



FIRST NEWS

Issue 98 December 2019

Newsletter of the 1st Northwood Scout Group



<https://www.1stnorthwoodscouts.org.uk>

New Scouting Centre – Open!

I think I'll have to stop writing these reports under the heading "New Scouting Centre", it's not really new any more! We still have a few jobs to do, but we're fully operational and pretty well tidy throughout now. We've fitted all the signage for the building, coat hooks in the lobby, all the facilities and an emergency alarm in the disabled toilet, and a shutter for the kitchen serving hatch. We have also fitted a burglar alarm; thanks very much to Darius, who is a parent of an Explorer Scout, for fitting this for us at highly preferential rates; I can strongly recommend his company, Neo-Engineering, if you need an alarm or other security work done.

I regret that we can't fit any permanent heating in the building yet, we still have some issues to resolve with Building Regulations before we can do this. But we have plenty of portable heaters and the insulation works well.

The new Centre was officially opened on Thursday 19th September. The purpose of the event was to say a big 'Thank You' to the major donors, volunteers, contractors and suppliers who had made it all possible.

We planned to have the Mayor David Yarrow perform the ceremony, but at short notice he was unable to attend. His place was filled admirably by two past Mayors, Councillors John Morgan and Carol Melvin, who did a great double act.

This was followed by speeches from John Morgan, Leo Mindel Chairman of the Fundraising Committee, and Richard Plume the Project Director. Our chairman Paul Akers rounded off the proceedings with a toast to a successful project. In his speech, John Morgan described our project as a triumph for Volunteering in the Community.

By this time we could all smell the food! We had laid on a Hog Roast, with drinks provided by a small local company called "the Mad Yank Brewery" – also strongly recommended, just Google the name. Everything ran to plan, the weather was perfect and we all spent the evening outdoors, enjoying the most glorious September evening with a brilliant sunset.

Richard Plume
Project Director
& Executive Committee Member



Chairman's Chat

Since the last edition of 1st News was published in August our Annual General Meeting was held in September - the first AGM we have held in our new Scouting headquarters.

A few years ago this event was poorly attended especially by parents of the young people in the Group. We couldn't really understand the reason for this so after some debate in committee we decided to introduce some food in the form of hot dogs and beef burgers into the proceedings. This helped a lot and while I do not have a figure of attendees, as a guess I believe at least fifty parents along with their children were in attendance.

Looking back to 2018, we enrolled two new members onto committee and both Tim Shipman and Stephen Chapman have been very useful to us. Apart from chipping in their two penny worth during deliberations at committee Tim has made a splendid job of handling publicity for Jumble. Stephen has been very useful especially when it comes to both collecting and delivering jumble. This year we elected just one new member, Keith Shimmin, the parent of a girl in the Group.

Your chairman, officers and the remainder of the committee were re-elected for another twelve months along with our long-standing auditor Kevin Mulvaney. All things considered it was an enjoyable evening.

The day after our AGM saw us celebrating in style again. This time the event was the opening ceremony for our new Scouting Centre, of which there is a full report earlier in this issue.

While it is too early to hang next year's calendar on the wall (those of you who haven't gone electronic that is!) a date to imprint on your aide-memoire is that of the jumble sale next year. It will take place on the **16th May**. More information about this important event will appear in the next newsletter.

Once again I have to end on a sad note and that is to announce the death of Doreen Brill. Anybody involved in sorting jumble in recent years or those who managed the clothes stalls will have fond memories of Doreen. She was another one of those jolly ladies who could be relied upon to turn up whenever needed and get stuck into whatever was required. Many of us will miss her for her input and also for being such good company.

Finally, very best wishes for an enjoyable festive season from all of us to all of you.

Paul Akers
Executive Committee Chairman



Doreen Brill 1939 - 2019

Freemasons' Presentation



One of our major donors, the Metropolitan Masons, contributed £5,000 towards our new Scouting Centre.

Last month we were invited to attend a presentations ceremony at the Freemasons' Hall in Holborn. Paul Akers and I attended on behalf of the Group, and were given a guided tour of the building and the museum after the ceremony – well worth a visit.

Richard Plume
Project Director
& Executive Committee Member

GSL Report

The end of 2019 is fast approaching and we will soon be welcoming in 2020.

What a busy year 2019 was for the Group.

One new scouting centre and a new minibus for the Group and not forgetting the exciting activities the sections have put on week after week for the young people. I do wonder what we will see next year?

I must say a big thank you to everybody who has assisted the Group or the individual sections this year. To the leaders, parents and also members of the group executive - a big thank you.

Also thank you to everyone who attended the AGM - it was good to see more parents in attendance. Maybe it wetted your appetite and you'd like to get involved. If so, please get in touch either to offer a skill or just some time - every bit takes a load off someone else.

I was very pleased to hear of the exceptional turn out and good behaviour from all sections at the Remembrance Parade - well done all and sorry I couldn't be there.

Christmas parcels have again been sent by the Cubs to the British Armed forces serving overseas which I am sure they will enjoy.

I hope that you enjoy the break from work over Christmas and that you get what you always wanted from Santa.

Looking forward to seeing you all in the new year.

Mike Bennett
Group Scout Leader

Beaver Blog

Once again, we have all been busy Beavers.

Since we last reported we have celebrated Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah).

We had a sleepover, campfire and songs at our brand-new Scouting Centre, the Beavers were brilliant, and the leaders actually managed to sleep too!

The Beavers made their own poppies using empty bottles to carry on the Remembrance parade. All the Beavers who attended were so well behaved, it's a long time for them to stand still in the cold but they did it so well and made the Leaders extremely proud.

Just before writing this, the very clever Beavers learnt about simple machines, drew a plan for their own machine then built it using Lego. They made some very creative and impressive machines – well done Beavers.

Coming up in the next few weeks we are looking forward to attending the District Beaver quiz, celebrating St Andrews Day, learning all about birds, making bird fat balls and getting ready for Christmas with lots of very exciting activities.

Have a very happy Christmas and an exciting New Year everyone.

Wendy Wiggins
Beaver Scout Leader

To the right we see the Beavers enjoying their campfire, at the Remembrance Day parade and making poppies.



Explorer Round-up

What do you do to keep more than forty Explorer Scouts occupied every week and coming back for more? As a leadership group we seem to have worked it out as they keep coming back and even more join us. With these numbers we regularly need help so thank you to everyone that has stepped in during the term to provide transport or supervise small groups. If you've not yet got involved, give it a try - you might enjoy it and want to get more involved.

So, what have we been doing?

Over the course of four weeks we've escaped from the Escape Room in Watford; cooked lots of cakes; learnt about disaster relief; and been on muddy walks back from Ruislip.

We've prepared for expeditions with twenty-five Explorers completing the expedition section of their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze.

On the wettest and windiest weekend in October a small group completed their Silver expedition practice on the Marlborough Downs - having survived that weekend they'll find all future expeditions a breeze!

Another wet weekend saw two Groups take on the Sky Camp Challenge - building a platform to cook and sleep on at PACCAR Scout camp. Putting their best pioneering skills into practice saw some good structures but the persistent heavy rain meant for safety they slept in tents for this year.

We had an amazing turnout for Remembrance Sunday with over thirty-five Explorers on Parade across Northwood, Eastcote and Ruislip.

We have continued our community engagement with volunteers supporting Northwood Hills Residents Association Christmas Lights Switch On; Northwood Live at Home Music evening; and Eastbury Residents Association newsletter delivery. The whole Unit had a presentation from a local Homeless charity and then created marketing ideas for them. They also all made generous donations to help the charity with Paul delivering bags of goods the next day.

With bowling, laser tag and a challenge night for the whole unit we've certainly kept everyone busy.

Enjoy the Christmas break and we'll see everyone recharged for another busy term at Explorers.

Christine Bennett
District ES Commissioner



Above and to the right we see Explorers on their Silver expedition practice and kitting up for Laser Tag and above, the Group, including Explorers, at the Remembrance Day parade.



Cub Collation

I can't believe we're at the end of another term and, looking back, am amazed by how much we've packed in. Before I share some highlights I must thank all who have helped us this term as without you we couldn't put on all the activities - Parents who have accompanied us on trips out and helped with transport; committee members and supporters (Roxana, Sarah, Helen, Tim and Brian) and other section leaders (Beavers, Scouts and Explorers) - a Big Thank You from all the Cubs.

So what have we done this term that's needed so much help?

We started the term at WRAP where Roxana led us in model making from donated materials. Then it was off to the Fire Station - third time lucky as they weren't called out and the weather was good so the Cubs got to use the hose! And last night we were guests of the Mayor of Hillingdon in his Parlour.

We've worked towards hobbies and chef badges at the hut and the navigator badge saw us walk from St Vincent's back to the hut one evening. That was in preparation for our recent Night Hike - a five mile walk back from Ruislip Lido to the hut supported by all the Poindextor Explorer leaders.

It was wet and very muddy but the Cubs all enjoyed it (once they were in the warm hut) especially when Gabrielle and Tim served up hot dogs. All slept over at the hut after watching a short cartoon before it was time to tidy up and go home.

On another wet weekend we had our first Cub camp for some years. Eighteen cubs joined four leaders for a night at Phasels Wood campsite. The aim of the camp was to learn some basic camping skills and to manage without parents so there were only two activities. Despite the weather the Cubs did very well although some might believe us next time we say wellies are best on muddy camps (laces get very wet and messy!)

As well as all this we had a great turn out for both the AGM and Remembrance Parade - thank you for your support. Also, thank you for your donations for Troop Parcels - we were able to send sixteen parcels to troops who will be in Iraq over Xmas - hopefully we will hear that they have arrived soon.

Finally thanks again to everyone who helped this term, have a lovely Christmas break and look out for more opportunities to get involved with the Pack next term.

Christine Bennett
Akela



Scout Report

The troop has been busy this term. Cooking in the hut as well as being out and about in the local area learning local knowledge.

We have also been out swimming at Windsor and an evening was spent at PACCAR scout camp air rifle shooting.

The model making badge had to be put back to the new year as a trip to the Games Workshop store in Watford was postponed due to circumstances beyond our control.

The District activity day was well attended with the troop coming away winner of the orienteering trophy. I put it down to all those hours we spent teaching them map reading. Although the weather was awful everybody survived the cold and wet day.

I must thank all the Scout leaders and parent helpers who have assisted during the term.

Hope you have a great Christmas.

Mike Bennett
Group Scout Leader

To the right we see Scouts making paper towers and Knex Christmas decorations on their Activity Night and also the winners of the District Orienteering Competition on Activity Day.

