

# 1<sup>st</sup> P&P Post

No. 21  
March 2015

## Chairman's Ramblings

Hello again. You will see what a great set of activities all of the members of the Group have once again been taking part in.

Three quick points of information from me this term:

**GSL.** Most important is to say a huge **thank you** to Richard Goodyear who stepped down as Group Scout Leader (GSL) at the start of February. Richard has served as GSL since December 2012. He is not leaving our Group but has decided that he wants to focus on his work with the Explorers. It has not yet been possible to appoint a new GSL, and in the meantime the District Commissioner, Simon Pickett, is taking on the role of Acting GSL.

**Membership.** Every year, the Scout Association has a census of its membership. This year we have 217 members: 47 Beavers, 65 Cubs, 54 Scouts, 22 Explorers and 29 Adults (leaders). That is about 15 more young people than were recorded on census 2014.

**Membership subscription.** Every year, part of the termly membership subscription that you pay comprises a payment of £20.50 to Scout Headquarters in respect of every member. You can see what the HQ Membership Subscription includes at <http://preview.tinyurl.com/HQsubscription>.

Have a great Easter break!! Best wishes, Hamish  
*Hamish Stout, Group Chairman*

## 1<sup>st</sup> P&P Winners!

Congratulations to Scouts Freya, Erika and Alex who won the first ever Pang Valley District Chefs competition in February.



"The cooking competition was really exciting, however, it was a lot of work with the table decorations, buying the ingredients and designing the menu. Although it was hard it paid off as we were the winners and we had a really good time."

## Project Africa Update



Preparations for the Project Africa trip to Uganda are going well. The team (six Explorer Scouts and two adult Leaders) attended a skill-building and cultural training weekend in February, which included working in small groups to plant trees and carry out maintenance work on site at Paddicks Patch campsite. They also learnt about Ugandan culture, music and dancing from a Ugandan now resident in Berkshire.



The young people are getting very excited about their forthcoming adventure and have been raising awareness about the project by attending Section meetings; they recently visited the Friday night Scout Troop where they put on an African-themed fun night, making traditional flatbreads and having a go at Ugandan dancing!

They are continuing to work hard on their fundraising; a successful bag packing session at Sainsbury raised £2000 and the bacon rolls at the Farmers Market remain as popular as ever. They have a stall planned for the Tour De Purley cycling extravaganza on 10th May (<http://tourdepurley.org>), and on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May they will be running a fun Bingo evening – keep an eye out for fliers!

*Project Africa Team*

## Easyfundraising

We have signed up to Easyfundraising to raise extra funds for the Scout Group.

Do you shop online? Did you know that every time you buy something you could be raising money for the Group? Over 2,700 well known retailers, including Amazon, John Lewis, eBay and Tesco will donate a small percentage of what you spend to 1<sup>st</sup> Purley and Pangbourne Scout Group to say thank you for shopping with them.

Just visit [www.easyfundraising.co.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.co.uk) and follow the simple steps to sign up. The Scout group is listed as 1<sup>st</sup> Purley and Pangbourne Scout Group.

*Liz Alexander, Fundraising Sub-Committee*



### Water Voles Colony

Since our last Water Voles update, a lot has happened. We have welcomed 9 new Beaver Scouts into the Colony and swum 6 up to Cubs. We hope they are all having fun. 2015 started with an evening on Science. The Beavers had great fun making lava lamps, seeing how raisins can dance, discovering how to clean coins with vinegar and baking soda and learning how to inflate a balloon without blowing. They conducted the experiments in their lodges and then showed the other Beavers how they worked. Lots of excited Beaver Scouts went home covered in baking powder and smelling of vinegar!

We have also had a few visitors this term - George and Hannah came from Explorers to tell us all about their prospective trips to Uganda and Japan. The Beavers enjoyed trying to pick up maltasers with chopsticks whilst learning about the Japan Jamboree with Hannah - though some mysteriously didn't make it into the second bowl ;- ) while with George they loved eating flatbread and making a huge mess with the playdoh when trying to sculpt African animals. We have also had visits from London Irish, who taught us about Healthy Eating and from Veolia who talked to us about recycling.



The Beaver Scouts have also learnt about disabilities as they worked towards their Disability Awareness badges. They learnt Braille, how to use a wheelchair and how to fingerspell. One of the Beavers also showed us a bit of sign language too.

This evening was spent making chocolate nests and planning for our Easter walk next week. Here's hoping the weather is nice. Fingers crossed!

*Tic Tac (Colleen Hughes), Beaver Scout Leader*

### Polecats Colony

Since the last report, the Polecats have had a very busy time enjoying lots of fun activities. This included hiking outside in the dark and making their own instruments – the noise of which could probably be heard all over Purley! Just before Christmas we had a messy evening decorating mugs for the Beavers to give as presents to their parents. We finished off the winter term with a good turnout at the District Beaver Scout Carol Service, where we were delighted that one of our Beavers was presented with his Chief Scout Bronze Award by the District Commissioner. In January we welcomed five new Beaver Scouts to join us and sent four of our older Beavers up to Cubs; three to Heron Pack and one to Kingfisher Pack. We are sure they are having as much fun as we are!

This term we have seen the introduction of new national Beaver challenge and activity badges and two of our Beavers worked towards achieving the Cooks badge, involving cooking three different dishes. All of the Beavers have had fun challenging themselves on their fitness levels, looking at their heartbeats and healthy eating. As well as some less-healthy eating when they decorated pancakes!



This led on to looking at Fairtrade, which culminated in a visit to Tesco (Portman Road) where the Beavers spent a fun evening looking for and finding Fairtrade items; the excitement of shopping somewhat overwhelmed the Leaders and parents accompanying them!

Hopefully all mothers received and enjoyed the mother's day gifts we made. Huge thanks to Corrina Smith and her jewellery making skills. We are now looking forward to making use of the lighter evenings to do more outdoor activities.

*Rainbow (Shelley Williamson), Beaver Scout Leader*

**DON'T FORGET!**



Project Africa Bingo Evening - Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May



Family Camp 2015 – 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015

# cubs

## Kingfisher Pack

We are growing! Having brought in three new Cub Scouts last term, we began this one with another five and formed Purple Six to accommodate the expanded Pack. With such a high proportion of new Cubs we started off the term with some team building and “getting to know you” activities, getting Cubs to teach each other simple skills such as tying shoe laces and working as Sixes for games.

Our main themes have been personal safety, health and fitness and science. Our fitness challenge was fun and we began our science work with an astronomical night hike, which for once wasn't covered in cloud. In the middle of the term we reviewed the new activities and badges available after the programme refresh next September and began our Pack forum to understand what Cubs want to do during their time in the Pack. We also touched on World Book Day with a stirring recital from King Louie



We're finishing the term concentrating on science, making lava lamps and hovercraft, getting knocked over by a vortex cannon and examining electronics.

*Akela (Matt Shakespeare), Cub Scout Leader*

## Heron Pack

Looking back at our programme I have realised just how much fun we have fitted in!

We began the New Year with a spot of bird watching for the RSPB's Big Garden Bird Watch. This was followed by a swimming session at Meadway, which proved to be extremely popular and something we will look at doing again. Also popular was our evening spent outside cooking sausages, bacon and mini pancakes on nothing but a tin can and a candle!



We celebrated Chinese New Year by making dragons' heads and trying our hand at Chinese writing, and also St Patrick's Day, playing leprechaun football (!), cooking 'Irish' sausages and marshmallows and playing a game of Irish musical statues. We hope all the Mums like the wine glasses the Cubs decorated for Mother's Day – and enjoyed the special filling!

The Cubs are looking forward to the annual camp at the end of May and to the Funday at Gilwell in June.

*Tabaqui (Gareth Evans), Cub Scout Leader*



# [SCOUTS]

## Monday Night Scout Troop

Way back in November, Alex, Robert, Sebastien, and Caitlin represented the Monday Troop at the big breakfast competition in the pouring rain and did really well to keep the fire alight, let alone cook some food! Later in the term we went climbing at the Reading Climbing Centre and at Christmas a number of members of the Troop spent a few weeks rehearsing as a band for the Group Carol Concert, and did a great job on the night.



In the New Year we made some cool paracord woggles, and had some cooking practice in the run up to the new Pang Valley District Chefs competition. We cooked with heat, and then used cold to make ice cream (great as long as you keep the salt out of the ice cream!). We entered two teams in the competition, and along with the Friday Troop 1<sup>st</sup> P&P managed to achieve three out of the top four places! Alex, Freya and Erika amazed the judges with their team work and cooking skills.

We have also been looking ahead to future activities with some training for later in the year, including some indoor dragon boat racing! We hope to run a real dragon boat session in Marlow, and then enter the county dragon boat competition in June. We are all also really looking forward to the Patrol Camp at Bear's Rails and our main camp in North Devon!!

*Jez Jones, Scout Leader*

### **Friday Night Scout Troop**

It has been a busy few months for the Friday night Scouts. We've been learning to sew our own badges on (can you hear all the mums cheering?!), played wide games in the dark and celebrated Australia day with a game of Boogalah, tucker tasting (kangaroo, crocodile, ostrich, crab, Vegemite, 'fairy bread', pavlova and billy tea) and 'singing' "Waltzing Matilda".

We also spent a fun evening doing miniature pioneering and learnt how some Indian families survive by making recycled paper bags. Most recently we were out on the streets of

Pangbourne, supporting the Pangbourne and Whitchurch Sustainability Group with a great litter pick in which we collected 10 bulging bags of rubbish.



We entered teams in the District's Big Breakfast Competition and the more recent Chefs competition; well done to all who took part. We'd also like to give a warm welcome to our newest adult volunteer, Alex Barrett, who's been with us since November.

*Friday Scout Leader Team*



Our programme so far this year has had a recurring international theme as the Explorer Scouts have devised activities based on Sweden, Africa, China and Japan. From learning how to play Kubbe and attempting a blindfold flat pack challenge (Sweden), attempting to recreate traditional dance (Africa), making pancakes and lanterns (China), as well as a World Quiz, it is fair to say that the Explorers have put their own unique twist on world culture!

Away from the Barn, we have recently had "half marathon camp", which saw the Explorers embark on a 13.1 mile hike from Purley to Whitley. We stayed at 52<sup>nd</sup> Reading Scout hut for the night where pizza and movies were the post-hike reward. 16 Explorer Scouts then joined a handful of P&P helpers to run a water station at mile 3 of the Reading Half Marathon. 16,000 water bottles were unpacked, uncapped and handed out to a largely grateful stream of runners. We were pleased to see some familiar faces from the Group run past.

We have also enjoyed climbing and archery evenings at Adventure Dolphin this term, thanks to Adam Stout, who has helped to co-ordinate these opportunities. Adam has also kindly

agreed to help on a more regular basis, which will give us much needed support for our expanding Unit.



We have now grown to 22 regular members, which represents a 50% increase in numbers year-on-year. This term, we have welcomed Mikey Roccia, Mark Boyer and Tyler Andrews, while also investing Kathryn Archer on the climbing wall and George Archer (fittingly) during archery night. We have more young people joining us after Easter so it's onwards and upwards for the West Pang Explorer Scout Unit.

*Chris Hughes, Explorer Scout Leader*