

**3rd Epsom Scout Group AGM
12pm 8th September 2013
Boiderhurst camp site**

Present: Richard Ascough, Wayne Smith, Judith Sitford, Catherine Luff , David Steele, Jo Danks, Guy Simpson, Assistant District Commissioner Richard Denyer and a number of parents from different sections in the Scout Group.

Apologies: Peter Sitford, Gillian WebbSmith

Catherine Luff opened the AGM "Welcome our guest Richard Denyer, Assistant District Commissioner, and all those present. It is great to see so many of you here and indeed coming on the Big Adventure weekend."

Minutes of the last AGM Proposed by Guy Simpson, seconded by Paul Moody.

There were no matters arising.

Beaver report given by Judith Sitford

Numbers in the Beaver Colony have been around the 20 mark all year. There has been the natural flow of children moving up to Cubs and a brand new influx of 6 year olds all year. Currently, we have 1 girl and 19 boys on the books. Subs have remained at £25 per term.

Badge work is always a focus for our planning, and this past year, this has seen the awarding of the Promise Challenge, Fitness Challenge, Imagination, Animal Friend, Nights Away 1, Safety Badge, amongst one or two gaining their Hobby badge in addition.

About this time last year, 10 children attended the postponed Bazzaz event and had a fantastic time. Thank you to Richard to took the children, stepping in for me at the last minute. The theme was Olympics and I understand that they all looked very smart with their Olympic torches on parade.

St George's Day Parade this year saw our fullest attendance yet since my time began with the Group. We looked very smart and it was lovely to see our young members re-new their Promise with their fellow Beavers in the District.

Attendance at Church Parade has been mixed with the Church altering the service we were to attend. The Service we have been invited to attend is not aimed at the Children's level, so numbers dropped. However, we have been invited to attend a different service on the 4th Sunday of every month. Unfortunately, due to a long standing commitment I have with another Church, I will not be able to attend on these services, so will have to ask the other leaders to look after the Beavers who attend.

This year at Summer Camp, we had 11 eager Beavers sleeping over for the night – for the first time on Summer Camp – without their parents! The theme for the camp was Harry Potter and the Beavers loved experiencing the Sorting Hat, playing the Battle of Hogwarts and have said that other favourite activities included washing up, and going to bed!

Leader-wise this year, we started the year with two D of E helpers from Rosebery, however when it got to the Summer exams, we had to say good bye to them. Sadly, we had to say Goodbye to Bagheera, Geoff Collins as he took the decision to retire from Scouting after long service to the Association. Kathryn (Panda) is also leaving us this year as she prepares for her time at University and we wish her well with her studies. So, this leaves me by myself, so I have installed a Parent Rota so that I have adults with me each evening. I thank them advance for their help as without them, I cannot run the meetings. However, this is not the solution, and I am looking to recruit uniformed leaders on a much more regular basis.

Cub report - given by Catherine Luff on behalf of Gillian WebbSmith

We have had between 19 and 30 Cubs this year. 2 Cubs joined in the autumn term (Ciaran & Niall), 3 more in the spring (Joe HB, Joe I and Ali) and 2 in the summer term (Alex Jones & Harry). A further 4 have come up after the summer (Edward, Hayden, Louis & Elliot).

Over the past year we have worked towards a number of Badges including:-

Artist

Fitness Challenge

Entertainment

Animal Cover

Map Reading

Nature & Science

We have enjoyed a significant number of meetings which have included outdoor activities such as:-

Wide Games at Elizabeth Welchman Gardens

Football at Alexandra Park

BBQ at Horton Country Park

And we also entered a team for the Football competition at Nescot

Summer Camp - 5 of our Cubs attended the whole of Summer Camp at Boidier Hurst with 5 more attending half the week. They all thoroughly enjoyed the experience and those who came for the whole week completed the Camper Badge. Kathryn Ascough ably managed and organised the Cubs with a range of activities throughout the week assisted by the other scout leaders who were on camp.

Church Parade – We are hoping to see an increase in numbers over the next year.

We have been fortunate to have the help of Kathryn Ascough and Michael Humphries during the year together with a significant amount of help provided by the parents. We are

very grateful for their time and assistance. Thank you, to all those who have contributed throughout the year.

Scout report given by Richard Ascough

Over the last year our Scout numbers have grown a little further from 20 to 23 Scouts. We have had a number of Cubs join and we have also had 5 children join from outside the movement and one from another group. We are quite a young Troop with Scouts in year's 5, 6 and 7 at School (i.e. with the exception of one scout the oldest is only 12 ½. We have lost a few of Scouts as they reached their 14th birthday, and we have also lost a couple of Scouts who have decided not to continue for various reasons including moving away to Wales and Switzerland. Unfortunately none of the older Scouts have decided to continue in the movement as Explorer Scouts.

The Troop is still run by Wayne, Peter and Richard, but due to work commitments we have regularly had to call upon additional adult support and help (in particular Charles Luff and Paul Johnson). We are very grateful for this. We are pleased that Luke Giles still continues to help regularly and our oldest Scout (Ben Moody) holds the position of Senior Patrol Leader.

Throughout the year we have continued to provide an exciting programme for our Scouts. Activities have included:

- making a carrot ocarina
- building pioneering picture frames
- wide games,
- camp fire stunts,
- ice skating,
- scouting basics (history of scouting, friendship knot and a code of conduct)
- newspaper bridge building.
- our Annual Chip Survey (this generation of scouts now seem to prefer fries to chips)
- a game of Monopoly round Epsom,
- cycling over Epsom Downs
- and climbing at Craggy Island in Sutton..

We had a number of Scouts complete the Mechanic, Photographer or Entertainer Badges as well as Camper, Outdoor Challenge and Outdoor Challenge Plus badges.

Take up for camps this year was slow and we had to cancel the May camp due to lack of interest. Our Summer Camp at Boidierhurst was attended by 9 Scouts, 10 Cubs (although 5 only came for half the week) and 11 Beavers. We were very frustrated when 3 Scouts dropped out from camp in the 4 days before the camp actually started. This caused real

problems for planning and catering. Planning for the Autumn family camp has again been difficult due to its timing.

Next year we are taking some of our Scouts with Surrey to the International Scout Camp site in Kandersteg. Other camps will depend on the take up of this camp.

We are very pleased with the attendance of Scouts at St George's Day parade in April with over 2/3^{rds} of the Troop attending, however we did not take part in any of the other District activities due to Scouts either not being interested or being unavailable, with a small Troop it is hard to get the necessary numbers to make up a team.

We are looking forward to another successful year of Scouting.

Group scout leaders report given by Richard Ascough on behalf of the Group owing to the retirement of Geoff Collins

We are sad to report that after 50 years as a leader in the Group and 62 years as a member, Geoff Collins has decided to retire as Group Scout Leader. He has lead the Group very successfully and we will miss him. The Group are planning a celebration evening on Thursday 3rd October to which all members of the Group are welcome.

Geoff would like to congratulate all the leaders for continuing to deliver exciting and varied programme of activities and continuing to give so much of their time for the benefit of the children. It is nice to see that Beaver and Scout numbers are staying the same or increasing, but the Group needs to provide support to the Cubs whose numbers have decreased. Leader numbers are fairly low at the moment and with two of our leaders currently at university (James and Kathryn) we need to find additional support for Judith and Gillian. In addition the role of Group Scout Leader is currently vacant, although Richard is undertaking some the tasks (i.e. acting GSL). It would be good to find someone new to fill the role.

Geoff also shares the other leaders concerns on the attendance at camps. Outdoor and Adventure is the largest Programme Zone in the Beaver, Cub and Scout Balance Programme. This zone is full of opportunities to learn not just the traditional Scouting skills associated with hiking and camping, but also those needed for other adventurous activities. Adventure is at the heart of everything we do and it is the single most important thing that sets Scouts apart. We are therefore keen to obtain some feedback on camps, when they should occur and how we can continue to provide adventurous activities, including the opportunity for every member of the Group to Camp at least once a year.

Finally I would like to formally record and recognise the massive contribution that Geoff (and his wife Rita) has made to the Group over the years and I hope you will be able to join us in October for his retirement presentation.

Nominations to the Group Executive Committee

Jo Danks to stand down as Beaver parent representative and become secretary

Alan Spencer to become Scout parent representative

Fiona Cowley to become Beaver parent representative

Guy Simpson continues as Cub parent representative

Assistant District Commissioner's address given by Richard Denyer

Richard thanked the Group for inviting him to attend the AGM and apologised on behalf of the District Commissioner, John Jordan, who was at Gilwell Park. Richard advised that he has had a long association with 3rd Epsom since he began as an assistant scout leader in 1971. Over the years he enjoyed much valuable help from the Collins family and holds them in great affection. He is looking forward to joining his celebration in October.

He was lucky enough to visit 3rd Epsom on their summer camp this year and then travelled on to visit other camps in the New Forest and the Channel Islands to visit other local troops. Richard then asked the Group members if any of them knew where the first scout camp was held. One of the scouts answered that it was Brownsea Island.

Richard was pleased that all the reports sound good and encouraging but said that 3rd Epsom faces a challenge to find a new group scout leader. This is really a management role and people should know that there are plenty of people around to go to for advice. He told the young members of the group that they should tell the leaders what type of things you want to do and then make sure you turn up!

Richard advised that he runs a leadership/ guiding course and scouts should tell Richard or Wayne if interested.

Look forward to Kandersteg 2014

Catherine Luff thanked Richard Denyer.

Treasurers report given by David Steele

David handed out copies of 2 sets of accounts; one for the hire of the hall and one for the scout group.

All accounts have been externally audited and signed off up to 31 March 2013.

Scout group accounts

Assets are in cash in the bank and have a good increase on last year, mainly due to the increase in subs.

A levy on each group member is now applied to each section to provide an income to the group.

Annual income is @ £7,700

Expenditure is @ £4,400

Surplus is @ £3,300

Hall Accounts

The hall is hired out as a way of generating income for the scout group.

There is just over £8,000 in the bank compared to £3,000 last year.

There are four prime hall users with Ferndale Nursery providing 60% of the income.

We own the building but not the land so we have to pay rent to St Martins for that. The maintenance on the building is likely to increase over the next couple of years but we currently have about £4,000 excess over expenditure.

Both accounts were agreed.

Any other business

Judith Sitford proposed that term dates for all sections to be set by the Executive Committee in the absence of the GSL to make it easier for parents.

Catherine Luff thanked everyone for their contribution and all the efforts of the leaders. She reminded those present that the Group has lots of vacancies and all help is appreciated even if it is the occasional hour.