



Hemel Hempstead District Scout Council Annual Report 2008



Hemel Hempstead District

A Round up of 2007

Chairman's Report

2007 was always going to be a busy year - the Centenary of Scouting, the Jamboree on our own doorstep, a new District Commissioner. The first two of these didn't organise themselves and enormous thanks are due to those in the District who gave their spare time to ensure that both were successful. These events were on top of the programme which forms the "usual" Scouting year for both the District and the Groups.

We were sorry to lose Mark Jefferson as DC after a short, but effective, spell and equally fortunate to be able to appoint Stuart Dickens to replace him. Stuart has already started to make his mark as he comes to grips with the complexities of running the District.

As you read through the reports from the various Sections I'm sure that you will be as impressed as I was with the variety of activities available. It never ceases to amaze me how much is on offer and how much time and effort are put in by the leaders. The expression "It's only an hour and a half a week" could never have been more inappropriate!

2007 has come and gone and we must now look forward. Membership numbers in the District are up and I am sure that this year's programme will represent a challenge to all of those who are prepared to take it on. Once again, many thanks to those in the District who devote so much time to its organisation.

David Fleming

District Chairman

District Commissioner's Report

I took up the role of District Commissioner during 2007, and what a year to start this undertaking. I have been associated with the District for several years, however, as a committee member and then Chair of one of the groups. Previously my involvement in Scouting had been in the London North West District where we still have some ties through friends and family.

2007, the centenary of Scouting, had additional events to the "everyday" ones that we have all come to know and love. In no particular order, these are the swimming event, cooking competition, cycling event, Snowdonia, Watford football, Aqua Splash, dragon boating, pinewood derby and the list goes on.

There are other events that are put on in our District and organised by the leaders and Network for the County that need special mention. These are the County Cub night hike and Chiltern Challenge for the Explorers. These two events in particular grow each year and no sooner has one been completed than the planning for the following year kicks off. There is a great deal of dedication to these activities and a drive to make the next year bigger and better than any that has gone in the past – long may this continue.

2007 saw the World Jamboree hosted in the UK with 40,000 attendees – a contingent of 12 from across the District attending. At the same time the local sunrise celebrations were taking place, hosted at Phasels Wood.





fun. Scouting is fun and we try to organise events that accommodate all age groups. You will find a more detailed report from the groups further in this report. The sections are Beavers 6 – 8 years, Cubs 8 – 10.5 years, Scouts 10.5 – 14 years, Explorers 14 – 18 years, Network 18 – 25 years and Fellowship 25 -106 (or so they tell me).

Thanks for your continued support in the Hemel District.



Stuart Dickens

Hemel Hempstead District Commissioner

The District grew during 2007 and has continued to grow as we have entered 2008, I hope that we can keep it up.

To run the Association and deliver the programme for the young people takes a dedicated team of volunteers across the District. There are some 150 uniformed leaders and at least that many more parents and non uniformed staff in the team that makes this happen – to all I can only extend my gratitude at times like this. However, to continue the growth of the District and the availability of activities for the young people, we need your help. Whatever the skills you have there will be a group or an activity that can utilise them. If you can spare an hour a week or feel that you are able to donate more of the most expensive commodity that we all have, time, please contact one of your local leaders or a member of the District team and we can talk through the opportunities to join in the

Hemel Hempstead Beavers

A Round up of 2007

It has been another successful year for Beaver scouting in Hemel Hempstead, with 15 active colonies. The last year has been eventful whether a beaver or scout. Not many of us will be around to see Scouting celebrating 200 years!

Although the beaver section were sometimes too young to participate as fully as some of the older sections, groups and colonies entered the spirit of 'world' membership, as many of the events laid on for the Beavers covered participation, mixing and mucking in together with Jamboree as the theme much of the time. There was the opportunity to visit the Jamboree, join the district family camp and be up early to renew their promise at sunrise. All of which they did with great gusto and fun. And not forgetting the all important brightly coloured scarf and badges they were able to achieve.

The beaver section is still growing our only drawback is lack of leaders, so here it comes! Without dedicated leaders and helpers we wouldn't be able to give the opportunities we currently can to our young people, and without you helping us and joining our ranks these opportunities may reduce, therefore I will take this opportunity to ask parents and guardians' and friends of scouting to consider coming along and joining in the fun, if nothing else we can promise you an un-paralleled sense of achievement and at least one smile and funny moment that will stay with you a lifetime.

All the above said I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the leaders and helpers who tirelessly give their time and have a bountiful supply of energy and enthusiasm that makes my job all the more fun.

The Hemel Hempstead District's Beaver Prayer – as part of their Promise Challenge Badge – an incorporation of all the groups own prayers

Dear God,

Please look after our families. Help us to remember to say thank you to them.

We are grateful that the world is so beautiful and that there is in it so much for us to enjoy

Help us to be cheerful and not grumpy

Help us to be brave and look after others

Help us to be kind and not mean.

We thank you for all the good things in our world, including food, friends and toys

Thank you for giving us homes and families

Thank you for all the nature in this world

Thank you for animals and pets.

Thank you for love so that we can love people

Thank you for beavers, cubs and scouts

Thank you for making each one of us special.

Amen

Yours in Scouting

Rae

ADC Beaver Scouts – Hemel Hempstead District

Hemel Hempstead Cubs

A Round up of 2007

We started the year off with most Groups taking part in the District Centenary Camp at Tawd Vale, Ormskirk. We went up for the half-term week travelling in minibuses. We had a wonderful time with plenty to do and see such as a visit to the Lake District. The Beavers and Cubs went on the train and did other things and the Scouts and Explorers went on a hike. We went swimming, went on a ski slope and had many more activities in and around the camp site but the main thing that we all enjoyed was the firework display - it was great.



The next event was our annual District sports day which we held in conjunction with the Beavers and Scouts. Hopefully the number of Groups taking part will increase next year. We had an outing to Gilwell's open day in June.



Our next activity was an evening at Aqua Splash Jarmans Park. Then came the Handicraft competition held at Bennett's End HQ followed closely by a Chess competition.

We held our Swimming Gala with the Scouts in February. This was very well attended and thanks must go to Bruce for organising the event.

St George's Day Parade came next and what a good turnout we had. It made us very proud to see them all marching with their flags - well done all Groups!



It only remains for us to say thanks to all of the leaders who put themselves forward to help on all of these occasions.

Paul Rathbone - ADC Cubs & Sheila Neep - DCSL

Hemel Hempstead Scouts

A Round up of 2007

After my first full year as ADC (Scouts) it's very pleasing to look back on a year when our programme and Centenary celebrations have clearly excited more young people than ever to join Scouting. Every week Troops in the District are growing in numbers and planning new and more adventurous activities to retain these youngsters, so I'd like to start my review of the year by expressing my thanks to the Scout leaders, their assistants and Scouts for approaching 2007 with such energy and enthusiasm.

In 2006, the Scout Leaders committed to ways of sharing resources and discussing ideas with each other, working together to make it easier for us to offer young people the chance to challenge themselves and achieve more during their time with Scouting:

Annual swimming competition – another closely contested competition, which many Groups prepare for by working towards the staged swimmer badge.

Bushcraft sessions – led by a team of backwoods enthusiasts. Anybody over the age of 8 can learn some of the traditional Scouting skills, including some leaders who are taking them back to teach their own Scouts.

Sports Day – a number of Troops took part in this event in 2007, to complete their athletes badge, having already put the Scouts through their paces earlier in the term.

Dragon Boating – a District-led activity for Troops to attend a two-hour session to introduce the skill of paddling together to the time of a drum.



Competitions – such as Green Beret, Nimrod and Chiltern Challenge have given our Scouts a chance to prove themselves against others from across the District, County and even the country. As usual our teams performed very well as a result of the training which goes on each week.

Pinewood Derby – Another firm favourite with many Scouts, over 80 entries in 2007, with many cars decorated with a Centenary or Jamboree theme.



Jamboree on the Air – this year’s event was held at Phasels. Troops in the District enjoyed making contact over the airwaves with Scouts from a range of countries – almost as many as at the Jamboree!



St. George’s Day challenge – each Troop was challenged to work in patrols to produce Go-karts and Sedan Chairs to race after our annual renewal of the Promise event. Many patrols enlisted the help of parents and local businesses and are looking forward to next year’s challenge.



It has been great to work with the group of leaders, and I look forward to 2008 when we can again use this enthusiasm to deliver quality Scouting and encourage the older Scouts to their next adventure – Explorer Scouting!

Russ Dyble

ADC (Scouts)

Hemel Hempstead Explorers

A Round up of 2007

The year started with one of our monthly Service Crew weekends. The first full month of the year can normally find a number of Explorers helping on Crew at Phasels Wood. Indeed this year 6 of our members were recruited on to the full paid Crew for the Summer period.

Feb 9-11 was our annual winter walking experience in Snowdonia. This year we joined forces with Stevenage explorers and spent the weekend walking in Snowdonia.

Feb 24/25 saw one of the wettest Chiltern Challenges ever which yet again Hemel Explorers carried off the top trophy. Chiltern Challenge is a combination of daytime challenges with a night incident hike and overnight camp thrown in.

March saw us making a guest appearance at the Outdoor Show at the NEC. We had been asked to bring an element of the Outdoors to the Outdoor show. We arrived on the Saturday night and slept outside in Tent City clearing out of the tents in the morning as the first visitors arrived, we then cooked a supply of sausages in rolls for our hosts from Camp city, the team running the Assn of Scout and Guide Campsites stands inside and ourselves.



We also helped throughout the day running the High ropes course. We certainly put Hemel and Hertfordshire Scouts on the Map that day.

April started our D of E Expedition season. We have an active Duke of Edinburgh award Scheme running in Hemel and the first of these was held in Snowdonia this year. We also took along a number of other Explorers with us when we went and whilst the D of E Group were doing their 3 day expedition we took the others to the top of Snowdon and then climbing in the Llanberis Pass. The weather was glorious for the whole time.



May saw a number of Our Explorers joining the rest of the District Scouts, Cubs and Beavers at the District Camp.

June saw a number of us attending the County Social camp HEAT (Hertfordshire Explorers About Town). A relaxing weekend mixing with other Explorers from Hertfordshire camping, discoing, a trip out to Thorpe Park and a number of challenging games on the Sunday. Typical Explorers great fun was had by all and very little sleep, making every minute count.



July was a very busy month with the Bronze D of E Groups doing their 2 day practice hikes in the Chilterns, The Explorers running Nimrod, a cut down version of Chiltern Challenge for the District Scouts, and 12 of our members attending the world Jamboree, a mind blowing experience for all of those involved.





August the 1st was “Sunrise Day” when every Scout in the UK renewed their promise at the same time and Phasels Wood was turned into a mini theme park with every activity of their own and a number of others brought in for the occasion in action. Many of the Explorers were again on hand to help man the activities and others just there for the day to enjoy themselves.

This was then followed by Hemel District paying host to a Jamboree contingent from South Africa for the week following the main Jamboree. This involved taking them kite flying over Dunstable Downs, site seeing in London, Hemel and St Albans, and a BBQ at Phasels.



The end of August found the Explorers at Great Towers Campsite in the Lake District for their annual Summer Camp and more Silver and Gold D of E Expeditions. Activities at the Camp included, canoeing, climbing, cycling walking and Gear Shopping.



The start of the Autumn term saw the repeat of the Explorer Special Event which is an invitation event and involves a weekend camp in the New Forest with a days sailing in the Solent aboard a 35ft yacht and a days climbing on the Cliffs at Swanage.



A few weeks later we were back down in the New Forest again with the Bronze D of E Groups doing their Qualifying 2 day Expeditions.

At the beginning of October the Explorers provided Cooks, waiters and waitresses at the District Centenary Dinner.



Mid October found us back in the Lake District competing in the County event Hertfordshire Peak Assault, which is a 2 day orienteering course in unfamiliar territory. This years event was the 40th anniversary and was an especially large event open to adult teams as well as Explorers and Network. The Explorer Leaders entered an all girls team in the adult section.



The End of October found yet another Gold D of E Expedition going on in the Brecon Beacons in appalling weather including floods, however they successfully completed their expedition.

December was the annual County Explorer Dinner at Aroma at which Hemel had approx 30 members and this was followed a few weeks later by Bag packing at M&S London Colney to raise funds to offset the cost of some of our Expeditions.

In addition to these events we had held regular weekly meetings which had included, tobogganing at MK Ski Dome, pioneering at Phasels, climbing at Brunel University, inter Unit Challenges and much much more.

We had 68 Explorers and 12 Leaders, which are split over 3 units which meet on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. As well as the events mentioned above we also have a Young Leaders Unit which provides training and support for the Explorers who are Young Leaders within the Beaver, Cub and Scouts sections within the District. We have also helped out at the County Cub Night Hike and other District events for the younger Sections.

Our thanks must go to our strong team of leaders who give up tremendous amounts of time, including holidays to make all of the above events possible and without whom we would not have such a successful Explorer Unit.

Frank Monnington
(Desc)



Hemel Hempstead Network

A Round up of 2007

This year has seen a rejuvenated Scout Network, building on the successes of becoming a District Section. For those aged 18 to 25, the Network has taken part in a wide range of events and activities, from policing events and acting as activity staff at the Jamboree through to the National Network Gathering. The opportunities have been enjoyed by our members.

Regular Thursday night meetings have allowed our members to continue their scouting, from beaver badge events to evenings of debate, rock climbing and night time raft building. With so much to do, we are looking forward to awarding several Queen's Scout Awards in 2009.

The section continues to grow with new members joining all the time, many from the Explorer Scout section. Everyone aged 18-25 is welcome to join whether a leader or not, giving you an opportunity to complete the Queen's Scout Award and the section's new unique award.

Geoff Angell

Network Leader.

Hemel Hempstead Fellowship

A Round up of 2007

Fellowship is the District's iceberg! You do not see much of us taking a high profile within the District, because most of our activity takes place below the waterline as we try to "provide active support to local Scouting" in a variety of ways. Fellowship members are active within the District, and more widely, in such roles as District Secretary, Scout Shop Manager and helpers, Water activities instructors and Phasels management team as well as supporting some of the Groups with which we have personal contacts.

Personally I spent five days helping the World Jamboree Take Down team.....1200 Fiesta Party tents; countless two man tents, wash areas, admin marquees, hundreds of boxes of equipment to be packed and despatched, etc. etc. etc. As all the gear was removed the Camp site seemed to get bigger and bigger! The day visit I and other members made enabled us to experience the Jamboree in full swing. What an event.

In strictly Fellowship role we help out at events wherever we can: as car park guards, marshals, judges, minibus drivers, refreshment providers and so on. We are used to standing for hours in cold, windy and wet places;- to help the young people have a great time !

Socially we get together now and then to enjoy meals out and walks (usually including suitable refreshment stops). There is more we could do but we are all so busy!

In the St George's Day Awards 2007 three Fellowship members had Long Service recognised.

At the AGM in April we looked forward to planning a future programme and extended an invitation to current Network members, just about to become

'too old', to join in with us and contribute to our activities. Ideas suggested included sailing and power boating, maybe a narrow boat trip, ten-pin bowling and further walks, meals out and possibly a weekend camp.

Fellowship is open to all interested adults, who do not have to have been in Scouting before. Often it suits Leaders who wish to take a step back from the weekly load of involvement with section activities or others who are willing and able to help Scouting on an occasional basis. Where appropriate we take training in specialist activities and are included in the Movement's Child Protection procedures.

Anyone interested in joining, or just wanting further information, is welcome to contact us by emailing fellowship@hemel-scouts.co.uk.

David Thomas.

Fellowship Chairman

Hemel Hempstead District Shop

A Round up of 2007

The Shop has been open for nearly three years. In 2007 it generated over £1700 profit for the benefit of the District. For 2008 we shall have to bear some losses due to writing off badges and publications which have become obsolete due to changes in the Training Programme which came upon us rather suddenly.

The success of the Shop depends on the willing help given by the four teams of 'Managers and helpers' who happily staff the Shop every Tuesday evening during term time. Sometimes they are overwhelmed by the crowds queuing before opening time.....and other times hardly any customers come! My very grateful thanks to every one who makes these teams work so well.

We try to maintain a reasonable stock of badges, uniform and publications but it is not sensible to hold too many items which are only infrequently requested. I propose to stock a few more items of adult uniform, but Leaders are of such a variety of sizes and shapes that keeping a full range is impracticable! Items ordered and paid for are usually delivered within three weeks.

In addition to the usual stock you can purchase a range of outdoor adventure, camping equipment, items for prizes or presentations etc at favourable cost. Please look at the catalogue or Scout Shops website and ask for a quotation. Groups can also buy from Herts County Supplies through the Scout Shop. We shall try to beat the competition; there are usually no delivery charges and all profits benefit our District.

For badges, it is always helpful if Leaders, when planning activities, can give some advance notice if a quantity of any particular badge is likely to be needed.

Email the Shop at Shop@hemel-scouts.co.uk.

David Thomas

District Scout Shop Manager