

OCTOBER 2007

Woodsmoke

Special 200th Edition



Editorial

I am very pleased to announce in this Centenary year of Scouting that "Woodsmoke" has reached it's 200th Bi-Centennial Issue. In early 1908 the 1st Watford became the first group in the County and will celebrate it's 100th year next year. The original Troop of the 1st Abbots Langley formed in 1909 although the present group only existed from 1927 as sadly WW1 saw the demise of the original. With this in mind, I had the idea to compile a history of the group to commemorate the occasion. This has meant delving into lots of musty brown paper in the HQ archives where I have been reading articles from previous Woodsmokes. These magazines have provided a complete history of the group's activities and a wonderful feeling of the spirit of Scouting during that time.

In this special edition of Woodsmoke I have included it's history along with reports on the Centenary year and the many activities that the group have been involved in during that time. I hope you find it of interest.

The 1st Abbots Langley Group Magazine "Woodsmoke" was the brainchild of the late **Bill White**, to whom the upstairs meeting room at HQ is dedicated. The first issue was released in March 1954 and it was produced bi-monthly for a subscription fee of 6d an issue. Bill wrote the Editorial and the Group Scout Master Frank "Skip" Hoadly had a regular page entitled "Skip Speaks". There were reports from The Rover leader C.J. Botwright, the Senior Scout Master, Arthur Miles whose aim was to include articles by the boys and news of notices and events, The Cub Corner from Akela Miss Gladys Staines and the Old Scouts from Hon. Sec. Doug Read.

Through Bill's personal devotion, dedication and example the standard set was extremely high. Like many other things in scouting it was a fine example of voluntary effort and team spirit and for the first

"Brother Scouts and Friends

This really is a red letter day. The 1st Abbots Langley boys have stirred themselves and produced a Magazine. Well! Well! Of course, you all know how good we are at running Socials, parties and shows, but can we run a Magazine?

After many conferences, complete with ice packs on furrowed brows, we have awakened the necessary enthusiasm and agreed to have a go. Our contributors rushed for writing materials to produce their articles, and with dripping pens poised, are now feverishly awaiting the word go for the next issue.

But what about you? Can we count on your enthusiastic support? We hope you will find something interesting in our pages, and for those who are not yet connected with the groups activities perhaps we shall be able to arouse your curiosity, and eventually have you well and truly roped in to our family circle.

Well now, as we said earlier, we want your support for this new venture, and hope you will purchase your copy regularly, but this need not be all;

time in the history of the group, information could be circulated to give prior warning of events and happenings in a more formal manner, without slips of paper being lost.

In the 7th issue Bill published figures for the production of Woodsmoke issues thus far which showed a loss of 19/8 on the year. This he felt was acceptable as the magazine was not intended to be a profit making effort, but for the purpose of stimulating interest in the Group and in Scouting generally.

By November 1955 the yearly subscription for six issues was 3/- and at that point over 300 copies of each issue were being distributed which included about 60 copies sent to other Scout groups and Scouters in various parts of the country and abroad. Interestingly enough on an issue that is still topical today, by the 11th issue Bill had identified that the low response to the competitions was the result of the boys in the troop not reading the magazine. Instead of distributing copies at the meetings he started sending the magazine directly home to the parents with a plea that anyone interested in

"The local press were very kind to us, The Observer, Post, Hemel Hempstead Gazette, and Langley Times, all wish us success with our new venture, so lets keep it up chaps, and give them something to write about.

The production of our magazine is of course, like so many things in Scouting, a fine example of voluntary effort and team spirit.

Well, eventually we get the "bods" writing the various articles smoothed out and in due course all the copy rolls in. Then the fun starts. Who's got a typewriter? Who can type? What can we do about a duplicator? Old Scout Eddie Miller says his wife can type, so we load her up with the copy and some stencils, only to discover later, that she is running across the High Street umpteen times a day to borrow Mr. Lyon's typewriter when he isn't using it. However, Mrs Miller is made of the right stuff and eventually the stencils are ready.

Now for the duplicating. Skip says we can borrow his old flat duplicator. Did he say old? Surely this printed the communiqués for the battle of Hastings, but with help from Eddie, (incidentally, he had to obtain many late passes) and the assistance of my wife with one eye on the TV, we rolled out about 3000 pages.

Then our brand new covers arrived, hotly pursued by Doug Read, who got cracking so fast with the stitching machine he didn't even stop to take his coat off, that he broke the bally thing, and off we went scrounging again to borrow another.

Well of course as you all know we made it in time for the concert,

Scouting should read it. Imagine how much effort this must have taken by the volunteers who delivered it direct to the door.

Bill was keen on international issues and by November 1954 had a group magazine exchange going on with fourteen other groups from around the country. From it's inception Bill had an international following as he was also Group Treasurer and Hon Secretary of the International Scout Club. During his time as editor Bill sent copies of Woodsmoke internationally to such places as South Africa, Canada, Australia and Borneo and won two International awards.

Editors

Bill White	From March 1954	to July 1964	63 issues
Jack Ridgeway 1974	From September 1964		to August 56 issues
Derrick Flowers	From October 1974	to March 1980	23 issues
Brian "Biff" Pleasants	From March 1980	to September 1981	10 issues
Ken Harrison & Dave Weatherby 1982			January 1 issue
Kevin and Neil Handisyde 1983	From Spring 1982		to May 9 issues
Keith Moore	Summer 1995	to summer 2000	18 issues
Janet Sands	From October 2001	to February 2004	8 issues
Pauline Styles	From June 2004	to current	10 issues +

To the Editor of "Woodsmoke"

I understand this is the hundredth issue of this magazine. One hundred puffs of Woodsmoke is quite a record—hundreds of contributors, thousands of articles and millions of words, and all about you Abbots Langley lot !!!! This is a journalistic feat of which you can be justifiably proud.

My hearty congratulations to you all.

The next issue will start the second century. This will fit in very nicely with your new Headquarters. Just as a H.Q. is a place to plan from, so a magazine is a means by which you feel towards the outside world. The future success of the 44th will not necessarily be in Abbots Langley but much more likely in the contributions your members make in the community around you, in the Scout District of S.W. Herts and in the wider Christian Challenge which faces us all. May your magazine help your Group to look really wide.

Melville Balsillie

After Bill White died the role of Editor was taken over by Jack Ridgeway and he continued to published to the same high standard and reached its 100th Edition in October 1970. Jack was followed by Derrick Flowers and then Brian "Biff" Pleasants until September 1981 during which time he produced a Christmas Special! So having reached the 1980's there was then a slight hiccup with finding someone willing to commit to the task and Ken Harrison & Dave Weatherby produced an issue once more in January 1982, followed by Kevin and Neil Handisyde to May 1983. Then the magazine really floundered through the next twelve years when it would appear no-one could be found to take the job on until the Summer of 1995 when the GSL Keith Moore volunteered to relaunch it. He produced a quarterly newsletter covering 18 issues until the summer of 2000 and he sadly died in April 2001. In October 2001 Janet Sands came to the rescue for 8 editions and published once a term until February 2004 when she decided it would be best for someone nearer the ground to take over as she could not keep in touch with the group as easily.

It was June 2004 when I foolishly volunteered for the role, and realised that not only did I have a huge tradition to keep up, but I was also automatically elected to the Group Executive Committee and thus also became part of the decision making process and more volunteering!

During my past 3 years involvement in Woodsmoke I have shied away from long wordy editorials but focussed on each section's activities during the Term and the enjoyment and achievements they have accomplished. I hope with the introduction of colour over the last two years that many of the Group have enjoyed seeing their photograph in print.

At the beginning I only used to compile the newsletter and the photocopying was done elsewhere. Sadly when that arrangement finished it meant I was back to Bill White's original situation of having to photocopy about 175 editions each term for circulation. A job that

The Chairman Speaks

I would like to congratulate the editor of Woodsmoke, and all the previous editors, some posthumously for the publishing of 200 editions of Woodsmoke. I can remember the start. The title was taken from Rudyard Kipling's verse of 1897 *The Feet of the Young Men*

"He who hath smelt the wood smoke at twilight,
who hath heard the Birch - log burning ..."

The magazine struggled through the sad and early demise of its first two editors. I had many discussions with Bill White the first editor, or were they arguments. Mainly as to whether we should stay in our timber and corrugated iron hut, or should we start to fund to build a new Headquarters. I am pleased to say that the younger element won, and with the full support of all the older members and with the help of most of the parents we built the hall we have now, all with voluntary labour forming our own building company.

During Jack Ridgeway's editorship we had a small complaint, that by the time Woodsmoke arrived through your door the items were somewhat dated. And so a few of us got together with the hand cranking Gestetna machine and staplers one Saturday afternoon. We then waited for the football results and printed them on the front page, and with the help of some Scouts, rushed out and delivered them. Watford was in the third division I think. This quietened the critics for a while. Bill White had a canny way of getting articles from leaders and scouts etc when the common excuse was 'I just don't have time'. He would be on the phone to them and say, "but if you did have time what would you say". Sure enough in the next edition your article appeared.

Bill White was a great chap, as previously mentioned in this edition he was our group treasurer, and also secretary of the International Scout Club in London. He managed to recruit some Abbots Langley Rover Scouts as members, including myself. It was at one of these evening meetings that I met, held and kissed the hand of Robert Baden-Powell's wife, Olave Baden-Powell of Gilwell. Not many can say that, and I owe that great honour to Bill White, Founder Editor of Woodsmoke.

Long may we smell the Woodsmoke at twilight and hear the Birch log burning!

Clive's Chat

Wow, what a summer we've had and I'm not talking about the lousy weather. It's been none stop in terms of events, activities and achievements.

We've had more Chief Scouts Awards achieved than ever before. A total of 8 Cubs completed their Silver Chief Scouts Award. They are Alex Babb, Greg Benson, Liam Goodman, Sean Hinks, Kieran Irons, James Landon, Sean Moore and Sam Pearson. The previous 6 months have seen 9 Gold Chief Scouts Awards completed which was followed up by another 7 this term. It was a sight for sore eyes to see all the Awards presented to the 16 Scouts and Explorer Scouts on 12th July. The 7 who attained the Award this term are Joseph Bernie, Kieran Coan, James Hendrey, Sam Kidd, George Styles, Joe Turberfield and Chris Ward. Congratulations to all Cubs and Scouts for your commitment and high level of success, and good luck with your future accomplishments.



My apologies to Matthew Gentry who was missed off of the photo due to lack of a wider lens on the camera! V. sorry Matt "Ed"

Following on from the Centenary Camp in May, which I mentioned in the last issue, there have been a number of other activities and events to celebrate the Centenary. Helen and her Beavers took part in their first Giant Sleepover, a national event involving thousands of children across the country. They had a great evening of games and crafts, and the boys made camp for the night in the upstairs of the HQ. Yours truly was left to guard the door (my snoring is enough to frighten anyone). My thanks to Lyn Lythaby, Clive Hurdle, Laura Ashton, Julia Wood and Adam Welch for helping with the event.

The Scout Troop and Explorer Scout Unit had a very enjoyable combined summer camp near Taunton in Somerset in July. They climbed, caved, kayaked, pony trekked, hiked, bivouacked, swam, sailed and, on the very odd occasion, even slept, on a non stop activity filled week. My thanks to all the Leaders, parents and Fellowship members who helped make it a great and pleasurable camp.

There was a good attendance at the Sunrise celebrations at Cassiobury Park on 1st August. There were 500 people from across the District who took part in the evening which culminated in a torch lit ceremony and the relay of a flaming torch to Ivanhoe Beacon by the Explorer Scouts across the District.

A number from the Group (yes, you were all invited) also spent a day visiting the World Scout Jamboree, a tented city covering Hylands Park with 40,000 scouting members from 216 nations. It was truly mind blowing to see the organisation involved in such an event and to take in the atmosphere. It was a superb day including a live stage show, visits to numerous exhibition tents from all over the world, national dances and cuisine and various activities. The most popular tent was run by the Germans....a beer kellar. Well it was a hot day.

Well that's enough for this 200th bumper edition. As you can see, there have been lots going on in this Centenary year and still loads to come. Good luck particularly to the Albatross Explorer Unit who are entering 3 teams into the Peak Assault in October, a gruelling competition to test their best orienteering skills and physical prowess.

Clive Winder
Scouter in Charge

Scout Troop Top Achievements

The Summer Term was incredibly busy for the Scout Troop with lots achieved, including 28 various Challenge Awards and 7 more Gold Chief Scouts Awards to add to the 9 completed over the previous 6 months. Congratulations to -----

Teanne Coan, Jasper Gillespie and Max Halcomb on completing their Outdoor Challenge on the Summer Camp,

Thomas Awcock, Teanne Coan, Jack Longbottom, George Isherwood and Bradley Weston on completing their Adventure Challenge,

Matthew Bowden, Teanne Coan, Jasper Gillespie, Max Halcomb, Ellie Hanson, Matthew Johnson, Sam Kidd and Andrew Sturgess on completing their Expedition Challenge on the Summer Camp,

James Hendrey and Daniel Lowrie on completing their Creative Challenge,

Kieran Coan, James Hendrey, Sam Kidd, George Styles, Joe Turberfield and Chris Ward on completing their Fitness Challenge,

Sam Kidd, George Styles, Joe Turberfield and Chris Ward on completing their Community Challenge (my garden looks lovely),

James Hendrey and Marc Redmond on completing 50 Nights Away,

Kieran Coan and Daniel Lowrie on completing 35 Nights Away,

And finally, to Joseph Bernie, Kieran Coan, James Hendrey, Sam Kidd, George Styles, Joe Turberfield and Chris Ward for the ultimate achievement, completing their Gold Chief Scouts Award, the highest Award in Scouts.

Well Done
Clive

Centenary Camp Lees Wood 25th to 28th May 2007



Team members and Leaders proudly displaying the gates that say
"Welcome to Greece"



Camp Activities



The Beavers visit to the Centenary camp. Wet but happy, after they had eaten lunch they sang the "Bumble Bee" song.

The Banquet—For which we proudly received 1st prize
(well done Tony)



Ian Leach received a Greek welcome and was fed grapes by Jo



Johnson
The Greek Team with



Ian Leach
Pauline Marret with the
Banquet dessert



Camp fire songs under canvass before the Explorers (seen in the background with their Viking helmets) burnt their long boat.



Later we had to resort to hanging the Chairman out to dry it was so wet.



And lastly we played



Centenary camp

An Explorers Story

By Julia Wood

The day for the Centenary camp weekend arrived. The weather forecast was bad but our spirits were high. Although only Me, Jack McCarthy and Tom Lambert turned up. We camped along with other units from the District, upholding the whole idea of Explorers, and soon became one big happy family helping each other out and making new friends.

The opening ceremony started with flag break, followed by all the Districts joining in traditional songs around the camp fire, ending with a great and unexpected firework display.



After such a late night the next morning's early start was not easy for some, especially as the weather was turning. Our role was to assist and instruct all the younger members in the art of canoeing, rafting and sailing at Bury Lake.

The rain came down down down on Saturday night flooding areas of the campsite and reducing others to a mud bath, fortunately our sub camp was in a dry part. Nobody was enthusiastic about getting up on Sunday morning but with a nice warm meal inside us we headed back to the lake for a repeat performance, nobody caring this time about falling in the lake as we were already drenched. At lunch time, rain stopped play, so those of us down at the lake who were still going strong at this point, made a large Viking longboat, which represented our sub camp country Sweden?!?!?!?

All the sub camps had a theme so there was not a Baden Powell scout insight. Instead, there was Clive and his merry men dressed like Greek gods, others dressed as Aussies with cork hats; at least it helped identify who was who and encouraged the friendly rivalry.

That night finished with a banquet each country eating its traditional food, in our case Swedish meatballs. Then everybody marched in ceremony through the woods, our group carrying our longboat and me blowing the horn to taunt the rival groups. Then everybody gathered round as we set fire to our master piece temporarily drying our clothes as well, before returning back to our tents.

Summer Camp at Bishops Lydeard



We left for Bishops Lydeard at 11.00 am hoping for a nice easy journey - well you never get one of them in the Scout minibus, especially when Clive is driving! Six hours later we arrived tired and stiff. Still it was great to be there and we soon set up our tents and scooped our dinner down. We explored our camp site and sat down and had a group chat about the week ahead.

The week was action packed with lots of different fun activities - canoeing, sailing, hiking, pony trekking, climbing, abseiling and bivi building. We also did swimming and shopping.

Best moment - staying up in the bivis.

Worse moment - stacking it 100 yards from the start of the hike when my laces got caught on my boots - LOL !!!

Funniest moment - capsizing the sailing boat, hanging on for dear life and then finally dropping into the cold water.

Tastiest moment - cooking and eating pizzas !

Thanks to all the leaders, helpers and cooks for all their hard work. We all had a wonderful week.

Matt Johnson

Summer Camp July 2007 **(from a Parent's perspective)**

It was my first camp with Scouts and I had no idea what to expect as I wasn't even a Brownie when I was younger.

We met in the car park and were loaded in what seemed to be a pretty quick time and all of a sudden we were off. The journey was terrible and took us nearly 6 hours.

When we arrived it was all hands on deck to set up camp (this was great for me as I was starting to feel a bit like a spare wheel) so that the BBQ dinner could be started.

The weather wasn't great all week, we had to deal with intermittent showers of rain and some quite heavy downpours but that didn't stop us doing any of the activities.

I enjoyed watching the scouts doing the activities, succeeding and in some cases excelling, I managed to gain a few new skills myself. I learnt how to make a cardboard oven, cook without utensils and set up a bivouac as well as having a go at sailing, horse riding, caving (which I must say I was abysmal at as I let my claustrophobia get the better of me and had to come out without even reaching the first cave!). I went in a Canadian canoe with 2 of the Explorers and traversed the 'rapids' upstream which took a lot of teamwork and then down the weir which ended up in a very graceful dunking.

I must say that I was in awe of the Explorers who did their 2 day hike with an overnight camp as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award, I can't imagine how difficult it would be carrying all their equipment, plus the extra present (a brick) hidden in their rucksacks from the leaders! I had found the normal hike difficult enough. I was really pleased with myself a couple of days later when I did the hike from the Beacon in the pouring rain, my group were fantastic in supporting each other and we all kept upbeat and finished. I was grateful to have my own personal Tom Tom (2 of the Explorers) who kept us more or less on track, as my map reading is not the greatest.

Nights sat beside the fire gave a chance for chilling and chatting, the only thing I felt I missed out on was camp fire songs.

I was inaugurated into the Banquet Evening and joined in with the party games after listening to Ed's gavel proclaiming the toasts.

On Saturday I was exhausted but it was a great feeling of having been part of a group who had worked hard, had fun and enjoyed each others company, I will not hesitate to do it again.

Michelle Luck

Explorer's Summer Camp

Fred Sugden

This year the summer camp was held in Bishops Lydeard, Somerset. The campsite where we stayed was large and spacious, with two campfire circles and a large field where we pitched our tents. During the week we took part in a range of activities including Climbing, Kayaking, Caving, Sailing, and Swimming. Also all the Explorers on camp took part in the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze expedition. This involved a two day hike, first to a different campsite where we stayed overnight, then on the next day we hiked to a car park where we were picked up in the minibus. The hike took us through the Quantock Hills. The scenery was beautiful until the second day when we had poor visibility and fog whilst still up on the hills. However, thanks to good map reading within the team we got down to the pick up point without any major problems besides blisters. Every Explorer finished the expedition successfully and everybody enjoyed it (I think), as we did the usual camp activities like outdoor cooking and making bivouacs. Finally to end the week we had a banquet which is always a memorable occasion with good food and plenty of games that return year after year. However all the above would not have been possible if all the leaders, instructors, caterers, and helpers had not put the effort into making it happen. Roll on the next camp!

DIARY DATES

October

5th	Talk on Digital Photography - HQ	Fellowship
7th	Beaver Bangers	Beavers
10th	Jumble Sale	ALL
12th – 14th	Hertfordshire Peak Assault	Explorers
13th	Jumble Sale	ALL
16th	Talk on 60's & 70's - Mrs Forrester	Ladies Guild
19th—21st	St Brievals Weekend	Fellowship
21st	Scout Triathlon	Scouts
27th	Cub Quiz at HQ	Cubs

November

9th	Games Evening	Fellowship
10th/11th	Build course for Green Beret	Fellowship/Explorers
11th	Remembrance Day Parade	ALL
16th – 18th	County Green Beret	Scouts
17th	Run Green Beret assault course	Fellowship/Explorers
19th	Executive Meeting	Exec Committee
20th	Quiz	Ladies Guild
24th	Christmas Market	ALL
24th	Festival of Scouting	ALL
24th	District Volleyball Tournament	Cubs

December

1st	Pantomime – Watford Palace Theatre	ALL
5th	Family Christmas Charity Market	Cubs
7th	Mince Pie Tasting	Fellowship
8th	Night of Lights – Phasels Wood	ALL
10th	Christingle – St Lawrence Church	ALL
12th	Hollywood Bowl	Cubs
15th - 16th	Weekend to North Wales	Fellowship
18th	Quasar	Explorers
18th	Christmas Party	Ladies Guild

January 2008

4th	Ten Pin Bowling	Fellowship
21st	Executive Meeting	Exec Committee

Abbots Langley Scout Fellowship

2006-2007 has been another very successful year where the biggest income was made at the Abbots Langley Carnival and the hotdogs were sold out in record time. The centenary camp proved a challenge but everyone rallied round and with the parents, leaders and fellowship working as a team nothing seemed to faze us. A good weekend was had by all, though I'm still not sure all the kit is totally clean or ever will be.

Currently the Fellowship are planning a number of weekends away, the next being late in October to St Briavals Castle followed in December by a Christmas weekend away. Places are still available, especially for St Briavals where we hope to have a medieval banquet on Saturday night.

We also have a full itinerary of activities for our evenings which are on the first Friday of the month. You will find a list of these on the diary dates page. We are always glad to see new faces so don't be worried about not knowing people as most of the leaders are members and you will have seen the other members at activities or fundraising events. Please do come along as all group members are welcome and families can be catered for.

2007-2008 will bring the Group and Fellowship a number of challenges which will need the backing and assistance of parents. The Jumble Sale will soon be upon us, the Christmas market and not forgetting the family camp. Please remember the fellowship is another section of the group and are there to enjoy these activities as much as you. We need the support of all the family and where possible please spare some time to assist as there are always background jobs to be done. It's not always about looking after groups of children. If everyone can spare 20-30 min's to assist in washing up or preparation of food, running an activity or perhaps



ALBBATROSS E.S.U.

Last year saw the Unit fully established at last – it was a long haul but we got there in the end! The accompanying photo shows the proud night when the first group of Explorers and the leaders were invested by the District Commissioner, Ian Leach and the



ACC Explorers, Dan Nathan.
We're almost there - our first Explorer Unit is in sight!

Alison Redmond and Rob Lambert are sworn in as Explorer leaders



Over the past year the Unit has enjoyed many activities including, to name just a few; climbing, canoeing, archery, survival techniques and even had a great raft building competition at Bury Lake in Rickmansworth against Hemel Explorers. Alongside the Unit Leader Alison Redmond and Assistant Unit Leader Rob Lambert, Explorers have attended both the Centenary Camp and the Summer Camp with the Scouts, where some completed a 30 mile overnight hike for their Duke of Edinburgh's (D of E) Bronze Award and a group joined the Jamboree visit in August. As well as the D of E, Explorers are also working toward their Platinum Chief Scouts Award. Some have also helped out at Cubs and Scouts as part of the award. Many Explorers have already joined the D of E Scheme and a couple of the Explorer parents, Gordon Gentry and Mandy Hendry have generously volunteered to help run the scheme for the Unit.

This session the ranks of the Albatross Explorer Unit have swelled to 33, with many new Explorers joining and to assist with the organisation the Unit now has four sub groups, Columbus, Cook, Drake and Scott. At a well-attended meeting just before the new term started many more parents volunteered to help with what is now a very big Unit. For it to be successful and for it to function as it should, parents help is vital, so if you were unable to attend that meeting please see the Explorer Unit Leader Alison Redmond who will provide you with a 'Parents Help' form. An Executive Committee has also been set up to ensure the smooth running of the Unit and again many parents volunteered to join and help out.

Night hikes, bike rides and a high ropes course are among the activities planned for the next session so there are lots of things to look forward to. In October three teams from the Albatross Unit are entering the Peak Assault for the first time. In September nine Explorers completed a training weekend organised by the District in the Brecon Beacons, and all did outstandingly well, even beating the Network team. They
Julia Sugden



Here is our group at the entrance to the 21st World Scout Jamboree, which formed one of the largest international gatherings in the world, involving more countries than the Olympic games and enabling Scouts from countries who have



Our Jamboree Visit

Julia Sugden

Sunday 5th August was a scorching hot day, one of the few we've had this summer when around twenty-five of us (scouts, explorers and parents), set off by coach from Abbots Langley to the Centenary World Scout Jamboree at Hylands Park in Essex. We arrived at an airfield about 20 minutes away from the main Jamboree site, along with hundreds of other people from Scout troops from the length and breadth of the UK. Everywhere we went Scouts of many nationalities welcomed us, wearing tall purple and red "Dr Seuss" style hats and who provided us with a taste of the friendly atmosphere we encountered all day at the Jamboree.

As you might expect from Scouts, the organisation of the transfer from the car park to the site was excellent considering the numbers of people arriving (we counted 50 coaches while we were waiting) and went without a hitch. Each coach was assigned a Scout from overseas to welcome us and give us a little talk about what to expect during the day. Alessandria was our guide, a young Scout from Italy who managed to impart several pages worth of information, (some of which we understood) - not an easy task when English was not her first language.

At Hylands Park we were welcomed by even more hat-wearing Scouts and paused to have our picture taken at the entrance. Once on site we were amazed to see the sheer scale of the event, it even had it's own Sainsbury's supermarket and cash points! Each participating country had it's own designated area and it was fantastic to meet Scouts from around the world to see



In the cool of the Souk are Scouts Christopher Winder, Henry Sugden and Joe Lambert



And drinking mint tea are Alison Redmond (Explorer Leader) Pauline

Styles (Woodsmoke Editor) and Sharon Duffy (Assistant Scout Leader)



The English Tent

what they had done for the Jamboree. Only six countries did not take part - what an achievement it was bringing everyone together! From Iraq and Afghanistan to Sweden and



Venezuela, there were Scouts from every corner of the globe. It



seemed strange to see some of the Nigerian Scouts wearing long white flowing cotton robes and a little skull cap but with a scarf and a woggle around their necks! Just a few highlights of the

day follow, as there were too many wonderful sights to tell you about them all; taking tea in a Souk with the Moroccan Scouts; watching the Ferris Wheel and Banana Boat, constructed using just logs and rope by the Swedish contingent; seeing the





Mexican Scouts performing traditional dances; getting our names signed by a Chinese Scout leader on our commemorative fans and sampling an ice cold beer in the most amazing Black

My Jamboree Experience of a Lifetime!!!

The Build Up.....

Unsure of the challenges we would face, George Styles, Dominic Benson, Jack Edwards and I turned up at Lees Wood, early one Saturday morning in April 2006. We were there to participate in the selection weekend for the 21st World Jamboree. The weekend consisted of various activities and team building exercises. It ended with a gruelling interview. After that, all that was left to do was wait. Wait for the letter in the post saying whether or not you had a place. I anxiously waited for news and was worried by the lateness of the delivery. I was over the moon when I finally got my letter. I had got a place!

From then on, various training camps and meetings were arranged over the next year, until finally we arrived at our last one at Thriftwood in Essex. This was the best one so far, as we now had all of our Jamboree gear and everyone was buzzing with excitement. No one could wait.

The Departure.....

It was Thursday 26th July 2007 and I pulled up in the Hatfield House car park, where the coaches awaited us. An hour and a bit was spent taking group photos, family photos, Hertfordshire photos and any other photo you could think of.

Our bags were loaded and we sat, nervously and excitedly, waiting for the coaches to pull away. Waving our last goodbyes through the windows as the coaches disappeared into the distance, the talk and laughter soon turned towards thoughts about what might happen at the Jamboree.

The Arrival.....

Our passes were checked and our scarves were issued as we set off along the road taking us to the entrance. We arrived and started to make our way up towards the huge white tents and thousands of other scouts. The site was HUGE! I had never seen anything like it before. This was to be my home for the next thirteen days - I hoped I'd like it.

Settling In.....

The partying went on until late that evening. Football games were played, new friends were made and a years worth of waiting was finally over. We were soon briefed on the up and coming days. With activities from dawn until dusk, we quickly discovered that we were going to be very tired.....up at 6am, bed at 11:30pm and non-stop action in between.

Over the next few days, participants from New Zealand and Australia to America and Canada arrived and started to pitch camp. Our neighbours were a troop from Texas, a unit from Luxembourg, a regiment from Germany and a group from Poland. Once everyone had got their bearings, people including myself set off to find some foreigners. Searches like this were never hard, as everyone there was friendly and eager to find us as well. It was early days and we were already experiencing a multi-cultural camp. Luckily, most Scouts spoke some English, so I didn't need to embarrass myself!

Some great memories I have from the Jamboree, are with people from all corners of the globe. Just a few of my first friends were from Luxembourg, Brazil, America, Japan, Germany, Pakistan and Malta. As the days flew by and adventures were completed the Jamboree really was in full swing.

Jamboree Action.....

There was no shortage of action, whether you were on site at one of the many exciting zones (Elements, Trash, Faith, Global Development Village, Aquaville or Terraville); or off-site at the Gilwell Adventure, Splash in Suffolk or Starburst Community Service in Essex.

Having some choice time at the Jamboree was a real plus. It meant that we could spend time catching up on sleep, getting emergency sweets from Sainsbury's or my personal favourite..... **BADGE SWAPPING!!!** Throughout the event I was constantly back and forth from the badge swapping tent, normally carrying with me another bundle of foreign badges. One badge though, that I couldn't get by swapping, was the Friendship Badge. I worked hard carrying out all the requirements and eventually completed it, along with four other friends of mine from Malta, Brazil, Luxembourg and America. I am very proud of that badge.

Entering the final week, England and America started to become friendly rivals. Disagreements to do with American football and Rugby became apparent when both countries wanted to teach the other their own sport. It was decided that the only way to settle the argument was to play each other. Two games were held. One of American football, the other of rugby. Teams were picked and, rather worryingly, so was I. Being the smallest in my unit I was seen as a quick, nimble and athletic rugby player (as if). The others were all six feet tall at least! I was soon to be squashed, tackled and generally battered. I accepted the challenge. England won the American football match and America won the rugby. It seemed the dispute would continue anyway.

The Sunrise Promise.....

On the 1st August a live link was set up between Hylands Park and Brownsea Island, where a scout representative from all over the world renewed their promise in their own language. It was an amazing event and I feel privileged to have been there. Baden Powell's grandson then gave a moving speech.

Closure

After two weeks of exhilarating camping, it had to come to an end. Now was the time to make your best swaps! I managed to come home with beret from Thailand, a Scout shirt from America, a T-shirt from Brazil and lots of scarves and badges from just about everywhere.

The closing ceremony was approaching and was soon upon us all. I had a surprise waiting for me there, as an interview I had done that day had been filmed and was shown on the big screens! It was like I was famous and I was hoisted up by a big American friend on to his shoulders and soon found myself doing a small crowd surf. It was BRILLIANT!

It was time to say goodbye. That was harder than I thought it would be. We all exchanged contact details and I talk to my Jamboree friends often. Each site was packing away and by the morning my American friends had gone. They had left during the night to start their long journey home. Everywhere looked deserted. It was time for us to pack our last belongings and start our own journey back to Tolmers.

Heading home.....

Now that I was on the coach I started looking forward to getting home to normal civilisation and seeing everyone again. Back home the first thing that struck me was being inside, having electric lights and luxuriously soft chairs to sit on and not forgetting.....a bed. I was well and truly home.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has helped and supported me, especially those who helped out with events to do with fundraising, it was much appreciated. It was great that some families managed to visit the site and lovely for me as I got to see familiar faces and some of my scout friends. Hopefully, at some point, I'll be able to show everyone some of my photos and swaps.

Jonathan Benson



Cubs, Scouts and Explorers who visited the Jamboree and met up with Jonathan (in yellow)

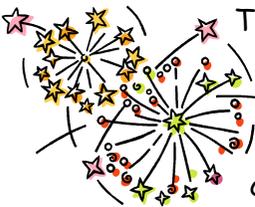


News from Cubs...

Another busy term at Cubs, with lots of fun, lots of challenges and adventure.....and unfortunately, lots of RAIN! This proved to be the greatest challenge of all, as every meeting was outdoors, with a few taking place underground in the Phasels Wood pot holes. You can just imagine the state of everyone that night. The pedal cars at Phasels are another outdoor favourite with the Cubs. The venue may be more Bedrock than Brands Hatch, but when the children get behind the steering wheel they drive like Stirling Moss (or for you younger readers, Lewis Hamilton)!



With the arrival of James Awcock from Beavers (big welcome to James), our grand total of Cubs for the Summer Term was 33. For anyone who may not already know, Cubs come with built-in excess energy to burn off, especially on Wednesday evenings, so parental help is essential in order to maintain a safe, happy and creative environment for everyone. We are very lucky at Cubs to have great support from parents who regularly volunteer to assist at meetings. Thank you everyone who has helped in any way and we hope that we can rely on your continued support in the future.



The District Centenary Camp was FANTASTIC! The week-end kicked off with a fabulous firework display in the fields, lighting up the sky and sending the local wildlife scuttling for cover. The days were action-packed, with a big variety of activities for the children to try out.

Despite this (you know what's coming).....when it came to bedtime, they were STILL full of life! Twenty two Cubs attended and for a few of them it was their first ever camp. What a first experience it turned out to be! Worried that the dreadful weather conditions would put them off camping for life, we offered them the chance to cut their losses and go home a night early. A few took up the offer, but the rest bravely stuck it out, singing songs and telling jokes in the event tent amid an atmosphere of camaraderie and adventure, refusing to let the elements outside dampen their spirits. It's exactly that spirit kindled between children and adults that makes a Camp so worthwhile and memorable. If you haven't done one before, make sure you sign up for the next one.

We had a great team of parent helpers from Cubs on the Centenary Camp, who were involved from start to finish. The task of making our camp gateway was given to the Cubs and, as the theme for our camp was Greece, we set about making a pair of grand 9 feet tall Grecian pillars, lit impressively by flaming torches. It's amazing what can be achieved with batten, cardboard, old paint, sponges and garden candles.....but when you have a team of parents with lots of inspiration, creativity and skill (yeah right), it's no surprise at all! A HUGE thank you, therefore, to the 'design team', who were, Dave Goodman, Jo Johnson, Alison Redmond, Mark Sherwin, Martin Tearle and Michael and Aisling Benson.

Other activities last term included backwoods cooking at Lees Wood, a quiz night run by the Silver Award Cubs, tracking skills at Whipendell Woods and a Centenary activity - 'Bring a Friend' at Lees Wood. This particular meeting turned out to be a really enjoyable one. We were blessed with a rare dry spell,

which meant that we could set up a circuit of bases in the woods. Most Cubs brought along a friend from home or school and so gained their Bring a Friend badge for the Centenary Scarf. Bases included a treasure hunt, quiz corner, team challenges, camp fire songs and good old wellie throwing! The evening must have gone down well with the friends, because we now have a few new names on the waiting list!

We managed to organise opportunities for all four of the Centenary Scarf badges to be achieved. Congratulations to those children who have completed the full set, you can wear them with pride. Another award gained during the summer term was the Outdoor Challenge Award presented to Kieron Irons, Danny Brocklehurst, Jeremy Cannock, Scott Denton, Ellen Hurdle and Joshua Davies - well done to you all!



It's always good to see Cubs undertaking badges at home and last term we were able to award James Allan the Book Reader and Hobbies badges, Michael Bell the Martial Arts badge, Greg Benson the DIY and Faith badges and Scott Denton the Stage 2 Swimmer's badge. (Apologies if we've missed anyone off the list!). They're good fun to do and your mums love sewing, so why don't you choose a badge and get cracking.

In July, the ten oldest Cubs went on a week end camp to Lees Wood (Sam and Danny you were missed!). This was, in part, to help prepare them for some of the skills needed in Scouts. It was a great week end and you can read all about it in Jeremy's report. The Cubs who went on the Leavers' Camp in July, gained their Map Reader and Camper badges and boy, did they have to work hard to gain the Camper badge! Congratulations.



We ended the term with the popular family barbeque at Lees Wood. Early booking meant that we could enjoy the privacy and freedom of the Les Willis Field - a must have for next year. The weather was fabulous, the company was great and everyone had a lovely time. Thank you for your generous donations towards the cost of the food - a staggering £140 was dropped in the pot, which will be put towards squash and other materials used at our weekly meetings.

Norman Brandon (ADC) came to present badges and certificates to the boys who achieved their Silver Award, the highest award in Cubs. Well done to Alex Babb, Greg Benson, Josh Faulks, Liam Goodman, Sean Hinks, Kieron Irons, Rhys Jenkins, James Landon, Sean Moore and Sam Pearson. We said goodbye and good luck to those boys, along with Danny Brocklehurst and Jeremy Cannock, who have now all moved up to Scouts. With twelve Cubs leaving at the same time, we are now looking to the remaining Cubs to take on the vacant roles of Sixers and Seconders. Hopefully, there will be lots of Cubs trying to impress us this term!

Happy Cubbing!

Chris (CSL)

Jo (Pack Assistant)

Aisling
(ACSL)

Cub Leavers' Camp

On Friday 6th July, ten Cubs arrived at Lees Wood to start their Leavers' Camp to prepare them for Scouts.

Firstly, we all helped to put up the tents. After we had finished with the tents we took our things into the tents and unpacked. I was in the first tent with Sean, Josh, Alex and Rhys. Then we had some fun time before bed - Chase the Ace card game and Supper.

The next day, tents still standing, our tent was the first up about two hours before everyone else. When the adults eventually woke up they prepared breakfast. We had eggy-bread - Yummy! After we finished breakfast we had to wash up and dry our bowls, plates and cutlery. We finished learning about maps and we did a game using our map skills. We had words stuck onto the windows of the gazebo. You had to find the place on the map using co-ordinates, and one team-member was then able to run to the gazebo and bring back the correct word. It was fun. We also had a compass and in two teams had to find signs and follow them, and the first team back won and got a prize. Then we built a bivouac - a little tent made out of leaves and wood. Believe me it's hard work! Back at camp we had free time. We lovingly prepared our own

jacket potatoes but unfortunately, Chris overcooked them in the fire.

That night, before we went to bed, we had an entertainment show, where we all laughed and joked and one or two of us even sang songs. It was great fun.

When we woke up the next morning, tents still standing - but not for long, we had breakfast - more eggy-bread!! Yum, yum - it was time to pack up. We all took the tents down. Adults started to take the gazebo down while most of the Cubs played rounders. But after a while we all had to help the adults... which was a shame because my team was winning. When we had finally packed up, we got into the bus and drove back to the Scout hut. When we reached it, we unloaded the trailer and helped pack away. We were then allowed to phone our own parents to come and collect us.

Thank you to the adults who camped.

Although, at times hard work, it will help us at Scouts and was great fun.

Jeremy Cannock



THE BEAVERS GIANT SLEEPOVER

Last term the beavers + one cub (ex beaver) took part in a giant sleepover at the Scout HQ. This was extremely successful and everyone who attended had great fun! The evening consisted of many activities which included decorating t-shirts, watching videos, playing games, making fathers day cards and decorating a pint glass for a present and finally a MIDNIGHT FEAST! This is something the beavers enjoyed tremendously (and leaders and helpers!)!! After all these activities the boys finally got washed and changed for bed with the help of their sleep over packs they were issued with which, contained lots of goodies to aid their giant sleepover!, and finally got their heads down in their base camp upstairs for a few hours sleep, before being woken up bright and early, for breakfast and more games.

Needless to say that the sleepover was completely action packed and was enjoyed I can assume by all who were there! I certainly did!

I think on behalf of the Beavers we would all like to thank Helen and Clive for organising the event, Lin who had all breaks covered with food and drinks and helped supervise the messy activities and finally to the parents who came to help.

Laura Ashton

Helen Welch
Beaver Leader



The Sleepover Beaver Colony!



The Beavers Watching an episode of 'Horrid Henry' on DVD



The many sleeping bags set upstairs!

Red Lodge making their fathers day cards.



Playing a fun game of "fish and chips"! Here they are pretending to be fried eggs!

Hall Happenings

Tuesday	Beaver Scouts Ladies Guild (Third in the Month) Explorer Scouts
Wednesday	Cub Scouts
Thursday	Scouts 1st Abbots Langley Brownies
Friday	Fellowship (First in the Month)

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this very special edition of Woodsmoke, whether it be writing articles, taking photos or just participating and helping in the activities so that we have stories to tell and memories to remember. Too many to mention but you all know who you are and a big pat on the back to you.

And finally I would like to include my own special thanks to all those strong lads on the Centenary camp who I sent out endless times to fill up the water barrel to keep the urn going all weekend. How would we have managed without our hot tea, coffee and hot chocolate ...

Woodsmoke Editor

Pauline Styles



1st Abbots Langley (3rd Watford North) Scout Group