed services, industry, and other organisations concerned with the training of youth. The boys themselves also prepare a confidential report for the Warden on their impressions of the course.

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ABOVE Canoeing in the Minches. **LEFT** The Assault Course—teamwork in climbing. This Assault Course is a full commando-type course designed to make the boys completely fit during the first week of instruction. Considerable attention is paid to their ability to work as a team.

ADMINISTRATION

application for places and other information

Boys may be sponsored by local education authorities, schools, youth organisations, industrial and commercial firms or, indeed, by anyone interested. Normal age limits for courses are from 16 to 20 and there are junior courses which run each year for boys between the ages of 14 to 16.

Boys must be medically fit to take part in the activities which are undertaken during the course. They are required to show a medical certificate on arrival. Apart from this all boys are eligible without distinction of colour or creed.

Applications for vacancies should be made to the Warden, West Highland School of Adventure, Applecross. On receipt of applications, the Warden will send out entrance forms for completion. Details of fees, travelling arrangements and clothing and other equipment needed by boys on the course will be given by the Warden. The Management Committee aim to set up a fund to pay for boys, particularly from the areas around the Dockland Settlement Clubs, who have no other sponsor to pay fees to attend this School.





Wick

Ullapool

Dingwall

Applecross

Inverness

Portree

SKYE

Kyle of Lochalsh

Fort Augustus

Aberdeen

Mallaig

Fort William

Ballachulish

Dundee

Oban

Perth

Stirling

Glasgow

Edinburgh

Ayr

“Applecross is connected by road with Strathcarron on the railway from Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh. Arrangements for transport from Inverness to Applecross for boys attending courses will be made by the school.”

Dumfries