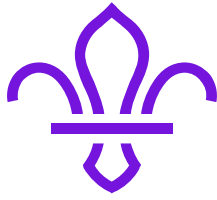


Scouts

1st Northwood



Group Scout Leader Report

Jumble has been and gone and it was another success. Over eleven hundred attended on the day, which was an increase on the usual number. Unfortunately, the weather wasn't as good as the previous year and the ground was certainly soft but it didn't slow anyone down as the public raced across the field to the stalls.

Before the sale opened, I walked down the queue selling tickets and chatting to those in the queue. Although there were a lot of the usual faces, there were many who said this was the first one since the pandemic and that they were pleased that the Jumble was still going. Bringing a piece of normality back into their lives.

We were back to the usual long marquee the year which we all agreed was a welcome return. Every year we try to improve on what we already have. Some changes are obvious and some not. Some work and some don't. There is so much planning that goes into organising the sale that you would not believe. I must thank everyone who assisted in this massive fundraising event including the leaders, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, parents, friends and family and not forgetting the Committee members.

All the sections have been really busy this term and all have visited Bury Lake for water-based activities which were enjoyed by all. Although all the sections leaders are now enjoying the summer break, they have all planned the programme for when they return. I do hope they all return with their batteries fully recharged and that they all enjoy the break which they all deserve.

I hope you all have had a great summer and look forward to seeing you on our return.

Mike Bennett
Group Scout Leader



Grand Jumble Sale

Thank you all for your support, one hour or twenty days, the success of this event is down to you and the Unit is very grateful. Thank you.

With all that was going on, it is nevertheless true to say that the absence of our Chairman, Paul Akers was keenly felt. There was no outlandish shirt or quirky hat or any of his cheerful banter. It was the first Jumble Sale he has not attended for many a year, but his health took a turn for the worse and he could not be there. We pray that his condition improves and we see him around again soon.

From start (back in February) to finish (in early July) over two hundred volunteers worked to provide the wherewithal for the Unit leaders to continue their magnificent programme of adventure and development for over a hundred children. During the sorting days we had up to twenty people in the hut (and more outside sometimes). The goods piled up thanks to the generosity of the locals and our hard work collecting it. Some generous and/or desirable donations were put aside to be sold on eBay and much rubbish was binned. But we have an excellent recycling policy.

Heaped up in every corner of the compound the goods were kept till Thursday 11th May when the great reshuffle started, coinciding with the erection of the (much-better-than-last-year) marquee. Every single item was relocated to a space, table, gazebo or tent in the compound or on the field. This is a mammoth task and should not be underestimated in the effort and co-ordination that is required.

By Saturday everything was in place and the queue was let in. Over a thousand people came, undeterred by the rain of the previous days which threatened to build on our (unfair) reputation of 'always wet and muddy'. It was dry and pleasant all day, though very muddy! Goods were soon being carried out - long before all the queue was in! And the shoes being worn! Trainers, plimsols, sandals, flipflops, stilettos, pumps! Will they never learn! One lady joined the queue and when she got to the gate asked what was going on! One of the security team clocked up 7.3 miles in the afternoon! All the BBQ food was eaten. And tons of stuff were moved again, this time into people's homes. Then the clearing up starts! This is such a great team. It has been a privilege to be in it and although there will not be a mention of JS again till November, I am looking forward to it all starting again next year. If you want to be part of this amazing event, please make sure I have your email address. To those who were there; Thank you, again.

Roxana Peters.
roxana.peters@virginmedia.com

Chairman's Chat

You cannot say this about the majority of Northwood but there is one area which is kept in a very shipshape condition and that is the area occupied by our Scout Centre. During the time of year when our jumble sale is taking place it tends to lose some of its shine but when that event is over and our clearing up teams come into action you could virtually eat off the floor of the Scout Centre or do likewise in almost any part of the compound surrounding the building that you care to choose.

The clean-up teams are headed up by Richard Plume and he manages, usually by persuasion, to get some very enthusiastic helpers along, often on one or more occasion. This year the clean-up task was much larger than normal mainly due to the state of the ground,

Every single item that we do not manage to sell either gets recycled at numerous outlets we have a good relationship with or alternatively taken to the local council dump. So, firstly a big thank you to Richard for putting in so many hours and then to his team of helpers who worked so hard and produced a first-class job.

Now, towards the end, I finish with some good and some sad news. Firstly, the good, in that I'd like to report that we have been shopping recently. We purchased an all-singing, all-dancing petrol-fuelled lawn mower. I understand that Doug Horgan who keeps the lawn at the side of the Centre in good order is very pleased with our choice. Secondly, we have bought an up-market barbeque that you will see working when you come to the AGM on 27th September. Hopefully you will approve of the taste between the old and the new appliance.

Now some very sad news that reached us recently in that Jerry Brosnan has passed away. We didn't see a great deal of Jerry in recent times but when you did see him the impression he made was extremely memorable. He possessed a great sense of humour. If your memory extends beyond thirty years you will remember that he helped prepare the footings where our garage/storage shed sits. Jerry was a very friendly and generous person who would always help you out if you were in need.

Best wishes to you all.

Paul Akers
Executive Committee Chairman

Here we see pictures from the Group and District camps.



Cub Collation

Writing at the end of the term is always with mixed emotions; we remember and celebrate all the achievements of the Cubs during the term but have to say goodbye to those moving on to new adventures. This term we said good luck to Povilas, Phoenix, Marco, Mili and Dylan who are moving on to Scouts. Before they left, Marco, Mili and Dylan were presented with their Chief Scout Silver Award - the top Award in Cubs - well done to them!

The summer term always starts with jumble - the Cubs excel at delivering leaflets, running up and down to letterboxes at different heights, keeping the supervising adults on their toes as they dash through the streets. On the off weeks whilst the hut wasn't available, we went over to Walter Davies Scout Camp for archery and rifle shooting- one week in the pouring rain but that didn't deter the Cubs!

After half term, the Cubs enjoyed athletics, water activities at Bury Lake, learning to play rounders and quick cricket, and finding out about the 4th of July.

Nearly half the Pack and several parents joined the Group at the District Family Camp in June. There were over eight hundred camping in separate groups at Phasels Wood Campsite. The young people were able to try lots of activities in the morning before working together in the afternoon to create the flag and scout badge for the Philippines. Saturday saw the whole camp come together for a campfire before we returned to our site for a smaller fire and s'mores. Everyone had a great time on camp helped by some good weather!

Other District events this term included the inter pack football tournament where our team played well and showed great teamwork although they didn't progress to the finals. A strong team went to Cub sports day where medals were won for running, balancing and having a great time.

The end of term arrived with a session cooking on fires, making pitta pizzas and s'mores before the final session for games and badges. The Cubs are now enjoying their summer break; recharging their batteries ready to start all over again in September. Thank you to all the parents who have helped us this term and of course to all the leaders.

Akela (Christine Bennett)

Below are a Cub sports day participant, Cubs enjoying summer water fun and the Cub football team



Scout Report

The Scouts have had a busy term with lots of activities away from the Scouting Centre due to the preparations for jumble.

We visited Bury Lake in Rickmansworth for a session Paddle Boarding which was enjoyed by all. Some were a little apprehensive at first, but it was good to see that by the end of the evening all had smiles on their faces.

Several trips to the local camp sites at PACCAR and also Walter Davies, where the Scouts tried out lots of varied activities.

The Scouts also attended the District Camp at Phasels Woods. There were over six hundred in attendance from all over the District and although hot, all seemed to enjoy themselves. It did rain on the Saturday night but by the time the tents were packed away on the Sunday, all were dry. To me that is always good news as it saves the leaders so much time when we pack the equipment away.

Cooking and pioneering were activities completed several times during the term. By the end they were able to build catapults that successfully launched a bean bag high into the air.

Mike Bennett
Group Scout Leader

Here we see some Scouts enjoying the view during an Expedition Challenge.



Beaver Blog

The Beavers had a very outdoorsy summer term. We went on two hikes, one at Oxhey Woods and one at Croxley Canal via the tube!

We did our Cyclist Badge at Northwood Recreation Ground and did two sessions at Paccar: climbing and zip-lining. We also went to Bury Lake for a very fun Katakana session.

Our brilliant Young Leader, Luke, led two excellent sessions about South Korea, including a cooking session, to celebrate the World Scout Jamboree and for the Beavers to earn their International Badge.

We had five Beavers attending the District Jamboree, who all had a great time and can't wait for the next camp!

We would like to extend a huge thanks to all the parents who helped with the hikes, bikes and other activities, we couldn't do it all without you.

See you next term for more adventures!

Bluebell (Gabrielle), Assistant Beaver Scout Leader
Victoria, Section Assistant



Here are the Beavers enjoying a variety of activities.



Explorer Round-up

As usual, the term starts with helping with the 1st Northwood Grand Jumble Sale during the lead up, on the day and tidying up afterwards. A group of the older Explorers helped with the late shift on Saturday - fresh arms to help with the tidying up before everyone else went home for the night.

This term has seen the unit undertake Duke of Edinburgh expeditions with a Bronze weekend in the Chilterns followed by two groups completing their Silver assessed expedition in the Marlborough Downs. Other activities since last 1st News include the ever-popular Paddle Boarding at Bury Lake, fire lighting and cooking on wood. The unit also practiced their pioneering skills building A frames for a walking race. As part of the requirement for Chief Scout Platinum and Diamond Awards and the King's Scout Award, Explorers need to undertake environmental and community related tasks. To cover this, they have adopted the Hillside School Nature Area and aim to return it to being a useable space for the school. The area had become unsafe with wooden play frames, a ship and train that had seen better days. Over several weeks the Explorers have completed most of Phase 1; clearing the area of the broken wooden equipment, weeding and removing dead and low hanging branches. They have also washed down the remaining wooden structures ready to paint. Other jobs for next term include repairing the outdoor classroom roof and the lookout tower; planting some hardy plants and herbs to create a sensory area; create bug hotels and more. We also plan to speak to the School Council to see if the children have any other suggestions for the area.

At the beginning of August, 15 Explorers went off on their summer camp to Dorset. Staying just outside Bournemouth they were very lucky with the weather - heavy rain on the way down but then generally dry and warm all week. This meant their active programme wasn't interrupted! Over the week they walked and cycled in the New Forest; tried sailing and had fun Paddle Boarding in Poole Park (an inland lake) and went coasteering and climbing near Swanage. The coasteering was probably the highlight for most of the unit. The final day was their choice which saw them complete a zip wire from Bournemouth pier to the beach, enjoy some free time in the town and then some time on the beach. In the evenings they were in charge of cooking dinner from spaghetti bolognese to curry to Jollof rice - all very tasty. After tidying up there were some competitive games of Uno and Monopoly for entertainment. A good time was had by all and they're already planning for next year!

Two of the unit (and three others from the District) were participating in the World Scout Jamboree in South Korea. They weren't back in time for this newsletter but will share their experience at the 1st Northwood AGM and in the District newsletter next term.

Doug Horgan

Assistant Explorer Scout leader

Below the Explorers are at summer camp, coasteering and paddle boarding.



The Jumble Sale – How it Works

Preparation

This year once again we held our Jumble Sale in May. We had the usual three weeks of collections on Saturdays and sorting every evening, followed by a weekend off before the big event. Site preparations begin on the Thursday morning before the sale on the Saturday, with the big marquee being put up, Herras fencing being erected all-round the site, and lots of gazebos, Gala Tents and market stalls being put up. On Friday, we carry all the goods for sale out to the areas where they will be sold, and on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, all the goods get properly laid out and displayed. We have security on site for the Friday night to protect all the property that is distributed around the field. And at 2.00pm on Saturday afternoon, we fire the start gun!

The Sale Itself

This year the queue to get in went well past the bend in the road, always a good sign. Mike Bennett sold entry tickets to over 400 people in the queue, and it took over 20 minutes before all the customers had gained entry to our Bargain Basement. We stopped counting at 1173 people through the gate, not quite a record, but close. I always run the Tombola stall, and I know that nobody comes to me for the first fifteen minutes, as they all rush to their stall of choice for the best bargains. But by 2.30, my queue starts to build up, and by 3.30 we had sold out. Excellent, time for a cup of tea. The ground conditions were not too bad in most places, but everyone ended up with muddy shoes, and the floors inside looked pretty awful.

We're Closed – but can't relax yet

Come 5.00pm, it is time to get the customers moving off the field, so that we can start the big Clear Up. We have to move anything of value to us inside the locked compound, as we only have security on site for the evening. So, all the clothes, household items, shoes, belts, hats and handbags have to be bagged up and moved into dry storage. All the books have to be moved in under cover. And all the expensive portable equipment such as gazebos have to be taken down and stored away. So, by about 8.00pm, we are ready to lock the gates and go home. And this usually coincides with the completion of the money count, where we find out how much money we took in return for all the hard work.

Back again for more clearing

On Sunday morning, with an 8.00am start, we have to complete the clear up, and get the Hogsback Open Space back to its normal empty state. This includes taking to the Council Recycling Centre anything that we cannot recycle ourselves, courtesy of two large lorries generously provided by Murphy, the building contractor. This year the field looked a little the worse for wear, as a couple of the vehicles had made some ruts in the rather soft grass and mud. But with a few sacks of soil to fill the holes, and a good downpour of rain, the field was back to normal in a couple of weeks.

Is that the end?

So is that the end? You have to be kidding. We still have to dispose of all the leftovers that we are able to recycle ourselves. On Tuesday, we had a dealer come to take away all the clothes and the china and glass. This year we received over £400 from him. On Thursday, we had a dealer come to take away 2.2 tons of books, for which we received over £130. Once the main hall was empty, we were able to get our cleaning lady in to clean the floors. I did warn her that it was going to be bad, but I think she was taken rather by surprise.

The following week we took all the scrap metal to the metal dealer in New Years Green Lane and received over £400 for 1.7 tons of mixed iron, plus some aluminium, lead and batteries. Unfortunately, we had a break in at the Scouting Centre site on the Sunday night, and all the cable that we had so carefully prepared by taking all the plugs off, was stolen. We had fourteen sacks of cable, which I estimate was worth over £200.

Eventually when all the "stuff" had been removed, we were able to take down the big Gala Tent inside the compound, take up the grass carpet, and have a good tidy up – getting the market stalls, Herras Fencing and pallets stacked away at the top of the site.

All of these activities take many hours of work by lots of people; it is very intensive physical hard work. We just about managed to have a clear and tidy site by mid to end June. Thanks to everyone who assisted.

Why do we go to all this trouble?

It costs us about £7,000 per year to run the Scout Group – building maintenance, utility bills, the minibus, Scouting equipment and subsidising activities. This year the Jumble Sale was a huge success financially and made a profit of several thousand pounds more than that, which allows us to put money into a Reserve for a replacement minibus, and to top up our general reserves. If we didn't run a big fund-raiser like the Jumble Sale, our subscriptions that parents have to pay would have to increase significantly.

We look forward to you all joining in with the fun again next year!

Richard Plume

Executive Committee Member

We hereby give notice of 1st Northwood Scouts AGM to be held at the Scout Centre on Northwood Way on the evening of 27th September. Keep the date to come along for a chance to meet the committee, hear what has been happening and our hopes for the future. Business starts at 6pm followed by a barbeque. Please respond to Roxana Peters at roxana.peters@virginmedia.com. All are welcome.