

gscouts

**News and Views for Scouting in Gloucestershire
October 2017**



County Air Activities Weekend 2017





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October 2017

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I bought the wife a new fridge the other day.

Her face lit up when she opened it.

If you want to print this magazine, it can be presented in A4 or as an A5 booklet.

Editorial



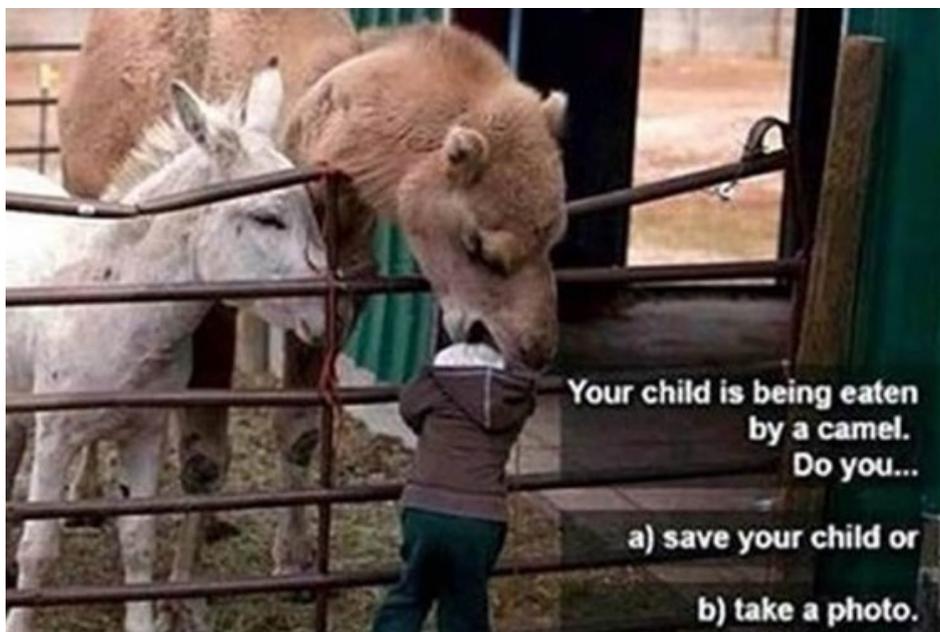
Over the August Bank Holiday weekend I attended the 36th World Collectors' Meeting of the International Badgers Club at Midhurst, West Sussex. It was held over two days and members from ten countries manned 86 tables, offering badges and Scouting memorabilia for swop or sale. If each collector had an average of 3000 badges, imagine the total number in the room! I came home with a huge bag full of badges new to my collection which already exceeds 32,000! We are delighted to see a steady flow of younger members, because otherwise, as we all get older, the club will fail. Over the years I have made a number of Badger friends and enjoyed

hospitality in several countries abroad. If you are interested in joining the club, have a look at our website www.int.bc.org or contact Sally Hollingham (memsec@intbc.org). There are regular meetings all over the country and there will be a big one over the Easter weekend next year at Woodhouse Scout Camp, Almondsbury (on the north side of Bristol). Do come along.

Copy date for the next edition of gscouts will be Monday 15th January.

Useful tip — How correctly to apply a BandAid

If you just wrap a sticking plaster round your finger, it is quite likely to slip off, especially if placed at the tip. If you cut a short slit at each end and then apply the pad to the wound, you can place one half of the adhesive part *diagonally* across your finger and place a half from the opposite side over it to hold it firmly. Use the other two halves to do the same the other way. Similarly when applying the plaster to a knuckle, place the diagonal strips away from the joint and it will hold more firmly, allowing the knuckle to bend.



Hello from Me!

My name is Mark, your new County Commissioner since the 1st September. I thought you might like to know a little about me...

I have been married to my beautiful wife Emma for 18 years and we have two daughters. Emma, like me, has been involved in Scouting since we were children, add to the fact my youngest is a Scout in the Forest of Dean. We have always had Scouting as part of our family. Amy, my eldest daughter is just starting college, but has always been a Guide, so we get to experience youth engagement in a completely different light.

We have now lived in Woolaston in the Forest Of Dean for four years, where we moved from West London to follow the rest of our family out here. A move we definitely do not regret. Some people that you may know who we are friends with include; Paddy and Chris Langham (Paddy is Emma's godfather) and Martin and Helen Williams, who are Emma's sister's parents-in-law. Just goes to prove how connected everyone in Scouting is.

When I am not Scouting, I work as a Learning and Development Consultant for O2, the mobile phone company. This involves me writing and delivering learning in lots of different formats, including workshops and eLearning. It also means that I am often found travelling round the country running workshops.

I am heavily involved as a Deputy Church Warden at our local Church and my faith plays a big part of who I want to be and how I try to live my life.

Scouting career

I joined Scouts quite late, when I was 13, but as soon as I did, I got 'the bug', and continued through Venture Scouts to achieve my Queen's Scout award. My leadership in this amazing movement began when I was undertaking my 'service' element of the Queen's Scout Award. I went to help as a Young Leader at a Troop and upon my 18th Birthday became the Scout Leader of a rapidly growing Group in a severely-deprived part of town. Some years later, I became the GSL for a number of years, before my work role changed and taking a regular weekly commitment became impractical.

With my new career as part of a training team, I started to support the County Training team and was asked to take on the role of County Training Manager, which I have undertaken for the past three and a half years, prior to joining as CC in Gloucestershire.

My philosophy

I have some simple beliefs in my Scouting roles that I hope you will see in my role as County Commissioner. These are;

I believe that Young people are the most important people in Scouting. It is our privilege to be able to support and develop them to be the best that they can be. I genuinely believe we have a huge honour.

Scouting is great for one reason. Programme. When delivered well, the programme is what I believe is the fundamental difference between Young people and Adults joining and them leaving.

Finally I see amazing things happen when adults are engaged. People are inspired and Young People have fun like they can nowhere else!

I see my role as enabling all three of these to be lived out in what I do. I want to engage and inspire adults, so that they deliver amazing programmes that help Young People continue to be awesome.

I am really excited about joining Gloucestershire Scouts. It's going to be a journey and challenge, but one I hope that we can all take together, as part of this amazing family that is Scouting. I look forward to meeting many of you over the coming weeks and months.

Mark

What's new in Gloucestershire?

At the County AGM, I shared our latest vision for Scouting in Gloucestershire. It is a three-year plan to support Scouting in growing and becoming even more relevant to thousands of young people locally. I call it "Vision 2020 – a clear view of Scouting in Gloucestershire".

Our vision is that by 2020...

- Young People influence and experience, high quality, balanced programmes, full of adventure, fun and development.
- Adults feel supported, engaged and able to undertake their roles.
- More Young People and Adults get to experience Scouting in Gloucestershire than ever before.

I am building a Senior Leadership team to help deliver this and by working with DCs, Managers and more importantly every leader in Gloucestershire, I know that together we can bring our vision to life.

Our Vision will succinctly link to the Strategy for 2023 that is currently being developed by the Scout Association.

You can, and we really want you to, help shape this strategy, so please do read the article on "2018-2023 the next steps" to find out more.

Over the past few weeks and during October, I will have met or will be meeting with every member of the County Team and every member of the District Leadership teams to set clear objectives and identify what support is needed to help bring our vision to reality. By working together we can continue to take Scouting in Gloucestershire new heights and help Young People be inspired to be brilliant citizens in our communities.

To help deliver the vision, we are building a team with clear accountabilities. Below is an image that shows, how I want to set up the team around me.



You will hopefully notice that like every good wheel, the tyre that is our **governance and support** will help us stay on the road safely.

All of our activity will point to **supporting leaders** whilst remaining **youth focussed**, so that we can do all we can to focus on the heart of this great movement; our Young People.

The key areas of responsibility will be:

Youth focussed – Keeping Young People at the heart of all conversations.

Scouting operations – Ensuring Adults have access to the tools, support and encouragement to be able to consistently deliver the Quality Programme.

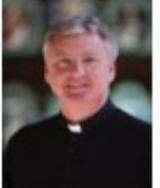
Media & Comms – Ensuring everyone in the County knows what is going on, and that the public can see the amazing work that you are all doing.

Projects – Every great movement is constantly finding new ways to do things. Dedicated leadership in this area means we can focus our efforts on failing quickly but succeeding well.

Growth & Development – Supporting Districts and Groups to grow in partnership with the Pears Project and our Regional Services Team.

Adult Support – Ensuring Adults have the skills, knowledge and motivation to deliver the Quality Programme with the support of Managers and supporters.

With all of this in mind, I have asked the people below, as part of the County Senior Leadership Team, to work in partnership with District Teams to help us deliver our vision for 2020:

Youth Focus (Youth Commissioner)	Scouting Operations (DCC)	Media & Comms	Projects & Support (DCC)	Growth & Development (ACC)	Governance & Support (County Chair)	Adult Support / County Commissioner
						
Lauren Greening	Chris Meadows	Vacancy	Liz Hodge	Godfrey Tarling	Stephen Lake	Mark Spiller

If you want to know more about the Vision 2020 – [click here](#) to see the slides that represent what was presented at the County AGM on 28th September.

Other roles:

Since the last edition, you may have missed that we have also had the following appointments confirmed:

(Acting) DC in Stroud & Tetbury: **Paul Trott**; DC in Gloucester: **Dave Hawkins**

ACC Events: **Ashley Freeman**; ACC Scout Network: **Josh Foye**

ACC Cubs: **Sara Berryman**; Safeguarding Awareness Co-Ordinator: **Michelle Vaughan**;

A huge thanks to all of you for your support and encouragement so far, I am sure you will continue to give everyone listed your on-going support as we continue to take Gloucestershire from strength to strength.

Mark

2018 – 2023: The Next Steps

As mentioned in my earlier article the Scout Association has begun its journey to plan the strategy from 2018 into 2023. In May, our Youth Commissioner and acting County Commissioner (Lewis) met with hundreds of others across the UK to start consultation on how Scouting will continue to develop over the next five years. So far over 5,000 adult volunteers have been consulted alongside over 6,000 young people. This together with the views of the public and some key influencers has started to shape the plan.

The first thing that is recognised the world over is that society and communities are changing. Scouting has to reflect this as it always has done over the last 110 years. In Scouting we all know that by working together we can;

Bring communities closer together.

Help people get on with skills for life.

Help young people feel great.

Help young people make an active and positive contribution to the communities they live in.

All of this is at the heart of what the Scout Movement wants to achieve in the future. The plan to achieve this will have three strategic areas – **Programme, People and Perception.**

Now, as County Commissioner it would only be all too easy to share my views and tell you much more about this, but you can [read more here](#), I really want to encourage you to take a look. Go on... grab a cuppa and have a read....



But it isn't my opinion that is needed or wanted right now. Right now, we and the Scout Association want your views. We want you to be part of shaping the plan for 2023 and to do this we are encouraging all Districts to schedule a two-hour session before the end of October, where we can give all adults in Scouting within Gloucestershire the opportunity to share their views on the proposed plans. There are resources and supporting materials on the page linked above, to help you including presentations, activities and session plans.

This is your chance to help shape the future of Scouting, for ourselves and for the Young People of today, tomorrow and the future, so get involved!



Mark

Gloucestershire Scouts 2020 Vision

We see a County where...

By 2020...

- Adults feel supported, engaged and able to undertake their roles.
- Young People influence and experience, high quality, balanced programmes, full of adventure, fun and development.
- More Young People and Adults will be experiencing Scouting in Gloucestershire than ever before.

We will know we are successful when... *“Adults feel supported”*

- New adults are vetted and welcomed through a valued appointment process within 5 months of starting in role
- All new leaders receive “Getting Started” training within 6 months of starting
- Year on year increase in Wood Badges
- Recognition of the implementation of the Adult Training Scheme at a Regional Level (2020) and National Level (2022)
- Adults are recognised for their contribution to Scouting
- All adults receive at least one informal review per year with their line manager
- We will do some of this through asking Adults in an Engagement survey.

We will know we are successful when... *“Young People influence and experience...”*

- Young people are regularly invited to influence:
- Section programmes
- District Activity
- County Activity
- Youth Commissioners are appointed in all districts and considered part of the District Leadership team
- We enable Young People to help us engage others at public occasions (e.g. AGMs, Meetings)
- We will ask Young People through Youth Engagement survey

We will know we are successful when... *“...experience high quality, balanced programmes”*

- Evidence of Quality programme is visible in every age group
- More nights away
- More international experiences
- More Top Awards (year on year)

- Chief Scout Awards (Bronze – Diamond)
- Queen’s Scout Awards
- Explorer Belt
- Young Leader Awards
- Gold DoE
- Scouts Of the World Award

So... How will we do this?

Gloucestershire Scouts Senior Leadership Team

Key factors:

- Governance & support in place to guide us and maintain our safeguards
- All SLT roles focused on supporting leaders
- Leader’s role is to deliver Youth Shaped Scouting

In partnerships with districts and groups..... and with your help

Thank you!

What is your pledge?

Please email cc@Gloucestershire-scouts.org.uk with what you believe you can do to help bring our Vision to life.

From Lauren Greening, County Youth Commissioner:

Kat Holter, currently a Network member and Assistant Cub Leader in Tewkesbury District, has proven the art of networking by getting a role of District Youth Commissioner (DYC) in Cardiff, where she is soon off to university!



Kat met a group of people from Cardiff last year at CubJam, where she was a part of the Explorer Service Team. Since then, she decided to go to Cardiff Uni and so started going along to some camps run by the Group that her friends are Leaders at. One of these friends became the DYC in January and has been preparing the role for someone else to share it with him, when he goes to uni. Kat has spoken to him about youth-shaped Scouting a lot and was asked whether she would be interested in a role-share in Cardiff. Kat has been through the process and is now a DYC!

Kat has been in Scouting for 12 years, all of which have been in Tewkesbury... until now!

It's great to see such enthusiasm be utilised as opportunities arise, such as attending university in a different part of the UK.

We wish Kat all the best with her studies and Scouting in Cardiff and look forward to networking more with Cardiff in the future!

Gloucestershire Scout County's Air Activities 2017

For the 15th successive year, Gloucestershire Scout County's annual Air Activities weekend took place over the weekend of 8-10 September. As in previous years, the event was held at Croft Farm, Defford, near Pershore.

Teams of Scouts from Gloucestershire Troops – as well as Air Scouts from Wales – took part in a weekend devoted to flying activities and, as well as earning Scout Activity Badges, they all flew as navigators in the microlight aeroplanes that were flown in for the weekend.

The planes' owners all donated their time, planes and fuel used free of charge. They also presented some of the classroom sessions. Without them, the event simply wouldn't happen. What they do for Scouting in Gloucestershire is very much appreciated.

As well as flights, there were classroom sessions on navigation, meteorology, the principles of flight, instrumentation, controls and handling, access to airfields, radio communications and model making.

The presenters were clearly passionate about their subjects, and the Scouts found the sessions interesting. Some of the topics covered will, no doubt, be carried forward in to their school work. It was a packed schedule, with the Scouts working on their balsa wood glider models until late on Saturday evening.

For the navigation session, the Scouts were introduced to air charts and shown how to plot a route using scaled rulers for distance and protractors for bearings. They were asked to plot a course from the airstrip to Ledbury railway station, from there to the rail bridge over the River Teme near Worcester and then back to Defford. When it was their turn to fly, they navigated the pilot around the course they'd plotted.



There was also an on-field session on aircraft marshalling where the Scouts marshalled a plane around a square course using internationally recognised hand signals.

On Sunday morning the Scouts had an opportunity to fly their model gliders – with varying degrees of success (for the Scouts' Model Maker Activity Badge, hand-launched gliders must be capable of a 25-second flight).

Before striking camp and heading home, the Scouts were presented with the new Air or Sea Navigation Activity Badge and their Air Activities Staged Activity Badge –

stage 4. Most of the Meteorologist Activity Badge was covered during the weekend, but in order to complete it, the Scouts need to keep a weather log at their home location for two weeks.

The weather throughout the weekend was reasonable with the occasional shower. Rain stopped play only once, but fortunately it was during Saturday's lunch break, so everyone got a flight.

The catering was superbly carried out by Explorer Scouts and Leaders from Pershore's Black Pig Explorer Scout Unit. They cooked meals and provided tea and coffee throughout the weekend for the 60+ people on-site. They also put on a well-deserved Saturday lunchtime spread for the pilots, as well as producing crêpes for everyone on Sunday.

Gloucestershire Scout County's Air Activities weekends have taken place every year since 2003. In its first year it was held at Calcot Farm airstrip near Northleach, but in 2004 the event moved to Croft Farm and has been there ever since.

One year a Lancaster and the Red Arrows flew over, and in only one year there was no flying because of the weather. One Scout participant is now a commercial pilot, and it's believed that several have joined the RAF. Some others have become teachers, so the event would seem to be truly inspirational!

Paul Emmett

SL, 1st Upton St Leonards, Gloucester





UK Soap Box Derbies / Scout Car Races

The USA originated Soap Box Derbies where Cubs/Scouts built carts and raced them down hill under gravity and the driver just steered hopefully in a straight line to the finishing post. Haydn Dimmock, Editor of 'The Scout', picked up on this activity and introduced the first Soap Box Derby in 1939 but with the carts becoming pedal-powered by the driver. The British Racing Drivers Club became involved and semi-finals were held at motor racing tracks, with the final at Brooklands Track. They were a huge success but due to the war activities were suspended until 1950. The event became very popular and in 1962 it became known as the National Scout Car Races and has had various sponsors over the years, including British Motor Corporation, British Leyland and Unipart. The Competitions have been held up and down the country including Brighton, Cleethorpes, Blackpool, Plymouth, Wolverhampton, Torquay and Coventry.

Carts/Cars were constructed to within certain specifications and a limited amount of money was permitted to be spent on them. One of the main ideas was for the teams to salvage as much material as possible from other carts, vehicles or general scrap as possible. Each event comprised of a number of different competitions in different age ranges and categories such as fastest, best designed, ingenious name, etc. Certificates were awarded and quite often a pennant / small flag was available, which over time led on to badges also being issued.



Below are several reports from my Group, the 1st Crownhill, who were involved in several races in the 1960s, through to the 1980s.



“On July 5th 1969, the National Scout Car Races were held in Torquay. So, after weeks of building, a vehicle of awesome power was produced. The day of the races arrived and the car arrived at Torquay to compete with nearly 100 other cars from all over the country. Although ‘Speedy’ didn’t win any races, it was through no fault of the drivers, who sweated and worked hard and were a credit to the Group. The coach of supporters was present at the races, which, together with the high standard of driving, made the whole event worthwhile. Because of the enjoyment and atmosphere created with the Scout Car Races, it was decided to take part in them again.”



“After modifications to ‘Speedy No. 19’, our Scout Car, it was entered in the National Scout Car Races on Plymouth Hoe on 6th June 1970. The event was organised by the Plymouth and District Scout Council as part of the Mayflower ’70 Celebrations. Unfortunately Speedy’s gears failed and a lot of work and brains will have to be used if the Group is to become successful at Scout Car racing. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.”



“On July 4th 1981, the National Scout Car Races were held on Plymouth Hoe and although 1st Crownhill did not enter a car, our Venture Unit helped staff the event.”

“1985 saw more Scout Car action on Plymouth Hoe with hundreds of entries from all over the country but again no car from 1st Cownhill.”



The National Scout Car Races came to Plymouth once again, 1989 being the 50th Anniversary of the event. Some of our Leaders were involved with staffing and the Scouts were selling programmes. The highlight of the day was the visit of the Chief Scout – Garth Morrison – who toured The Hoe, meeting everyone involved.”



Below are a selection of other pennants and badges from some of the National Scout Car Races around the country.



Historical information at the beginning was gleaned from the National Scout Car Races website <http://www.scoutcars.org> where there is lots more information about the competitions, including rules, sponsors, profiles, further history, video/image galleries, contact details and links.

Stephen Bull
ASL, 1st Crownhill (Plymouth)

Great news! — From your County Shooting Advisor.

A great opportunity for County Explorers and Network members to take part in a new venture.

There is a great deal of interest in shooting within the County but I think you will agree that there has been no structure for its development. For most groups it becomes a part of the overall programme. Since I took up this post I have been looking for a way to develop the underlying enthusiasm for shooting and promoting the self-discipline and responsibilities that it develops. These are after all the aims of Scouting.

Being such a large County we can't centralise, District hubs or Centres of Excellence must be the way forward. Guess what! We are getting another one! Not a new Explorer unit but a specialist activity unit; all those attending will need to be paying subs to a unit already so as not to pay capitation twice. There will be a termly fee to attend, covering the costs of room hire, targets, pellets etc., with a small addition to cover kit replacement.

Based in Cheltenham and starting in October, there will be a dedicated Shooting session with pre-charged rifles that are of national competition standard, not those 'Springers' you are used to, and NSRA qualified coaches. Next year we will be shooting against that lot in the Forest, [Lets get a bit of rivalry going here] and making contacts with outside clubs and shooting in national competition.

The facility at Prestbury, on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from 7:30 to 9:30, will allow four to shoot at the same time and one to have individual Dry Fire practice. The range must be dismountable to allow for normal Scout unit activities and therefore is mobile and can be made available to units throughout the County. And although this is a Cheltenham District based activity, I will be advertising it County wide, I admit, to build enthusiasm for shooting.

Why is this aimed at the 13+ age group? Well much of it is a matter of size - size of the shooter that is. I am sorry to say that Cubs and smaller Scouts find it difficult to handle the rifles and I also think that they should have something to look forward to when moving up to Explorers. The other boils down to traveling. Explorers, particularly the older ones, can make their own way to Prestbury. And if there are parents that deliver their youngling, they will be very welcome to stay. At least they will go away with a better understanding of the seriousness with which we take safety.

The first session will be an introduction; those attending will be asked to name the new group, produce a code of conduct and behaviour and, of course, there will be a bit of shooting. If your Explorers are interested, please let me know, as it would be nice to know there will be enough biscuits and squash to go round. Leaders look out for the advertising, for you will be the first to use the new facility on the open evening I have planned for you.

I know you will understand that in the first instance I shall be giving Cheltenham District priority; after all they stumped up the money. Due to the size of the County and the traveling distances, I would like to promote similar centres in the south of the County somewhere in the Stroud and Tetbury area and ideally somewhere based on the Cirencester area but units are a bit thin on the ground in that area. Do you think you could champion something local to you? I have done much of the ground-work but don't go into it lightly, by the time we fire the first shot I will have been working on this for the best part of a year and you will be looking at four-figure sums of money.

Neil Hatton
County Shooting Advisor.
backpacker308@gmail.com

Denmark Jamboree from Paddy Langham's September Newsletter

Denmark Jamboree was a great experience for Josh and I, even though Josh was the youngest Scout going, he says he felt as though he really did fit in with everyone very well. It



was great to share a camp with Danish Scouts as well as going back to our host families to stay with, we felt very welcomed. I myself have made some very good friends on camp and even went to another group of Danish Scouts' campsite for dinner, as well as a campfire afterwards. I am still keeping in touch with everyone I met on the Jamboree. The events on camp were amazing, Josh particularly enjoyed the beast inflatable assault course. I enjoyed the music at the main stage, as that is where I met a lot of my new friends.

Elliott King, Adder's Tongue ESU

This year I led my first International Camp and this was to the Danish Jamboree in Sonderborg, Southern Denmark. Thirty-one excited young people left Cheltenham by coach and arrived in Denmark 24 hours later. Unfortunately we didn't manage to get the tents up before it started pouring with rain and this set the pattern for the rest of the week. Warm sunny spells interrupted by heavy rain, turning the site into something akin to Glastonbury in the mud. This wasn't surprising as there were about 40,000 people on site. We were hosted by a Danish Group from Silkeborg, which is a town about 150 km north of the camp. The host Danish Group were very nice and tried their best to help us, especially with the language difficulties. It was a Danish camp and Danish was the primary language. By the end of the week we had formed some good friendships and were working well together.

The programme was a mix of drop in activities, pre-booked activities and centrally organised activities. We all had a really good time on "The Beast", a giant inflatable obstacle course. Everyone managed to get round, however I think the youngsters probably did better than the Leaders. There was one morning when we split the group up; some of the young people were able to go rafting or sailing. On another occasion some of the younger members of the contingent went on a tree-climbing activity, where they donned harnesses and got up into the top of some very tall trees.



Gloucester Scouts at the opening ceremony

On the Wednesday it was sub-camp day and all the activities were laid on by the sub-camp. This basically took the theme of a jousting event. Teams were mixed up within the sub-camps and these then went on to challenge each other in mini tournaments to get a sub-camp winner who then went forward to represent the sub-camp in a grand tournament. A team from our sub-camp with a couple of our youngsters, together with some Danes, got through to the sub-camp tournament but, despite valiant efforts, they didn't manage to get any further.

We had two days' HoHo (home hospitality) which were spent in Silkeborg with our host Group Leaders and their families. The youngsters were in a range of group sizes from two to a family to six to a family. Both days were split, so that there was some time spent with the host families and some time spent with the rest of the contingent. This worked really well and everyone really enjoyed this. Some got the chance to go swimming in a lake and sleep in hammocks, whilst some others had a boat trip and walk up to the top of

Sky Mountain, sounds dramatic but probably not to the same scale as some of our hills. The last day we had a visit to LEGOLAND, followed by take-away pizzas before embarking on the journey home.



Danish Jamboree Scout pioneering: a cantilevered three storey camp!

The camp went very well overall and, despite the weather not being the kindest to us, it didn't dampen spirits. Our young people got a lot from the camp by mixing with Scouts from other countries, Counties and Districts and many friendships and memories were made.

Jean Buxton, 1st Tetbury Camp Leader

Diving with Seals from Paddy Langham's July Newsletter



Octopus Explorers arriving at Lundy

At the third attempt in as many years, the Octopus Scuba Unit finally got their chance of Diving with Seals off the coast of Lundy during the last weekend of June. The dive skipper cancelled his Friday bookings due to a poor weather forecast and also the Sunday one scheduled for our J C Scuba dive team (so they could relax instead of supervising our youngsters). Our trip survived! An early start from Worcestershire and Gloucestershire (03:00 for some) meant a prompt 08:00 arrival on the quayside at Ilfracombe, allowing everybody to prepare their diving cylinders and get changed into their wetsuits and drysuits

(depending on qualification) in time for a departure at 09:15 in the light drizzle. A run of 1.5 hours across the Bristol Channel was rewarded by a good number of inquisitive seals coming to investigate these strange creatures in the water in what was now a warm sunny morning.

One of the youngsters was preparing to tell his dive buddy to back off a bit as they kept making contact but when he turned round it was a seal nudging up to him! Another youngster meanwhile was trying to keep his fins on as another seal decided it was time to play tug of war with it. After a good 40-minute dive, it was back to the boat for the required rest period and an exchange of exciting stories.



Octopus Explorers getting ready to dive with the seals

The second dive period saw fewer seals around – possibly as other dive boats were now in the area and the seals are still (thankfully) quite timid when faced with lots of humans. However eight very happy Octopus divers completed their second 40-minute exercise and returned to the boat for the slightly faster return to harbour.

The entrance to Ilfracombe harbour is interesting – the oldest working lighthouse in the country covers the approach to the harbour, mounted in the 1321-built St. Nicholas' Chapel, whilst the controversial Damien Hirst statue of Verity (a pregnant woman with one side cut away to show the internals of her body including the fetus) towers 20 metres over the entrance.

The party returned to Gloucestershire by 20:00. The minibus driver reported strange noises from the back of the bus – not sure if it was illegal seals hitching a ride or the sound of youngsters snoring.....

Derek Newman FBCS CITP Cheltenham (UK) Scouts: Explorer Scout Leader, Octopus (Scuba) Unit Gloucestershire Scouts County Training Administrator CEOP TUK Ambassador; STEM Ambassador

The following is adapted from an article by Philip Adams entitled "A billabong half empty" in *The Weekend Australian Magazine* 12.8.17

Waltzing Matilda is one of the songs we sing at campfires. It has for a long time been considered the unofficial National Anthem of Australia. It is not clear why, because it is a sorry tale of misfortune, a hard life, crime and life and death. Probably because the tune is a catchy one, it remains popular. Although several Australian Prime Ministers have been keen to exchange *God Save the Queen* for something a bit livelier, it has been rejected because it might sound odd, even a bit frivolous, at funerals and other solemn occasions.

Some of the words needs explanation:

Swagmen, otherwise known as swaggies, sundowners or tussockers, were transient labourers, common during times of economic stress. They carried their few possessions in swags, or matildas. **Squatters**: wealthy sheep or cattle farmers who, having squatted on (i.e. stolen) large acreages, had become rural aristocracy. **Billabongs**: ponds left when a river changes course. **Jumbuck**: a sheep, from the Aboriginal word *dhimba*. **Coolabah**: once again from an Aboriginal word, *gulabaa*, a eucalypt found almost everywhere. **Billy**: as in billycan and billy tea, a small metal bucket.

The song concerns a jolly swagman — and note that he was jolly — who camps by a billabong, under the shade of a coolabah tree. Little wonder he's jolly. The coolabah's canopy protects him from melanoma in this era before sun tan lotion. The billabong provides water for his billy and, as he proceeds to brew some tea, the joyfulness of our anonymous nomad is further enhanced by the arrival of a thirsty and unsuspecting jumbuck. This the swagperson purloins, placing it in his tuckerbag, tucker being a colloquialism for food. Whereupon a squatter arrives, mounted on a horse of equine superiority, followed by one, two, three armed troopers, clear evidence of the eternal links between wealth and political power. Challenged to produce the jumbuck, the swaggie instantly ceases to manifest jolliness and becomes suicidal, drowning himself in the billabong. Where those of superstitious inclinations believed his unquiet spirit lingers on.

It is clearly an over-reaction to kill oneself over a sheep. This suggests that the swaggie's joviality was superficial, that he had emotional issues brought about by economic oppression. Which takes us to the next question. Why did *Waltzing Matilda* become so central to Australian culture? True, many to this day see themselves as economically oppressed. You wouldn't think it to hear Australian's talk but there seems to be what is perhaps a celebration of failure (which they think is one of the few words that rhyme with Australia!). Their singing of a doleful dirge shows they expect the worst, and seem to get it. Look at their rapid succession of floods, footrot and bushfires. All to the mocking cackle of that avian satirist, the kookaburra.

Sheep no longer keep squatters in luxury. The billabong? Bone-dry because of climate change and fracking. His ghost may be heard ...

The Schwebebahn at Wuppertal—a unique solution to a transport problem

Wuppertal is an industrial town about 15 miles east of Düsseldorf. It is situated in a narrow steep-sided valley, through which runs the small River Wupper. The town grew by ribbon development along the valley and road transport from one end to the other was restricted by its geography. In 1824, an Englishman, Henry Palmer, proposed a suspended railway drawn by horses to carry coal around the valley, but this was never built. However, in 1887 the towns of Elberfeld at the eastern end and Barmen in the west formed a commission for the construction of an elevated railway and work was begun in 1898. The railway opened in 1901 and was extended in 1903.



By suspending the track above the river, they made the best use of the space available and only the four most westerly stations are sited over land, the route running above a busy main road between buildings.

The Schwebebahn's total length is just over eight miles. This unique railway has been fully modernised and a fleet of 27 twin-carriage trains serve 20 stations on average 800 yards apart. At peak times trains run every three to four minutes, carrying some 72000 passengers on a working day. The fare from one end to the other is €2.70.

The carriages are suspended from a single rail built underneath arches of steel. Electric motors operating at 600 volts DC drive the wheels.



Each carriage can seat 48 passengers with room for up to 130 standing, running smoothly at an average speed of 17 mph, though a top speed of 37½ mph can be reached. Recently several smart new carriages have been added and it is possible, for parties or other special occasions, to charter the Kaiserwagen, the original train used by Emperor Wilhelm II during a test ride in 1900.

John Morton

Scouting in Thailand

Scouting in Thailand is unique in that it is part of the school curriculum and receives strong support from the Thai government and people. Even the Royal Family are keen members. King Bhumibol (Rama IX) is the Chief Scout.



Promise: On my honour I promise that I will be loyal to the Nation, the Religion and the King; help other people at all times; and obey the Scout Law.

Motto: Better to die than to lie

Scouting was first introduced in Thailand on July 1st 1911 by King Rama VI. It was the third country in the world to take up Scouting. King Rama VI received his education in England and was the first Thai monarch to have studied abroad. He graduated at Oxford University and also attended Sandhurst Military academy. He brought back with him many new ideas that he had seen.

In Thailand he established the “Wild Tiger Corps” for adults and created a junior branch which continues today as the Scouts. King Rama VI is fondly remembered as the “Father of Thai Scouting” and every year on Scout Day, July 1st, Scouts take part in parades. Thailand is the only country in the world where Scouting was directly founded by a monarch. It is also

honoured with being one of the Founder Members of the World Organisation back in 1922.



Tak District



Phayao District

Scouting in Thailand is organised in 12 Regions with 78 Districts. Each District has its own distinctive unnamed badge made of silk.

Thai Scouting has received much publicity due to its impressive work during emergencies. Such work includes taking part in ambulance and first aid teams, helping the Fire Brigade and assisting in flood control.



Uthai Thani District

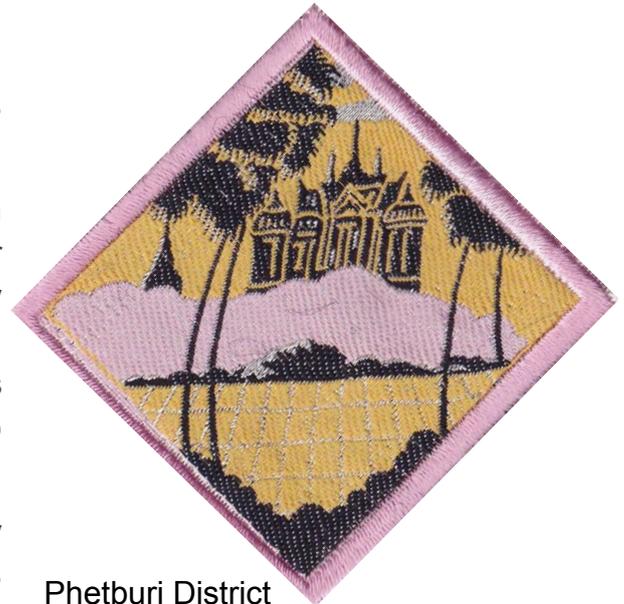
The fundamental principles are: adherence to spiritual values, loyalty to country, promotion of world brotherhood, helping others, the practice of the Scout Promise and Law, voluntary participation in community services and various programme activities.

Scouting is open to boys and girls of all religions. There are four sections: Cub Scouts, Scouts, Senior Scouts and Rovers. There are also Sea Scouts and Air Scouts which are supported by the Royal Thai Navy and Royal Thai Air force. Scout training takes

place at both primary and secondary school levels as well as at university and technical colleges.

Scouting is part of the normal school curriculum. On Scout day students come to school wearing their Scout uniform. They work towards proficiency badges, learn knotting, cook food, practice drilling, play games and sing songs. Because Scouting is part of the school curriculum, the students have to sit an exam at the end of each term.

Thai Scouts come from all regions of the country and participate in a variety of training activities during the year concerned mainly with national development and public services which include cleaning up public areas, first aid, traffic control, disaster-relief, summer public services and particularly the environmental and natural conservation.



Phetburi District

If you and your family are ever in Thailand, then you are more than welcome to come and visit Scout meetings at our school. We encourage visitors to come in their Scout uniform so that our students can see and compare the different badges. You will also be able to join in with Scouting activities.

If you are ever in Bangkok and want to buy Scouting souvenirs then you can visit the Scout Shop on the ground floor of the Scout Headquarters, Vajiravudh House, National Stadium, Rama 1 Street, Bangkok, 10330. Telephone +662 612 5305-06. Alternatively, every school shop which can be found in most department stores, have a Scout section. The National Stadium Sky Train station is conveniently nearby.

A Gloucestershire building stone

Around 200 million years ago, what is now Gloucestershire lay beneath a warm, shallow sea at about 30°N (about the latitude of Morocco) on the western edge of a huge ocean called the Tethys. (What remains of the Tethys today is represented by the Mediterranean Sea).

Over vast periods of time the remains of the trillions of creatures inhabiting the sea accumulated on the bottom and became consolidated into a unique type of limestone called oolite. Around tiny pieces of shell or a grain of sand, rings of chemically-deposited calcium carbonate formed in the eddies of the water. These “ooliths” (egg-stones) were constantly brushing against each other, which prevented them growing to more than about 2 mm in diameter.

Some 50 metres of thickness of these consolidated into rock in which can be found sea urchins, oysters known as “the devil’s toenail” and pencil-shaped belemnites called “thunder stones”.

The earliest-forming Inferior Oolite can be seen in the walls of the many delightful Cotswold cottages in villages such as Broadway and Bourton-on-the-Water. The later-forming Great Oolite is the source of the yellowish/white stone which weathers into the lovely honey-coloured building material used in Bath, Blenheim Palace and the Oxford colleges.

In between these oolitic strata are layers of ash, deriving from volcanic activity to the west, or possibly from eruptions following rifting in what is now the North Sea. This is the Fuller’s Earth, an absorbent soil that was so useful for “fulling” (degreasing) sheep’s wool and is now used for cat litter and mud packs.

John Morton



A little bit of Geology

Having an interest in Geology, I recently visited the well-known cliff at Aust, just under the east side of the first Severn Bridge. It reveals how South Gloucestershire has changed over the last 230 million years. Aside from the rocks in the cliff, I was interested in the construction of the bridge, for the supports had to reach down to hard bedrock and the depth varied greatly. At the east end, the cable anchor block could sit on Carboniferous limestone (around 300 million years old) only 10 feet down and this rose so close to the surface that the eastern tower needed only 4 feet to reach solid rock. The limestone dips towards the west so much that the foundations of the western tower have to go down 35 feet and the western anchor block has to reach 60 feet before it can sit on a firm base. Truly Geology must have played a really vital role in the construction of the bridge 51 years ago.

John Morton

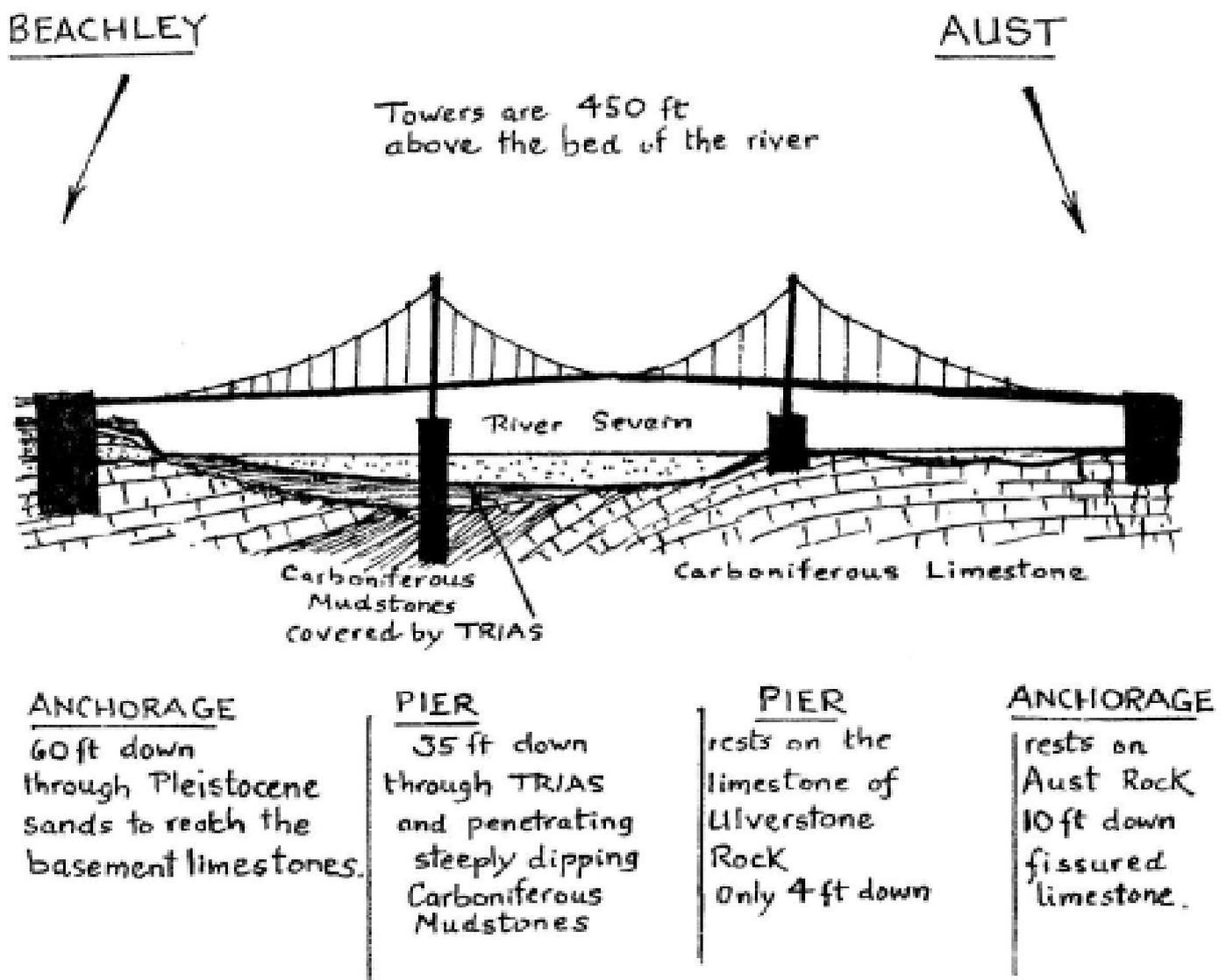


FIG. 19 THE ENGINEERING GEOLOGY OF THE SEVERN BRIDGE

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