



JUNE 2015

Maple/Oak/Sycamore Group Activity Weekend



For

this year's

group camp the Beaver sections transformed part of Polyapes camp site into a medieval jousting ground under the watchful eye of many lords and ladies.

The day for the Beavers sleeping over started at 11.00 hrs with some games and a guided walk around the site to see the other sections in action lead by the one and only Toad with his endless energy and enthusiasm and of course code words. 'Flobalob!'

After our sausage cannon rolls, moat jellies and with the Beavers coming for the day added into the equation, 72 beavers took up the quest to kit themselves out in knight battle gear .

With bases such as shields, tabards, helmets, swords, belts, lances this was quickly achieved. A proper knight also needs a horse and what beautiful horses they made.

Bows and arrows were fired, the bouncy castle besieged, dragon pie eaten, new songs learned during campfire, hot chocolate, story time, torch games what more could a Beaver want before going happily to sleep. On the Sunday all the colonies said good bye to those Beavers moving up to Cubs this term at the Going up Ceremony.

It is only when you see all the Beavers lined up for the final game that you fully comprehend the scale of this event and our thanks go out to all adults that participated in some way: The brave few parents who ventured out in the pouring rain on the Thursday night to help set up the gazebos, the parents that helped out the previous week in making a start with the prep for the craft activities, the kitchen people as usual fantastic food! All the parents that helped out on the day .The leaders and well done to the new leaders that joint us for the first time. You have survived. Last but not least Owl, her planning skills and dedication are vital for a memorable experience for all. Mole.

cubs Enjoy the Group Activity weekend(GAW)



2015 is the Cubs section "Year of Adventure" - leading up to the celebration of 100 years of Cub Scouting in 2016 - so it was clear that GAW had to rise to this challenge for the 60 or so Cubs on camp. Activities were therefore based around core camping and outdoor skills that will ensure Cubs are prepared for future adventures.

However, the weather provided the first challenge on the Thursday evening: putting up 10 patrol tents and two mess tents in the rain and wind on the ridge at Polyapes is an adventure in its own right, but the Cubs set to enthusiastically, with fantastic support from parents (many thanks).

Camp life revolves around food - as fuel of course, but also for the socialising and for learning that great skill: washing up in a bowl (*"Yes that's right you are the "dishwasher" on camp - the appliance of science here is just elbow grease and soapy water..."*). The Camp Cookie, Akela Catherine, and team fed us very well throughout, but an innovation this year was to get the Cubs to cook their own chicken fajitas for lunch on the Saturday which proved a interesting experience for all concerned.

For the rest of the day activities included pitching tents, lighting fires, learning the countryside code and how to pack and look after kit on camp, pioneering projects, building shelters and cooking s'mores. Later we all enjoyed an excellent camp fire led by the unsurpassable John Baldwin. Sleep came much easier on the second night for all...

The camp tent competition was fiercely fought as always and our congratulations go to Sophie, Marisa, Evie, Alisia, Jessica and Rebecca from Panthers for their well-deserved victory.

All those on camp achieved their Our Outdoor Challenge Award - well done to them and, last but not least, our many thanks to all the leaders and particularly the parent helpers who made it such a great weekend.



Jonathan Perkin Mang, Lynx Pack

[SCOUTS] Group Activity weekend

Group camp is a great opportunity for patrols to work together as a team. This starts the week before, with the patrol leader (PL) guiding the Scouts through the creation of a nutritious and balanced menu. Each PL is given a budget and is responsible for buying the food.

Once on site, patrols work efficiently to pitch a large sleeping tent and dining shelter. They will be cooking on an open fire, so need to set up a fire area in addition to collecting and chopping wood. During Saturday, there are a range of activities to develop their camping skills, followed by more adventurous activities such as orienteering, pioneering, shelter building, an assault course and a wide game played in the woods. Sunday morning provides an opportunity for quiet reflection during the going up ceremony before patrols focus on packing up and returning home for we assume a welcome bath.

At least, that's the theory ... let's hear from the Scouts themselves to find out what really happened.

"When we arrived at camp [on Friday night] we had to put up the tent and the diner. It took us about two hours to put up the tent and the diner. After that we made pot noodle, hot chocolate and ate marshmallows. We then had to wash up. In addition, we went to bed at 11pm. The little Scouts were extremely tired. We had a good sleep and got up fresh for the next day. "On Saturday morning, my patrol and I got out of our tent to cook breakfast. We had pancakes, which were homemade American style. After all our washing up, we did four different activities on rotation from morning to the afternoon. They were fire-safety, knife/axe/saw, camp gadgets and wet pit building. In the evening the PLs went down to the woods to build bivouacs, shelter for the night. After two hours of work, we went to the campfire where we sang songs and had a great time! After the campfire, the Scouts and Explorers went to play a wide game in the woods. Luckily, nobody got lost, but we all had a good time taking down the other Scouts. After all this, the PLs went to our own little fire, ate a load of sweets and went to bed."



"On Sunday we got up and made breakfast. We had pancakes and cereal. It was cooked on an open fire that we started and cooked on. We then went to Scouts Own and watched the people going up on the friction bridge [built without ropes] that the APLs made. We then cleared up our site and then took down our tent, diner and food tent. After that we helped the leaders pack everything into the van and then had lunch and went back to the Scout HQ to help unload the van." Amazing weather helped to make it a great weekend and Eagles, under the expert leadership of Kathryn, finished the camp as winners of the inter-patrol competition, maintaining a points lead from start to finish

ST GEORGES DAY PARADE 2015 – THE PERMISSION TO MARCH ON THE ROAD?

You might all think just marching down the road is a simple thing, but as always there is some red tape to sort out. You have to do the following :

- ✓ Sort the route
- ✓ Obtain a road closure order
- ✓ Produce a risk assessment
- ✓ Get permission to use the car park
- ✓ Contact the Police for support
- ✓ Arrange our own marshals

Hugh asked me to sort it all this year as he was heavily involved in the Band playing at Windsor. No problem I thought At the end of January I duly sorted the route, updated the risk assessment, submitted the application to Elmbridge Council and requested support from Surrey Police. This resulted in a few further calls with Elmbridge Council clarifying a few points to meet their requirements. Things looked good. Then in early March we were advised that 'Surrey Police no longer support these events'. This meant that Elmbridge Council could not grant us a road closure order. At this stage with only a few weeks to go I went into panic mode! Many phone calls were made and it was confirmed that this was not an isolated decision. At this stage we involved our local councillor Alex Coombes who successfully lobbied Surrey Police on our behalf and it was agreed that on this occasion Surrey Police would provide the support so that we could Parade to the church. The officers providing the support on the day were great and I would like to thank them for this. As always we had a great parade, but is far from clear if we will be able to do it again the future. Watch this space!

Mark Aulds Assistant Group Scout Leader



The annual Maintenance morning is an opportunity to mobilise a band of parent volunteers and to give the Scout Centre some much needed TLC. The boundary fences always need attention and with a few willing helpers all the vegetation particularly the Brambles were cut back. Once the borders had been weeded and the car park swept of leaves, I think you'll agree that the Centre looked good as new. The footpath in the wooded area was dressed with wood chippings from the recycled Christmas trees and the side path topped up with fresh gravel. The stores to the rear were tidied and the felt roof replaced – all important jobs that ensure the centre and its grounds are in good order for the many activities held throughout the year.

Inside, blown bulbs were replaced and the boys' toilet was painted and new silicon sealant applied to the tiled surfaces.

I would like to extend thanks to everyone who was able to help this time around; the event was very well supported and you may be interested to note that your efforts cleared 700kg of debris and rubbish!

A great effort by everyone who attended.

Look forward to seeing you next time

William Sidaway

SCOUTS DISTRICT DAY HIKE – SATURDAY 14TH MARCH

"A dog with a moustache"

Scouting is all about new experiences and taking on new challenges. The district day hike is an annual competition between the ten scout troops in Esher District and takes the scouts to unfamiliar territory and asks them to complete an 8 mile hike with only a set of grid references to work from.

Along the way, teams have to reach checkpoints and answer questions about the sights and sounds they experience. Older scouts form competition teams with points counting towards the top troop trophy, whilst younger scouts are in training teams accompanied by leaders.

This year's hike started in Godalming and took in a number of sights from the area, including an amphitheatre, a water pumping station tower (10 points for correctly saying that it was an 8-sided tower) and various scenic lookout points, although seeing "a dog with a moustache" was the new experience of the day for Will B.



"I fell in the mud and got stuck"

Our eighteen scouts were arranged into two competition and two training teams, the latter grateful for the support of Steve Fenton who walked with team "D". Teams were let loose at staged intervals during the morning and began to navigate their way around the course.

Despite it being a cold March day, the rain held off and conditions were generally good, although one patch of mud caught out the scout quoted in the heading of this section.

Everyone managed to find their way to the checkpoints and made it to the finish within time. The competition results were going to come down to who had been paying attention to the questions on the way round.

"We got a bit lost, but it was fun overall"

This quote from Chris W perfectly captures the experience of Claygate "B" team (Daniel C, Chris W, Alex S, Will B & Nathan K) who came a creditable 4th having missed a few of the questions along the way. Claygate "A" (Gemma T, Emma L, Will B & Ed M) put in a strong all-round performance, but were rather harshly fined 50 points for walking on a road, which dropped them from 2nd to 5th. For the training teams, the results were very close, but Claygate "C" (David, Laurence E, Thomas L, Alex S & Sam F) took 1st place overall with a perfect 100% score, closely followed by Claygate "D" (Toby W, Quentin D, Ryan S, Tom H & Will S) who only missed one question. Our teams certainly rose to the challenge and had some enjoyable experiences along the way.

1ST Claygate Scout and Guide Band

Leading the national St. George's Day Parade at Windsor Castle

The band recently had the privilege of leading the national St. George's Day parade at Windsor Castle, which this year was attended by the Duchess of Gloucester. The band performed a drill display in the Castle Quadrangle to entertain the crowds ahead of the parade, and then joined the Band of the Coldstream Guards to support the parade itself. 62 members of the band took part in the parade, the youngest being just 8 years old.

The band worked really hard in the months and weeks running up to the parade to ensure their drill and music were of the highest standard. On the day, every single band member was superb.



Feedback about the band's performance from those attending the event has been very positive. It will be an event that everyone in the band will remember for years to come.

The band were selected to play at this prestigious event by Paul Wong, UK Technical Advisor - Bands. Commenting on Claygate's performance at the parade, Paul said: "*The Scout Association each year choose one of the best bands in the UK to lead our parade at Windsor Castle. The 1st Claygate Scout & Guide Band lived up to this accolade and proved themselves to be worthy of the honour. Each band member played their part and performed to the highest of standards*".

The atmosphere during the whole event was amazing. The grandeur of the event came home to a number of band members when, as they were waiting in the Royal Mews to start the event, the Duke of Edinburgh rode through the courtyard having been out in Windsor Park with his horse and carriage. It was also reported by a number of band members that they caught sight of the Queen watching the drill display out of one of the Castle's windows..... No-one knows if this is true, but it's a great story to hold on to!

The band are now preparing for their normal summer events. In November, the band will take part for the first time in the Lord Mayor's Show in central London. And at New Year, the band are touring in Paris, leading the Disney Parade in Disneyland Paris on New Year's Eve and then taking part in the New Year's Day parade through central Paris.



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Sad News

It is with a heavy heart that I write to advise you that Jem Salter, our Group President, died on the 25th May 2015. All of us know what a great 'Scout' Jem was and how he shaped the Group in his time as GSL from 1970 to 1985. Subsequently, he was always a presence in the Group providing support and guidance in so many ways.

It is hard at these times to find the words to express our feelings but I certainly feel a huge loss following his passing and the Group has lost someone that we hold most dear.

I had hoped that we would have a more detailed account of Jem' Scouting for this edition of the Newsletter but this is still being worked on and will be available shortly.

I am sure many of you will have very fond memories of Jem, a great Scout 'Gone Home'.

Hugh Gostling Group Scout Leader

Chairman's News – Stuart Ballard.

We are approaching the AGM, where you will have the opportunity to hear a review of the year's activities and to approve the Group's accounts. We try hard to make sure we have sufficient resources to run the Group in a way that ensures the children have the opportunity to get the most out of scouting. Crucial to this is our fundraising effort. Our regular jumble and plant sales are an important part of this and this year have raised over £6,000. This is a great result and wouldn't be possible without our regular teams that run the events and the parent volunteers that assist them. It is very important to the Group that these fundraisers continue to raise the money they do and I would urge you to volunteer for the two fundraisers each year that we ask parents to help with.

We have one half term left and the scouting year will be finished. I would like to thank everyone for their contribution to the Group. The leaders spend as much time preparing as they do with the children and they cannot be thanked enough. There's the team that makes sure the building and equipment is up to scratch at all times. I'd like to thank the Group Executive for their time and wisdom and Hugh for making their job easy. All our other volunteers deserve a pat on the back. There are a huge number of people that give time long after their children have left the Group and every hour that a parent of a current member gives, whether it be at a camp, fundraiser or elsewhere is hugely valuable. Thank you to all.

It is with great sadness that I learnt of Jem Salter's passing. Compared to most of the Group, I knew him for only a short time. However, I remember him when I first joined as a smiling face and encouraging voice when I felt hopelessly unprepared for the job of leading a Beaver colony. And I remember the joy he took from the investitures of our newest members which he regularly helped with. He will be missed.

Thanks once again for everyone's contributions and I look forward to seeing some of you at the upcoming summer events.



The Esher District Beaver party took place on the 21st March kindly hosted at Hinchley Wood School. Nearly 150 Beavers attended from the District with a great turn out from 1st Claygate!

From arrival Toad did a marvellous job of keeping our Beavers entertained until the fun and games started.

This year's theme was Alice in Wonderland which resonated throughout the planned activities including decorating (yummy) cookies as playing cards, painting rabbit shaped money pots and playing flamingo hockey: a first for many of our Beavers!

We were also treated to an interactive stage performance of Alice in Wonderland. Several Beavers were called upon to support in the key roles of flowers, bees and page boys. The fact that 150 Beavers sat transfixed for over 30 minutes is testimony to the performance.

A great time was had by all, but this would not have been possible without the support of our Leaders and Parents. A Huge Thank You to all those who participated.

