



Co-ordinator

The Chief Scout - George Purdy CBE to open Wymondley Wood Scout and Guide Centre



We have received the keys to Wymondley Wood and to cap the good news the Chief Scout, George Purdy will be visiting us on Saturday 24 May to officially open the Centre. It is a tremendous honour to host the Chief Scout and it will make our Centenary Jamboree a memorable event.

The Centre has been completed on time and our thanks go to Morris Builders and Len, their site agent, Steve Rogers (architect) and Marilyn Hands (Director of Property at Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation).

All the new furniture will be delivered to the Centre during the next couple of weeks. Work parties have been busy tidying up Norton Bury and will be transferring equipment to Wymondley Wood.

All will be ready for the first occupants, 1st 3rd Letchworth and 12th Letchworth Beavers on 15 March.

The biggest problem has been the wet weather which has hindered the landscaping of the site and may limit outside use for a time but a spell of dry weather should quickly sort this out.

Meanwhile plans are going ahead for the Centenary Jamboree and the official opening. In view of the Chief Scout's visit it has been agreed to keep all activities on site on the Saturday so that as many Scouts and Leaders can meet him as possible. There will be a wide range of bases to cater for all ages ranging from crystal maze activities to an aerial runway and a climbing wall.

It is an important event in the Heritage Foundation's Centenary celebrations and local TV cameras will be there.

Census - 2003

Group	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
1st Ashwell	42	33	33	16	39	19
1st Baldock	103	89	78	89	88	121
1st 3rd Letchworth	42	28	37	27	38	29
2nd Baldock	55	59	64	57	57	48
2nd Weston	22	20	21	24	35	35
4th Letchworth	61	76	72	72	78	76
5th Letchworth	61	78	83	64	58	62
7th Letchworth	65	70	58	54	48	45
8th Letchworth	45	34	45	44	68	63
11th Letchworth	24	22	32	41	51	50
12th Letchworth	47	59	55	46	42	30
Oak Eagles Explorer	17					
Beech Springs	19	24	23	32	26	16
Total	603	592	601	566	628	594
Fellowship	23	23				
District Team	10	9				
Grand Total	636	624				

Thank you to all the Groups. You have all responded quickly and with little hassle to the letter from the District Secretary and Ron Smith requesting information on numbers for the yearly census. Thank you to Ron Smith who once again co-ordinated the census returns.

It is pleasing to note that the District numbers have increased over the year. However, the increase is largely explained by the formation of two Beaver Colonies. There is still spare capacity in many Groups and every effort must be made to recruit new members.

The Census returns show that many Groups are still not making use of Gift Aid which is now an easy way to increase funds without much effort.

We have always had a dream of a District membership of 700. How about trying to achieve this for the Centenary year of Scouting? - after all it is only one extra Scout per section in each of the next three years!

Dave Hawkins— DC



GROUP TREASURERS

Please do not forget that your Group subscription is due to Mike Thomason— District Treasurer by 7 March 2003 latest.





I was selected to attend the Jamboree more than a year before the event. In this time I managed to get quite a lot of fund raising done. The days until we departed barely seemed to change until it got to about a month and from then the time flew.

On the morning of the 23 December 2002 I got up at about 4.30 am; this was because we had to be at the meeting point in Cuffley by 6.00 am. We were waved off by our families and sent on our way with warm wishes from the County Guide and Scout Commissioners. We knew a long time in advance that the travelling was going to be murder. Forty five minutes in a car, one hour thirty minutes in a coach, fourteen hours on first flight, three and a half hours on the second flight and finally four hours on a coach. That's close enough to a whole day travelling and that doesn't even include sitting in departure lounges for three hours before each flight!

Anyway, once in Thailand we were taken to a very posh hotel not far from Bangkok. Here we spent Christmas Day by the pool and meeting new people. In the evening of Christmas Day, all 2,400 British Scouts were transported in a fleet of taxis, with a police escort to a big hotel where there was Christmas dinner with crackers. The following day, amid tight security we were again whisked off in a fleet of coaches for a sightseeing tour of Bangkok.

On the 27 December we made the short trip to the Jamboree site. Being taken out of an air-conditioned hotel, sitting in an air-conditioned bus only to be dumped in a sandy, barren landscape with an air temperature of about 45 degrees centigrade isn't a nice experience and it was made even worse when we had to carry our suitcases and rucksacks the thirty minute trek to our site. But no sooner had we got there than we were all acclimatised and raring to go. (hmm I think not). As there were over 30,000 people at the Jamboree, (more than the population of Letchworth) you need a site nearly the size of Letchworth to accommodate them. This was done by converting an old US Navy base into a camping site, with its own railway and specially built reservoir.

Most of the free time during the Jamboree was spent swapping things, such as badges and neckerchiefs. I managed to swap my whole uniform for an American one, which had a good story behind it as it was the only America uniform from Hawaii. I also managed to swap a Japanese unofficial uniform and dozens and dozens of badges. I got the opportunity to try food from most countries in the world, and I tried one dish, which sticks in my head as it put our beloved British Vindaloo to shame !

At the Jamboree itself we did many activities which I have never done before and will probably never have the chance to do again, such as running a car from peanut oil, swimming through a snake trap (not done purposely) and trekking through the jungle. We celebrated New Year with about 150 different nationalities and finished up by getting up at 7.00 am the next morning to celebrate New Year at home by jumping in the sea with dozens of other British Scouts!

One of the most exciting activities was a day we spent off site at a local school. It was a school which hadn't much money and was in need of some new facilities, so we went along to help build a new volley ball court . It was very hard work, but you could see the excitement in the children's eyes when we finished it.

All these activities and events made the Jamboree exactly what I had expected it to be, but once the Jamboree was over, we still had places to go and new people to meet. Our original plan was to go to the Philippines to stay in Scout family homes, but due to the threat of more terrorist attacks we were taken to Singapore instead and put up in an air-conditioned hotel; we all remembered to stick our little finger out when we drank tea, so I think we did the British Scouts proud!

This wasn't the first time the threat of terrorists was upon us, as about a week before we were due to leave Britain the Foreign Office weren't happy with the situation in and around Thailand. However, the Thai Army and Navy were brought in to protect the site and they even went as far as to have battleships moored just off the beach to protect us.

We spent our time in Singapore mostly shopping and visiting places of interest. This was a great way to round off what was a truly once in a life time experience, a three week period of my life which I can say I was an ambassador for the British people.

Thank you very much for all your support

Nick Howell - Beech Springs VSU

District Cooking Competition



The competition was tough but the Underpant Gnomes (Saam, Yasmin, Will and Adam) and another team comprising Tom, Carla, Hayley and Christopher were confident that one of them would follow in the footsteps of the Famous Fifth team and win the District Cooking Competition.

We had practised the day before and we now knew that you shouldn't eat sausages if they're pink. We had a lot of time to make the dishes and we were marked on presentation, taste and hygiene. We had to tell the judges what we were doing and how we were doing it. The meal that the Underpant Gnomes made was a tuna pate with fried vegetables round the edge, sausage hash with pasta and last of all a crunchy flan. The judges looked at our meal and they looked pretty impressed. After they had marked us on it we

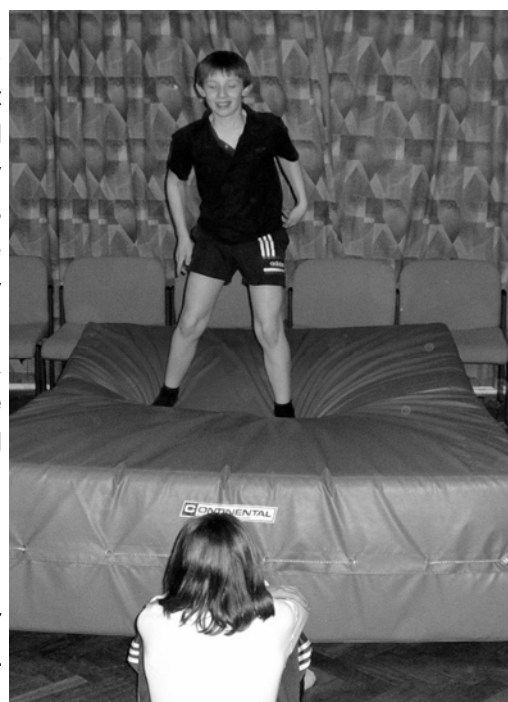
ate the meal and all agreed that sausages taste better coked. Then all the teams went into the main hall for the marks. The other Fifth team did very well as they hadn't been in a cooking competition before. They completed their meal about 90 minutes before the deadline, a lot quicker than us. We thought, we had a good chance of winning and when it came to the top two and our name still hadn't been called out everyone on the team was excited. For second place another team was called out and the Underpant Gnomes went mad!! We went to the front to collect the trophy and to have our photo taken. Another victory for Fifth Letchworth in the District Cooking Competition!! Famous five eat your heart out, we are the Underpant Gnomes!!

Will Dollman—5th Letchworth Scout

Group Scout Evening

What did you do on Friday night? A group of Scouts from 1st Baldock put all their training and preparation for the fitness challenge award to the test. In a final evening fifteen Scouts put themselves through a set of ten fitness tasks, in a hope that they could show an improvement on their fitness levels assessed some seven weeks earlier. (I'm pleased to say they all did)

This is the first challenge award to be undertaken by the troop and despite the hard work all those that took part thoroughly enjoyed themselves. In preparation for the award we contacted the Head of PE at Brandles School (aptly named Mr Bos) for advice on a suitable programme. Mr Bos kindly came along on the first evening to ensure that the Scouts were properly instructed in how to warm up correctly and to show everyone the correct way to undertake each exercise. Other areas of the award were tackled through a quiz and a fact finding competition on diet and food, and dare I say a **homework** questionnaire on smoking, drugs and alcohol.



Mike Wheeler
1st Baldock—ASL

County Cooking Competiton

16 February 2003

THE

FIFTH

COME FOURTH

A Purposeful Report on The County Cooking Competition

(No RAMBLINGS from this Leader !!)

After their fry away success in the District Competition, tension has been building at the 5th. They were all conscious of the responsibility to the District that sat on their shoulders. STRONG men had wept – in the pages of The Co-ordinator—at their groups failure to win through this far in the competition !!

Have I over trained them? Are they BURNT out ? have I BOILED them dry too soon ? Will Yasmin's chopping hand stand up to the strain after a week of exams ? Has William's stirring wrist recovered from snowballing the other week ? We have a clear advantage playing on our home ground at 1st Baldock. We know the pitch and will have the home crowd behind us ! But wait, what is the etiquette at a Cooking Competition ? You take a rattle to a Football Game, we have all seen the skiers tapping their sticks together in encouragement on Ski Sunday. What do you do at a Cooking Match ? Bang a frying pan with a wooden spoon whilst shouting 'Come on you 5th Fry'em alive ! '?? I get a warning from the ref for ' unbecoming conduct '

The instructions said give your meal an International flavour. Will our choice of an American main course go against us after yesterdays peace march ? We have put a French dessert on the menu beside it. Nowhere else in the world are the two countries in such harmony ! Our table decoration looks great with the flags of the nations our dishes came from. The chefs hats have matching emblems on them.

It's 10 o'clock and they are off ! I talk with the Potters Bar coach – they had no District Competition – clearly not match fit ! No problem there. I go home to change into uniform and chew my nails out of sight of the team. When I come back later the air is heavy with the sweet smell of success and the odd odour of burning and failure, one team have clearly over cooked it ! Did the 5th listen to my last minute instructions ? 'Remember Scouts, don't drink too much of the cooking sherry, only pick your nose with the left hand and don't sneeze on the hors d'oeuvres !' There are 10 teams. The standard is clearly very high, particularly on presentation. I don't think we can afford to win through to the Regional Competition, already our Group's budget is stretched by so much buying and cooking. Perhaps Morrisons will sponsor us in the next round! They are the clear winners so far ! One more round and some of our team will have got so fat they need new uniforms !

Its 1 o'clock, Graham Dollman – Chairman – and guest of honour has just taken his place at the table, my wife is on the phone asking when I will be home to entertain the 7 guests we have for lunch at home. Tension. Tension.

Placing	Team Names	Total points	At last it's time for the results. The judge commends all the teams on their imaginative menus and the quality of their cooking.
1	1st Cheshunt	126	We finish in fourth place. It's good to be amongst the leaders and, at least the Group budget won't be stretched any further.
2	1st Berkhamsted	122	
3	2nd Ware	120	
4	5th Letchworth	110	Good luck to 1st Cheshunt in the regional final.
4	1st Royston	110	
6	4th Potters Bar	105	
7	1st Chorleywood (Chess)	104	
8	12th Harpenden	102	
9	1st Sawbridgeworth	101	
10	64th Bushey & Oxhey	83	

Win A trip to USA—Astronaut Training Camp

British National Space Centre (BNSC) is offering one lucky winner the chance to train like an Astronaut at the International Space Academy in Huntsville Alabama.

The five day programme is jam packed with astronaut training for young people. Activities include simulated Space and Shuttle missions, movies, training simulators, rocket building and launches.

Participants must be available to attend the camp between 26 July and 1 August 2003 and be between 12 and 14 at the time of the camp

To win a place all you have to do is answer the questions on the website and complete the tiebreak assignment by 4 April 2003.

www.bnsc.gov.uk

Follow the Link to the competition Entry.

The Twenty First Annual Rotary Club of Letchworth Garden City Walk will take place



Date : Sunday 18 May
Registration Fee: £1.00
Entry Forms from: Peter Jackson
32 South View
Letchworth
SG6 3JJ

Tel: 01462 484413
peterjackson32@btinternet.com

The walk takes place around the borders of Letchworth and is fully marshalled with check-points, route map and refreshments. Walkers do not have to complete the full course and transport will return any drop-outs to the start.

HAVE FUN AND RAISE FUNDS FOR YOUR GROUP OR CHARITY

Registration Fee of £1.00 per walker is charged to help with administration and refreshments cost but in the case of Scout and Guide Groups Rotary has agreed this money will be refunded.

75% of the money raised will be retained by the walkers for the Group or Charity of their choice.

It's time to bring out your walking boots and join us on the Hertfordshire Scouts 25 / 40 Mile Challenge Walk. The District once again will be providing the back up support for anybody entering via the District for this unique challenge

Event: 25 & 40 Mile Challenge Walk

Venue The Greensands Ridge

Date: 28 - 29 June 2003

Cost: £25.00 - includes all entrance fees, camping fees, food and transport.

Forms will be available shortly from your Group Scout Leader



This year's St George's Day Parade and service will be held at St Mary's Church in Baldock on Sunday 27 April starting at 3.00 pm.

There will be a rehearsal for FULL COLOUR PARTIES WITH NECKERCHIEFS and readers on Saturday 26 April at 9.30 pm at St Mary's Church, Baldock.

As in previous years there will be refreshments for Guests and Leaders after the event.

Please assemble at Brandles Close School Field by 2.15 pm. The parade will be dismissed at the St Mary's Church Hall at approximately. 3.45 pm

If you require further information please contact Rob Hemmings GSL 1st Baldock on 01462 895366

Welcome to



Simon Goodwin - ASL 4th Letchworth

Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service

Congratulations to David Miller—GSL 4th Letchworth for being awarded the Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service.

David joined the 4th Letchworth Scout Group in 1995. Since then he has held posts of Group Treasurer, Group Chairman and has recently become Group Scout Leader. David is a regular visitor to all sections and their activities at both Group and District level. He is also often seen holding "Maggie's" handbag at County events.

Hug Certificate

If I could catch a rainbow
I would do it just for you
And share with you its beauty
On the days you're feeling blue
If I could build a mountain
You could call your very own
A place to find serenity
A place to be alone
If I could take your troubles
I would toss them in the sea
But all these things I'm finding
Are impossible for me
I cannot build a mountain
Or catch a rainbow fair
But let me be what I know best
A friend that's always there



Wardens at Wymondley Wood

11 March	Bob Williams	686727
18 March	Barbara Crombie	671062
25 March	Maureen Kell	684665
1 April	Dave Hawkins	643432
8 April	Elaine Wigglesworth	626218
15 April	Julia & Alistair Pollard	686190
22 April	Barbara Crombie	671062
29 April	Nora Hitcham	627905
6 May	Ann Martin	627439
13 May	Sheila & David Daws	621699
20 May	Bob Williams	686727
27 May	Shirley & David Rossall	431884
3 June	Mick Balls	893855
10 June	Pauline Gimson	677993
17 June	Mark Hill	483422
24 June	Jane Thorn	635745

2003

March



2003

29 Feb - 2 March	Peak Assault	Somewhere	John Clifton 01582 622454
7	Last day for payment of Subscription		Michael Thomason 01462 683235
11	District Team Meeting	Wymondley Wood	Rita Hawkins 01462 643432
13	District Executive	Wymondley Wood 8.15 pm	Dave Hawkins 01462 643432
15	County Cub Swimming Gala	St Albans	Bob Cooper 01438 235969
17	District Fund Raising Meeting	Wymondley Wood	Bob Williams 01462 686727
21 -23	County Scout Fun Matrix Weekend	Well End	Mick Edwards 020 8236 0040
28 - 30	Gang Show	St Francis College	Peter Marsh 01462 624894

APRIL

2	Scout & Guide Shop Meeting	Wymondley Wood	Bob Williams 0162 686727
5	District Beaver Scout Challenge	TBA	Mark Hill 01462 483422
5 - 6	Sixers & Seconders Weekend	Wymondley Wood	Mandy Woolmer 01462 637718
7	District Beaver Leaders' Meeting	11 Bowershott 8.00 pm	Maggie Miller 01462 632163
10	District Executive	Wymondley Wood	Dave Hawkins 01462 643432
27	St George's Day Parade & Service	St Mary's Church	Bob Hemmings 01462 895366
27	Wymondley Wood Open Day	Wymondley Wood	Barbara Crombie 01462 671062

MAY

2 - 5	County Scout PAW	Tolmers	Andy Lanham 01707 872900
2 - 5	CCCC03	Phasels	Bob Cooper 01438 235969
8	District AGM	Wymondley Wood 8.00 pm	Rita Hawkins 01452 643432
11	District Cub Football Competition	TBA	Dave Hawkins 01462 643432
18	Garden City Walk – Rotary Club		Peter Jackson 01462 484413
23 - 26	District Jamboree	Wymondley Wood	Andrea Soulsby 01462 643992
24	Visit from the Chief Scout ,George Purdy	Wymondley Wood	

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