

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

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## GSL's Report

Happy New Year, and welcome to the start of another exciting year of Scouting. We may only be a few weekends in, but the Scouts and Explorer Scouts have already been on their first hike of the year, and the Leaders have been busy planning programmes for the first term.

November half term saw the Explorers head to windy Falmouth during the gales. Then at the end of half term six of the Group, both Scouts and Explorers, attended a selection weekend in the hope of representing the UK at the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan. Congratulations go out to Hannah Tolson who, from over 170 who applied, gained one of the 45 places from Berkshire. She will be heading to Japan in 2015 for an amazing 2 weeks with Scouts from around the World. Watch out for updates on what Hannah is getting up to in preparing for this once in a lifetime opportunity.

The end of 2013 saw an amazing Carol Concert organised by our Young Leaders for all the Beaver Scouts in the District. The Beavers learnt all about Christmas in countries from around the World which have hosted the World Scout Jamboree. We also unfortunately said goodbye for now to Gill (Hawkeye) from Otter Colony. We are very thankful to all the other Beaver Leaders who, with a few extra helpers, will be running the Otter Colony from now until Easter in the hope that we can find some new Beaver Scout Leaders to take on the Colony permanently.

We hope you're looking forward as much as we are to all the fun 2014 has on offer. We look forward to seeing you at lots of the events we have going on.

*Richard Goodyear, Group Scout Leader (07786 285045)*

## Fundraising Update

Belated thanks to everyone who entered the second annual 1st P&P Quiz back in November. We were pleased to accommodate over 100 people in the Pangbourne Working Men's Club for a fun evening of family quizzing and raised close to £400 for the Group thanks mainly to a bumper raffle and successful silent auction. The eventual winners of the quiz itself were Scouting for More Girls, who took the honours after a closely run contest. Thanks to the many local companies who generously donated raffle and auction prizes.

Before the festive period, we also ran a games stall at Pangbourne Christmas evening, which added valuable funds towards our 2013/14 fundraising target. Additionally, we raised £100 from our first ever Bag 2 School collection and continue to benefit from our involvement in Recycle 4 Charity, which exchanges used printer cartridges and old mobile phones for cash for our Group. Thanks to those who generously donated items or helped in any way!

As we enter a New Year, we will be holding more fundraising events and social activities for the Group. We are continuing to raise funds for the ongoing boathouse project this year and will keep you updated with our fundraising efforts. The 1st P&P Breakfast Roll stall at Purley Farmers' Market will continue to play a key role for us this year; the stall raises around £100 per month. We had many new faces help out in 2013, so why not make it your New Year's resolution to join in the Farmers' Market fun? The market is held on the second Saturday of each month from 8am-12pm... a few hours of your time will go a long way for the Group.

*Chris Hughes (Chair, Fundraising Subcommittee)*

## Chairman's Ramblings

Happy New Year to everyone involved in 1st Purley and Pangbourne Scout Group. I hope you all had a good Christmas break and that those of you in low lying ground haven't been affected too much by the local floods recently.

Every year at the start of a new year it never ceases to amaze me how busy the Group has been previously and 2013 was no different to any other year. Unfortunately as I was away over Christmas I missed the Christmas Ramble but I understand a good time was had by all and my thanks to Jez and Fran for organising this. 2014 will be a year of consolidation after all the growth and development we have experienced over the past few years. From a Group Executive point of view the start of 2014 will mean a focus on finishing off the boathouse so that our young people can really benefit from it over the spring and summer of 2014.

One thing we do really need though is more support with the Sections. There is a huge demand for Scouting in our area and obviously your children are benefiting from all the hard work put in by the Leader teams but we do need to strengthen the teams both for now and for the future. I would like to challenge you all to consider giving up some time to volunteer to assist with one of the Sections. This doesn't need to be the Section your child is involved in. One thing I can assure you is that you will get as much enjoyment out of it as your children do. Please contact either Richard (our GSL) or myself if you can give up some time to assist.

Yours in Scouting,  
*Andy Williamson, Group Chairman*



### Annual Christmas Ramble 2013

On Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December, 1<sup>st</sup> P&P Scout Group held its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Ramble. We started at Barn, and spent a very pleasant couple of hours walking a circuit through Sulham woods and the adjacent fields.

The weather was very kind to us and the sun even joined us for part of the walk. The woodland paths were muddy, but not as soggy as the Thames path would have been! Just under 4 miles later, we finished off back at the Barn with tea, coffee, mince pies and biscuits. Thanks to all the families who came along and supported this event – it was a fun way to spend a post-Christmas morning.



### Polecats Colony

Since the last newsletter the Polecat Beaver Scouts have been busy having fun and working towards their Creative, Friendship and Safety badges. Just before half term they made their own puppets from a range of materials and then treated their parents to two fantastic puppet shows of “Little Red Riding Hood” and “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”. We were very excited to have the District Commissioner, Simon Pickett, in the audience. Later that evening he presented Jabez with his Bronze Chief Scout Award (the first Beaver Scout in our Colony to gain this award) and Rainbow with her (second!) Wood Badge.

After half term we focused on Remembrance Day, went for an exciting walk round Purley in the dark and damp and took the Beavers through our very own “channel tunnel” for an evening trip to France. The croissants and French bread went down well, but there was a mixed reaction to some of the cheeses! We finished off the term with an evening on stranger danger and a visit to St James the Less Church in Pangbourne for the District Beaver Scout Carol Service. This lovely service was even more special for the 1st P&P Beaver Scouts this year as it was organised and run (very well) by our wonderful Young Leaders.

2013 was a great year for the Polecats Colony and we’re looking forward to lots more fun in 2014.

*Sunshine (Fran Jones), Assistant Beaver Scout Leader*

### Otter Colony

We’ve had a fun, fast half term covering the exhausting Experiment activity badge, where we sped around our homemade racetracks with custom built cars using our magnetic knowledge.

As Christmas was rapidly approaching we took the opportunity to assist Santa’s Elves by making musical instruments and special Christmas recipe books completing the Creative Challenge badge.

We finished this term off with a celebratory Christmas party where Alex, Zac, Teyah and Angus were presented with their

Bronze Chief Scout Awards by the Group Scout Leader. However, sadly we said farewell to Hawkeye who has been a great Leader and inspiration to all the Beavers and myself.

*Tic Tac (Harry Archer), Beaver Scout Young Leader*

### Water Voles Colony



The Water Voles had a great time last term with a trip to the Police station. They were lucky enough to do finger-printing, look around the cells and Rusty even got handcuffed! They also got to look around a police van and loved it when the sirens were set off - a great way to finish off our topic of safety!

The Water Voles also gained two new badges. They went to St James the Less church where the vicar helped them work on their Faith badge and also talked to them about Remembrance. It was great to see so many of our Beaver Scouts at the parade this year.

“Tiny” Tic Tac came from the Otters Colony and taught us all how to use a computer for our IT badges; some lovely drawings have been coming through on email to complete these.

We enjoyed a pirate evening where we all got pirate names and played pirate themed games and also enjoyed our Christmas party where we had lots of fun playing the chocolate game.

We are looking forward to welcoming some new Beaver Scouts to the Colony and wish those going off to Cubs good luck. We look forward to seeing what exciting adventures 2014 takes the Water Voles on.

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



# cubs

## Kingfisher Pack

The second half of the autumn term was busy and diverse. We began by, what has now become a big part of our year, talking about and what it means to young people. Inspired by this I was very glad that so many Cubs, Scouts and Beavers were able to help sell poppies this year. We raised an amazing £326! Following on from the very well attended Remembrance Day parade we worked on emergency aid, and with that under our belts began the first part of our DIY badge, around the safe use of tools, all fingers, and eyes intact.

An amazing night of science took the Cubs to all parts of the solar system and sent them home with crystal growing kits. We ended the year working on the old English tradition of Mummers plays, the dramatic equivalent of carols. The Cubs improvised and then rehearsed their own play based on the centuries old traditions and characters and ended the term with a gala charity performance raising money for action on homelessness.

*Akela (Matt Shakespeare), Cub Scout Leader*

## Heron Pack

The last half term has seen the Cub Scouts involved in a variety of activities. Most of these have only been possible because of the parental support we have had. Thank you to everyone who has helped out. Bonfire night was celebrated by making open fires in roasting tins and toasting marshmallows. The following

weeks were focused around first aid. The most popular activity was the making of fake wounds! However I am confident that the Cubs would also know what to do if they had to deal with a minor first aid incident and who they would need to contact for a more major one.

Then the fun began and the toilet seats arrived! Following a very powerful and motivating talk from a local Water Aid representative the Cubs were very keen to help raise some



more money for the charity. The toilet seats were decopatched and then put up for auction. I was amazed how parents could be persuaded to part for money for a toilet seat! Many thanks to everyone who attended the auction; we raised £90! We ended the term with an X-Factor karaoke night. Many thanks to Jacko for organising!

*Baloo (Judie Pickering), Cub Scout Leader*



# [SCOUTS]

## Monday Night Scout Troop

In the last few weeks of the winter term we had a bit of a focus on food and cooking, with some fire lighting, a sausage sizzle, and cooking of breakfasts in preparation for the Big Breakfast competition. The practice must have helped as our team of Kathryn, Ella, Robert and Ollie A, did very well, bringing home bronze trophies.

We have also been working on the fitness challenge, and would like to thank Suzanne Stout, and Kevin Williams for coming along one evening to help us understand the dangers of Alcohol and Drugs.

In December we held the first in our winter series of hikes, with members of both Troops walking from Rivermead along to Caversham bridge and then back along the northern side of the Thames to Pangbourne. Highlights included ascending the hill near Bottom Wood to get a view of the whole of Purley on Thames, rolling back down the hill again, and buying veg at a stall just outside Hardwick House.



We will continue the series with a hike in each of January, February and March, partly in preparation for the "Three Towers Hike" competition in April, but mainly because it's just good to get out for a walk and see a few different bits of the world. The hikes are also a great way for parents to get involved; you do not have to be a wiz with a map and compass. We hope to enter a few Scout teams in the competition this year, but there is a not too strenuous route that adults can take part in too! Please take a look at [www.hike.org.uk](http://www.hike.org.uk) if you would like to find out more!

Planning is progressing on both our "Patrol Camp" at the end of March and our camp in the Peak District in the summer term half term holidays, and we are looking forward to some great adventures in 2014.

Jez Jones, Scout Leader

### Friday Night Scout Troop



In this social networking world, #proud is how I sum up last term. We came back from half term straight into Remembrance Day

preparations. The Patrols wrote some amazing poems, we sold poppies in Pangbourne, and it was great to see so many Scouts turn out for the parade. #proud

The next event was the Big Breakfast Challenge, and to practice we fired up the gas stoves and cooked a full English breakfast outside in the Adventure Dolphin car park – with the bridge being closed and so many pedestrians I think we missed a fundraising trick there because the smell was amazing and the food wasn't bad either. Our team of Lucy, Josh, Peter and Ted came 4th out of 10, and we had a special commendation for the fact that they were such a young team. #proud

Almost everyone in the Troop has achieved their Stage 1 & 2 Emergency Aid badges. #proud

We got crafty and creative as Viki from Mango Goose popped in to help us make some lovely bracelets and earrings (and lots of concentration was needed to thread those tiny beads onto wire), and the Patrols also created campsites out of junk. They were brilliant! Not only did they have tents, and campfires – we had a boating lake, zip-wires, climbing walls and even a shooting range! #proud

The Christmas party was a flouy riot! It was great to see everyone having fun #proud

Yes, I'm very #proud of the Friday Troop – keep it up!

Samantha Hinkley, Scout Leader



It was a very busy half a term leading up to the break; as usual we undertook a variety of activities including a (scheduled!) visit from the Fire Brigade, evenings in discussing the 'pros and cons' of alcohol, and a film and popcorn evening watching Despicable Me 2!! (Proving you're never too old!). A trip to Bracknell saw us Sno-tubing and the term ended with a Christmas Dinner and traditional party games held at Cray's Pond.



The highlight of last term was possibly our trip Cornwall for a week at half term. We stayed in a converted grain barn and had

all the luxuries of indoor accommodation for a change! We kept occupied by a trip to the Eden Project, visiting Falmouth, hiking part of the South West Coast Path and not forgetting our 'food' intake – we made pizzas and traditional pasties and spent the rest of the time messing about on the nearby Maenporth beach!

Suzanne Stout, Explorer Scout Leader

### World Scout Jamboree Selection Camp

You may have already heard about the World Scout Jamboree to be held in Japan in 2015. Over 30,000 Explorers and Scouts attend from countries all across the globe to celebrate Scouting. Most counties in England hold a selection camp to choose which Scouts they think should go on this amazing experience. We partook in various team building activities, such as creating sketches and puzzles. The weekend finished off with a campfire which included all the classic songs, with a few that I had never heard of before. The experience, though chilly and rainy, developed my skills within working in a team.

So far (the contingent having just held the first Jamboree meeting) I feel excited about the prospect of getting to know the team better and making new friends over the course of the two years. I will meet up with others to fundraise for the trip in forms such as bag packing and cake making. The trip, apart from the Jamboree camp for 12 days, includes "home hospitality" which is when you stay with a Japanese family and get a real sense of life in Japan, and Japanese culture. I am most looking forward to all the water activities that are available on the massive Jamboree camp site, the new friends I will make and the chance to become immersed into a culture completely different from my own. The Jamboree will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Hannah Tolson, Explorer Scout