

**33rd OXFORD (KIDLINGTON)
SCOUT GROUP**



**ANNUAL REPORT
2008-2009**

**To be presented at the AGM
Thursday 21st May 2009
Scout Centre, Blenheim Road**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Another successful year for the Group, made possible by the small but very dedicated few. Having just read my report from last the noticeable thing is that very little has changed. It is still the same dedicated few keeping the Group going. Our usual fund raising events, Scout Post, Scout Rail and now bag packing at Sainsbury's, all made a good profit so once again the Group will show a healthy bank balance. How sad though that the Group can only rely on so few.

Many thanks to all of our Executive Committee colleagues who have fulfilled their roles perfectly, and are the backbone of our dedicated few who can be relied upon for fund raising.. Also my sincere thanks go to everyone that helped with Scout Post and Scout Rail, as mentioned last year without these events it would cost each of you many pounds more for your child to enjoy their Scouting experience.

Of course none of this would have any point without our young people, your children. In turn they rely on our superb and enthusiastic leaders excellently led by Andy our Group Scout Leader.

Thanks must go to Martyn for always keeping our finances in order with his up to date accounts. To Sarah who has made all of our lives much easier, always one step ahead with her outstanding secretarial skills. To Ron for keeping our records second to none including our waiting list and who, with Martyn keeps our building looking as smart as possible along with many other unseen and unlisted jobs.

If I have forgotten to mention anyone, it is not intentional just merely an oversight due to old age memory.

If you feel that you can spare an hour or so every other month, please say you will join our Executive Committee, we will make you very welcome. If though you have a little time to spare on a more weekly basis then please do come and help out in one of our sections. I promise you will get as much out of it as the young people that you work with.

Do you think this year we could manage to get at least one parent from each section to sit on our Executive Committee, as I say only six meetings a year?

Margaret Boggs
Chairman

Beaver Section

No Report Received.

Mowgli Cub Pack Report 2009

The Pack has had a good year with quite a few badges gained and lots of fun along the way.

Pirate Camp was great – we swash-buckled across the week-end, having battles across the high seas and singing sea shanty songs for the parents. The shark fin soup for lunch was particularly tasty! Thanks to Alistair and Ian for giving up their week-end to be support staff.

We are very grateful to John Amor who made a return visit to make ballisters with the cubs – this is an evening that the cubs always enjoy.

The ‘high’ spot of the visit to the Fire Station was Akela driving the high reach rescue platform (not to be recommended if you don’t like heights!) and the boys trying to hold down the large hose. A very good evening and enjoyed by everyone.

Thanks to the great support from the Mum at our Mother’s Day pack meeting we were able to send Helen and Douglas House the sum of £55. The cubs came up with ideas for stalls and activities, the mums played games and a great time was had by all.

I say this every year – a big thanks to my leaders – but I really mean it so much. Without their support and that of my very willing husband, we wouldn’t have half as much fun and such well organised activities. So, Anita, Steve, Gary, Tina and hubby Chris – A BIG THANKYOU!

Lynne Hooper
Cub Scout Leader

Jacala Cub Pack Report

Our Pack is continuing to do very well: we have had thirteen Cubs join since last April, seven of whom swam up from Beavers. We currently have twenty-two Cubs in the Pack, exactly the same as this time last year, following a high of thirty Cubs in December. There's a good spread of ages, with two Cubs due to go up to Scouts after the summer holidays, right down to a handful who are not quite yet eight following the change to the lower age limit.

Last year's summer term started with a magnificent win by our six-a-side team at the District Football in May. Our Human Monopoly evening in June was a huge success and the Olympics featured in our programme with a China themed meeting and a very soggy athletics event (more like swimming than running). Eighteen of our Cubs attended the District Camp in July and we managed to get out on the Thames twice, with perfect weather for both our own boating evening and the District boating day – thank you Dave!

During the autumn term we worked towards our Home Safety badge, had a fireworks party and learnt how to make our own chocolates. As has now become traditional, we took the Pack ice skating at the end of term, an event attended by almost every single one of our thirty Cubs (one had hurt his arm that day, but he sent his sister in his place).

The Spring term had a focus on visits and visitors, with a presentation from Oxfam (Global Challenge), a ghost walk round Oxford Castle (Local Knowledge), a trip to the Oxford synagogue (World Faiths), a *Simpson's* themed camp at Youlbury (so much fun) and an amazing animal evening, with live meerkats, skunks, scorpions and tarantulas at the Scout hut (wow)! We took part in the District Super Cub challenge and the Boots and Compass challenge and made a start on our Personal Safety badge. We also made an exchange link with an English Pack in Luxembourg –and had a visit from their Akela, who brought us a giant jar of delicious chocolate eggs.

We have linked with two other Thursday night Packs, the 10th and the 28th Oxford, for a trading posts meeting in May; a giant water fight and barbeque at Youlbury in July; and a huge Christmas party, attended by around seventy Cub Scouts from the three Packs, in December – more crowd control than anything else! More joint meetings are already planned.

In November, six of our older Cubs gained their Chief Scout's Silver Award. Four of them have now moved on to Sea Scouts and two have joined Land Scouts: we are very proud of their achievements and they have inspired many of our younger Cubs to work even harder. We are hoping that another two or three will achieve their awards this year.

Our website remains very popular with Cubs and parents (and grandparents!) as a place to see photos from all our meetings, trips and events. It also provides a useful source for lost letters and forms: www.kidlington-cubs.org.uk

Thank you to our excellent team for their continued invaluable help: Alastair and Stu, who are now both fully warranted, plus our young leaders James, Beccy, Nick and Andy. Thank you as well to all the parents who give up their time to help with meetings, camps, outings and with ferrying their Cubs back and forth!

Rebecca Ebdon – Akela, Jacala Cub Pack

33rd Oxford (Kidlington) Land Scouts

This has been a busy year for the Land Scouts. My aim at the beginning of the school year was to get the young people through four badges as a troop each term, and encourage them to complete any work required at home, in addition to tackling any other badges that they wish to. All in all most Scouts achieved eight badges last year, plus many Challenge badges. Once again I am aiming to achieve a minimum of four badges per term. With Wings 2009 International camp coming up in August, we should be able to achieve this together with the Global Challenge badge by linking up with Scouts from around the world who are also attending the Camp. With the latest scores on the door over 5000 Scouts and Guides attending the camp from twenty four countries with over 1000 Adult leaders/ helpers. I am taking eleven scouts, along with one of the dads as a helper (thank you – Neil) I am currently e-mailing a troop in America, so that we may (both sides of the pond) start our Global Challenge badge. We will also make a point of seeking them out at the camp.

Our numbers have increased to twenty three, consisting of four patrols, and a Senior Patrol Leader helping the Adult Leader team. On that note, we have just had Ben Moore join us as an Assistant Scout Leader from Scotland. He is currently learning to be a pilot at Oxford Airport and aims to be with us until September. He will then jet off to America to fly small jets, and then hopefully back to us early next year 2010.

During the school holidays I am starting to plan one day camps/ Scouting skills training days, At these I plan to do one day hikes, building a real shelter, looking for wild food and cooking it (as a back up I have a friend who shoots Rabbits, and is happy to supply me) I hope to be able to get everyone and I do mean everyone competent in lighting fires and cooking on it, pitching and striking camp and not forgetting knots and lashings.

Andrew Davis
Scout Leader

Sea Scout Troop

Another busy Scouting year has passed and I can't believe I have to write another annual report looking back at the past twelve months. The troop has grown again and numbers are back up to full strength with seven patrols. Our Patrol Leaders and assistant Patrol leaders are working hard to support the leaders. As a result of attending a PL/ APL leadership training course at the beginning of the year they were able to plan and deliver an excellent troop night which included games, patrol challenges and a scouting quiz. Other troop night activities have included Robot Wars, Night Exercises, Pot Curry Cooking, Chinese Boxing, Fire Safety Badge at Kidlington Fire Station, Circus Skills, Skittles & Spuds, Fancy Dress, Morse code, Pancakes, Ice Skating and more, which in combination delivered a balanced programme.

The Chief Scouts Gold Award has also changed over the past twelve months, Scouts now have to gain eight out of the nine Challenge Badges to complete the award. Our programme is therefore planned to ensure that members who attend regular troop meetings and activities will gain the award. I'm pleased to say our Senior Scouts are on track to complete the award this year.

Our summer boating season was far more successful than the previous year of floods. Rain throughout the summer months still hindered us as strong currents prevented us from being on the water, with the occasional weeks having to be cancelled. However, between showers and currents we were able to offer a fun and safe time Kayaking, Gig Pulling and Rafting. Big thanks again to Nick Dixon and Mark Lockwood for their help throughout the summer months.

Over the past year we have spent eighteen nights away which included a boating camp with Clifton Hampden Sea Scouts, a weekend at the Boat Base, Winter Indoor Camp, District Midnight Exercise (which we happened to win!) and The County Patrol Camping competition. Our summer camp was a week to remember. As the first tent peg entered the ground it started to rain and continued to do so until the Thursday afternoon. There was one particular day when we returned to camp from a day's activity to find our woolly neighbours taking refuge in the Marquee! Nevertheless morale was high and rain didn't stop play. Trips to Butlins, cinema, bowling, Combat Collection and indoor climbing kept us in the dry alongside beach games, hiking on Exmoor, Digger Land and team challenges between showers.

We've just had our first camp of the year at Youlbury, where all the cooking took place on open fires in a camp and Dutch oven. Lighting fires using bush craft techniques and chopping wood using axe and saws became second nature to the Scouts that attended. The main event was the weather - it didn't rain!

This year marks a special occasion for Sea Scouting - we celebrate our centenary year. In 1909 BP organised his third and final camp. It included the water based activities which had been planned for but could not take place during the first camp at Brownsea. As a part of our celebrations we've already had an exclusive trip around HMS Ark Royal

organised by a friend of Trevor, Lt Pete Baker RN and later in the year our summer camp will be held at the Centenary Jamboree at the national White Water Centre in Nottingham along with 2000 other Sea Scouts from around the world. Water activities will be dinghy sailing, windsurfing, kayaking, white water rafting and kayaking, power boating, dragon boating, water-skiing and rowing. Non water based activities include archery, bungee, trampolines, swinging gyms, circus skills, mountain biking, BMX, assault course and the list goes on.

Finally, thank you to those who continue to support the Sea Scout Troop, especially my team of dedicated and enthusiastic leaders. Thank you to Gary Lane (and congratulations for being awarded the Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service), Trev Newton and Ian Marris for your hard work every Tuesday night and many additional hours; Young Leaders George Brooks, Grant Ferrett and James Richings. I'd also like to introduce our parent helper Andy Pike. Finally (and most importantly) not forgetting our girls for their understanding and support - none of the above would have been possible without you.

David Eyles
Sea Scout Leader

GORDO EXPLORER UNIT

The Gordo Explorer Scout Unit is still a fairly young Unit and in many ways still finding its feet, but 2008/2009 has be our busiest and most successful so far.

Over the last twelve months we have been running Duke of Edinburgh separate to the units Monday night meetings and this has produced excellent results.

In January we had seven Explorer scouts pass their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh; John Brew, James Brooks, James Clack, Daniel Jones, Matthew Jones, James Richings and David Sawyer.

We also had five gain their Chief Scouts Platinum Award; George Brooks, Beccy Coates, Matthew Jones, James Richings and Ben Treloar.

Congratulations to all involved. It's a marvellous achievement, keep up the hard work!

A special thank you must go to Gary Lane, the leader of our Duke of Edinburgh club, whose help and dedication is invaluable.

Earlier in the year we held our Summer camp at Ferny Crofts Scout campsite in Hampshire. Activities included climbing, air rifle shooting, archery, high wire assault course, bowling, a day at Bournemouth beech and a day at F C Watersport at Sandbanks. We tried wind surfing, open sea kayaking and a blast round Brownsea Island in big power boats (this was no cruise!!, they were powerful boats on a windy day and choppy sea conditions, everyone got soaked and loved every minute!)

We also took part in Sun Run, a national scouting event with a small night walk (26 Miles),

With a full and exciting program organised and run by the Explorer Scouts, the forthcoming year is looking to be just as busy, exciting, and manic as ever! But completely worth it!!

A huge thank you must go to my leaders, Matthew and Michelle, whose enthusiasm and dedication to the unit has been outstanding, and of course thank you to all the Explorer Scouts who come along each week and make the unit a joy to run.

Mike Hopcraft
Gordo Explorer Scout Leader

Treasurer's Report.

As per usual, the financial year began with a large outward cash flow occasioned, by the bills that have all to be paid together, at the beginning of the year. These include the Membership Account to District, Boat Licences, the Building and Contents, Boating Base and Contents, Insurances, the Mini Bus Insurance, Service and MOT. Anyhow we paid them all, and the cash flow from then on, has picked up, with Subs income, albeit reduced, rent income and the Gift Aid refund from the Inland Revenue. Details of these figures can be seen in the Groups Annual Accounts.

I would however, very much again like to commend the Leaders, again on their successful efforts in promoting the Gift Aid Scheme. It has become a good consistent source of income and is a relatively easy method of raising funds, now the system is set up,

Towards the year end, three major fund raising events namely Bag Packing, Scout Post 2008 and Scout Rail 2009. were financially very successful. For this, I thank all those stalwart few, who helped, for all their efforts.

There was no real major expenditure project for the year, as it was decided to replace the centre flooring in 2009. So funding was being accumulated to finance this development, which is estimated to be somewhere in the region of £10k. Applications have now been made for grants, from Cherwell District Council and Grassroots. Meanwhile, two donations have already been received, one from the Forrester's and another from the Kings Arms Invitation Darts League

There has also throughout the year, the usual maintenance work being carried out, with a working day in the early summer and improved lighting to the driveway has been installed..

So the year ends with a reasonable financial situation with the current planned re-flooring project now well in hand. When this is complete if assistance is forthcoming to redecorate the centre, this will make a more presentable centre, for some rental income to be obtained

M.F.Fawcett
Treasurer.

