



5th Dartford Scout Group

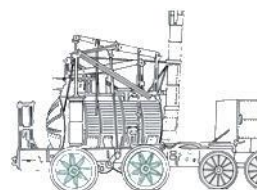
Annual General Meeting

Sunday 11 June 2017

Activities Report

1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

Our special thanks to Lloyds Banking Group Community Fund, Dartford Borough Council, the Hedley Foundation, the Garfield Weston Foundation, British Telecom and the Co-op Local Community Fund



**THE BERNARD SUNLEY
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION**

Welcome from the Chair

Welcome everyone to 5th Dartford Scout Group's activity day and AGM. I hope you find this newsletter detailing the Group's activities informative.

The AGM is part of the necessary governance of any Scout Group and it is the job of the Group Chair to support the Scouting aims of the Group and to ensure that money and facilities are available to pursue those aims in the interests of our young members.

The AGM and the individual section reports in this newsletter cover April 2016 to March 2017, which was the Group's centenary year.

We celebrated with a dinner and dance at Hesketh Park, organised by Lyn Medcalf, with significant assistance from lots of others especially Kay O'Brien and Lesley Bauckham. We published a 2017 calendar, put together by Lynne Missions which included a photo of all of the current sections and some wonderful photos from the history of the Group. All of the more than 100 people who attended the dinner received a calendar and we also sold some after the event. Wendy Hurd ran a competition to design a new neckerchief badge commemorating our 100 years and all members received the new badge.



The biggest news of the non-scouting year is that we have instructed an award-winning architect and building company to start work designing our New Hall and we have got some posters of their fantastic ideas displayed here today. We were introduced to the company, Zedfactory, by Feroz Gandhi, who put his hand up at last year's AGM to volunteer for the Executive Committee and his input this year has been another positive contribution.

As ever, the success of 5th Dartford relies on people like you volunteering to help the 5th Dartford family. I hope we can encourage more of you to give up a little bit of your time to help all of our children gain even more from being members of 5th Dartford.

We were forced to close Medcalf Troop Scouts last year, because we have a limited pool of leaders and I urge you to consider how you might help.

Lots of people continued to fundraise for the Group last year. Dave Monteith ran the London Marathon, we received donations from Dartford Borough Council and from lots of companies, especially those whose staff volunteer at the Group, including Lloyds Bank and BT. I would especially like to thank Lyn Medcalf, who with assistance from Lesley Bauckham, has obtained pledges of £30,000 from Garfield Weston and £10,000 from Bernard Sunley. We have also received a wonderful donation from Dartford Freemasons, but more of that later.

We continue to invest in equipment for Scouting including new solar lighting for camps and new pellet catchers for shooting, both of which were organised and made for us by Gary Missions. Gary has recently undergone major surgery and I am sure you will all join me in wishing him a speedy recovery and hope that he is back to full health and back to scouting soon.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity, on your behalf, to thank Paul, our GSL, and his team of section leaders, assistant leaders, activity leaders and all other helpers. His team of dedicated volunteers are critical to the success of our Group and of the wider 5th Dartford family. Thank you to you all for your time, energy and commitment.

Scouting is a fantastic modern success story. Our kids will be better adults, because they were once Scouts. The 5th Dartford family are an excellent example of that and I thank you all for your support.

Neil Young

Chair, 5th Dartford Scout Group

1 Group Scout Leader's Report

As always I would like to thank all our leaders, instructors and helpers for the time, knowledge and skills they give, and congratulate them for making Scouting safe, enjoyable and fun. And a special thank you to our Executive who support us so the Scouting side can run such an active programme of events; they provide the governance to our group, ensuring that we achieve the high standards as expected, and ensuring that we are fully compliant with the Scout Association and Charity Commission rules and best practices.

As you will read within the section reports, many of our youth members are achieving their Bronze, Silver and Gold Chief Scout Awards with Jason supporting the Explorer Scouts gaining their Young Leader Award and Dave Monteith leading them through the Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

We celebrated our Centenary on 4 December, firstly at the Methodist Church in Spital Street and then onto Flip Out Trampoline Park at Chatham. It was fantastic recognition to receive a letter from Buckingham Palace detailing the Queen's good wishes on our significant anniversary, as well as the Chief Scout Bear Grylls' message of heartfelt congratulations.

As a Scout Group, we pride ourselves on being part of the local community, being involved with many of the Borough and County activities such as the Dartford Festival and local schools' fetes, as well as being able to offer our activities (archery, climbing and abseiling) to other Scouts, Guides and youth groups. Family Camp is a growing tradition within 5th Dartford, regularly attracting 100+ people over a bank holiday weekend where parents can participate with their children in Scouting activities - some families are seasoned campers, but many have never camped before. These events build on the family and community spirit of the group and are something that people ask about and eagerly await each year.

As with the joy of opening a new section, also comes the realisation that, without leaders being available, decisions have to be taken to close sections. When Delia's work promotion (and the required additional qualification studies) meant that she and Graham were unable to continue as leaders, and insufficient volunteers were available to fill the void, we made the decision to suspend Medcalf Scout Troop and offer the Scouts places at our two other troops. I am pleased that all the youth members were placed successfully within our two other troops.



All the leaders and instructors within our group are unpaid volunteers. All our parents who have decided to invest their time and energy in their and other children's lives are making a positive difference to the youth members' lives, skills and outlook, as well as that of the local community.

We are often the victim of our own success with both our leaders and youth members spreading their wings, with job promotions, university and travel opportunities. We can only provide the weekly section meetings as well as the activity sessions (archery, shooting and climbing) if we have sufficient number of volunteers.

The pace of life is not getting any slower, with more and more demands being asked from us all, hence we need to adjust and be flexible with our volunteering roles and we require more people to come forward and assist, not leaving it to a few. I have set out at Appendix 2 a few examples of the volunteering opportunities that are available. These can be taken as a regular commitment but are also flexible to suit individuals' personal and work commitments.

Yours in Scouting

Paul Boreham

Group Scout Leader

2 Section Reports

2.1 Philpott Beavers

We started the year off in April with birthday cake all round as it was Big Beaver's 60th and Kind Beaver's 18th so we couldn't let these two milestones go by without a celebration. The following week we celebrated again, this time Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday. This time we had a street-style party to which we invited parents and siblings to stay and join in the fun - we received a great response and lots of fun was had by all.



Eight of our Beavers braved a very cold St. George's Day Parade in Central Park and this was followed a few weeks later by a group of Beavers and family members (24 in all)

entering Jamboree on The Trail from Sutton-at-Hone to Dartford Park along the Darent Valley Path.

At the end of May six Beavers and their families joined in the Group Family Camp enjoying good weather and lots of activities. On their return when asked 'What was the worst part of camp?' their unanimous reply was 'Coming home'. That says it all!!

June saw our annual AGM/Activity Day attended by 8 Beavers on a very hot day. A week later we were out again for 'Fun in the Woods' at Joydens Wood. 13 Beavers had great fun getting very muddy, building a dam across a water-filled bomb crater, mini beast hunting, bark rubbing and searching for the wooden statues completely oblivious to the thunder storm overhead.

In July, as part of our Animal Friend Badge, we had a visit from a representative from Cats Protection. Every Beaver brought in a tin of cat food and after a very educational talk were rewarded with cat masks, crayons and activity leaflets. Our usual end of term water night was a sad occasion as we had to say 'Goodbye' to Happy Beaver and Kind Beaver as they headed off to university. Before they left they presented the Colony with a toy beaver and a certificate to say they had adopted a real-life beaver on our behalf – ah, so kind of them!

After the summer break, we made the most of the continuing good weather and spent a Saturday morning walking the Bluewater nature trail and, on completion of the work sheets, received enough activity pads and crayons from the concierge desk for every Beaver to have one each.



In October, following the success of the Queen's party earlier in the year, we invited parents to join in our annual joint Colony Halloween Party. Seven parents and one grandparent proved to be very good sports not only dressing up but participating in all the games too.

December and the Group celebrated its 100th Birthday by attending a special church service, receiving a commemorative badge and visiting 'Flip Out' at Chatham for an afternoon of fun.

In January, we were very fortunate to be joined by a new 'young leader' Eager Beaver (Henry McCarron) who is proving to be a great asset. He is working on the Experiment Badge with the Beavers and bringing new ideas to the Colony, which is brilliant.



Seven boys gained their Chief Scout's Bronze award over the year and many other badges were achieved.

My sincere thanks as always to my regular team of assistants (Big Beaver, Skippy, Bearded Beaver, Joey Junior and the aforementioned Young Leaders), without whose help I couldn't operate.

Auntie Beaver (Wendy Hurd)

2.2 Peacock Beavers

It has, once again, been a very busy year for Peacock Beavers, with a new leadership team since September as a result of both Maggie and Debbie retiring after running the Colony so successfully together for many years, as well as lots of new Beavers, including the first female member in the history of Peacock Beavers.

We have done lots of activities and have awarded a great number of badges, including some Bronze Awards, the highest award that Beavers can achieve. Those Beavers who have been presented with their Bronze Award should be very proud of themselves, and we hope that they enjoy the adventures to follow as they move on to Cubs.



In addition to the usual events such as JOTT and St. George's Day Parade, we have visited Bexleyheath Police Station, where all the Beavers seemed to enjoy getting handcuffed, having their fingerprints taken and being locked in the cells. We also visited Christchurch and the Sikh Temple in Dartford, where the Beavers were free to explore, leading them to achieve their Faith badges.

Other badges that we have been working on this year have included the Experiment badge (lots of fun and just a little bit messy!), the Animal Friend badge, which involved the Beavers getting to know some guinea pigs and (very noisy!) dogs, and the Gardener badge.

Of course, none of this could happen without the dedication of all the leaders who give up their time on a Friday night, so thank you! Also, a big thank you to all the parents for their continued support, and finally to the Beavers themselves for showing up every week so cheerful and full of energy!

George McCarron

2.3 Edwards Beavers

It has been another exciting year for the Edwards Beaver Colony, it has seen a change in leadership from Shea and Tracy to Abbi and her faithful assistants Little Leo and Clum!

This year we have seen 5 Beavers achieve their Bronze Awards and 7 swim up to Cubs. We have tried to achieve as many badges as possible in a fun and engaging way, which will inspire our Beavers to continue their Scouting Journey with the 5th.



We have been on mini beast hunts, explored the local area, hiked in the pouring rain, made a huge stain on the Scout Hall floor with our oil, detergent and water science experiments, created havoc in the kitchen making pizzas and pancakes, utilized the outdoor area with an Easter Egg hunt, enjoyed Halloween and Christmas parties, attended the Hundred Year Birthday Parade/Celebrations and the St. George's Parade and still managed to tick off criteria for several other badges!



Still to come is Family Camp, District Activity Day and our annual Water Fight!

Thank you to all the Edward Beavers, you have achieved so much this year, with so much enthusiasm and conviction! Well done!

Abbi Cohen

2.4 Leigh Pack

This year's activities included archery, pottery, pizza making, map reading, building guys for our firework night, a family quiz night run by our young leaders, drumming using tins and containers from Christmas as part of our Music badge. Other new badges that we did were Fire Safety and Astronomy run by Becky.

Events away from the hall: firework party in Tracey Honey's garden, which included parents and siblings. We went to a trampoline park, we had another great panto at the Miskin Theatre, visited the Police Station in Bexleyheath (do not ever tell a Cub not to touch the red line that runs around the Police Station wall as this is an alarm!) We planted another crop of spuds, after our success last year, and had another cook-out with them on

a warm summer evening. Our Cubs have taken a spud home with them to grow this year. Silver Awards went to Calum Chuter, Adam Sameen and George Russel.



Thank you to our loyal and reliable team: Tracey, Tina, Jacqueline, Becky, George and Connor.

In the 5th Dartford family, our pack carries the honour of being named after our founder Skipper Leigh. We hope we are living up to his expectations by having fun and learning new skills that will prepare our young members for their future years with the 5th - and possibly even to be leaders themselves one day, in our new hall.

John Akela

2.5 Collins Pack

In October, with the birth of his first child, Darren Watts decided to step down as Cub Leader, however remaining with the Group as an occasional helper. Darren has been a leader for the eight years assisting with Earley Troop, and then Assistant Cub Leader before taking on Collins Pack leadership in 2012. A big thank you to Darren for all that he has given to Scouting and I'm sure we all wish Darren, Louise and Eddie all the success for the future.



Since October we have looked to implement Flexible Volunteering with a number of the parents taking Collins Pack forwards using Easier Scouting for programme ideas and On-Line Scout Manager to carry out the administrative tasks needed. I would like to thank

Amanda, Louise, Lynda and Ellisa for their help and assistance, however to ensure Collins Pack continues we need further volunteers to take an active role.

Collins Cub Pack has 25 invested members, 17 of them being invested this year with 3 linking to Burne Troop Scouts achieving their Silver Awards.

We have visited the Fire and Police Stations, camped with District at The Barn in Maidstone, achieved Our World, Personal Safety, Air Activities and Athletes badges and are currently working on our Teamwork Challenge Award. We are also looking forward to the Cubs Activity Day later this month.

We are looking for additional help to assist with preparing drinks, collecting subs, record-keeping and coordinating games. New instructors are always welcome too. If you can lend a hand, please let us know.

Paul Boreham

2.6 Phillips Pack

The last year has seen a shift in leadership. Shea Gardner became Assistant Cub Leader and I stepped up to Cub Leader as we said a sad goodbye and good luck to Tracy as she changed career. Fortunately, we have not lost her for good and she still visits Phillips Pack and the wider 5th Dartford family when she is not working.

Our first challenge was to start to implement the new Challenge Badge system.

April was a busy month, seeing Phillips Pack join Collins and Leigh Packs to enjoy the new Jungle Book film at Bluewater cinema. We also joined the rest of the group for St. George's Day.

In May, we visited Northfleet Police Station and experienced what it would be like to work there.



We joined Collins and Leigh Packs for the District Cub Camp in June at The Barn in Maidstone. The Cubs enjoyed activities such as climbing, shooting, archery, field games and sing songs around a camp fire.

We had a visit from Tesco's Farm to Fork and the Cubs got to try different fruits, breads and cheeses. They also learnt about where the different foods come from.



In July, all the 5th Dartford Cub groups joined together to enjoy a Sports Day and tug-of-war competition over Roseberry Gardens. Dave Monteith gave out the individual certificates and finally the group trophy to Collins Pack - watch out Collins Pack, we will be fighting you for that trophy in 2017. At the end of the sports day, all 5th Dartford Cubs gave Dave a fundraising cheque for his Marathon efforts, with the money being split between the New Hall Fund and the MS Society.

In November we helped with design ideas for the new hall.

Cub Scouts were 100 years old, culminating with a Dartford District Birthday Party in December.

Activity Badges covered were: Air Activities, Home Safety, Artist, International, Home Help and the starting of the new Challenge Badges. Lots of problem solving and team work, mini raft building and a new Phillips Pack Code of Conduct.

Silver Awards were achieved by Ella, Dillon and Andrew. Congratulations to Ella Ferris who jointly won 5th Dartford's Scout of the Year Award.



Lastly, a big thank you to James and Megan O'Brien for all your help and support. You are both a credit to me and Phillips Pack.

Kay O'Brien

2.7 Burne Troop

No report submitted.

2.8 Earley Troop

Troop Nights: This year we have seen Megan achieve her Chief Scout Gold Award and move up to Explorers. We invested 16 new Scouts, with 3 linking to Explorers and a few others moving on to other interests. Our invested total remains a healthy 28 and our evenings continue to provide a wide and varied programme with a mixture of practical Scouting as well as games. In December, we had 7 Scouts merge with us from Medcalf Troop. We have also introduced on-line payment of subs via the OSM functionality which is easier for parents to use and the leadership team to administer.

The Troop has been working on a number of badges: Axe and Saw, Fire Lighting, Fitness badge, Air Craft Recognition, Survival Skills, Navigation, Local Knowledge, Pioneering, Night hike, Whittling, Target Shooting, Archery, Egg Drop Challenge, Climbing and Abseiling, First Aid and Pizza making to mention a few. We have awarded over 50 badges, with more to be presented.

Out & About: St George's Day Parade and Remembrance Parade were both well attended, with the Scouts taking the effort to looking their best to represent themselves and the Group.



Eight of Earley Troop Scouts attended the 2016 Summer Camp at Broadstone Warren, East Sussex, with good weather except for the overnight hike. Activities included raft building, backwoods cooking and shelter building (with it being the first year that we used hammocks).

For our Centenary Birthday Parade and church service then attending the trampoline centre Flip-Out at Chatham with the whole group, enjoying pizza and a very large birthday cake.



Easter camp at Thriftwood, is our more back to basic camp, focusing on bush-craft and fishing which the Scouts always enjoy, especially the roast chicken over an open fire.

Leadership: There has been good support by the parent volunteers ensure that it is a lively vibrant section, with thanks going to Gary Tuffee, Andy Balfe, Kevin Wells, Dan Scorey and Sean Hodder, with ongoing support from Keith Furlong, Dave Monteith and Jason O'Brien.

A big thank you to the volunteer team whose combined contribution make Earley Troop the success it enjoys.

Paul Boreham

2.9 Johnston Explorers

This year we have had a rise in number to 27 invested, with more interest coming from around the district and the balance between male and female members is pretty much equal now. This diversity is adding to the strength of the unit and they are starting to think ahead to things they actually want to do and pick up the reins to make them happen.

Awards: Following on from last year's Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) achievements, we have had a further 2 complete their DofE Bronze and one DofE Silver Awards through Dartford Grammar School and another 7 sign up to do the award with us for our second batch. This group is younger, so will be under our wing for longer to support them.

The number of Young Leaders has grown and they continue to commit to supporting younger sections and completing their training, with two of them achieving their Young Leader's belt this year, with more to follow next year.

Five of our highest achievers have earned their Chief Scout Platinum awards this year, the highest number I've seen at the 5th for many years. We will look to continue in this direction in the year ahead with a couple of Diamond awards a strong possibility too.. Numerous activity badges have been gained and including the merits above, 57 awards have been made this year.



Activities and Events: The ESU has had another activity filled year starting with St Georges Parade, Ten-Pin bowling (twice), JOTT, Edinburgh Chase, Target Shooting, Climbing, Abseiling, Summer Camp, Driving Range, Cooking, Chinese restaurant for George's last night... Remembrance Parade, Birthday Parade and a whole bag of fun at 'Flip-Out' Trampoline centre in Chatham thereafter, Young Leader training weekends, Pancake night, Pioneering, Trading Post, Egg Drop and so much more.

Leadership: We are looking for help on Monday evenings, especially with so many young ladies joining the unit; some female support would be very welcome,

Jason O'Brien