Hornchurch District
Scout Association
www. hornchurchscouts. org. uk

"Scouting About"

Bumper Issue!

Well another year, another Gilwell Winter Camp. Last year was the first time that I'd actually taken the Scouts of 2nd Elm Park away to this camp. With the time of year and the weather in mind I only opened the camp up to 6 Scouts (1 Icelandic) But with word of mouth, I knew that I'd have to open it to more this year.

So we took 14 Scouts to the easiest camp there is in our camping year. Although wet and muddy, there's no cooking, no washing up, no wood collection, no water collection and NO GRIM SNORING NEXT TO YA !! On the Thursday night Rob, Pinto and myself went up to the site to put our tents in the best spot. When we arrived we found that we were right next to a Group from Wales. (never mind though) Whilst we were putting up the three Icelandic's the Welsh Group offered us a tea or coffee, but for those of you that know me, I simply hate tea and coffee. The lovely lady then offered me a beer instead……. I take back all I've ever said about the Welsh, they're lovely people ! After rubbing it in to the Welsh group that we were off to our beds, only about 30 minutes away we went back home.

As it was the new year and my holidays had re started, I decided to have the Friday off of work (didn't have to go sick for a change) to go up to the site and give people a hand setting up in the ever increasing mud. When I arrived on site, most of the work was done and so a quick visit to the pub and I was heading back to the Scout Hut to collect the lads. We arrived at the site at about 19:15 and the Scouts quickly laid out their sleeping stuff and were off to the disco. The Leaders took the opportunity to relax in the comfort / dry / warmth of the bar, which once again Hornchurch District soon took over. All of the usual suspects were there and a good evening was had by all (even if I was attacking them with my sponsor form)

Saturday morning saw early entertainment, in us watching a certain Explorer Leader decorating the base of a tree, with the night before obviously being a bit heavy for him. After breakfast, it was another day packed full of activities, the theme being ' the fair.' After a bit of arguing, most of the Leaders also got to take part in all of the activities, with Pinto doing his up most to destroy a quad bike (he insists the steering / throttle locked, causing the high speed crash) In

Continued on Page 14

Feb'04
Issue **35**

Group Circulation:	☐ **Explorer Scout Leader**	☐ Scout Leader
	☐ Cub Scout Leader	☐ Beaver Scout Leader

D.C.'s Discourse...

It may be February, but a belated Happy New Year to one and all.
The census figures are now all in, and the good news is that as a District we have gone up by five members since last year. This may not seem like a lot, but bearing in mind that last year we were down by 101 members, we do seem to have secured some stability over the last year. On the whole, 2003 was a fantastic year for scouting in this District, with higher attendance at most district events, 42 adult leaders recruited, our best attended District AGM since 1983 and of course Her Majesty The Queens visit to Romford, and the Guard of Honour that Hornchurch Scouts provided.
Special congratulations go to 1st Cranham, 1st Elm Park, 2nd Elm Park and 3rd Rainham who have all gone up as a group total. Also of note is the fact that we now have 175 adult leaders, about 40 more than this point last year – however with more leaders we could achieve a lot more.
To address some of the concerns over adult recruitment, the County hope to employ five Adult Recruitment Officers (one per borough), whose sole job will be to go out into the community and recruit new adults into scouting. It will then be up to us to find the most suitable role for them to take on. The role will be part-time (about 15 hours a week), and will be as flexible as the candidate requires. Basically we are looking for someone who is good at 'selling a product' and could relate to people of different ages. If you think this could be you, or you know someone suitable, please let me or Avril know and we will pass this onto County.
It's been another busy time, with a vast array of different events and experiences. Some of the highlights;

- Camping with 2nd Elm Park, 2nd Cranham, 8th Hornchurch & Hornchurch Explorers at Gilwell Winter Camp on the first weekend in January (check out the pictures on the District Website)
- District Team Drink at The Optimist (even if the pub did forget the promised buffet, leaving us with just a bowl of potatoes and some almonds until Paul went shopping!)
- The District Cub Carol Service at St. Nicholas Church (and the Mayor came too). Excellently coordinated by the leaders of 1st Elm Park & Jaqui Morgon.
- Scout & Explorer Clay Pigeon Shooting at Crowfields – probably the wettest yet, but still highly enjoyable – I missed all the clays, but many of the novice Scouts did superbly well.
- Presenting Awards at 2nd Elm Park's Open Evening & AGM – Over 120 Scouts and their Parents were present!
- District Away Weekend at Hayling Island – a good time was had by all (what I can remember of it!)

The District Swimming Gala is fast approaching, so it would be nice to see representatives from each and every Group. Even if you can only get one or two young people interested please try and enter. The sense of achievement for young people when they win is well worth the effort. Beaver Scouts will again be part of the event this year, as well as a new Explorer Scout Trophy.
As a whole, the District has a vast array of events organised over the forthcoming year. It would be nice to see more groups represented at some of these. These events are organised to complement and extend the programme that each section operates. Many of these events are run because we are told at District Meetings that they are wanted – so please, if we take the effort to run them, try and take part.
As from September this year, the whole pattern of adult leader training is changing. Consequently this is the last real opportunity to complete Leadership One & Two. I would therefore encourage all those who are part way through training to complete as much of it now as they can.
Thank you once again for all that you all do for scouting in this district – last year was my first full year as your District Commissioner, and largely I have thoroughly enjoyed myself. If we all work together, 2004 can be even better!

Yours in Scouting
Dean Jefferys
District Commissioner

News/ Events...

District Cub carol service raised £96.00 for little haven hospice.

The District Scout and Explorer Clay Pigeon Shooting Competition 2004 has been put forward to Sunday October 3rd when the weather should be better and there is time following the School summer break for Leaders to distribute the details to their Troops and Units.

The Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003.
All Leaders and Instructors involved with teaching young people marksmanship using air weapons must be aware of the changes further details of which will be distributed via Headquarters and County in due course and through Shooting Organisations
It is now an offence for any young person aged under 17 to have an air weapon and /or ammunition (pellets) with them at any time unless directly supervised by a person aged 21 years and over or as part of an approved target shooting club.
At a campsite air weapons being carried to and from their store and a range can only be carried by a person aged over 21.
It is also an offence to make a gift of an air weapon or ammunition or to part with possession of an air weapon and ammunition to a person aged under 17.
It is not an offence if a young person aged 14-16 is on private premises and has the consent of the occupier to have an air weapon with them. It is however
illegal for them to fire the weapon beyond the boundaries of the premises the maximum fine being £1000.

Fun and Educational Wildlife Activities available at Hanningfield Visitor Centre and at Bedford's Park Visitor Centre.
Both Centres run activities aimed at Beavers, Cubs and Scouts etc that include Minibeast Hunts, Orienteering, Nature Trails, Pond Dipping, Bird Watching ,Night Walks, Practical Conservation and much more.
Cub Scouts can work towards gaining their Global Conservation, Scientist, and Naturalist badges ,and Scouts their Global Conservation, Forester ,and Naturalist badges.
Costs are a £2.50 donation per child (£35 minimum)
For further details and to make a booking please contact Becky Spurgeon Education Officer Hanningfield Tel. 01268 711001 or Michelle Pearson Community Wildlife Officer, Bedford's Park Tel. 01708 748646.

Training
Why not try to finish your training before the change to the new modular system which will be starting in the summer of this year.
If you are quick there is time to register your attendance at the next **Leadership 1** at Hargreaves starting on 28/29 February, second weekend 15/16 May plus a residential experience.
Or if you need to do Leadership 2 to complete your training this will be held at Hargreaves on the 6/7 March plus 10 July.
Thriftwood
There are all the new Activity Authorisation Training Courses for 2004 at Thriftwood online for all to see at
http://www.thriftwood.org.uk/training.htm

Family Disco on Saturday 21st.February at the 8th.Hornchurch Scout Hall, Chelmsford Drive (nr.Hacton Lane) from 7p.m.—10.30p.m.
Tickets £5.00 adults £2.00 children .Please bring your own refreshments.
(**Parents must supervise children at all times.)**
Tickets phone Karen on 01708

Colony Chat...

2003 ended on a high note with the Beaver Carol Service and Party. David from 8th Homchurch did a superb job organising it all and in the end over 100 boys and girls attended. They all had loads to eat and went home with Goody bags and cake. Thank you everyone at 8th Homchurch. for a good day. 1 was hoping to also have a celebration as thought a colony was reopening at 1st Upminster always exciting news as we have closed rather than opened ones in the last few years. It was not to be though as the new leader did not materialise. The good news was that new leaders came forward for several other colonies and two took over the running of 1st South Homchurch. Cathy and Wendy had been there several years and always did community singing at the Christmas Party when we ran out of ideas to keep the beavers amused. They were also the first colony to have girls. I wish them well in the future. The problem of leaders is always looming over me and at the moment I have become one as 7th Homchurch is in need of Leaders rather urgently. I am glad I retired it gives me time to do Beaver paperwork rather than school paperwork! The interesting thing is that we still have the most Beavers in G.L.N.E so we must be doing things right, so thank you all the Leaders for their dedication to the job.
Janet Winslow
ADC Beavers

3rd Rainham Group went to neighbouring Wennington for a visit to the fire station during the October half-term. Red Watch gave a tour of the building, explaining what each of the rooms were for, how the calls came in and what to say when you are dialling 999, then a call came in and they had to rush off to check out a car fire.
The Group ate the Red Watch chocolate biscuits while awaiting their return.
When they got back from the shout Red Watch continued the tour and demonstrated the up-and-over doors, again, and again, and again.
We ran out of time to go outside and see a car being cut up as a rescue demonstration so we have been invited back in the summer, which we look forward to with great anticipation.
Many thanks to all the firemen who answered all the questions, there were a lot of questions, and also thanks to the Watch Commander who wrote the following letter to the group after the visit:
Please pass on our thanks to your colleagues and the Children in the scout group for the biscuits and their excellent behaviour this evening. All my watch commented on how well they conducted themselves. We have already begun to make headway into the biscuit "mountain"; rest assured they will be much appreciated!
Garry Warren,
Watch Commander,
Red Watch F40 Wennington,
Oak, DBSL, 3rd Rainham GLNE.

8th.Hornchurch Apollo Cub Scout Group

The evening of Saturday 24 January most of the Apollo Cubs and some of the Dragon Cubs set off on the underground to spend, what we hoped would be, a really enjoyable and interesting, overnight stay at the Science Museum. On arrival we unpacked our sleeping bags, PJ's and teddies in the Shipping Gallery, where we were to camp amongst the priceless exhibits! Straight onto, what we thought would be, a very boring safety talk, only to be greeted by a man in black, that is a black wetsuit, goggles and snorkel, who proceeded to show us how not to perform, by running a film of some capers. The evening hadn't even started yet, and we were already laughing. Our first session was about snot, where Michael played the part of the brain, and we all made our very own samples of snot to take home-yuck! Then we went to a session about the brain, where Baloo was asked to wear something like a flesh coloured swimming hat, which had lots of symbols drawn over it, depicting what each part of the brain didifthe surgeon could find one! Again many of our lads got the chance to join in, Glenn playing the part of a cow, and James a whale.

Time for our snack break, when we all shared our picnics. Then straight to the theatre for a very entertaining and informative session about blood. Thomas discovering what it was like being plasma, Chris becoming the youngest blood donor ever, whilst Hathi had an unplanned health check!

For the last session of the evening the lads chose to see a drama in the Aviation Gallery, where we met "The Amy Johnson", and heard about her epic flight from England to Australia many years ago. We proved to be a. very participative audience-surprisingly as it was very late in the evening at this stage! Finally, there was just time for a simple refresher quiz and questionnaire, before we hit our sacks for the night; some of the younger members falling straight off to sleep; whilst others tucked into their midnight snacks; while others still, tried to terrorise the leaders!

Early next morning we tidied our things away, before going down to breakfast-courtesy of the Museum!

There was yet another drawing competition in a different gallery again, before we stampeded The Launch Pad, the hands-on area. The final activity was to watch a 3D film in the giant IMAX Cinema about bugs of the Borneo Rainforest-who'd have thought it would be so terrifying and gory in places? Very "'watchable" all the same!

It was at the end of this session, we found out that we'd won the bedtime quiz-a great end to a fantastic trip out; made even better because the lads were so well behaved, a credit to the group and their families. Also, bearing in mind they were two different packs, they not only got on very well, they actually looked after one another.

Here's to a very memorable and worthwhile experience!

Sue Cruse

8th.Hornchurch

Troop Talk...

Dear Scouters and Scouts of Hornchurch District,
Firstly, let me wish all those whom I haven't yet seen in 2004 a very Happy New Year and welcome back to a fresh year of Scouting.

More great news – I'm very pleased to be able to welcome more new leaders to the Scout section in Hornchurch District. Thank you to Thomas Herring (1st Elm Park), Rob Phimister (2nd Elm Park) and Paul Lovell (2nd Cranham) all of whom have taken out ASL warrants in recent months. THANK YOU for volunteering to continue the great Scouting offered in Hornchurch.

Despite it only being the end of January we have already had one District Scout event. On Saturday 24th January the **District Scout Chess Competition** was held at Wood Lane for the third time in its current reincarnation. My thanks go to Michael Suggate and the 2nd Elm Park leaders for running this event. It was great to see numbers up yet again and seven Troops from across the District took part. Congratulations to Jack Buffoni of 2nd Upminster who won the main competition with Michael Morton (1st Elm Park) as runner up. The plate competition was won by George Patmore of 3rd Cranham with George Whipp (1st Elm Park) as runner up. The four semi-finalists have been asked to represent Hornchurch District at the County Chess Competition on Saturday 20th March. Good luck to all of them.

District / County Scout Events Coming Up

The annual Swimming Gala takes place this year on Saturday 6th March at Hornchurch Pool. Have you thought about holding a special Troop night at your local swimming baths in order to pick your team? How easy is this for a Troop night program idea? I hope to see every Scout Troop represented and I'm sure the level of competition will be as high as ever. If you require any further details please contact either your GSL or myself.

County Swimming Gala – this will be held on Saturday 20th March. The winners from the District Swimming Gala will be representing Hornchurch at this County event. After winning the Trophy two years running we were just beaten into second place last year so I know we will be trying our hardest to win back the Cup. Fur further details please contact Danny Aherne.

County / District Scout Camp – This will be held over the weekend of 4th – 6th June at Decoy Broad, Norfolk. Full details were handed out at the last District Scout Leaders meeting and are also available on the County website. Please do come along and support this event.

County Scout Five-a-side Competition will be held on Saturday 15th May. Full details were also distributed at the last District Scout Leaders meeting and again are available on the County website.

June will see the very popular **District Hiking Weekend** run again at Skreens Park. The dates are 19th / 20th June. More details at the next District Scout Leaders meeting.

St. Georges Day Parade

This annual event when EVERYONE in Hornchurch District renews his or her Scout Promise will be held on Sunday 25th April. Please could you encourage all of your Scouts and indeed leaders to attend because this is the one time that every member of Hornchurch District can see just how large the District is and also just how great we are. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Nights Away Permit Scheme – Can I just remind everyone to submit their Nights Away Permit application form ASAP with a passport sized photo. The forms are available from Scoutbase or direct from Graham Crossman. And finally – if you are a parent reading this article then please think very seriously about volunteering at your son's Scout Group. Scouting is purely voluntary and relies on volunteers. As I look around at many of the Scout Leaders in Hornchurch District they do NOT have children in the Troop – indeed many of them don't have children at all. So these volunteers are given their time to run sections for the benefit of your sons and daughters. Do you think now might be the time for you the parents to come forward and offer assistance. There are many tasks that have to be done to keep a Scout Group functioning successfully and remember the old saying MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK. If you can get involved in any capacity then please contact your son's leader, your Group Scout Leader or myself on 01277

To all of those leaders, instructors and parents who are doing so very much for Scouting in Hornchurch – THANK YOU

Andy Rice ADC (Scouts)

District Chess Comp...

That's right, only 24 days into the new year and already the first of the District Scout events of 2004.

The District Chess Competition has only recently started to take place again, with Michael Suggate and the Leaders of 2nd Elm Park primarily taking responsibility for the organisation. Saturday 24th January saw the competition's third year in a row, and with the numbers up by 50% last year, we hoped to have a similarly good turn out.

So 12:45 arrived and so did the Scouts, with 8 of the 15 Troops in the District being represented. Once again the numbers were up on last year with over 20 Scouts present. The competition saw each Scout, play at least 3 competitive matches, with the first round losers going into the plate competition.

In between matches there were refreshments and plenty of biscuits and sweets on offer (well Mike's a bit of a pig) It was also pleasing that considering there were 20 Scouts in a reasonably small hall, the level of noise was kept to a minimum throughout the play….. As I've said before, I quite like helping at this event, as it's possibly the only Scouting activity from which don't go home with a headache.

As ever the four semi finalists will be invited to represent the District at the County Competition in March. So a place in the final four, if not winning, would prove to be just as important. After about 3 hours of play, we had our winners, the plate trophy went to George Patmore of 3rd.Cranham and the overall winner was Jack Baffoni of 2nd Upminster, our congratulations to both.

This is an event where the Scouts can simply turn up and take part without any Leaders having to be there. Just a case of handing out the letters (provided) and reminding the Scouts a couple of times in the lead up to the date. With this in mind a look forward to seeing as many Troops as possible represented next year.

STUART BARHAM
2nd Elm Park Scout Leader,
Hornchurch District Scout Leader
(Editor's article and photo featured in the Romford Recorder 30th.Jan 2004)

Night Hike...

Remember that Wednesday With all that Snow !!

Well that Wednesday was the one when I had a night hike planned for my Scouts at 2nd Elm Park.

As soon as it came down the phone calls started…. " it's really cold is it still on ", " it's snowing, is it still on ", what if it keeps snowing, will it still be on " All were told yes and the hike stayed on.

I knew we wouldn't get anywhere near the potential 33 Scouts that could have attended, and when I trekked out and found the roads in the state they were, I was pleased when we had 14 Scouts taking part.

After the predictable snow ball fight in the car park of St Georges Hospital, we set off for what was originally planned for about a 6 mile hike. All of the Scouts were wrapped up well and with the gloves and possible refusal to take their hands out of their pockets (and I wouldn't have blamed them) it was decided that I would read the map for the hike. Off passed the hospital, and straight onto the first of the very narrow footpaths, and as I was at the front I was the obvious target for all snow balls at this point. When in the open I took pleasure in watching the lads who'd been bombing me with snow, come across various deep puddles covered in snow and ice and not realise until the water was in their boots. And I must admit to throwing the occasional snow ball back their way as well.

On a couple of sections of the route we had to go on roads, with no footpaths next to them. This was an ideal opportunity to teach the younger / less experienced hikers the way to walk on roads. With Pinto at the front for this, myself at the back and Rob in the middle, the lads soon got the hang of when to cross over for the bend and when to cross back again. And with high visibility jackets as well as a few torches, all cars saw us well in advance and gave us plenty of room.

Before the last leg of the hike, we met Grim (who was allegedly injured and couldn't walk with us) at the Optimist pub, where he had hot and cold refreshments as well as a packet of crisps each. We then walked back through the airfield to the hospital. The Scouts had done exceptionally well, actually doing a slightly longer route than planned, and arrived back 10 minutes early to be collected and get home to the warmth.

If you get a chance to take your Scouts out on a night hike, it's well worth it. In better conditions it's a great opportunity to learn some practical mapping skills rather than just looking at the map in the hut. The leaders of 2nd Elm Park would always be happy to put a hike together for your Scouts as well as walk the route with them. Just give me a ring.

Stuart Barham
2nd.Elm Park Scout Leader
Hornchurch District Scout Leader

Winter Camp Mk2...

Winter Camp 9-11 Jan 2004-Gilwell Park

Turn the wheel slowly one-way, 1 went to sleep in my cosy tent (not) hearing the-: voice of the dodgem car operator did he really believe scouts and explorer scouts would listen to him, mad fool. But surely we were all mad! In excess of 1500 young people and not so young attended this wonderful event- this was my 5th in a row but we all know Jim is mad. Last year minus 7 degrees this year mud, mud and more mud. If you haven't tried it you are missing out on so many events to try as 1 said. There were dodgems, waltzer, ferris wheel, rotating climbing wall, archery, rifle shooting, laser clay pigeon shooting (what's wrong with using real ones), computer room, climbing wall, absei1ing, giant push ball, quad bikes, go carts and a brill disco in the lid on Saturday evening. Explorer scouts from 2 District Units, scouts from 8th. Hornchurch, 2nd. Cranham and 2nd. Elm park plus leaders from all sections.

After last years catering by Linda, who could forget stodge and mince, surprise we mostly eat out. Those who dined in were expertly shown how by Stuart Brown, Scout leader 8th.Hornchurch, instructing scouts how to make a pot noodle? Most of the District Team breakfasted at the local golf club (where else) and managed to find an excellent pub for evening meals we really know how to rough it. I did mention mud, but for the leaders and scouts of 2nd E.P. who as there was not enough made a mud slide and used to great effect apart from Sarah, cant make out why?

Before joining the lads in the disco the leaders had a swift half in the Gi1well bar with our pink polo shirts large flag and pink fish (that's another story). Hornchurch District were soon on the map with our own David Blaine alias Richard Pinto encased in a tower of beer glasses. I made myself known to Stephen Peck (someone high in scouting) should get my warrant back one day.

Is there a point to Jim's ramblings? Yes why not join us next year? It really is what scouting is all about young people having fun, leaders meeting old and new friends.

Details are available at the Gilwell reunion and on Gilwell's website.

Yours in scouting

Jim Berry, Deputy District Commissioner

2 E.P. Christmas Camp...

2nd Elm Park Group Christmas Camp

As with every year, the Troop were going to once again have their annual Christmas Camp. But with numbers at the highest they've been we thought we'd give ourselves a challenge, and take the whole Group away for the weekend.

So we booked the Pack Holiday Centre at Belchamps for 19/12/03 - 21/12/03 and went about persuading the Beaver Leaders that a 24 hour sleepover was a good idea. After a few meetings, phone calls and worried e-mail's (and that was just Grim) all Leaders were happy about the programme, menu and sleeping arrangements. Although I must admit to being slightly concerned when I realised there were 48 beds and nearly 60 people attending (hey, the Scouts wouldn't mind being on the floor)

The weekend went as smoothly as could be expected, with the Scouts doing some joint activities with the Cubs as well as the Cubs doing some with the Beavers. It was nice to also see a lot of the lads away for their first camp, and getting to know the Leaders and members of the sections above theirs.

The Leaders took advantage of the Beavers not being there on the first night, knowing that the Cubs and Scouts wouldn't be too much of an issue. We had a huge game of poker, the stakes were high (giant box of celebrations) with anywhere up to 10 dairy milks being bet at one time. Although you knew when someone wasn't too confident with their hand, as they started betting with the Topics (well, they are disgusting)

On the Saturday we had the Cubs and Scouts rifle shooting, as well as doing archery, whilst the Beavers were making snow globes and Christmas baskets. I then took the Scouts to the local swimming pool, leaving the Cubs and Beavers to make some biscuits for their baskets. We again had Grim's famous Christmas dinner, which was to it's usual high standard. He did particularly well this year as he had to feed 60 people. The Saturday night proved to be an interesting one, with the wind picking up and the shutters banging against the bedroom windows. This coupled along with the stories Pinto had been telling the Beavers about various evil things that lived at Belchamps, lead to a sleepless night for a few. Jill was in and out of bed a few times in the night, but all in all the lads were great and they, and I'm sure Jill, all had a good time.

The Sunday saw the clean up of the hall, as we had the 18 Scouts sleeping in their on the Saturday night. Biscuits, crisps, sweets, wrappers and a few items that we've sent away to be analysed, were soon cleared up and we had another fun day. After breakfast, the Beavers played some games in the main hall and the Cubs and Scouts did some wall climbing. A big thanks to Dave Langley and Keith Carver for coming along to run the climbing sessions. After lunch the Beavers left us and so the Cubs and Scouts did the necessary in the dorms.

There are a few pictures from the camp on our new website:
www.2ndelmparkscouts.org.uk

This really was an enjoyable weekend and I'd recommend you trying a Group camp of your own, and maybe even a Christmas one. Haven't told Jill yet, but we're doing it again next year !!

STUART BARHAM
2nd Elm Park Scout Leader,
Hornchurch District Scout Leader

More About Winter Camp...

Winter Camp was one of the best camps I've been on (although I've heard Norjam is the best camp). The best things that were there were the Quad bikes, the disco (which is on every night) the mini Cinema and fun fair with the Disco Waltzes and Dodgems. They also had some smaller activities in the hall during the day where the Disco is at night.

List of Activities

- Ferris Wheel
- Dodgems
- Disco Waltzes
- Quad Bikes
- Free Falling in hall etc.
- Rock Climbing
- Disco (at night)
- Mini Cinema (at night)

When we had a camp fire on Saturday evening there were two Christmas trees left behind… you guessed it, once we got it alight (which took round about an hour) we chucked a Christmas tree on there and immediately it went up, it sounded like there were a million fireworks going off because of the tiny ferns and was as hot as anything. As it died down it started to smoke- A LOT! I reckon we covered half the campsite in smoke the way it was going, once it started going down we started to blow underneath it and it flared up again until there was nothing left except the trunk, one of the leaders took the old one off and put the other one on but the fire wasn't as strong so we just left it to burn out.

All, in all it was a really good laugh and I would be more than over the moon if I had the opportunity to go there again and would encourage any scout to go there to enjoy the experience I had.

James Mannering
Falcon Patrol P.L.
8th.Hornchurch

Providing active support

YES!, we would love to help you at your activity or event. However, we meet monthly to pass on your needs to our members. Asking at the last minute makes things difficult and we would appreciate more notice where possible. Attempting to telephone almost fifty members is expensive and ineffective.

We run a full programme of events throughout the year for members from 18 to 65+. Details of the remainder of this year's developing programme are given below:

Sat 6th Mar District Swimming Gala

Mon 15th Mar David Spratt – The Fire of London – DHQ – 8.00

Mon 19th April St George's Day Briefing – Activity TBA – DHQ – 8.00

Sat 24th April St Georges Day Service – Set up - Emerson Pk Sch.- 9.00am

Sun 25th April St George's Day Service.-.Emerson Park Sch.- 10.00am

Fri 30th April Archery Challenge v Romford – 8th Hornchurch HQ – 8.00pm

Mon 17th May Fellowship Annual General Meeting – DHQ – 8.00

Mon 14th June Business Meeting.- Activity TBA – DHQ – 8.00

Fr/Sn25-27June National Fellowship Camp – Chalfont Heights

Mon 12th July Activity & Business Meeting – Thriftwood – 8.00

Mon 13th Sep Programme Planning for 2005 – DHQ – 8.00

Sat 25th Sep Scout Camping & Cooking Competition

Mon 18th Oct First Aid – Chris Langford – DHQ – 8.00

Mon 8th Nov Scouting Skills – Stuart Barham – DHQ – 8.00

Fellowship is open to all from 18 yrs upward. If you like to help, contact the Secretary, or just turn up at one of our activities.

Eddie Body - Secretary
6 Stewart Avenue Upminster, Essex, RM14 2AF Telephone: 01708 -
Email: erbod1@aol.com

More Colony Chat*...

Torchlight Winter Walk in the Woods!!

I had this idea - instead of the usual Colony meeting; take the Beavers down the road to the woody area on Hacton Parkway behind Branfil School - great, they should think it's exciting as they are usually driven everywhere.

The notes went out explaining exactly what I had in mind and requesting the help of two mums to walk with us. Reply slips came back the next week with the needed response from the mums. We were ready for the adventure; my scout helper had sussed out the route and timed it so we knew that it should fit in to the usual Colony times. Right, explain to the Beavers that next week they should come with Wellingtons, coat and torch.- Lots of questions - they can't wait!

The intervening week I begin to panic; what if someone runs off-1 will not be able to find them in the dark. Is this such a good idea. I've told them now I've got to go through with it. Stop panicking!!

I thought I'll get a long rope out of the stores and get the Beavers to hold on to it. Perhaps I'd better have at least one token man along in case there is any trouble. (No offence Ed/John). On my second try to the Fellowship, success. Ed agrees to come along: I start to feel a bit better about everything.

The night arrives; at least it's not raining. The Beavers start to arrive all wrapped up in coats, hats and gloves and of course the obligatory torch is shone around. A rope is found. Right everyone is ready. I explain exactly where we will be walking. A stern word about everyone behaving and keeping hold of the rope and off we go. Down the road; cross Derby Avenue (with leaders standing in the road to hold up any traffic) and on to the pathway where the rope is unfurled and instructions given to all Beavers to go into single file and hold the rope in their left hand and their torch in their right hand. (Am I this controlling! In this sort of situation - YES). The leaders interspersed with Ed bringing up the rear to make sure no-one wanders off.

Right we're ready to brave the dark, dark wood - this is really exciting isn't it. Up and over the footbridge to get to the other side of the Ingrebourne and into the wood led by our trusty scout. As we entered the wood there were these sharp alarm calls and lots of flapping and I think every single roosting bird in the wood was awoken by the Beaver's excited voices and flew off to a quieter spot. We followed one another along the circular winding trail in and out of the mud, endeavouring to see the tree roots to step over rather than tripping over, and ducking the low branches. Back over the bridge, across the road and back up to the hall. Beavers excitedly talking about this and that and what an adventure. Parents arrive to collect their children and have to listen to their son's exploits. Thanks to all that helped. It was a great success and I'm very glad I stuck with my idea, but can't get over how slow the Beavers walked.

Sue Cruse

8th Hornchurch ST. GEORGES Beaver Colony

Winter Camp (cont.from front page…)

between all of the activities was Lunch and Dinner for which we again used the on site catering. The food again wasn't too dismal, and although the portions tend to be a bit small, I will be using the catering again next year. During the day we had invented a new activity of mud sliding (Pinto being the main orchestrate) which entailed simply launching yourself down the wet / muddy hill (the quick) at the back end of the site (sorry any parents who are reading this) and seeing how far you could get. This was felt to be a lot more entertaining than the cup stacking (which Streaky found amazing) that was on show in the lid……. Yes it was simply how fast can you stack cups…… imagine the excitement ! After the Scouts had met a few female campers on the first night, they were all eager to get themselves back down the disco, and who was I to argue. This again left the Leaders at a bit of a lose end, so we dressed ourselves up (well put on the pink t-shirts that Jim had kindly MADE US BUY !) and went to the bar. The evenings entertainment was Hornchurch District (along with a few lads from Newham) building a circular tower around Pinto (pictures are on the website) I also had to dash off at one point with one of my lads having stood on a nail. The Scouts had me believe that Voov was about to have his foot amputated, but when I arrived at the first aid post, he'd just grazed it.

The Sunday saw us simply pack up the tents as quick as we could between the showers and get away before we all got too wet.

Once again the Scouts had a great weekend, and with the amount of other back to basic / Scout based activity camping that they do throughout the year, I have no problem that there is none of this at Winter Camp. You can simply turn up, put your tents up and have a weekend full of fun and activities. Great for the Scouts and relatively stress free for the adults, so why not give it a go next year, and we'll see ya there.

STUART BARHAM
2nd Elm Park Scout Leader,
Hornchurch District Scout Leader

There are many photographs of the Winter Camp on the District Website. Most of them are of Pinto stacking glasses! You can find them at the following URL-

http://www.hornchurchscouts.org.uk/photos_index.htm