

Trustees Annual report 2009-2010

5<sup>th</sup> Beckenham South Scout Group

reg. charity number 1011301

[thefifth.org.uk](http://thefifth.org.uk)

## 5<sup>th</sup> Beckenham South Scout Group 2009-2010

Busy sections from beavers to scouts combined with an excellent relationship with our partnered explorer unit gave the kids a fantastic twelve months and challenged the leaders with more nights away, bigger adventures and even more time commitments.

The Beaver programme of three sleepovers per year is a roaring success. The youngsters leave the section ready for the camps that await them in cubs. Lisa, Gary and the two Elaines along with CJ their young leader ran nightly fun weekly meetings and weekend events that included a trip to Colchester Zoo, a day at Biggin Hill Airfield and a Chef School. The Beckenham Vultures Explorer Unit helped the beavers run a Sports Evening.

The Two cub packs are now running with their new leadership teams and Helen has moved into her role as Chil Pack Akela with the support of Tim as her Baloo. The two packs share a programme as well as their camps. Whitsun Camp is still their big camp of the year but a smaller April "mini camp" was added to the programme this year to help prepare the younger cubs for the 3 day camp at the end of May.

Like the beavers, the cubs ran an event at Biggin Hill Airfield. They offered other exciting new experiences for the cubs including a day fishing at Hawkhurst Fish Farm. 2009 finished with a Christmas Camp that is now firmly embedded in the programme.

The scout section started the year with some narrowboating and spent their summer camp at Tolmers in Hertfordshire. The scouts won the District Quiz and were runners up in the District 5-a-side. The scouts competed at Bisley and visited the War Graves around Ypres.

The Explorers are thriving and the Scouts look forward to making the move to join their friends each year.

The biggest event of the year was also one of the saddest in the group's history.

### **Gone Home:** Rob Prendergast 1978 - 2009

Rob Prendergast was a cub at the 4th Beckenham South Scout Group and followed his brothers to the 5th Beckenham South in September 1989. He was a scout and venture scout until the unit was disbanded and went on to become a young leader (before they existed) and then a sectional assistant with the beavers and eventually all sections.

Rob made his promise to keep the Scout Law as we all did and he showed immense courage in great difficulty. He was diagnosed with bowel cancer in January and died last Tuesday in St Christopher's Hospice. He never complained at how unfair life can be and he filled his time as much as possible with camping, narrowboating and weekly meetings.

In a life dedicated to the service of others, Rob was a policeman in Streatham and when he wasn't driving fast and catching bad guys, he helped at police led Summer Schools and with the home for the incurables. As part of his scouting, he acquired qualifications in kayaking, narrowboating, air rifle shooting, archery, powerboating, navigation and offshore communications. He also developed a far from healthy love of Land Rovers and this allowed him to tow huge amounts of kit around this country and indeed to Kandersteg for the group.

When following a trail laid by another scout... one should recognise the symbols left to follow. The one that we use when a scout dies is a circle with a dot in the middle. the tracker's symbol for "gone home". It is found on Baden Powell's gravestone in Kenya and on scout memorials everywhere. Rob Prendergast - Gone Home

Rob's funeral was attended by scouts and explorers as well as friends from the district and county.

Rikki pack met on the evening of his death. We continued to meet for the rest of the week. We planted flowers, talked about Rob and played some games. Scouting continued and he remains close to us as we keep on camping and having fun.

Despite all this sadness, the programme is full and more young people than ever are being offered exciting opportunities and challenges. Our thanks to all of our many supporters and helpers who give so generously of their time and funds without whom nothing could happen.