

1ST OXTED SCOUT GROUP



ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

2008 - 2009

***Headquarters: Stafford Scout Hall, Chalkpit Lane, Oxted, Surrey.
Registered Charity No. 305779***

A member of Tandridge Voluntary Service Council



THE GROUP CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



This time last year I wrote “this will be my final report after 18 years with the Group”, I received a very nice “leaving” present from the Group (embarrassment!). I was given a Scouts “Thank You” badge which I still proudly wear. I also received my 15 year certificate from the District Commissioner. A few weeks later at the District AGM I resigned as an Executive Member and Trustee of the East Surrey District Executive. This was happening, as I had informed the Group some months before, because I was moving to Southampton with my company, being involved with the start-up of a new regional business. Then the Credit Crunch caught up with the business and I was made redundant!!!, the Bankers had struck again. Luckily within a week or so I had secured a new job in Reigate. So after a summer break I rejoined the Group as Chairman and subsequently the District Executive, so back again after an interesting year. So I now present my 19th report to the AGM.

Well despite my short absence, the Group continues to grow and strengthen, the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are full still and new youngsters are always available from the waiting list, as soon as a vacancy appears at any point. The 1st Oxted Scouts now form the core of the Local District Explorers Unit (we combine with Tatsfield). We are now seriously looking at opening a second Scout Troop in the near future; the numbers are there, we just need to secure suitable additional Leadership. On that point, Nick, Tony and Jenny continue to offer very good leadership. Prior to me “leaving” it was proposed that Nick should take up the role of Group Scout Leader. That formal process is nearing completion, but Nick has been acting up for some time, since he has now found a very suitable Scout Leader to manage the day to day running of the Troop. Nick whilst still helping out, he is now concentrating on the administration and overall management of the Group. Believe you me you need someone, as the bureaucrats multiply, we even now have Line Managers in Scouting, Nick for the Leadership and myself for the Executive. Unfortunately it will only continue to get worse, the form filling grows, the risk assessments fall like confetti and the paperwork mounts up. What about Scouting I say!!!

Since last year all the sections have been very active with their respective programmes and badge work. We have had a number of residential camps for both Cubs and Scouts and there will be more. Please read the Section Leaders reports to see what is happening.

Last year we had two successful Bike sales and a Donkey Derby. On the 9th May we had our first Bike sale of this year with an approximate £1100 profit and the highest number of sale items for some time, so success again and at least the recession has not hit that, in fact it may be helping!!

Our Donkey Derby is on the 6th June and we were pleasantly surprised that we lost very little of our regular sponsors for the programme, so hopefully good weather, and a good turnout will see profits at least as good as last year.

Whilst I have returned as Chairman, I would still like to retire sometime. Perhaps after the Centenary celebrations in 2011? So I am looking for someone to become Deputy Chairman. They can sit alongside me and learn the “trade”, perhaps even take on some tasks like the Donkey Derby, It’s not too difficult. Then perhaps we can swap roles eventually and I can take a back sit at long last, whilst still maintaining a relationship with the Group and Scouting, so is there anyone out there?

We will start planning for the 2011 Centenary soon, so keep a look out for advance notices. We want to do some special things, so parents especially, we will need your help and involvement, there is only once chance, as the next one is 2111 and we will all miss that one

Finally as always, a special thanks to everyone in the Executive, the Leaders, Helpers and Parents for your hard work over the last year, especially during my short absence, we all look forward to another successful year.

Malcolm Kirk, Group Executive Chairman



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



My opening sentence in last year's Report was *"It's strange how one's plans never seem to work out exactly as they were intended."*

It is just as true this year, though not necessarily "my plans". I refer to our esteemed Chairman, Malcolm. Last year he wrote that after 18 years with the Group, mainly as Chairman, he was standing down.

What do we find?

He just can't keep away! I, for one, am very happy to welcome him back. When his work situation changed he said he would come back on the committee if we wanted him – but not as Chairman.

I'm afraid that I told him that was OK, but when he turned up for his first meeting, I introduced him to the rest of the Committee as "our new Chairman" – and he hasn't looked back!

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**O**ur 38<sup>th</sup> Donkey Derby is scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> June. We hope to see you all there. While we will plan the 39<sup>th</sup>, it is the 40<sup>th</sup> which will see us in full flow, for the 40<sup>th</sup> in 2011 coincides with the Group's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary – and we intend to make it a day to remember! Mind you, we will have other celebrations in 2011 – just keep your eyes and ears open – and we expect all parents and the boys and girls of the Group to take part.

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Since Nick took the reins for the day-to-day running of the Group we have gone from strength to strength.

He has encouraged all connected, both adults and the boys and girls. He has built up a great team, though he still needs some extra help. He has emphasised the need for parents to offer assistance, both as possible uniformed Leaders and with the occasional help when we have one-off activities.

He has indicated that we may well be in a position to start a second Troop, and I know that the Cub Section is full to overflowing which could mean a second Pack is in the offing, and, of course, we should not forget the Beaver Section – Jenny is doing a great job, but she does need help.

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**L**ooking at my last year's Report, I spoke of Peggy Gray and how she ran the Moor House Cub Pack for us until she retired, and then she became seriously ill. I am so very pleased to say that Peggy has made remarkable recovery and is so much like her old self that one cannot imagine how ill she was. We are so happy for you, Peggy.

*Mike Moss,  
President.*



# *GROUP SCOUT LEADER'S REPORT*



**T**he Cubs and Scout Sections remain in good health with more than 25 children in both sections. The Beaver Colony remains in need of assistance; as last year the need remains urgent for a new permanent Assistant Beaver Scout Leader to assist Jenny Roe. Our Akela, Tony Soutter, is ably assisted by Chris Hulme and Rob Griffiths, and Dr. Tony Pearson has completed a useful first year with the Troop as an experienced and capable Assistant Scout Leader.

I have taken steps to assume the formal role of GSL, but in so doing will weaken the Scout Troop leadership, so further uniformed leaders are still required. As ever, parental support is essential for the continued well-being of the Group. The uniformed leadership and the Executive cannot run the Group properly without practical support from parents. Any expansion of the Group's role, including the possibility of doubling the size of the Scout Troop to meet on two nights, will need further committed help from parents. Without this help we cannot even start.

We still need a Group **Quartermaster** to pull together an inventory of the Group's usable equipment. This role needs the loving hand of someone who respects equipment and property and who is willing and able to spare a few hours a month looking after "stuff" for us. I'd like to thank the several people who have contributed in this area and who have given up their time to tidy the HQ and its grounds.

Each year I start my conclusion by speaking briefly about Subscription and Capitation.

**Subscriptions** are paid by all invested children; these fees of £25 per term do not fully cover the cost of maintaining the HQ, including utilities and services to the Scout Hut (particularly heating in winter), as well as the resources needed for week-in/week-out youth work at the HQ and at off-site events. Whilst we cannot and do not turn away cases of genuine hardship, the subscriptions charged by the Group represent excellent value for money, and will remain at the current level.

**Capitation Fees** are levied by the Scout Association to cover the costs of maintaining a national, County and District level support structure. Much of this is unseen by parents – an example would be the very comprehensive and very costly public liability insurance required these days to protect both your children and uniformed leaders on and off-site. Another is the organisation behind District events like winter camp, the Colditz Night Hike and Swimming gala – these would not happen, and would cost a lot more when they do happen, if there were not District and County level Scouting organisations. Capitation fees pay for these, and were charged in 2009 at £30 per invested member.

The Treasurer will speak more about financial matters, but we will take a closer look at budgeting in the uniformed sections, particularly to form clear guidance on what can and cannot be claimed as an expense against the Group's limited funds.

Finally, a primary role of the GSL is to more closely integrate the three uniformed sections and move beyond the short term to identify a strategy for the Group – where will we be in five years time? This is something I hope to find time for in the coming twelve months, though this could easily prove more difficult than it sounds.

It only remains for me to thank the uniformed leaders, parental assistants, non-uniformed members of the Group, particularly Sue Daly, and the children themselves for making it all worthwhile.

*Nick Hough*



# *SCOUT LEADER'S REPORT*



The Scout Troop continues to be very popular with 27 Scouts this term, rising to 33 next term. We delivered our first Explorers last Christmas; this was a milestone as it represented the first group of children that had been through the Troop under our leadership. This winter the Troop will deliver more youngsters to the East Surrey North Explorers “Cobra” unit. The East Surrey North Explorers, consisting as it does of large numbers of Oxted scouts, will also begin to hold Wednesday evening meetings at the Stafford hut.

Demand remains high for Scouts and in addition to the uniformed Cubs there is a long waiting list for direct entrance into the Troop. It is a truism that the parental demand for youngsters to be involved in Scouting is not generally matched by willingness to offer more than nominal rota-based assistance.

For much of the year the leadership team has been myself and Tony Pearson, assisted by Austin Copp and Matt Stone. A parent rota remains an absolute essential, and more adults willing to join us in uniformed leadership would be welcome.

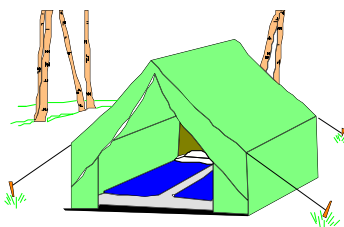
Last year we took the Troop, along with the Cub Pack, to Summer camp at Drum Hill near Derby; this was a first for us as a leadership team, and was a great success. This year our Scout summer camp will be at Collard Bridge near Barnstaple.

The Scouts have done some exciting stuff over the last twelve months, including a memorable evening with birds of prey, electronics evenings, cooking, swimming, caving and water sports at Mercers Lake. We will continue over the next year to keep an exciting programme for the Scouts as well as the usual stalwart events like the Colditz night hike and the Frost Camp.

With a strong Troop, our challenge for the next twelve months is to not fall back on the tried and trusted but to be willing to innovate and bring new exciting and challenging experiences to our young people, without incurring large costs in the current difficult economic climate.

As always the Troop is a joint effort between the uniformed leaders, parents, non-uniformed members of the Group, and of course the Scouts themselves, and it only remains for me to thank all of those people for the last year's Scouting.

**Nick Hough**





## ***CUB LEADER'S REPORT***



**T**he Cub pack is now at 27 strong of whom 5 are female. We only have one child on the waiting list and this child has now been invited in. We have some nine other children on a waiting list who have yet to become of age.

The Pack visited Beaver World on the 4th March, and has recently returned from a District Cub Camp at Broadstone Warren where 22 Cubs attended. The Pack recently purchased an allotment plot adjacent to the HQ and has regular parent working parties to knock it into shape. We asked all the children to bring in seeds and we planted them in germinating trays ready for propagation. Once they had grown we spent some time with the Cubs planting what we could. This will be an ongoing commitment.

The Pack has booked its summer camp 15th to 22nd August which this year will be in the Isle of Wight. We hope to be taking ten Cubs.

In October the Pack is taking 16 lucky Cubs for a sleep-over in Kew Gardens. We will be holding a winter camp at Down Activity Centre with accommodation in early December - all being well.

Last year we made a start on a pond adjacent to the Group's car park, this was for a Pack environmental badge and hopefully will be taken up as a project and completed after the summer.

1st Oxted Cubs had the highest percentage of Cubs turn out for St George's Day Parade and will be very well represented on Remembrance Day,

In addition to myself the Pack, has two very dedicated Assistant Cub Scout Leaders, Robert Griffiths and Chris Hulme.

***Tony Soutter  
Cub Scout Leader***





## ***BEAVER LEADER'S REPORT***



**H**ow did this year go by so fast? Well.....

This past year the Beavers joined the rest of the East Surrey District at Lingfield HQ for a sleepover, where they took part in pond-dipping, making miniature gardens, decorating cakes, going for a walk and playing games.

We also had a trip to the Observatory Science Centre at Herstmonceux, where we all had an excellent time with the hands-on science exhibits indoors and out. We had a tour of a telescope and also learnt how to make simple torches. This fun led to the Beavers earning their Experiment badges.

Our meetings this year have included a tree trail around Master Park, making poppies for the Woodhouse Centre and also presenting them with a Harvest Box, walking over the Downs in the snow which involved playing snowballs, finding bugs, making strange sandwiches (and eating them), and following a trail around Oxted.

Once again, we have attended the St George's and Remembrance Day Parades, and watched the Robin Hood Pantomime at the Barn Theatre.

Some of the badges earned this year are the Fitness Challenge, Health and Fitness, Healthy Eating, Experiment and Hikes Away.

Phew! How did we fit all that in?

***Jenny Roe  
Beaver Leader***



