



Third Alton Scouts

Endeavour Troop Report 2024-25

Introduction

Our Scouts have recently returned from a week-long adventure in the Channel Islands and this is possibly the highlight of the year for us, then again it may just be the icing on the cake. Keen Scouts at Third Alton are given so many opportunities through the year and each one offers something special. Camping has always been at the heart of what Scouts do and this year has been no exception. Our highest scoring Scout has already clocked up thirty nights away since he joined the troop on top of everything he attained in Beavers and Cubs. Let me reprise the year and see what you think.

Highlights for the Troop

At about this time last year (early summer) the troop joined everyone else to take part in the group camp which was held at Garner's Field Scout camp site near Farnham. This was a multi-activity weekend with many different skills available – archery, air rifles, tomahawks, exploring a camp fire of course and all supported by a very hard-working and professional team of parents and friends.



In contrast to the hurly-burly of that camp we ran another shortly afterwards for a much smaller group of boys and girls from both troops. This was at Birchmere in Surrey, very close to Wisley Gardens and it proved to be a very good site with easy access to interesting countryside. We shared the site with a local troop of Sea Scouts and made friends in the evening around the camp fire.



In the autumn we spent a weekend at Cranbury Park near Chandler's Ford. We were given a conducted tour of the ancient St Cross Hospital by Red Brother "Big Bad John" who was a member of the Order of Noble Poverty. It was fascinating to see and hear the history of the place and its role in mediaeval pilgrimages. The Scouts then climbed St Catherine's Hill and explored the Itchen Valley. In the evening the Scouts cooked a tasty supper over open fires in Dutch ovens.

This was the first major outing for our new tents, the previous set were showing their age but had given sterling service over very many years.

At this point I would usually write about a weekend spent in London at the Dockland Scout Project but unfortunately this year the accommodation we have used for many years has closed and we do not yet know when or even if it will reopen.

Troop night programmes have included a variety of badge and project work. They also seem to have been a number of food-related activities; is that a coincidence or do Scouts just like food? Create your own designer crisp flavours, Chinese New Year, sausage sizzle, chip shop run, sandwich, bannock



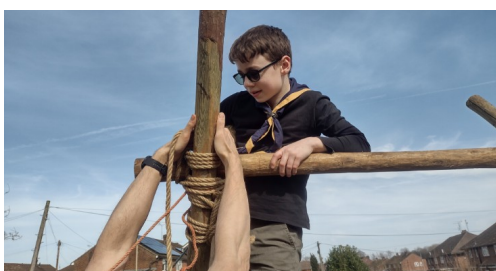
and biscuit making (not all on the same evening I hasten to add). There are always several volunteers on camp for cooking duties, somewhat fewer for washing up however!

As well as the culinary aspects Scout evenings have included a visit to the National Trust on Selborne Common, wide games, a murder mystery walk, first aid training, trading post, a visit to the observatory at Clanfield, a sleepover at the Den and indoor climbing at Guildford. Earlier this term we visited the Watercress Line at Ropley to find out about the role of the railway in the Second World War.



Our Scouts have raised over £400 for the Scouts Against Malaria scheme and this included two very impressive totals raised by Isobel Adams and Jack Richardson. This sum went towards a much larger sum of over £1500 raised by other sections and through a group-run fund-raiser. The work undertaken by SAM helps save lives in malarial countries in Africa by directly funding local, Scout-run initiatives to procure and distribute treated bed nets. <https://www.scoutsagainstmalaria.org.uk/>

The Monopoly Run is a live game where small teams of Scouts aim to visit all the places in London which are featured in the Monopoly board game. This is organised by a team based here at 3rd Alton. Our Scouts took part twice this year. Normally this is held yearly in March but because of high demand an extra game was run in September. For this we were able to include an adult team of leaders who were able to experience just what the Scouts and Explorers have been doing for a number of years now.



In the spring we had a Day of Scouting at the Den. This was a great opportunity to try out some of the things which we don't have time for on a regular two hour Thursday evening meeting. We focussed on pioneering with large poles, heavy ropes and pulley systems. We also did some cooking on the embankment and camped over.

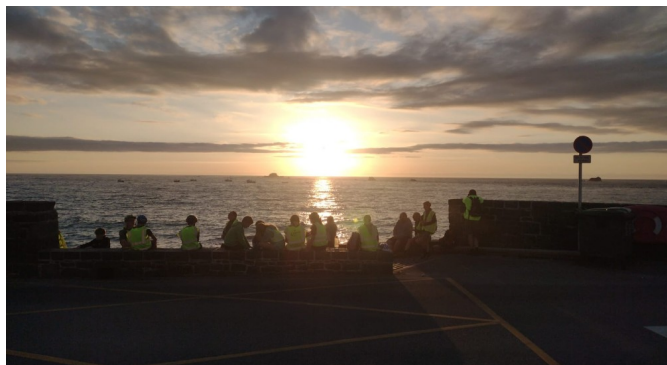
Scouts also helped in the community by providing a much appreciated water station for Alton Runners' very popular Alton 10 race. This was on the same day as TrailJam, a hike around the six hills of Alton for all sections of the group.



Both troops attended Beastly 25, a day of Scouting fun organised by Basingstoke Scouts. This was a massive event with several hundred young people attending and offered over thirty different skills, crafts and pastimes to try out.



Last week we returned from a week in Guernsey. Third Alton have been going there for many years now and for good reason. There are so many interesting and historical places to visit, the coastal scenery is superb with rugged cliffs on one side of the island and wide sandy beaches on the other. Mike and I made a recce trip earlier in the year and



made a number of useful contacts. Festung Guernsey were able to show some of us their archaeological work in some of the historic German fortifications. One of the local Scout Groups helped us with firewood. We watched motor racing on one of the beaches and hill climbs in St Peter Port. We tried coasteering, sailing and paddle-boarding. Scouts enjoyed sleeping in hammocks in the woods at the camp site. Our travel around the island was principally by bicycle and this allowed us to visit Castle Cornet, the beaches, Martello Towers and ice cream stalls of L'Ancrese, the Underground Hospital and the Little Chapel. It was a happy camp and very much enjoyed.

Gone Home



Sadly we bade farewell to too many of our former leaders this year. Harry Crossley ran the Troop back in the sixties and even then we were going overseas, in his case taking the Troop to the Kandersteg in Switzerland by minibus. Lynne Hughes was Akela of St Andrew's Cub pack from 1976 through to 1990s. Mon Spiers and her husband, Bill, ran one of the Scout Troops in the mid-1970s and remained a loyal supporter of the Scouting at Thirds for the rest of her long life. My very good friend Sandy Sclater (Sparks) was an extremely active member of the group for some forty years both with the Scout section and later founding the Banderlog Explorer Unit. All will be greatly missed.

Thank You

Let me finish with a big word of thanks to our leaders: Mike and Paul. Without their support we would not have been able to hold our regular meetings and the quality of our Scouting would have been considerably lower. I must also say thanks to all the other leaders in the group and all the Mums and Dads for their support in all sorts of ways, particularly Rob who has provided much appreciated support on Thursday evenings and on camp.

Adam Brook,

Skip, 3rd Alton Endeavour Scouts

