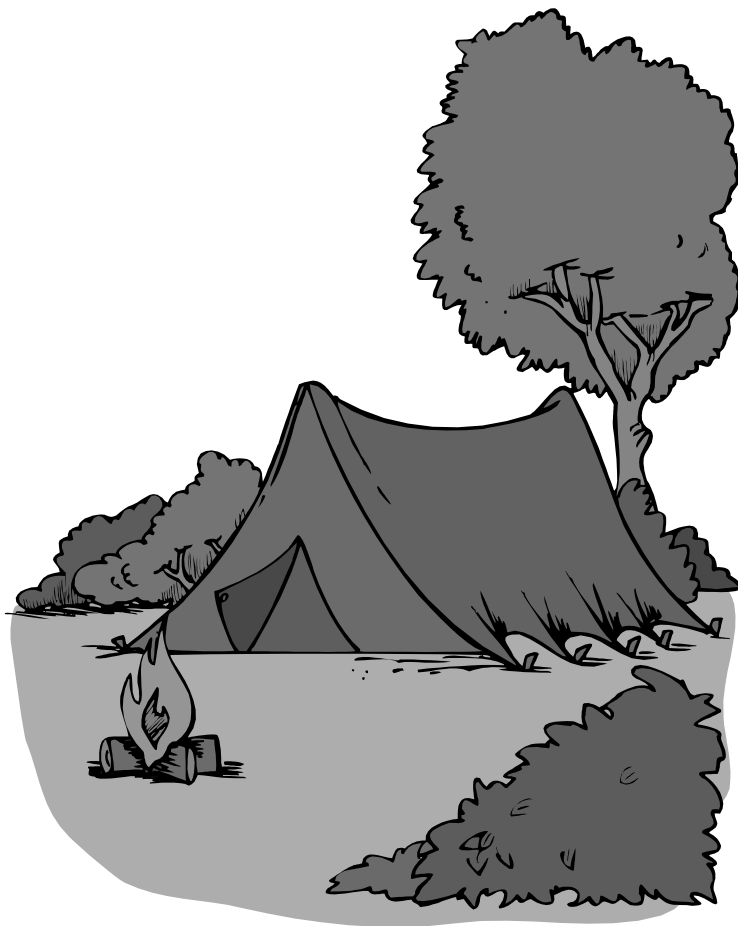


222nd Edition

FEBRUARY 2015

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Woodsmoke



www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk

Chairman's Blog



Welcome everybody to another year of scouting in Abbots Langley - 2015 certainly looks like being another busy year for all concerned. It is the World Scout Jamboree in Japan this August and I would like to wish Clive the best of luck as he will be representing our group at the event as a section leader. I know he and his team have been busy fundraising over the last few months so don't forget to give him your support as he heads towards the finishing line. Good luck Clive!

Many of you will have noticed I'm sure the fact that we had no heating from October onwards last year. Unfortunately our very old and tired boiler gave up on us and a replacement was the only option left open. I am happy to report that we are up and running again with a more efficient system which hopefully will improve our running costs. Many thanks to Rob, our Quartermaster, for arranging for a local engineer to sort it out for us. This didn't come cheap however and put a severe dent in our bank balance hence the need to fundraise more than ever. I was heartened to learn that upon hearing of our heating dilemma a local lady kindly donated £500.00 towards our replacement boiler at the October Jumble Sale ... this certainly shows our community spirit at its very best.

Over the Christmas holidays unfortunately the front of the HQ was victim to mindless vandalism with the front glass and window frames being damaged with large stones. The repairs have been carried out now costing several hundred pounds with money that could have been better spent elsewhere, so I ask you all to be vigilante to prevent this sort of thing happening again.

Since the last edition of Woodsmoke we have had a very successful Jumble Sale in October with £1476.00 being raised. The Christmas Market collected £1264.00 this year, which included another large donation from Dot from her second hand Jewellery sales. Well done and thanks once again Dot.

My thanks go to all of The Ladies Guild, Executive, Leaders, Parents and Young People who make these events possible. We couldn't manage without you.

The Village Remembrance Day Service was very well attended in November at the magnificent, newly restored war memorial. Our Scout Group had 145 uniformed members in attendance which was a record turnout - well done to you all.

The Christingle service was a huge success with St Lawrence's packed to the rafters and £208.00 was collected and donated to a local charity.

Our next fundraiser is the Double Jumble on March 18th and 21st - so start sorting now.

Early on in January all sections completed their annual fire evacuation drills successfully and I would like to thank Bib for assisting me during that process.

Future projects that our Group Executive are currently looking into and which will improve the HQ are the replacement of the front drive and some extra lighting to the rear of the building so watch this space!

Bye for now

Mike Benson
Group Chairman



The History & Heritage Team of Hertfordshire Scouts

Invitation to an exhibition

The Life of F. Haydn Dimmock MBE



For further information contact:
Archivist & Historian – **Frank Brittain**
archivist@hertfordshirescouts.org.uk
Tel: 07850 818600

From the 6th to the 12th May 2015
10.00am to 4.00pm
Hertfordshire Scouts Heritage Centre,
Well End Activity Centre, Well End Road,
Nr. Borehamwood, WD6 5PR

Private viewings at any time by appointment

Clive's Chat

Many congratulations to Harry Argent-Philips on completing his Silver Chief Scouts Award, the highest achievement for Cubs. Last term we also had a flood of our Beavers complete their Bronze Chief Scouts Award. Well done to Ceira Deegan, Elizabeth Dunstone, James Fewster, Toby Greaves, Amar Kapoor, Nathan Messenger, William Potts, Jack Stephenson, Charlie Taylor and Andrew Wilson. Bravo bravissimo.

We have had a few changes to our Group leadership team this month with Alice Swaine-Gray (ABSL) and Christopher Winder (ASL) both moving out of the area to Aylesbury and Chatham respectively. I wish them both the best of luck in their new endeavours. On the reverse side of the coin, we welcome the addition of Jeremy Cannock (ABSL & AESL) and Liam Goodman (ASL & AESL) to our Group and the Abbo's Explorer Scout Unit leadership teams. It is great to have more youngsters taking on an adult leadership role, particularly in two sections.

It was great to see so many of our youngsters, and indeed adults, attend the village Remembrance Day Parade in November, particularly in the year commemorating the Great War. It was a huge turn out with 145 in uniform from our Scout Group. The St George's Day parade is at the beginning of the summer term on 26th April so please keep it free and make every effort to attend.

And finally, a big thank you to our fundraising team, particularly Lin and Eugene, who organised our Christmas Market in December which was another great success and raised £864, and to Dot for the £400 she has accumulated from selling high value jumble sale items.

Clive Winder
Group Scout Leader

SCOUT TROOP Achievements

Many congratulations to -

Roslyn Chase on completing her Fitness Challenge,

Alex Bruguier on the award of his Creative Challenge,

Aidan Cheng, Daniel Nottage and Lucy Packman on achieving their Community Challenge.

Very well done.



Green Beret 2014

Green Beret 2014 was not as cold or as wet as previous years (by account of my sister) but we could have done better in the competition.

When we arrived at Phasesls Wood, the venue for the weekend, it was dark and we still had to put up our tents! Progress on the boy's tent was slow but we soon got help from Dave and Clive, our two Scout Leaders. Once that was done, there was a quick meal for dinner and a team brief from Clive and the captains spoke to their teams (Hannah was our captain). After that, it was off to bed. None of the boys went to sleep straight away of course!!

The next morning, we woke up at around 7:30 and got dressed. Then an hour later, we had finished breakfast and were making final preparations for the day's activities. At 9:00 we started our activities, it was difficult to choose one as we had to do the assault course right afterwards. But we finally chose one, and once we'd finished, we moved on to the assault course, our group believe we did better than the group next to us. The next highlight was the orienteering which was going well, until we got a bit lost. We then went back to the activity bases until they closed. My favourite day base was the rifle shooting.

After all the drama at the day bases, we were hoping for a calm clean run at the night bases, which went well.
(sarcastic)

Firstly, everything was fine and we got on with the bases, but as soon as we left the only compulsory base – the hot chocolate stop - the boys (excluding me) got colder and colder and we were forced to retreat to camp so they could put more layers on. However, no one else wanted to go back and therefore tensions in the team were high and when one of the boys came back with no more layers on, we all got to breaking point. All we wanted to do was have a chance of winning, but that seemed to have gone out the window. So at the end of the activities, we handed our night card in and a very tired and angry team headed back to camp.

So overall, not the best Green Beret ever, but we did ok. My thanks to Clive and Dave for supporting us at the event and to the leaders from the District who provided the lovely grub.

Alex Chase
Otters Patrol



Watford
North



Herts
County

1st Abbots Langley (3rd North Watford)

EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

LADIES
GUILD

ACTIVE
SUPPORT

BEAVERS+ cubs+ SCOUTS+ EXPLORERS+

Double Jumble Sale

18th & 21st March 2015

Abbos Scouts Have a New Website!

www.abbotslanglescouts.org.uk

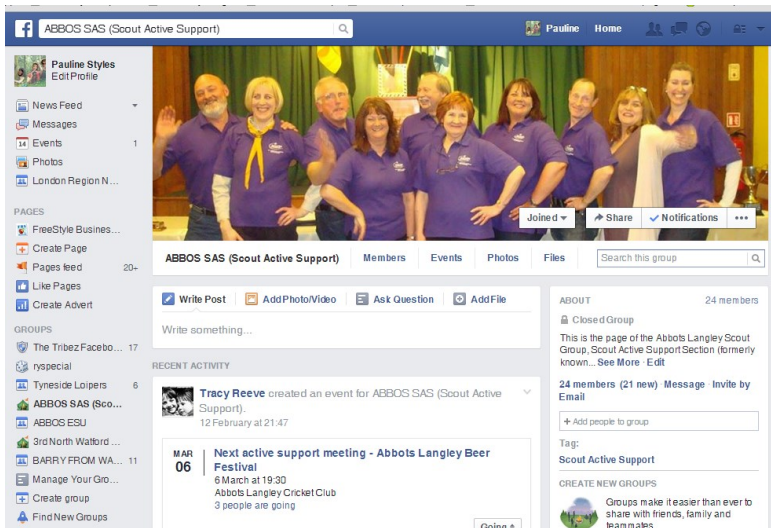
For a number of years as an ex-member of the group who went from Beaver to Explorer with the group and onto being a leader elsewhere, I kept looking back to see what the group was up-to and would refer to the website for information and dates. My view was the site needed a revamp to make it a little more consistent and uniform across the site, and as I do websites as a hobby, I decided to start the ball rolling with the Group Executive. From this a small team was created enabling the real work to commence with the existing webmaster Martin Davis and the rest of the team.

The site is now live so please take your time to look around and get used to the new information and locations of things. The Exec have taken the view that we can improve and correct little bits whilst it is live, so please remember that the site is still under development and will continually be improved.

Any comments, issues or improvements please feed back to 1st.abbos@gmail.com or use my contact details at the bottom of the site and comment directly.

I would like to thank Pauline and Hollie for their invaluable suggestions and drive and Martin for his coding and support, along with all leaders who have answered requests for information or are in the processing of sending some.

Iain Stanley



The Abbots Langley Active Support Group, otherwise known as *The Fellowship*, now have its own Facebook page. You can find us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ABBOSSAS/>

Anyone over the age of 17 is welcome to join, so please take a look if you would like to be kept up to date with future events and ways you can help us support the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers. The monthly event will be posted here with full details of where, when and what.

Look out for the 2015 programme, coming shortly — its bound to contain a walk, a weekend away and maybe even an evening's kayaking too!

The existing Explorers page is at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/146463325363794/>

Both of these are closed groups where people have to be approved to join, for safety reasons.

P.

DIARY DATES

February

16	District Curry Night—Abbots Tandoori	All
17	Meeting—2pm	Ladies Guild
28	Chiltern Challenge	Explorers

March

6	Beer Festival Cricket Club—7.30pm	Active Support
9	Executive Meeting—8pm	Exec Committee
18 & 21	Double Jumble Sale	All
24	Meeting—7.30pm	Ladies Guild

April

10	Meeting - theme tbc	Active Support
21	Meeting—2pm	Ladies Guild
26	St George's Day Parade	All

May

1—3	Top Ten Scouts Narrowboat Weekend	Scouts/SAS
8	Meeting - theme tbc	Active Support
15	Group AGM	All
18	Executive Meeting — 8pm	Exec Committee
19	Meeting—7.30 pm	Ladies Guild

June

5	Meeting - theme tbc	Active Support
12	Loading up at HQ for Carnival	All
13	Carnival	ActiveSupport/All
16	Meeting—7.30 pm	Ladies Guild
19 - 21	Explorer's Narrowboat Weekend	Explorers

Active Support

The tiresome efforts of this section continued in November when they supported the Scout's Green Beret weekend. It is quite a physical affair as the base the Abbo's run is the aerial assault course, and it has to be built, run and disassembled. The first I heard about it was via a text from a rather frantic Chairman.

"Do you know where Richard is? We're at Lees Wood and he's got all the gear in the minibus."

"No, I have no idea," I replied "I'm in Germany!"

Apparently all worked out once Richard, sitting in a field all on his lonesome at Phasels, had realised he was at the wrong campsite. The course is assembled the weekend before, but after a long night at the Green Beret, it is not an easy job taking it down in the dark to load and transport it back to base. It would be great if some of the Dad's could get involved this year to support the team and the Scouts as well as the SAS (Scout Active Support) as some of the ladies really struggle holding up the beams.

However, they were all rewarded the following day after building the course with a very fine evening of Real Ale, Wine and Music in support of Clive's fundraising for his Jamboree team Chosen. I am told it was a splendid evening.

Support was also given later in the month to help set up the Christmas Market which was a very festive affair. And then members of the Fellowship and the group turned up to make the Christingle candles for the service at St. Lawrence's church the following day.



Standing: Daniel Nottage (Scout) Dave Goodman (ASL) Rob Sheppard (Exec Health & Safety) Richard (which way is East) Gabriel (SAS) Rachel Drake (Exec/SAS) Alistair Gabriel (SAS) Lin Lythaby (Exec/Ladies Guild)
Seated: Nikki Goodman (Exec) Julie Cannock (parent), Liam Goodman (ASL / AESL) Ross Sheppard (Scout) Val Rogan (Exec) Daniel Lowrie (ASL)

In December the SAS took over half of The Royal Oak for their Christmas meal which was very well attended, plus Lin from the Ladies Guild and our latest member Rod Anderson, who had joined the Autumn trip and liked us so much he decided to stay.

Elbows had to be kept firmly under control on a rather cramped table, and the excitement of the evening again was the Secret Santa gift for under £5 that Tracy organised. There were a variety of ingenious ideas and Chairman Mike, a carpenter by trade, was so thrilled with his chocolate tool kit as you can see in the photo opposite. Richard unwrapped his gift to find it contained a compass which always accompanies him to meetings now, although it would seem the mystery of his Secret Santa may take a while to solve. Next year's gift - a course on how to use it ...

I was given a pot of irises to grow from my Santa, and I am pleased to say they are now shooting.



So, with the festivities behind us a group of us met, as usual on 26th December for the traditional Boxing Day walk. As it has been a while

since this tradition has been explained, you can read more about it on Page 17.

But for now onto January's meeting, and the spectacular "Casino Evening" that the Gabriels put on. This was an evening of roulette and cards accompanied by Ric's cocktail bar. The theme was *'smart with a touch of glitter'* and there were high heels and fox furs aplenty, and the odd bow tie or two, especially of the cardboard variety. The upstairs room at HQ positively swayed with the ambience of a cruise ship as we paid £2 to receive the chips in our hot little hands. Rachel declared she didn't know how to play roulette and then went on to swipe the board.



Various pink and blue cocktails were served by our friendly barman Alastair, whilst John (the banker) Gomme managed to dupe everyone on the pontoon table. Not to condone gambling and drinking (or even fox fur) in any particular way, the evening was a huge

success, and made a change to our traditional January Ten Pin Bowling night. Late comer Mike Benson was the winner at the end of the night, having made the most amount of chips and received a bottle of wine.



The SAS AGM was held in February, where Rachel stepped down having served 5 years as Secretary—many thanks Rachel.

The role will now be undertaken jointly by Tracy Reeve and Hazel Harkin. The rest of the committee remains unchanged with Tony Dabson - SAS Manager, Pauline Marrett - Treasurer, and committee members—Rachel Drake, Richard Gabriel and John Gomme.

Pauline Styles

Boxing Day Walk

“One of the comforting things about a long established Group is the traditions it has built up over the years. Our Boxing Day Walk is just such a tradition, of which we are justly proud.”

Bill White, March 1959

1950 was the first recorded entry of a walk from Abbots Langley to The Holly Bush which was instigated by Fred Dobson, Frank Hoadly, Jack Gentle, Colin Flint and Jack Botwright as a way of getting the Rover Crew out for fresh air after Christmas day's indulgences. They walked from Cecile Lodge which at the time was located at the top of Love Lane, opposite Abbots Langley School, across the fields through Tenaments Farm to The Holly Bush in Potters Crouch.

In the early days there were only men allowed to go and there was a traditional game of Cricket played on the dart board and a few pints paid for our of the “kitty” that Fred Dobson collected. The walk started at 10.30 and arrived to coincide with the pub opening. Closing was at 2pm sharp and then people were usually ferried home on various bikes and in cars.

1961 was the first mention of singing in Fred Dobson's account in the Woodsmoke.

“Over 40 people turned out at the Holly Bush, some 25 of them who walked. Lots of fun, singing and meeting old friends made it a memorable day. After the traditional photograph, the party broke up leaving 14 to bring up the rear. These 14 mostly wearing tea cosies for hats had a whale of a time getting home. Stopping at the “Bell” for further refreshments and another round of singing which was so appreciated by the rest of the customers that the hat went round and nearly £3 was collected for charity. Carol singing at the “known” stops en route to home, we arrived for Boxing Day lunch at 4'oclock.”

It was not until 1976 that ladies were allowed to go on the walk, and then only if they drank pints, to try to discourage them.

For some years now the event has had the same format. The group meets at 10.15 am and take a welcome photo. The party leaves dead on 10.30 am to walk across the fields, past Tenaments Farm and onto Kitty corner. Here the group pause to organise 'the Kitty' and take the traditional photo on the mount, making sure the sign post is turned the wrong way first.



Kitty Corner

On reaching The Holly Bush the group take over the reserved corner and say hello to the others already inside. The pub is packed to the rafters waiting for the group to arrive and many of these people, who have no connection with the Scout Group have come here for many years to celebrate the day and

sing together. Song sheets are given out, and then its glasses charged, a toast to "The Queen and Absent Friends" and the singing begins.

Traditionally the first song is always Yonder Blackbird as it mentions the Holly Bush, and this is followed by a swift half a dozen Christmas Carols. Next up is "Down by the Station", a ditty now performed by Nicola Trotman, who inherited the honour of singing it after her father "Butch" passed away, and she is accompanied by all of the ladies, complete with hand gestures.



Bib & Clive in good voice

Somewhere along the way Bib Butcher sings his rendition of Rule Britannia and the whole pub joins in the chorus, standing up to raise their glasses enthusiastically in the process.

Other favourites follow and Pete Linskey's music man is performed in a variety of different ways each year by Steve Flowers who inherited this after Pete died. A rousing chorus of Jerusalem is heard along the way, producing a tear or two in pride and remembrance, and this is usually followed by some other silly ditty like Lloyd George or Sir Jasper. And it wouldn't be the same if we didn't have a few "oggy's" and "bravo's" along the way as well.



It has been a tradition for so long that we've stopped counting how many years it had been going. I had a long standing argument with the

late Bryan Sharpe, who's favourite day of the year was Boxing Day. He insisted that 2010 was the 60th year, but I pointed out that it was no good to simply deduct 1950 from 2010 to get 60, as 1950 was the 1st year, and so on. So we missed the 60th anniversary in 2009 but celebrated it anyway in 2010. I bought him a large golden helium balloon with 60 on it which he proudly carried along the fields, until it bursted when it got snagged on a holly bush. However, there were more to blow up inside the pub itself and we had great fun batting them about the place.

After all the singing is finished the party, and it is a little like one by that time, leave the pub to walk back up the lane to Bedmond, pausing only at "pee corner" and to run up the sides of the bridge if they have the strength. As The White Horse is no longer a pub, they arrive at The Bell in Bedmond to say their fairwells and continue the long walk back to Abbots Langley High Street.

Once again we managed to miss a land mark this year as 2014 should have been the 65th anniversary. Should we carry on the tradition and celebrate that in 2015 or roll into onto the 70th in 2019? If you want to find out then you'd best come out and join us next year ...

Pauline



Lake Beavers

Last term was another busy, and more so, exciting one for the Lake Beavers! The Beavers were all excited to model their household recyclables into robots, monsters and fairies to name a few. This was of course in aid of the creative challenge badge that we have been working on this term. With not even a milk carton lid to spare, the models were sat up on the stage for the beavers to showcase their evening's work.

'What are your hobbies?', that was the hot topic of one evening at the scout hut. Beavers arrived with a huge array of pastimes to present to the group, with the ordinary, such as drawing, and the not so ordinary, such as eraser collections, put on show for one night only. After the curtains were drawn on an interesting show and tell session, talk turned to the then upcoming trip to Pets At Home. With excitement spread across each and every Beavers face, the tour commenced with half of the group going to the reptile house, and the rest to the rabbit and guinea pig section. The beavers were able to hold each of the fluffy and scaly creatures before moving on to fun facts about the animals they had met and then an opportunity to ask questions before moving on to the next section. The evening was definitely one that the beavers will not be forgetting any time soon.

Deep into October, with the start of winter only a matter of days away, it was time for a party. The Halloween costumes were out in force as an army of ghosts and



ghouls arrived at the H.Q for an evening of games and entertainment. Apple bobbing and musical statues were just a couple of the activities on offer that

evening before tucking in to an assortment of food and drinks. As the night drew to close and the face paint had worn off, the beavers were ready to go home and recover in time for the next big event on the beaver calendar: Cooking!



Beavers had their biscuit cutters at the ready as they prepared for a night of fun, baking Christmas themed biscuits. The beavers did everything, from making the dough from scratch, to adding individual finesse to each of their creations. Silver balls and sugar snowflakes littered the room after the beavers had finished perfecting their bake; they couldn't wait to tuck in to their festive delicacy.

As the final stretch of 2014 neared, so did the end of another term. After the annual Christingle service had passed it was time for the end of term party. A movie night was the pinnacle of what had been a great year for Lake Beavers, and what better film to get into the Christmas spirit than 'Ice Age: A Mammoth Christmas'.

If that wasn't enough to satisfy our beavers, a spread of seasonal treats had been provided too, the beavers really did indulge as they watched the film unfold. As the end credits rolled and parents arrived, another year at lake beavers was over, this also meant that a selection of the beavers would be collecting their Bronze Chief Scout Award.

The prestigious award was presented to: Alfie, Amar, Andrew, James.F, Nathan, and Toby.

Well done!

By James Cresswell
Young Leader at Lake Beavers

Hall Happenings

Monday	5.30 - 7.00 pm	Beaver Scouts (Lake)
Tuesday	5.30 - 7.00 pm	Beaver Scouts (River)
	7.45 - 9.45 pm	Abbo's Explorer Scouts
	8.00 - 10.00 pm	Ladies Guild (3rd in Month) 2pm Winter/7.30pm Summer
Wednesday	6.30 - 8.00 pm	Cub Scouts (Rainforest)
Thursday	5.30 - 7.00 pm	Beaver Scouts (Lagoon)
	7.30 - 9.30 pm	Scouts
Friday	5.30 - 7.00 pm	Cub Scouts (Jungle)
	8pm	Active Support (1st in Month)

Please note that this Woodsmoke is
now online to view and print at
www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk

Woodsmoke Editor

Pauline Styles

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1st Abbots Langley (3rd Watford North) Scout Group
www.abbotslangleyscouts.org.uk