



Jungle Beat



Apply within - your group needs you!

It always makes me proud when I see and read about the fun and adventure that our young people get out of their Scouting activities and since writing the intro to the last edition of 'Jungle Beat' I have been fortunate to see many, many more examples of great Scouting right across our group. You'll read about a few in this edition, particularly the launch of our Explorer Unit for 14-18 year olds.

Its easy to showcase the public side of Scouting but what you don't always see is the 'back office' machine that exists to support the front line leaders in doing what they do so well. So in this edition we are also telling you about some of those unsung heroes that you won't ever see wearing uniform but without whom, the group would simply grind to a halt!! My job would certainly be much, much harder without the exec committee supporting me.

Finally, you will see on page 2 an advert for new adult vol-

unteers. Why not find out a bit more about what could be involved in helping out with the young people or working in the exec committee??? 50 people have done so far, they can't all be wrong.....

Simon Pickett, Group Scout Leader

Five go on an Adventure

On Saturday 3rd October five cubs – Alex, Thomas, Jack, Helen and Georgina went to Windsor for a day out as part of their outdoor challenge plus badge.



Conker fun at Windsor

We met at Mortimer Station and waited for the 10.19 train to Reading Station. We then caught another train which took us to Slough and then another train on to Windsor.

When we got

there we had a picnic lunch in Alexandra Gardens next to the Windsor Eye. Once we had eaten our lunch we walked to where the Windsor river cruise boat departed from. During the river cruise we saw a blue heron standing by the edge of the water looking for fish. We also saw Windsor Castle and Windsor racecourse but we didn't manage to see the Mars bar factory in Slough. After the cruise we went to have a look at Windsor Castle. We saw two policeman one of which had a gun.

Then we crossed the road to have a look at the Long Walk. We walked a tiny fraction of it and wrote "1st Burghfield and Sulhamstead Cub Scouts" in conkers on the grass. This used up rather a lot of conkers!

Once we had done that we went back to Windsor station to catch a train back to Slough, then another train to Reading, then one last train back to Mortimer station where I found two conkers in the same shell on the platform.

We all had a fun time especially re-arranging the Queen's conkers!

By Alex Little

Annual Ball raises over £3000 and is once again a huge success!

The second ball took place on the 3rd October and, proving to be highly popular, is set to become an annual event. Despite facing the problems created by the credit crunch and its associated doom and gloom, Julie Dell and team laid on a sparkling event, in the beautiful tithe barn at Ufton Court.

Drinks and canapés met guests on arrival and dinner was followed by an auction and raffle. The evening was rounded off with dancing to a wide range of dance floor favourites performed by Brouhaha who, as usual, attracted some 'wanna be' pop stars!

The success of the evening as a social event was matched by its success as a fundraiser. Thanks to many generous donations of raffle prizes, auction items and time £3,200 has been raised for the group.

Without doubt, this event will be happening again, same time, same place, next year.



Dave realises he's out of the game!

Spotlight on – Sharon Masters



Sharon

What is your job title? Akela with Cougar Cub Pack and Membership Secretary for the Group.

What does that mean? As Akela, I lead the general running of Cougar Cub pack and delegate to my very able assistants as much as possible! Then there are the meetings that I choose to attend, such as planning, camp planning, Group Leaders' and District! As Membership secretary, I offer places to children on the waiting list, liaise with the section leaders and parents and try to resolve all problems with children linking! I am also on the Finance committee of the Exec.

How long have you been scouting? I started off in Guiding, working my way through Brownies, Guides, Ranger Guides and was a Young Leader. But then I found boys (!) and became a Venture Air Scout before becoming an assistant Cub Scout Leader when I moved to Reading. I met my husband as he was already an Akela in Reading and then we ran another cub pack together. We had a break of 11 years until Simon had his very sensitive leader detection radar working and, in 2005, he asked us to run the Sulhamstead cub pack!

What do you like most about scouting? The chance to challenge yourself, to try activities that you wouldn't otherwise do (even for the adults!) and to make lasting friendships.

What do you hate about it? Not much, but you can get absorbed into the adventure if you're not careful!

What do you do when you are not scouting? I do a bit of supply teaching in both the Mortimer schools, run the Mortimer St Mary's recorder groups, enjoy researching family history (I am known as my family's 'archivist!') and anything else that will get me out of doing housework. Oh, and I do try my best at being a mum!

Favourite food at camp? Lots of snacks (especially home-made cakes from the parents) to keep me going!!!

Favourite Badge? The Chief Scout Awards for each section as they show commitment

Do you have any other family in scouting? Yes, my husband, Paul, is one of the assistant cub leaders in Cougar pack and is the group webmaster; Charlotte is in Eagle scout troop; Louisa and Phoebe are in Voyager beaver colony; Harriet is desperately waiting until she is old enough to join beavers.

Who do you admire most (alive or not – preferably not Bear Grylls!)? Paul thinks it ought to be him.....!

Is there anything else we should know about you? I am not a morning person – but the cubs already know that from camps!

Vacancies

We currently have vacancies for Leaders,
Assistant Leaders and Helpers

Fun and Adventure is guaranteed

Training and support is provided

All you need is enthusiasm and a sense
of humour

More Info from Simon Pickett 0118
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gsl@burghfieldandsulhamstead.org.uk
or Steve Langstaff 07780956768
scouts@burghfieldandsulhamstead.org.uk



Stephen & Rachel's Big Day

Congratulations to Steve & Rachel who tied the knot on a beautiful sunny day in August. Stephen is the leader for Falcon Scout Group and our assistant Group Scout Leader. His wife Rachel looks after our subs. On behalf of the group, we wish them a long and happy marriage.

TAO Explorer Scout Unit



Pioneering!

The first term of the new Explorer Unit has (we think!) been very successful and we have now grown to 14 Explorers and 3 Leaders. Trying to live up to the Unit's name 'Try Anything Once' we

have already attempted a few new activities:

- Making pizzas and an oven to cook them in
- Scuba Diving
- Surviving a camp on only 1 hour's sleep
- Building a swing bridge across a bog (and not falling in!)
- Breakfast on the beach

to name but a few. High on the list for the next completely new experience is Zorbing! Hmm not sure about this one but hey I'll try anything.....once.

We had our first successful Explorer Camp which saw 7 of our new Explorers getting up well before dawn and hiking to Beachy Head for an investiture with a view. The sun didn't manage to shine on us and it was a little cold but none the less no one got lost on the way and the Explorers took part in the first of many (I hope) unique investiture experiences.

This month saw the launch of our ALPS 2011 Expedition on October 13th. This promises to be an exciting adventure, organized and run by the Explorers (with help from a few leaders!).

If you have siblings or friends (14+) who you think might be interested in joining our Explorer Unit we'd

love to hear from them. It's not too late to join and become part of our Expedition Team so give me a call or turn up Tuesdays at the Scout Hut 8.30 – 10.00pm.

Liz Penston
Explorer Scout Leader
0118 9834111



Investiture experience on Beachy Head at dawn

Update on Premises

In order to focus the responsibilities of the Executive Committee we have recently formed sub committees, one of which is the Premises Committee. Our functions are to set policy and actions for the Scout property which includes responsibility for the hut, grounds and equipment. So far it seems to be a very effective way of gathering opinions and arriving at a consensus that suits the majority.

Our current major focus is the extension of the Scout hut which is now receiving the consideration of the committee and moving ahead at a pace.

The background, in brief, is that the Scout hut is simply not big enough to cater for the sections that we have, let alone the embarrassingly large waiting list. Grand, complete rebuild plans soon gave way to more feasible plans of using the space that we have and extending it. In essence we intend to add another hall and extend the facilities (loos, kitchen, & storage). We have already presented our draft plans to Burghfield Parish Council and received their support and are now in the process of discussions with the local authority planning department.

Obviously the next steps will be fund raising and any thoughts, ideas and contributions would be most welcome. We are delighted to say that we already have received offers of construction assistance towards the build and if any Mum or Dad can offer their skills or provide contacts that may be of use then, again, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Mark Penston (Chair of Premises Committee)
0118 9834111

Dates for your diary:

2009

- 16th - 18th JOTI
- 24th October - Halloween Party
- 4th November - Exec Meeting
- 7th November - Mortimer Fireworks
- 8th November - Remembrance Day Parade
- 6th December - Pantomime
- 12th/13th December - Dad's Army
- 27th December - Mince Pie Hike

2010

- 3rd April - Easter Egg Hunt

Money, Money, Money

As a banker you would think that the role of treasurer for a Scout Group would be a "walk in the park". However the complexities of Financial legislation, government targets and funding ratios of banking are a breeze in comparison to ensure there is enough money for kit and camps!!!

Joking aside, with the rapid growth of the group, it has become even more vital that we understand clearly where money comes from and goes to, at all times. We approach the finances as any small business would, assessing profitability of fund raising, ensuring best value on events and challenging all spend across the group - is it any wonder why I am seen as the Simon Cowell of 1st Burghfield!!!!

However, the treasurer cannot fulfil his duties without considerable co-operation from all stakeholders and often a willingness to embrace change. It is this effort which has seen the successful movement towards full internet banking and placing of all transaction onto a common platform.

Hopefully learning from the recent Banking crisis will help me demonstrate how money should be looked after!!!

Andrew Johnston

Dad's* Army (Your scout hut needs you!)

From time to time some of you may be aware that we run DIY sessions at the scout hut to mend, repair, tidy, spruce up etc our somewhat overused occasional home for your children.

On Saturday the 13th of September we ran a Dad's Army day which was reasonably well attended, but as they say more *'hands make light work'* and we are always grateful for any support that you feel you can give.

The next Dad's Army date for your diary is on Saturday 12th December. Watch out for further emails nearer to the time and hope to see you there. Feel free to bring the kids but please note that they are your responsibility.

Mark Penston (Chair of the Premises Committee)

*Please note that referring to *'Dad's Army'* is intended to be a catchy title not gender specific. All genders are most welcome, even those that are under question!

The Exec committee

Within our group are a team of hard working individuals who organize and run all the back office needs of the group. They are collectively known as the Exec and their role is to ensure the smooth running of the group and includes being trustees of the charity and making unbiased decisions on expenditure and direction. As chairman I have tried to put a business slant on the way things are run and as the group has grown I have seen the need for this more and more with all the same issues arising and needing sorting. We make decisions on how money should be spent and on the types of fund raising events that would be most effective in raising money to contribute to the group's financial demands. The exec is made up of myself as Chairman, Mark Penston as deputy chair, secretary Debbie Smith and treasurer Andy Johnston. We have 4 working groups:

- Property
- Fund raising and finance matters
- Group Public events
- Recruitment

These groups cover most of the areas that the exec has to deal with and report any issues arising at each committee meeting.

The property group is headed by Mark Penston and at present has been given the task of making a head quarters that is suitable for a group of our size. It is looking at a number of options of what can be done with the existing building to accommodate the number of members we expect to have in the coming years. The sub committee's responsibilities include the upkeep of the present property through Dads army days or organizing trades to come in and work on the building.

The Fund raising group is headed by Julie Dell and coordinates all major fund raising events such as the Scout Ball, Quiz night and Sponsored walks. They are also responsible for proposing new ways of raising funds.

The Group has a public events team to organize events such as family camp, Mortimer fun run, Mortimer fireworks, group camp and any other group wide activities.

Recruitment are tasked with making sure we have enough leaders to run the number of groups we have and also put resources in place for training when required.

I would like to say a big thanks to all the members of the Exec as without all their hard work the group would not run as smoothly and they give the leaders and children support where needed. I think of them as the silent army, working tirelessly in the background making the wheels of the group turn easily.

The exec has 16 members but we are always looking for people who have some spare time to offer help in many areas from being available to help at events to becoming a fully involved member of the Exec. If you would like to know more please feel free to give me a shout.

Dave Kilshaw