

Fifth Beckenham South Scout Group Annual Report

April 2018 – March 2019

Adam Young – Group Scout Leader

A year of bedding in for the Fifth, new section leaders and teams are beginning to work well and noticeably starting to complete their Wood Badges. Liz Martin in particular has also taken the lead on fundraising and organised a terrific Burns Night event for us and now looks to take on a District role of Training Adviser for The Fifth on top of her ACSL full role.

Bag packing at Waitrose proved a good success with future plans to secure a busier weekend for next Christmas.

A new assistant treasurer has been press ganged along with parent executive committee members to broaden our vision of the Scouting we provide for our members and our new Chairman gained his PCV license enabling the Scouts to visit the war graves.

Our Explorers supported the local community in providing a water station for the Beckenham Half Marathon and the Group as a whole manned a checkpoint for the St Christopher's fun walk in Keston.

Our Beavers had some basic starter kayaking sessions at Pinewood Scout centre and our Cubs and Scouts had open water days with the Sea Scouts at docklands.

All sections camped successfully with the Cubs enjoying bouncy castles and obstacle course along with some glorious weather at Whitsun, whilst the Beavers had a fabulous summer camp at Wilberforce. Over the summer break, Scouts returned to Deal for a green field camp and Explorers went away on their own to Snowdonia utilising a light weight camp setup which quite frankly almost blew away.

As a Group and leadership team, our training records look healthier than ever with a few more boxes to tick over the coming year and our newly bolstered executive committee is leading The Fifth in its continued success, in particular the unsung heroes such as our treasurer and secretary keep on top of the running of the Group whilst Section leaders and assistants keep raising the bar on adventure and Scouting for our young members.

Merry Beavers - Wednesday

The Merry Colony has had a fantastic year with Chip (Maddi), Raccoon (Kate) and the Young Leaders. The colony hosts 24 Beavers who work together to develop both social and personal skills each week, forming strong friendships also.

Meetings have involved a lot of exciting activities such as, learning about plastic, nature and the world around us as well as playing silly games, such as cotton wool beards and tea tray ice skating! The children have shared their favourite board games this year and taught

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others how they work and what the rules are. The beavers have also participated in multiple active activities such as 'Mini Olympics', Parachute games and Circus Skills.

The Colony is enjoying working together to complete tasks and help the community. The Beavers have participated in numerous activities to earn their community badge, such as; donating to food banks, cutting back on plastic usage, donating to the shoebox appeal and attending community fun days and raising money for important Charities. All of the children in the colony are working towards their Bronze Chief Award and are due to be awarded it in December 2019.

The Christmas sleepover of 2018 was held at Downe Scout Adventures and was attended by both colonies, the children enjoyed it very much. They made Christmas crafts, played lots of party games and saw Santa. The children were even lucky enough to enjoy breakfast while watching a family of deer play outside. The beavers earned their Nights away badge alongside a few others!

In the new year the beavers tried their hand at cooking and chocolate making, this led to some very silly chocolate eating competitions that the children enjoyed thoroughly! The summer term saw lots of outdoor play and team games, such as 'Tag Rugby' and 'Stuck in the mud'.

Summer Camp this year was 'Space' themed and involved lots of education and learning based around science and space! The children enjoyed this a lot and have asked to do more experiments at meetings alongside the occasional fact lesson!

The final term of our colonies meetings has welcomed in our new ABSL Fred, who the children refer to as 'Moose', and we have seen Raccoon (Kate) get married and step down from her role with us! Kate has been an integral part of our team and Chip (Maddi) could not have thought of starting to take over the colony without her two years ago!

The new year is due to bring lots of exciting meetings, camps and day trips our way and myself and the team could not be more excited to spend another year teaching and caring for our colony of amazing Beaver Scouts.

Pippin Beavers – Thursday

Dave and Spencer were assisted by two new leaders, Anna and Helen, as well as Lizzie (who became an adult leader) along with two new young leaders Dylan and Kirsty. The colony maintained its numbers throughout this period at 24.

A busy itinerary saw the beaver scouts not only attend each week but they also took part in a variety of other activities.

The first event was getting close to various reptiles including snakes and lizards – along with Merry colony, 12 of our Beavers attended.

For the first time in several years, the group attended the St George's Day Parade, held along the Petts Wood High Street on 22nd April.

In early June, we combined again with Merry colony for our summer camp. This was held at Wilberforce Scout Centre in Keston and the beaver scouts enjoyed sleeping in tents, making fires, cooking smores over the fires and of course the campfire. A total of 16 beaver scouts from Pippin colony attended this two-night event.

Later in June, 20 beaver scouts attend Frylands Scout Centre's Wild West Funday – activities included archery, air rifles, obstacle course, bouncy castles and a hike through the woods.

After the summer break 8 beavers from Pippin, along with a number from Merry colony, attended a kayaking afternoon at Pinewood Scout Centre where they earned their time on the water stage 1 badge.

In October, 6 beavers achieved their swimming badge stage 1 award by taking part in the District run event held at the Beckenham Spa.

The Remembrance Day parade took place on Sunday 11th November with the rest of the group – a fantastic turnout from both colonies and the behaviour from the beavers was impeccable.

13 attended the Winter Camp in December which was held at Downe camp site. This was a combined camp not only with Merry colony but also our Cub packs. The beavers enjoyed a variety of activities including grass sledging, crate stacking, abseiling, arts & crafts plus, of course, a visit from Santa.

In the new year, 17 attended the Easter Egg hunt at Frylands Scout centre, run by the district. They successfully completed lots of challenges and deserved their chocolate eggs.

As well as these outdoor events, the beavers also worked hard towards their challenge awards with 4 achieving their Bronze Chief Scouts badges.

A busy and enjoyable year with lots of fun.

A final word goes to the parents who kindly assisted on many of the events, for which we are very grateful.

Cubs

The two cub packs have had another busy year with attendance at meetings ranging from 24 to 30 cubs with 5 leaders and 6 young leaders.

We continue to run a varied programme through the year. Our activities have ranged from wide games both inside and outside to tin can cooking, pioneering with marshmallow and spaghetti to circuits and volcanoes for the science badge. Following the success of the adults Burns night on the Saturday we had our own Burns Night at cubs, followed the next week by Chinese New Year.

We have also enjoyed activities outside of our weekly Monday meetings. Our first event was a sleepover for pizza and film night at the hut in October resulting in some weary cubs going home on Sunday morning to enjoy the rest of their half term. Our Christmas camp at Downe was cold but we shared it this year with the Beavers and enjoyed a variety of activities including a night hike, abseiling, wall climbing, backwoods cooking and crafts with many of the activities contributing to badge requirements. The most memorable part of the weekend was meeting Father Christmas in his house and our hike back to our hut with our laser lights. Can't wait until we go again this year with the Beavers.

Remembrance Sunday saw a good turnout of cubs to the annual parade and service at the war memorial. We had a good turn out of the St Amory water day where cubs achieved their water sports activity badge.

The highlight of the year is always our Whitsun camp near Dorking. This year saw sunshine and showers for the weekend but that didn't dampen the fun. We had a great weekend doing backwoods cooking, go karts, archery and of course the traditional barbeque and camp fire. We also had a bouncy slide and assault course on Sunday as well.

The cubs have worked hard on their badges this year and all the cubs moving up to scouts are gaining their chief scout silver award with many of the younger cubs well on their way to achieving the award.

Scouts

Both troops continue to flourish. Thunder, on Thursdays, is led by Tim Younge and Lightning, on Fridays, is led by Don Mullane. We are grateful to all our leaders for their hard work: Spencer, Nick, Oliver, CJ, Helen, Alison, Marc, John Spence, Simon, Nicole, Connie and Daphne, and an array of other helpers who are all vital to both Troops. A special mention goes to John Potter for all he continues to do.

As you might be aware, Don was still recovering from the tragic death of his wife from Advanced Breast Cancer just before the start of the year – yet he has kept going.

A busy 12 months has included a bank holiday camping weekend at a Kent farm, which enabled Don to earn a Greenfield Camp Nights Away Permit without which we wouldn't have been able to run our Scout Summer Camp as our new GSL, Adam, the existing permit holder, was taking the Explorers to have a separate Explorer Camp in Wales.

This permit enabled the Scouts to return again to Deal, near Dover; which they did by hiring transits and a truck to drive the kit, the Scout minibus being with the Explorers in Wales. Tim led the Deal Summer Camp and received his own Green Field Nights Away permit as a result.

Don and Tim went on to obtain their Wood Badges; and Don has since gone on to qualify as an instructor for archery and also for air rifle shooting.

Don and Tim represented 5BS at the county's Scout Fest Weekend for leaders which gave them ideas for other activities to run.

The weekend trip to the WW1 War Graves around Ypres in December was memorable for all the right reasons.

The Scouts also returned to Frylands for a weekend in January for their late Xmas Camp.

This was all in addition to the usual fire lighting, nerf fighting, water night, pancake night, Chinese cooking, Circus skills, Quasar, Trampolining and a host of other activities.

Finally, not forgetting our 3rd annual Fireworks Display and all the other fund raising done for the group during the year which enables us to provide better experiences for our Scouts.