

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Epsom (St Martins) Scout Group

### Minutes of AGM meeting held 25th Sept 2008

**Present:** Peter Clayton, Geoff Collins, Rita Collins, Jane Clayton, Beverly Stevens, Matt Clackson, Richard Ascough, Wayne Smith, Judith Sitford, Peter Sitford, Ann Chapman, David Faulkner, District Representatives (John Jordan, Phil Alexander), several parents

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He commented on the success of the Group over the last year in terms of numbers of Children and variety activities provided, and thanked the leaders for giving up their time to make it possible.

- 1) **Minutes of last meeting:** Agreed
- 2) **Matters Arising:** None
- 3) **Section Reports:**

#### **Beavers**

*Judith Sitford presented the Beaver section report:*

The Beavers have been very active in the meetings this year. Numbers have averaged around 10-12 which is a nice number to handle! I was worried at the start of Easter, when I lost 5 Beavers to Cubs, only to find the next week, 5 new ones and all of them have stayed and are enjoying themselves.

The theme for last year has been centred on discovery and craft. The Beavers have found out how a torch works, and have discovered how things grow – albeit at varying rates of success. We have grown cress and made egg and cress sandwiches, grown bulbs, and along the side of the HQ, we have some sunflowers. We plan to harvest the seeds and turn them into bird food in the next few weeks. They have also discovered which food is healthy for you and how to stay healthy – and made a lovely fruit salad which they all enjoyed. Along with the healthy eating – the Beavers went on a hike on the Downs, finding as many ribbons along the way as they could – with some fun time at the end of the hike at the swings and slides. Thanks to Otter who set out the ribbons with Benjy during the day!

The craft activities have centred around the District Craft competition which was held in March in Stoneleigh. The theme was 'The Prehistoric Era', and I'm pleased to say that a number on 3<sup>rd</sup> Epsom were awarded individual prizes for mobiles, dinosaur vegetables and collages.

The Beavers entered the District Cross Country – and did very well – three of our four entrants coming very high up in the results. Well done to all those participants.

3 Beavers spent a fantastic day visiting the Cubs and Scouts at Mellow Farm, where they spent time inside tents, acted like Pirates and looked for buried treasure, made boats to float on the river, and joined in with a campfire at the end of the day.

Leader wise, we have been joined by Kathryn Ascough who has been a happy addition to the team. Thank you to her, and also Baghera and Otter (Geoff and Rita) for their dedication to the section, and flood of new ideas!

#### **Cubs**

*Beverly Stevens presented the Cub section report:*

We currently have a Cub Pack of 24 boys. Several have left since the summer, some to join Scouts, and we are expecting a few more to come up from Beavers soon.

Cubs are still meeting 6.30 to 8.15. Ferraro/Ben is Assistant Cub Scout Leader and taking on more responsibilities as the months go by. Jacala, or Hannah, is still with us and is now in uniform, and we will be investing her later this evening. Zoe, our other Young Leader, has left to go to university in the States.

District events: The Cubs took part in the Night hike and swimming gala last Autumn, and the **Cross country** in March this year. Three Cubs passed the **emergency aid badge** earlier this year, and we attended the **St George's day** Knights Away funday at Boidierhurst. We had only an older team in the

**District Football** competition in May, as unfortunately the younger Cubs did not want to take part. Only 8 Cubs attended the **Cubcraft** competition – disappointing as 14 had signed up for this. It is particularly important to have a good attendance at the Cubcraft competition, as Packs are penalised if they have fewer Sixes there than in normal Pack meetings. Those who attended did very well, had a great day out, and were taken out for a thank you meal. Several Cubs gained their **Athletes Badge in July. We would like to** thank the parents who helped at this and other District events.

Unfortunately most of these District events were not very well supported by our Cubs this year, despite having good numbers in the Pack. It is important to point out that if a Cub has been put down for an event, and then cannot attend, a Leader should be informed as soon as possible, as it may not be worthwhile attending the event with a very small number of Cubs. It is disappointing for the Leaders who give up their time to go along to events with the Cubs.

Our **summer camp** at Mellow Farm just outside Farnham was a great success. We probably had the best week of the summer holidays, albeit with some rain. Activities included canoeing, assault course, swimming followed by a walk to Farnham castle, archery, and a visit to Alice Holt Nature reserve. We hope you have enjoyed looking at the photos – if you missed them, we can always show them again.

Cub activities: We continue to do as many outdoor activities as possible. However, this is becoming more difficult as the nights draw in. So far this term we have been to play games in Alexandra Park, and to Epsom Library earlier this evening. Next week we are going swimming at the Rainbow centre, when we hope to select our team for the District swimming gala. We will be helping the Cubs earn their Artist Badge this term. Some of these activities were the kind suggestion of one of the few parents to return their Volunteer forms given out last term. There are some more of these forms available this evening, in case you lost your original one, as well as some booklets on volunteering within Scouting, for you to have a look at, and hopefully come forward to help.

We would like to thank all the parents who have volunteered in the past and have offered to help this term. It would also be great to have some more behind the scenes help with the Executive and HQ committees. I would like to thank Claire O'Farrell, who has offered to take over from me as secretary on the HQ committee, and Rie Stanton who may be able to help with the Group accounts. If anyone else feels they could help, please let one of us know. As mentioned on the Volunteer form, this could be something as small as helping with refreshments – thanks to those who have helped this evening - or acting as marshall at the Cross Country competition.

Just to reiterate, those of us involved in running Scouts, Cubs and Beavers for the benefit of your children are also volunteers, and we would really appreciate some assistance. Thank you for listening.

## **Scouts**

*Richard Ascough presented the Scout section report:*

2007/08 has been a fun packed year with the Scouts undertaking a number of activities and challenges. Over the year the troop numbers have grown slightly from 12 to 15 Scouts with most turning up to all our events very regularly. The Troop is still run by Wayne, Richard and Peter.

With the problems of a meeting location in the last year we have tried to take the Scouts out as much as possible and activities have included

- Several wide games (some jointly with 3<sup>rd</sup> Stoneleigh)
- A walk along the Thames
- Bowling
- Hikes – the Scouts do need to improve their map reading!
- Geo-caching (treasure hunting with GPS handhelds)
- Mountain Biking
- Backwoods Cooking

The programme has also included:

- Several Scout challenges during the meetings
- A fair trade evening
- Building Bird Boxes

As well as this, they have been learning basic scouting skills like first aid, knots and mapping.

In the last year we have had three camps for the Scouts.

The first was with the District for the St George's day weekend where six of our Scouts camped at Boidier Hurst and were joined by a further five Scouts joining for the activities at High Ashurst on the Sunday.

Ten of our Scouts attended the tri-annual Scoutabout at Ardingly. We again joined with 3<sup>rd</sup> Stoneleigh for the accommodation and catering. At this camp the leaders do all the cooking and run a base whilst the Scouts disappear around the site undertaking up to 200 different activities including Caving, Canoeing, Archery, Rock and Ice Climbing, Abseiling, Crafts, Shooting and Popcorn making. It is one of the best Scouting weekends that they will have.

The last camp was a Mellow Farm near Farnham where we spent a week doing our own activities and some with the Cub Scouts. With the farmers field being bounded by a river we took full advantage of the facilities by canoeing, rafting and swimming/paddling in the water. We also built a monkey bridge between the banks.

We are looking forward to a fun year ahead, and we are pleased to see that the Forge has been refurbished and is again available for use.

**4) GSL Report:**

*Geoff Collins presented the Group Scout Leader report:*

Geoff thanked all the leaders for their hard work throughout the year, and also David Faulkner and Ann Chapman for their work keeping the HQ running.

He welcomed Hannah who has just been invested as an assistant leader, and congratulated Wayne on his 20-year long service award.

**5) HQ Committee:**

*Ann Chapman presented the HQ Committee Report:*

The year's income came entirely from hiring out the headquarters building. Regular users include the Ferndale Nursery, Epsom Players and Nam Yang, a martial arts group. Income from the nursery was reduced this year as, during the Spring and Summer terms, the afternoon sessions were dropped. However, this term, both morning and afternoon sessions are being provided.

Only fairly minor maintenance work was carried out this year. Fencing work was done. The front door and frame were replaced, complete with lock and spy hole. Hand towel and soap dispensers were provided for the toilets. The rear doorway of the building was also bricked up and a retaining wall to the rear car park was built. Work was done to reduce the crown of sycamore trees and to grind out some of the tree stumps. In June 2008 some lead flashing was stolen from the roof of the HQ. This has been replaced with additional fixings to deter further removal. Although this may seem minor, costs are continually rising, and we made a loss again this year. In particular, we have been hit by rising gas and electricity prices, so all users of the hall are asked to be as economical as possible with heating and lighting.

For the year ahead, we are very pleased to welcome Claire O'Farrell to our committee: Claire has kindly undertaken to succeed Beverly as Secretary.

We would also be pleased to welcome anyone else who would like to join the committee. Meetings last between 1 and 1½ hours and take place three or four times a year.

Finally, on behalf of the committee, I would like to say 'thank you' to Beverly, who is leaving our committee and has done sterling work as Secretary for the last 14 years.

**6) Election of Officers:**

Peter Clayton will remain as Chairman.

Jane Clayton will remain as Treasurer.

Matt Clackson has stepped down as Secretary, and will be replaced by Deborah Kaye.

Vea Flintham will remain as Cub parent representative.

Dawn Knight will be Scout parent representative.

Volunteers were requested for a new Beaver parent representative to join the Committee, but no-one came forward.

**7) Presentation of Accounts:**

*Jane Clayton presented the Group Accounts:*

Jane reported that Rea Stanton has offered to assist with book keeping.

**8) Address by District Representative:**

*District Commissioner John Jordan delivered the address:*

John Jordan re-iterated thanks to Leaders, and to parents who help in any way with the running of the Group.

He finished by presenting Wayne Smith (Kaa) with his 20-year long service award.

**9) A.O.B:**

Peter Clayton closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Tea, Coffee and Biscuits were served after the meeting