

13th Wimbledon Scout Group and St Saviour's Explorer Scout Unit Newsletter, April 2024

Explorers go to Kandersteg!



Ten members of St Saviour's Explorer Scout Unit enjoyed a fantastic seven days at the International Scout Centre in Kandersteg, Switzerland <https://www.kisc.ch/> . They were part of a 150-strong party of Explorer Scouts and leaders drawn from across the Wimbledon and Wandle and Royal Kingston Scout Districts. The Centre was established by the Founder of Scouting and Chief Scout of the World, Robert Baden-Powell in 1923 as a place where Scouts from all over the world could meet and share experiences and learn from each other. The 20-hour journey there then back was well worth the experience.

During their visit they went hiking, tubing (sliding down a ski jump on a rubber ring), swimming, canyoning, rafting, attended Swiss National Day and were able to mingle with

over 1500 other Scouts from across the world. Look out for the movie of the event which will be premiered in September!

The Scouts had a somewhat more modest, but nonetheless highly successful, 5-day summer camp at Thriftwood campsite near Brentwood in Essex. Among other things they went canoeing, bouldering, shooting, whizzed down the 'Cresta Run', participated in an inter-patrol cooking competition, went on a night exercise, visited a Top-Secret Cold War nuclear bunker and finished with a grand banquet!



Canoeing (apparently not very successfully)



Water rolling hamster-like



Cresta Run



Bouldering



Cooking competition – Winning team



Preparing dinner, the Scout way

Rafting in the Park



The Scouts also participated in the annual rafting event on the river was Wandle along with Scouts from across the district. It is reported that their raft was one of the few that did not disintegrate as it made its way down stream loaded up with Scouts. This is an annual event that takes place in Ravensbury Park in Morden, perhaps the most picturesque stretch of the River Wandle.

High Attendance at Group Camp

The Group camp was very well attended by Scouts, Cubs and Beavers with 64 young people camping overnight on the Saturday. Each section followed their own programme and came together for a campfire on Saturday evening. All the Cubs saw soap this camp as they had a go at soap carving; at least one shark appeared. Crate stacking was a hit as was archery with three archers giving instruction and guidance: Chil, his son Matthew and Nathan King, who had just completed the AGB session coach course.

The Scouts brushed up on basic Scouting skills then disappeared to Oxshott Heath for the top-secret Operation Beetroot exercise.



Cubs with lofty ambitions



Traditional campfire

On Sunday all hands were on deck to strike camp before a family BBQ professionally cooked and delivered by the Explorer unit. This was followed by the Group AGM where votes were taken, appointments confirmed, reports given, and thanks expressed to the leaders and all the parents who have helped in so many ways to enable the Scout Group and Explorer Unit to have another very successful year.



More Family Fun

St Saviour's ran its annual Family Fun Day to celebrate and invigorate the community of Raynes Park. The Scouts ran free side shows for the youngsters who were rewarded with chocolate bars if they performed well in such skills as splatting the rat, lobbing wet sponges at unfortunate (though usually quite willing) Scouts in the stocks or learning knots or craft skills with the Beaver and Cub leaders.



Families forget formalities for frivolous fun at the fabulous fun fest

Cubs boosted by parents' help

The wet summer did not deter Cub parents coming along to help the Pack in a variety of ways. Yamak's dad helped run a football practice evening, though sadly this year we were unable to raise a team for the district competition.

Assistant Scout Leader, Nick, and Henry's dad ran a rugby evening while Max's dad organised an evening of gardening at the Martin Way allotments where the Cubs developed an understanding of how to use different gardening tools and sowing flower and vegetable seeds.



Allot of earthy fun

Martial arts

Football training

Young leader Seb ran a martial arts evening exploring the different types of martial arts and where they are particularly prominent across the world and preparing the keenest cubs for the 2036 Olympics.

The Pack provided a great service to the area by undertaking a litter pick around Prince George's playing Fields and undertook a road safety walk around Raynes Park learning about road signs, road markings and where and how to cross the road safely.

The term finished with an evening of family entertainment put on by the Cubs at the 22nd Wimbledon HQ in Motspur Park followed by songs around the campfire and chili con carne.

Explorers run Cricket Green Adventure Day

The Explorers helped to run an activity day at Walton Firs Scout camp for pupils of the Cricket Green School in Mitcham. This has now established itself as an annual event which is greatly appreciated by the pupils attending and their teachers; a great example of how Scouting can make a difference to a diverse range of people in the community.



Explorers at Walton Firs

Beavers booming

Summer term is always a highlight for the Beavers, as it's an excuse to be outdoors in the sunshine, although sometimes the program has to be adapted.



Tent pitching out of the rain

Last term they tackled the Outdoors Challenge Award, and the Emergency Aid, Faith, Campcraft and Safety Activity badges. As part of the safety badge, they completed the challenge of putting their parents in the recovery position when they got home, which virtually all of them managed, not at all encouraged by the bag of Haribo sweets given to all that completed it successfully.

Peter Kelley, Priest-in-Charge at St Saviour's (now an honorary member of the 13th), gave the Beavers a guided tour of the church and they asked some tricky questions, such as 'how old is God' and 'how much are you paid'.

A trip to Wimbledon fire station was a fantastic night. Thank you to blue watch who were so accommodating. Not so much a night to look around, more of an excuse to try on uniforms and clamber over the fire trucks. All good fun.



Roasting marshmallows at Group camp

A big part of the term was the Group Camp, which was a great success. Thank you to all our parent helpers who joined us for the weekend; we literally couldn't have done it without you. A record number of Beavers attended, all of whom went home very tired but happy, which is what it's all about in the end.

The end of term saw (slightly) better weather and the Beavers made the most of it, sailing paper boats on the Beverley Book and ending in the traditional massive water fight, always a highlight.



Our Assistant Beaver Leaver, Lukasz, is hanging up his scarf for the moment while his son moves up to Cubs, but I am sure he'll be back when his daughter joins Beavers in a few years. So, thank you Lukasz for all that you have done for the Colony; you'll be greatly missed.

But...

Parent Michelle Morton-Swart has kindly agreed to join us this term, so welcome to the team!

Major changes in Scouting

Scouting is about to undergo major reforms to bring it in line with societal and technological changes. Roles will be redefined and more processes digitized with the aim of making it easier for adults to volunteer and be able to contribute in a wide range of flexible ways. Core to this is an updated computer system designed to reduce the amount of time adults spend on administration so they can focus more on the needs of the young members. The system is currently being piloted and will be rolled out over the coming months.

Subs increase

Mindful of inflation over recent years, increases in our costs and comparisons with subs paid by other Scout groups in the district, the Group Trustees have agreed that subs should be increased to £45 per member per term or £125 for the year if paid in advance. This will apply from September this year.

Those who have paid subs in advance do not need to pay until their subs become due.

We hope you agree that this still represents extraordinary value for money!

We would never want any member to miss out on scouting due to financial reasons, therefore if any family is facing financial difficulty, please let me or a section leader know, and we will come to an accommodation.

Payment should be made online to the following account:

Account Name: 13th Wimbledon Scout Group

Sort Code: 30-91-35

Account Number: 03230034

Bank: Lloyds

Reference -

Please provide as a reference: 'Subs' then 'B/C/S' depending on section then surname. e.g., 'SubsBSmith' would be subs paid for a Beaver surname 'Smith'.

NB bank details for Explorer subs are different.

Thanks for reading!

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