

Fifth Beckenham South Scout Group

Charity Number 1011301

Annual Report

April 2023 – March 2024

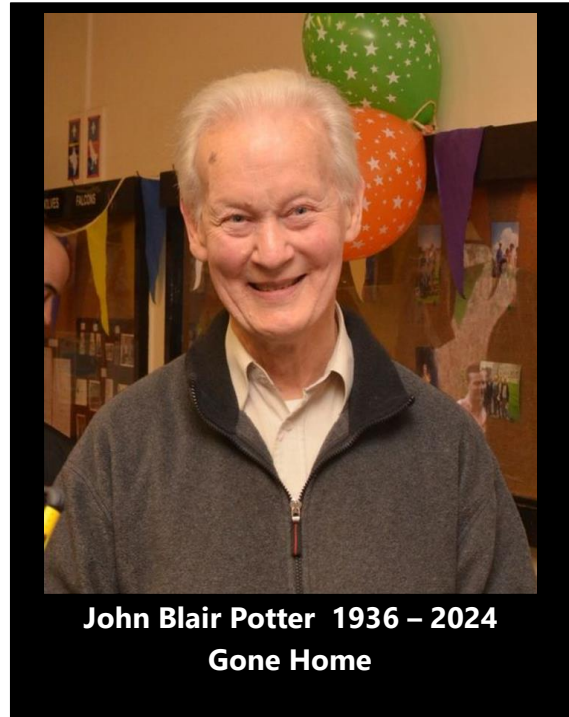
Group Scout Leader

A successful year of Scouting for the whole group, very much overshadowed by the passing of our Group Quartermaster and beloved Scout Leader John Blair Potter. John gave 55 years of selfless service to Scouting and The Fifth Beckenham South. In 2007 John received The Mayor of Bromley Award for Outstanding Voluntary Service and he will be deeply missed by all who knew him. A true gentleman, role model, mentor and friend.

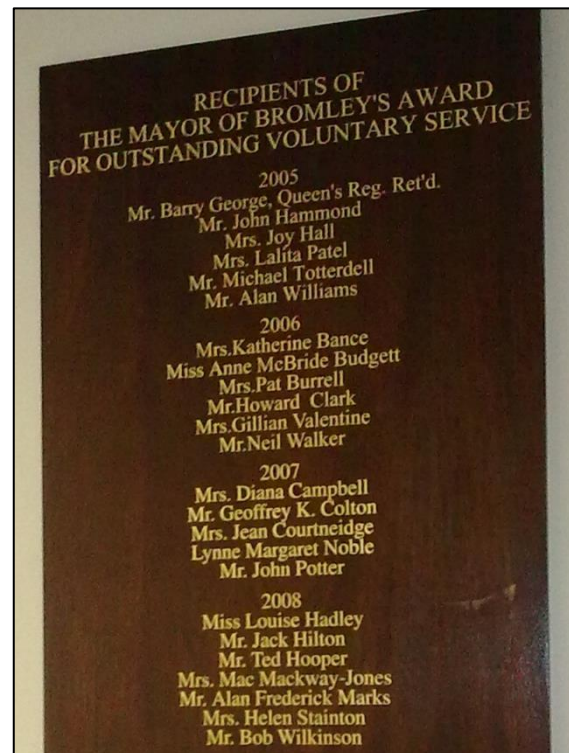
All sections have surpassed the Scout Association minimum policy of operating standards despite relentless changes to Policy Organisation Rules and extra additions to risk assessment requirements and adventurous activity permits. All sections have continued to function and thrive in the adversity of a post pandemic society, where youngsters have distinctly lost out on years of personal social development and continue to pose new challenges to leadership teams.

A new hierarchy structure looms within Scouting, changing traditional role titles across the Group and bringing training and volunteer recruitment and retention kicking and screaming into the 21st century.

Beavers continue to flourish with numbers and adventures, joining in with Bromley District events such as Easter Egg hunt and running their own successful winter and summer sleepovers and Cubs too continue to grow their leadership team and adventures with a sleepover on HMS Cavalier and a full-scale Whitsun (Group) camp joined by Beavers for the day and a small contingency of Lightning Scouts as new Scout Leaders cut their teeth under canvas.



John Blair Potter 1936 – 2024
Gone Home



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Scouts enjoyed a successful year and their summer camp in Dorset saw several Scouts gain their RYA sailing qualifications amongst other adventures.

Our partnered Explorer Unit summer camped in South Wales and whilst the weather was characteristically wet, it did not dampen the adventure. Our Explorer Leaders also took on the Yorkshire Three Peaks challenge to raise money towards their next international trip planned for 2024.

In the summer and autumn of 2023, John Potter, knowing that his days of service were numbered, spent many hours with myself the Group Scout Leader, clearing our Scout Hut and sharing his in-depth knowledge of the inner workings, structure and facilities. Detailed explanations and diagrams of the plumbing, electricity and drainage were shared as well as the vast array of master keys and spare keys available. John also oversaw the start of a Group premises project to inspect and modernise our hut electrics and capacity as the group continues to expand its ambitions for our premises.

Adam Young

Beaver Scouts (6-8yrs)

Pippin Colony was once again led by Dave Barber, Spencer Coward and Paul Blewer, ably assisted by our Young Leaders Henry, Josh, Amelia and Scarlett.

Merry Colony was led by Helen Langston and Lee Anderson, with John Noakes joining our ranks in September.



Our numbers were close to capacity throughout the year.

We provided a healthy and varied programme:
Summer term 2023:

- District run St George's Day event at Frylands Wood Scout Centre with 30 Beavers from both colonies attending
- A day visit to our Cubs' camp at Cudham Shaws in May
- Activity Evening run by Frylands Wood with the Beavers taking part in climbing, archery, go karts, assault course and many other adventurous activities
- Summer camp, also at Frylands Wood Scout Centre, in July. Activities included a blindfold trail, pond dipping, making and lighting a fire and cooking on it, learning how to put up tents and songs around the campfire. This was a joint camp with 25 attending
- An evening trip to Frylands to create bug hotels and learned how to use natural materials
- As well as plenty of games, the Beavers worked towards Outdoor Challenge Badge

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A busy and enjoyable year that saw 14 Beavers achieve their Chief Scout Bronze Award.

Our thanks, as always, go to our parents who have supported us throughout.

Dave Barber & Helen Langston

Autumn term 2023:

- Badge work this term included the Skills Challenge award and Safety badge.
- The Beavers enjoyed Halloween activities at the hut, and many took part in clearing the park on Sunday morning after our annual fireworks display
- Remembrance Day parade saw 17 Beavers take part in the parade through Beckenham
- Winter camp was also held at Frylands Wood with 26 Beavers and 4 Young Leaders attending overnight. Activities included Tunnels, Orienteering, a nature walk, the campfire and Xmas crafts.



Spring term 2024

- Chinese New Year was celebrated, and the Beavers learned about the Year of the Dragon
- 37 signed up to take part in the District Easter Egg Hunt, but sadly this was called off on the day due to very poor weather conditions
- Pancakes were enjoyed at the start of Lent with a variety of fillings
- We concentrated on the Global Issues and Disability Awareness badges

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Cubs (8-10½ yrs)

The year for cubs has been a busy one and we have continued to meet weekly and work on badges and have had our camps and sleepovers, Cudham Shaws for the May bank holiday weekend; a sleepover on the Lord Armory in October and a winter camp in January 2024 at Fryland. Numbers have remained steady with 24 cubs in each pack and leaders Ray, Sinead, Anna, Matthew and Liz.



We started the term in April with a bears bridge building mission – great fun designing a bridge. We attended a very wet St George's day in April but a great day out where the cubs were able to try out lots of different activities. We made pizza during the term and completed our science badge over 3 weeks as well as our traditional end of term water evening

The highlight of the year, as always is our Whitsun camp and in May we did a joint camp with scouts on the other side of the field and beavers joining us for the day. It was a great weekend full of activities including backwoods cooking, camp fires, archery, air rifle shooting and bouncy castles.



In June the sixers were lucky enough to attend the Colonels review representing Bromley District with other groups – we were close to St James' Park so that we could see the parade of the Royal House Artillery, the massed Bands of the Foot Guards and Prince William, on a very hot Saturday.

Our weekly meetings have seen a variety of activities, including science evening, shelter building, wormery making, fires, and the end of summer term our water slide evening. We had a great day out at the docklands scout project in July trying out dinghy sailing, rowing, canoeing and some of the cubs went on the yacht in the amazing setting of Canary Wharf.

In October we had a sleepover on HMS Cavalier the last operational second world war destroyer. The cubs slept in real bunks and we had a great evening of activities learning about the ship and it's history. The following morning, we had time to visit the submarine, HMS Ocelot; HMS Gannet a sloop of the Victorian Royal Navy, and we visited the ropery and made our own rope! A great weekend.

We also went bowling in October as a group and went to see Matilda in December at Filmbox at Langley Park school.

Other activities over the year have included making Airfix models of a spitfire or jaguar and painting it. St John Ambulance team gave us a fantastic evening on first aid and trained us on the Resus Annie on resuscitation. We

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also did more traditional scouting activities including knots and pioneering together with the regular annual meetings of Halloween, Chinese New Year and pancakes for Shrove Tuesday.

We joined the group Remembrance Day parade.

Our winter camp at Frylands in January was a great weekend and as well as the traditional activities, of assault courses, hikes, knots etc we had a mad scientist visit.

Thank you to all our leaders and parent helpers for all the support throughout the year and we look forward to another year of scouting.

Liz Martin & Anna Clough

Scouts (10½ - 14yrs)

Both troops continue to thrive, Thunder, on Thursday led by Tim Younge and Lightning on Friday, led by Andy Dawes, supported by a team of scout leaders which includes Spencer, Alistair, Andrew S, Ray, Dickie, CJ, Matthew and Joan and others on an ad hoc basis.

It is great to see our troop nights having attendance back to pre-Covid numbers with a combined troop night attendance of around 45 Scouts per week. Scouts are overcoming their reluctance to attend overnight stays; this is something Andy and Tim continue to work on by arranging short nights away to build up their confidence.



We had our regular Group Whitsun weekend camp at Cudham Shaws Activity Centre which was attended by over 20 scout activities included air rifles, archery, grass sledging, and tomahawk throwing. There was a group BBQ and a large campfire.

There have been many trips and camps this year with trips to HMS Cavalier to spend the night on a WW2 ship, a weekend on the *Roseanne* canal boat for the Patrol & Assistant Leaders, a further day out cycling with Penge Cycle Club and the yearly Monopoly run managed by CJ.

The minibus is well used for day trips, including to water sports days and Frylands to make use of their facilities and campfire area.

The Troops also enjoyed night Badge work, water night, fire lighting, pancake & Chinese cooking, circus skills, Quasar and a host of other activities.



We had our summer camp at Budden's Activity Centre in Dorset, the weather was not kind to us but in true Scout Fashion we made the most of it and had a great time. All the Scouts over the week undertook their RYA training in some challenging weather conditions and all passed their RYA Stage 2 sailing certificate.

We did many activities on site including raft building, climbing, archery, axe throwing, zipwires, high wires, Jacob's ladder, rafting, volleyball. Day trips off-site included the Tank Museum and Monkey World.

Our end of year Christmas night was held at Bromley Bowling where we put on festive jumpers, played a few games and had Pizza.

Our Late Xmas winter camp was at Runways Indoor near Aldershot which 35 scouts and 10 leaders attended. There was frost on the ground outside, but that didn't deter us from activities such as high ropes, indoor circus skills, team building, a campfire with quiz and film in the evening.

We would like to thank all the leaders and occasional helpers who have helped throughout the year to achieve all of this. Looking forward to 2024

Tim Younge

Fireworks & Easter Egg Hunt



We continued our organisation of the Beckenham Fireworks display and the Easter Egg Hunt in Croydon Road Recreation Ground and were very pleased to raise a record amount for local charities – over £50,000.

This would not be possible without a huge commitment from the group and our many volunteers, and the continued support of the local community, to whom we offer our grateful thanks.

www.beckenhamfireworks.com