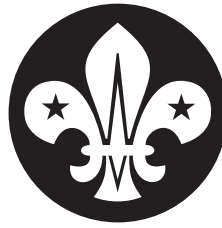


Editor : Andrea Soulsby
5 South Close
Baldock
Herts
SG7 6DS
01462-491401

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THE OFFICIAL BULLETIN
OF LETCHWORTH AND BALDOCK
DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL

DISTRICT GANG SHOW 1997

This years show will be at Plinston Hall, Letchworth on Friday 14th March (at 7.30pm) and Saturday 15th March (at 2.30pm and 7.30pm). Please come along and support the show. Tickets are £3.50 each, with a 10% discount for groups of 10 or more. Please see last months Co-Ordinator for a booking form or contact Andrea Soulsby on Baldock 491401.

ST GEORGE'S DAY PARADE AND SERVICE

SUNDAY APRIL 20th AT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. BALDOCK

Please assemble at Knight's Templar Car Park at 2:15pm. The rehearsal is on Saturday 19th April at 10am. Full Uniform.

For further details please refer to last months Co-Ordinator.

Administrator's Evening - Thursday 27th March -Norton Bury 8.00pm

Reminder - Can all Groups please send a representative. The District only hold two meetings a year, and I am sure that you will benefit from talking and listening to the District Team and their fellow administrators.

Doris Allen

Another link with First Baldock Group has been broken by the death at the age of 89 of Doris Allen. For many years in the early fifties she was Assistant Cub Master, whilst Fred Cogar was Scout Master. She will be remembered by many old members of First Baldock who still live in the town.

Canoes

First Baldock Scouts have canoes for sale as follows:-

One single at £20. One Double at £20. One canvas canoe (offers)

Two single canoes in need of slight attention (offers).

You can view them any Sunday morning between 10-12 at HQ, Park Drive or contact any Leader.

DISTRICT A.G.M.

The District AGM will take place on Thursday 8th May 1997 in the Clulow Room of St George's Church Hall. Please put this date in your diary.

MINIBUS**IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO ALL USERS OF MINIBUSES**

As from the 10th February the law has changed as follows:-

1. The new regulations stipulate that minibuses carrying three or more children between the ages of three (3) and sixteen (16), on trips organised for children must be fitted with at least a lap strap for each child.
2. Children between the ages of three (3) and sixteen (16) can only be seated in front facing seats. **i.e. the four rear side facing seats in the District Minibus can only be used by children over (16) and adults.**

More information can be obtained from RoSPA Tele: 0121 248 2000

CHILD PROTECTION

I make no apologies for raising this subject once again and asking you to ensure that every leader, helper and administrator in your District is aware of our policy and procedures.

The Association's policy is '.....to safeguard the welfare of all members by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm'. At a recent meeting that Roger and I had with Hertfordshire Police it was suggested that we should restate our requirement that, if a leader has a suspicion of any form of abuse by a parent, fellow leader, or anyone else, they **MUST** advise their GSL or DC. The GSL or the DC **MUST** in turn advise me (or, in my absence, the CC or my fellow DCC) These obligations to report are **NOT** negotiable!

Leaders sharing their concerns should be aware of the fact that the information they have given will be treated as confidential and they should, within 48 hours, receive a telephone call from the CC or DCC acknowledging the fact that their suspicions have been noted. If they do not receive a call, or the DC is in any way implicated, they are entitled to call me direct on 01763 288389 (24 hours)

The CC/DCC will advise on the steps taken. These are outlined in Section 7 of the "Reference Guide for GSLs & DCs".

We are very fortunate in Hertfordshire that our links with the Police Child Protection Teams are first class. If you or one of your leaders needs to talk to them about a matter involving one of our members, it would be helpful if I could be contacted first. The Police in turn usually call me before approaching a leader when they need information

Brian Melville - Deputy County Commissioner

THE ADVANCED MOUNTAINEERING COURSE (or a bit of a knees up in Scotland)

In the early hours of 27th December Richard, Tim, Mark and Glenn were taken to Hertford in the 'monster'. Packed with plenty of warm clothing, including long johns, hiking boots, gloves, anything really to keep the cold out. However, it proved to be colder in Baldock for the week than in Scotland. Which probably wasn't a bad thing!

The advanced mountaineering course began on 27th December. Barely time to digest your Christmas turkey. Based at LOCHEARNHEAD, 9 hours coach drive away, we arrived at about 6.30pm., just in time for dinner. For those of you who have been there you will know what a beautiful part of Scotland it is and with snow on the mountains the setting is perfect. Amazingly the weather was wonderful with marvelous visibility which lasted most of the week.

With daylight in short supply everyone had to get up, wash and dress ready for the mountains in time for flag-break at 6.50am. (yawn) still in the dark. Gordon the station master coordinates the days start and comes up with his thought for each day (which get more bizarre as time goes on) Breakfast is at 7.00am and after clearing away and making final adjustments to crampons we were off to our first peak.

We set off in groups of 4 with a leader and technical adviser. At this point I should give them all a plug because the standard of instruction on, and off, the mountains was very high indeed. As we set off we got to know one another by talking about our favourite Christmas presents. As we climbed, the rivers froze and the hard ground became more and more slippery so after picking our way across the ice for a time we stopped and put on our crampons. In spite of the cold, walking up a mountain is hot work and it is important to carry plenty to drink.

As we approached the summit of Ben Ledi the views were breathtaking, but on top it was possible to see for miles. Never mind the weight, one of the essential items to take is your camera. By the time we had returned to the pick up point it was already beginning to get dark, but the day was hardly over. There was just time to get changed into your uniform ready for dinner, which was always a treat thanks to Morris. Every evening there was a talk on some aspect of mountaineering, snow, ice, safety etc. Finally time for bed - tired and exhausted and wondering if you'll be able to get up at 6.30am.

After 4 days of training during which the team conquered Ben Vorlich and the Tarmagon ridge, it was time to set off for the 3 day hike in the mountains, camping in the hills. Of course New Year's Eve fell on the night before our departure and, well, you have to see the New Year in, don't you? Still we all managed to set off on time and my team camped in the beautiful setting of a frozen loch in Glen Orchy.

The first day we walked a circular route from our campsite, which we pitched on our arrival. Water for cooking and drinking was taken from streams after breaking the ice, and all the basic essentials had been brought along with us. It was an opportunity to practice our navigation before the main event. a mountain called Coire nam Etbanaich, which was a Munro with a steep summit at about 1300 mtrs. We attacked it from the south side following a river up a coire then onto a snow covered ridge. The final 200 mtrs were steep and in deep untouched snow and we looked forward to being the first to reach the summit in 1997. Alas, when we reached the top there were 2 other parties already there eating their lunch! Still the mountain was wonderful and the scenery from this vantage point was truly breathtaking. On the return journey we investigated the quality of the snow and practiced making snow belays etc. Ice axe training and rope work were covered on an earlier day trip and we were beginning to feel like real mountaineers now. We headed back to base camp in the fading light and watched the stars come out against a black sky while we cooked and ate our high camp meal.

On the last day after breakfast we went off to climb a nearby peak so that we could be back in time to strike camp and make it to the pick up point 6km away.

On our return to Lochearnhead we returned our team kit to the stores and had a welcomed shower. After dinner there were a few toasts (hilarious) and a few beers for us older ones.

A last sad farewell was followed by a fairly quiet coach ride back to Hertfordshire.

We all learnt a lot, made a lot of friends (and girlfriends) and felt a huge sense of achievement and although not for the fainthearted, it's a great course. Anyone wanting to know more should consider doing the IMC during the Easter break (get in touch with Kim Henson)

Since the AMC, we have completed a two day first aid course, which will enable us to go for our Form M's (at last).

The next project is a super wide game in the Lake District or so my Exec tell me. At least I'll be ready for them this time!

Anyone wanting to know more about Beech Springs Venture Scout Unit can ring Glenn on 01462-895650.

BADGES

The cost of badges will have to rise by 2p a badge from the 1st April, to offset increased charges by our suppliers

DISTRICT ARTS & CRAFTS TROPHIES

Does anyone know the whereabouts of any of the District Arts & Crafts Trophies?

If you know where any of them are then please contact Chris Parr asap.

THINKING DAY & FOUNDERS DAY**W.E.S°DVIINSIER ABBEY - ST MARGARET'S CHURCH**

On Saturday 22nd February 1997. we went to London to celebrate Thinking Day and Founder's Day in a service held at St Margaret's Church Westminster Abbey, with Scouts and Guides from all over the Country. The Chief Scout was also in attendance. This was the first time that we have had the opportunity to attend. The service was given by the Reverend Dr Donald Gray - Rector, and one that we will not forget in a hurry. We hope that next year more members of the District will attend. Leaders, Scouts and Cubs. Tickets are available on request from Bob Williams via County.

Rita & Dave Hawkins

Nortonbury Questionnaire

The Norton Bury Management Committee would like to thank everyone for their very positive response to the recent questionnaire concerning the centre. There were many helpful and positive suggestions which have been analyzed and which will be considered for action wherever possible. The responses indicate that priority needs to be given to the updating of the kitchen which we hope to do before the end of 97.

Barbara Crombie. Chair NBMC

SIXERS & SECONDS TRAINING

52 Cubs enjoyed a day of cub scout skills, from knotting, pitch and strike a tent, outdoor cooking, orienteering to the last family badge, all had a thoroughly good time.

Many thanks to all the leaders who helped make this weekend successful. Also thanks must go to the scouts who gave up a day to help us :- Simon Templeton (1st/3rd Letchworth), Nicholas Brown, James Lacey, David Hall, David Albon, Richard Matheson and Andrew Walsh (1st Baldock). Well done to you all.

CENSUS 1997

Can I take this opportunity to thank all Group Secretary's for returning their census forms promptly. This has enabled me to return the District numbers to County well before the deadline.

Rita Hawkins - District Secretary.

After the grand figures for 199b, it has come as a disappointment to find our numbers significantly down this year. The fall is particularly noticeable in the Cub Scout section and to a more limited extent in beavers.

It is a reminder to us that we must be ever alert to recruitment of both Scouts and Leaders. This year we have had to close a Scout troop and a Cub pack due to lack of leaders. The Warrants Committee is preparing materials to help Groups recruit and hopes to visit each Group to explain the Scout Association six point scheme for recruitment.

Below is a table of this years census figures and then an overall comparison with previous years.

Bob Williams - DC

| GROUP | BEAVERS | CUBS | | SCOUTS | | VENTURE SCOUTS | | LEADERS | | HELPER/INSTS | | GROUP |
|-------------------|---------|------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|--------|---------|--------|--------------|--------|-------|
| | MALE | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE | MALE | FEMALE | TOTAL |
| 1st Ashwell | 0 | 16 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 20 |
| 1st Baldock | 34 | 42 | 0 | 39 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 130 |
| 2nd Baldock | 20 | 10 | 0 | 11 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 55 |
| 2nd Weston | 0 | 13 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 30 |
| 1t/3rd Letchworth | 0 | 13 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| 4th Letchworth | 19 | 32 | 0 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 92 |
| 5th Letchworth | 11 | 24 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 68 |
| 7th Letchworth | 0 | 14 | 0 | 17 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 50 |
| 8th Letchworth | 15 | 29 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 64 |
| 11th Letchworth | 14 | 19 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 59 |
| 12th Letchworth | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 21 |
| Beech Springs VSU | | | | | | 7 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| F'Ship <65 | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| F'Ship >65 | | | | | | | | | | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| TOTALS | 132 | 212 | 1 | 163 | 15 | 16 | 3 | 38 | 30 | 20 | 13 | 643 |
| 1992 | 115 | 236 | 0 | 170 | 3 | 29 | 22 | 39 | 35 | 10 | 3 | 662 |
| 1993 | 135 | 220 | 0 | 170 | 4 | 22 | 12 | 39 | 36 | 13 | 8 | 655 |
| 1994 | 143 | 237 | 0 | 154 | 7 | 12 | 8 | 37 | 37 | 10 | 5 | 650 |
| 1995 | 128 | 232 | 1 | 154 | 7 | 14 | 6 | 38 | 27 | 5 | 6 | 617 |
| 1996 | 145 | 253 | 2 | 155 | 15 | 5 | 2 | 41 | 29 | 11 | 11 | 669 |
| 1997 | 132 | 212 | 1 | 163 | 15 | 16 | 3 | 38 | 30 | 20 | 13 | 643 |

DIARY DATES - DIARY DATES**MARCH**

5th Warrants Meeting - Norton Bury
 8th District Cub Football - Feamhill,Letchworth
 7th-9th Peak Assault
 10th District Cub Leaders Meeting - 32 The Rowans
 13th District Executive Meeting - Norton Bury
 14th-15th District Gang Show - Plinston Hail,Letchworth
 16th DEADLINE FOR APRIL CO-ORDINATOR
 21st-23rd Chief Scout Celebration Weekend - London
 22nd District Beaver Scout Challenge
 27th District Administrators Evening - Norton Bury

APRIL

2nd Warrants Meeting - Norton Bury
 10th District Executive Meeting - Norton Bury
 11th-13th Scout Fellowship Conference - Coventry
 12th-13th Night Jar - Scouts Over Night Exercise
 19th Rehearsal for St Georges Day Parade - Catholic Church,Baldock
 20th St Georges Day Parade - Baldock
 20th DEADLINE FOR MAY CO-ORDINATOR
 24th District Scout Leaders Meeting - Norton Bury
 25th 2nd Baldock AGM
 30th 1st Ashwell AGM