

1st TOLWORTH (ST. MATTHEW'S) SCOUT GROUP

FOUNDED 1908

REGISTERED 5th MARCH 1909

SPARKS HALL, PYNE ROAD, TOLWORTH, KT6 7BN.

OUT OF THE BLUE

CONGRATULATIONS TO
MARGARET WARRY,
GROUP PRESIDENT,
ON BEING AWARDED
THE BAR TO THE
SILVER ACORN



REGISTERED CHARITY

NUMBER 1040958

MAY 2021

www.1sttolworthscouts.org.uk

ISSUE No. 591

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Last year, my report was made in similar circumstances to the one I am making today, ie, no physical meetings are taking place either at Sparks Hall or in the park. However, I am glad to report that the end is in sight! This time next year I believe that things will be back to normal. So has anything been going on?? Well, yes. All of us in Scouting are resourceful and imaginative and our various laptops, i-pads and computers have had plenty of use.

The Beaver Colony has not been able to do a great deal but I know the leadership are gearing up ready to start. With Cubs, Lianne and Craig have retired and we have a new team led by a familiar face. Megan Taylor has returned from Liverpool and has others lined up to help her. In the meantime she has been running a "virtual" Pack of around a dozen or so. I am not sure about the choice of activities but I expect there have been puzzles and craft as well as things to do in the garden.

The Troop, however, has been going great guns! Caroline and her team have been meeting online each week. They have had some ideas fed to them by Gilwell Park and other ideas they have dreamed up for themselves. Members have been camping in their gardens and polishing all their Scouting skills. Some have greatly improved their computer skills.

They have welcomed new members - some up from Cubs, others brand new.

Planning for the next Troop camp has been done and a site at Phasels Wood Activity Centre in Kings Langley has been provisionally booked and a deposit paid.

I want to give huge congratulations and thanks to Caroline, John, Graham, Stuart and Alex for the fantastic efforts they have made to ensure that our Lockdown year has been the best it could be.

Margaret Warry

GSL'S REPORT

Hi everyone.

Welcome to the 1st Tolworth (St Matthews's) Scout Group Annual Report. I am feeling rather sad as this will be my last report as Group Scout Leader as I am stepping down at the end of the AGM.

What can I say? This year has been trying, to say the least. Our numbers within the Group have varied greatly but yes we are still here!

Our Scout Leaders have done an amazing job with the Scouts, doing Zoom meetings on a regular basis. They have run a camp from home and taken part in a cooking competition.

Unfortunately, Cubs and Beavers have not been able to follow suit with the Zoom meetings. The children's ages do not really allow for this although some of the children have been able to do some badge work at home.

Regrettably, our current Cub Leaders, Lianne and Craig, are also stepping down from their role as they are moving further afield and won't be able to carry on.

On the plus side we do have a new Cub Leader, Megan Taylor, who was a 1st Tolworth Beaver, Cub and Scout. She also went on to Explorers and is currently running an online Cub Pack for the Royal Kingston Scout District.

She will also be joined by Ellie and Jennifer who have volunteered to help at Cub meetings.

We are hoping Scouting will get back to some normality in the not too distant future, allowing us to meet once again, face to face, in the Scout hall. This will be done following all national guidelines laid down by the Scouting Movement and the Government. The Leaders are currently working hard on a Health and Safety plan to allow this to happen.

We at 1st Tolworth are so lucky to have such a great Executive Committee with Martin Smith at the helm as Chair, together with a great team who, without their commitment and dedication, would not have allowed the Group to carry on in these difficult times. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank them, one and all, along with all of our current Leader Team, for their help, guidance, and friendship in the time I have been with the Group.

Finally, I must thank my wife, Tina, who has always supported me in this great adventure. I know 1st Tolworth will carry on regardless in the same way as it has always done by putting the children and young people first.

Many thanks and all my love.

Reg Lefevre GSL

CONGRATULATIONS MARGARET

Our Group President, Margaret Warry, has been awarded the Bar to the Silver Acorn for her continued support within Scouting. She was once our Niagara Beaver Scout Leader, Vice Chair for the Circle and a Personal Training Advisor for 10 years in Royal Kingston Scout District.

She is also well known for the hundreds of hours she spent preparing for, and selling at, Car Boots and Outdoor Fairs, and also Group Jumble Sales for many years.

Reg Lefevre. GSL

CHAIR'S REPORT

I normally start my report by inviting all members, families and supporters to attend the 1st Tolworth (St. Matthew's) Scout Group Annual General Meeting.

However, in the circumstances, I will start with the hope that you are all safe and well.

At the time of writing this report, we are in the gradual process of coming out of the third National Lockdown, currently just past Step 2 on the Lockdown Roadmap, to ending restrictions. Hopefully soon, we will be in a position to start Face To Face meetings. Due to the Pandemic last year the 2020 AGM which was as normal scheduled for June, was postponed and finally held over a Zoom call in September.

As we are currently not meeting at the Hall we have decided to run this year's AGM again via a Zoom call. This is currently planned for Tuesday 15th June at 20.00. An invitation e-mail will be sent out confirming the date and joining details.

Please do log on and join us. It would be great to see as many of you as possible and we will have the opportunity to reflect on the previous year. Please use this opportunity to raise any concerns you may have regarding the way the Scout Group is managed.

To continue this report as always, will be a review of the past year. As you are aware, not a lot has been happening so I am struggling somewhat to find items of interest to include.

Obviously, due to the Pandemic restrictions, the 2020 November Fayre could not take place. Remembrance Sunday, another event that we normally attend, was also cancelled. However, our members did have the opportunity to show their support by taking part in the "In Uniform Two Minutes Doorstep Silence."

Usually on this day there is also a service at Polyapes camp site in the afternoon. This also was cancelled. However, Reg had, as he has for many years, ordered the Group wreath. So, following our own separate Two Minutes Doorstep Silences, Reg, Tina, Viv and myself travelled to Polyapes, and following strict guidelines, we paid our respects. I had the honour and privilege of laying the 1st Tolworth wreath at the Memorial.

The Trivial Pursuit tournament was another victim to the restrictions and again will not run this year. However, I would like to thank the teams for continuing to support this tournament, which, apart from having some fun, does still raise some funds for 1st Tolworth. Hopefully we can resume this tournament in 2022.

On a sad note, Steve Scott a long-time supporter of 1st Tolworth as a member of one of the Trivial Pursuit teams, sadly died on 11th November 2020, following a short battle with cancer.

We also must sadly say goodbye to our dear friend and long-term supporter Pat Frith. A lovely and caring lady. God Bless you Pat. I will certainly miss you.

On March 5th 2021 the Group celebrated its 112th Year since being founded. None of those 112 years would have been possible if it wasn't for the volunteers, past and present, who take on the roles as Group Scout Leader, Beaver, Cub and Scout Leaders, Assistant Leaders, Young Leaders and Executive Committee members and the regular helpers who all do so without any payment and in some cases, with cost to themselves. Thank you all.

My special thanks to Caroline, our Scout Leader, who has kept the Troop's Friday meetings going via Zoom.

As a Group there have been many changes in leadership of sections over the years and it's always sad when a current leader has to leave. This is the case with our Cub Leaders Lianne and Craig, who have done an excellent job running the Cub Pack. Unfortunately, due to other commitments, they need to relinquish the task. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Lianne and Craig for all their work with the Cubs and wish them well for the future. Fortunately for us, a volunteer has come forward to take on this role. Megan Taylor, who some of you may know, was a 1st Tolworth Beaver, Cub and Scout before becoming a District Young Leader. More recently she has been running a Kingston Scout District virtual Cub Pack via Zoom meetings.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Megan back to the 1st Tolworth Scout Family.

This is also the second year we have not been able to hold the St. George's Day service and yearly awards presentations. Hopefully we will be able to resume this in 2022. Some of our members took the opportunity on Friday 23rd April to re-affirm their Scout Promise. I was lucky enough to join the on line Scout meeting to do mine.

During the Lockdowns the Executive Committee has still been busy and continued to have regular meetings via Zoom. Although the Hall has been mothballed, there is still the run of the mill business matters to deal with, one of which is making sure all the essential safety measures and checks are being kept up to date.

One of the things discussed is the Group website and we are in the early stages of looking at a complete overhaul. We are aiming to make it easier to navigate and a better way for the Section Leaders to keep everyone up to date with the latest news.

We are also planning to upgrade the lighting in the main hall and the stairwell which has been on our agenda for some time. However, due to the Pandemic restrictions and not wanting to expose anyone to infection with unnecessary contact, we have been very cautious with engaging anyone to give quotes or start the work.

I should like to thank the Group Executive members for their support during the past year and look forward to their continued support in the next. Although mainly in the background, the Executive Committee does a wonderful job in managing the Group's funds and assets so I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of everyone in the 1st Tolworth Family to thank them for their support.

The past 14 months have certainly been a challenge to us all with unusual and unprecedented times. Hopefully as we enter the Group's 113th year, we can very soon get back to normality and look forward to another year of great Scouting.

I'm sure that whatever the future holds for us we will, in true 1st Tolworth family tradition, rise to the challenges that present themselves and we will continue to do what we do best by providing great times, life skills and excellent Scouting for the youngsters in the area.

As a Group we have survived and kept running through Two World Wars and the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918 so I'm sure we will survive this.

Hope to see you soon. Stay Well. Stay Safe.

I am so proud to be part of 1st Tolworth (St. Matthew's) Scout Group.

(Proud to be 1st)
Martin Smith
Chair

TREASURER'S REPORT

This year's report is for the accounting period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. It has been a strange set of accounts to collate compared to previous years because of the pandemic. So, our income and outgoings are not what they are normally showing at the end of the accounting year.

During this time our Group has had no Section or Executive meetings at our hall so our outlay for the building has been minimal. We still had to pay for hall and equipment insurance even though it has not been used for over a year. Membership fees have also been paid earlier this year. Our business rates were cancelled by the council and our utilities usage has been reduced but recently Castle Water has re-introduced their charges again. We should be due a rebate when a meter reading has been submitted in the coming months.

Our mini-bus has been mothballed too, gathering dust at the Royal British Legion car park. It has been insured for fire and theft only to reduce the cost of it standing idle. Once the go ahead for Scouting is given the green light, the Group will re-tax, insure and M.O.T. prior to any Scouting usage.

The fundraising has taken a blow too with only some car boot sales taking place last year between lockdowns, otherwise there have been no jumble sales, outdoor fairs and the November Fayre.

One thing I must commend is the 20 or so parents who have still paid their member's subs continuously throughout the crisis to help our Group. Parents/guardians were given the choice to cancel their contributions back in March 2020 to help with their own financial situations which is completely understandable. So many thanks for all those who are still paying a year or more on.

The Group's finances are in a good state and are able to cope with any future bills,

membership fees, insurance, etc for the foreseeable future. However, this did not stop me from applying for the Government grants made available through the Council.

As our Group is classified as a business and we pay business rates, even though we are a charity, we were eligible to be assessed and given several grants throughout the past 12 months. These grants are shown on the accounts and have been added to our income. It is the intention of the Group to hold fast on these grants and use them only if the Group desperately needs to access them for our financial future.

We are lucky to actually own our hall as if it was rented from another organisation, we would not be considered for these grants. Other Groups are not so fortunate and are facing hardship and even closure in other parts of the country.

I have not processed the Gift Aid for the last 12 months but I estimate I can claim about £750 which is down by £250 on the previous year. The 12 months up to 31st March 2021 will be even less, due to the fall in contributions but it is also down to parents who have not signed a Gift Aid form. Please consider signing one, even if your Beaver, Cub or Scout has been with the Group for a few years. I can claim for up to 4 years previous contributions so it really does make sense to sign one!

Once again, many thanks to the leaders, helpers and members of the Executive Committee who have gone through these strange times we are encountering. We all had to endure with social distancing, staying and working from home, teaching children at home, taking part in Zoom meetings and not being able to see, touch or visit loved ones. I must admit, I am looking forward to face-to-face Group Executive meetings again!

Times are changing now with the 3rd lockdown ending in stages. A Roadmap they call it. 1st and 2nd vaccinations are going well and slowly, ever so slowly, some sort of normality is returning but not as we knew it. I think it is going to take several years for us all to be out of the woods.

Scouting is set to re-surface but with certain safeguards in place which does take time to sort out and establish. We need patience and time to make these changes and if all goes well, we can all look forward to getting 1st Tolworth Scout Group back on the map!

One sad note which I wish to add is the passing of Pat Frith on the 25th April 2021. Pat was a lovely, caring and helpful lady who supported our Group through thick and thin. I knew Pat from a very young age and indeed it was her son, Denis, who knocked at my house back in the Sixties when I was eight and said come with me to Cubs at Pyne Road Hall. The rest they say is history. I will dearly miss my chats and laughter with her. My thoughts are with her son and Helen, Pat's granddaughter.

God bless you Pat. x

Hoping everyone is well and safe and looking to the future.

Let the Powell be with you.

Terry Goodall
Group Treasurer.

THAMES REPORT

Rachel Ferris. Beaver Scout Leader, *Thames Beaver Scout Colony, Boys and Girls age 5 ¾ - 8 yrs Fridays 17.45 – 18.45*

EVEREST REPORT

As the Scouting year is coming to the end I reflect back on the strange year we have had. Although we may not have been meeting face to face this year, that hasn't stopped you all representing Cubs.

Last April we celebrated St George's Day slightly differently by joining us on your door step in your uniform. Some of you attended the District virtual Cub Pack and continued your badge work and had lots of virtual fun with other children from all over the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.

This year I have had lots of Cubs reach the age of Scouts and even though I was not able to say goodbye to them in the traditional way, I have heard that they are thoroughly enjoying their Fridays on the virtual Scout Troop. I wish them all the best as they continue their Scouting journey and will hopefully see them as Young Leaders at some point in the future.

With the restrictions starting to lift slowly, I know there will be lots of new and exciting adventures ahead when each of you returns to the hall.

I hope you all have a brilliant summer with your family and friends.

Lianne Ford
Cub Scout Leader
*Everest Cub Scout Pack,
Boys & Girls age 8-10½.
Wednesdays 18.30- 20.00.*

TROOP REPORT

I never thought that I would have had to write an Annual Report such as this. We have been unable to do any camps, hikes, expeditions, archery, wardening at Polyapes or even just meet on a Friday night at Sparks Hall since my report last year.

Friday nights have been on the digital platform “Zoom” which we had started using only a short time before writing my report last year. We have met virtually, nearly every Friday since then, even through the summer holidays. At first it was lots of quizzes and games but as we got used to the new set-up, we have progressed to crafts, cooking, research, scavenger hunts and have all learned a lot.

We made wreathes at Christmas, we did Pin & Thread pictures at our Virtual Camp in April, we have a lot of Kindness Rocks to be given out. We have cooked pizzas, mug-cakes, cakes that look like hedgehogs and evidence for Murder Mysteries. We have tackled several different badges – Naturalist, Circus Skills, Fire Safety and Astronautics.

We have run 3 “Virtual Camps” when we have built dens to sleep indoors and spent the weekend meeting up on “Zoom” 3 times a day for activities, games, campfires, teaching and crafts. Two of the Scouts have individually been and cleared the weeds from the front of Sparks Hall, so that we will still be able to get in the door after a year.

The only County event available to us was the GLSW County Bake Off when the Scouts had to cook a cake in their own kitchens, then decorate it with the theme of “The Spirit of Scouting”. There were only 8 entries from Royal Kingston but 4 of those were from 1st.Tolworth. The top 5 cakes in each District went forward to the County competition. We had one of ours get into that group and come 11th place in the County and highest placed of the Royal Kingston cakes out of 122 entries in all. Well done Evannah!

I must say that the support available from Scout HQ has been so important with programme ideas, national events on-line, excuses to sleep in a den or a tent.

The explosion of Scout-related Social Media has also been invaluable.

To be honest, after a year like no other, I really do not know how many young people we have in the Troop. We had quite a number who were Explorer-age and just about to move on, before Lockdown. Others have now reached the age when they should be in Explorers. Many have missed out on the Leadership experiences of being Patrol Leaders. We had Young Leaders who are now over 18.

At the other end of the spectrum, we have welcomed and invested new members from Everest Pack, from 6th Tolworth and some new to the Movement.

Some Scouts have coped well with meeting on-line, some cannot cope at all and everything in-between. I have done my best to keep in touch with them all and they do join in when they want, school permitting. I can only hope that they will all return when we are allowed.

We are now remarkably close to meeting again face-to-face. It will have to be outdoors initially, as Sparks Hall is too small for the whole Troop if socially distanced. Another challenge for us to tackle and conquer.

I hope that next year, I will have more events to report and a thriving Scout Troop post-Covid. I have a Summer Camp provisionally booked. Hopefully, we will be allowed to go!

We hope that we will not get “locked down” again next winter, but if we do, we will cope and come out smiling in 2022.

As to the Leadership team, many of those, too, found that they could not cope with meeting online regularly. I could not have kept going, providing something to do each week, even if only a handful of young people appeared on the screen, without the help, support, ideas and laughter with John and Graham, Stuart and Alex. Well done and “thank you” team! Onwards and upwards!

Caroline Marsden
Scout Leader
Scout Troop
Boys and Girls age 10 ½ - 14 yrs
Fridays 19.30 – 21.30 hrs

CIRCLE REPORT

PAT FRITH



Pat Frith, a long time Group supporter, passed away in Kingston Hospital on Sunday 25th April.

She joined 1st Tolworth when her son, Denis, became a Cub.

She was a member of the B.-P. Scout Guild, later “The Circle” and for many years was its Chair. Pat ran stalls at the Group’s annual November Fayre, helped with Jumble Sales and assisted at 20 fund raising Outdoor Fairs including the Imber Fair, Kingston May Merrie and the Green Fair.

To help with fund raising targets, newspapers were collected by members and stored at the Douglas Road Hall, now The Corner House. When the stores were full the paper lorry would arrive and Pat, and others, loaded the lorry. It was a tiring task!

Pat joined Niagara Beavers on some outings as an additional helper. On one occasion she brought along some Circle members to a meeting when the Leader, Margaret Warry, organised an evening for the Beavers to meet a Grandma and Grandad. Some Beavers didn’t stop talking for the whole 45 minutes!

Pat was recognised for her support with the award of the Thanks Badge in 1978 and the Chief Scout’s Commendation for good Service in 1997.

God Bless, Pat. We will certainly miss you.

Graham Warnes.
Circle Treasurer.

FUNDRAISER'S REPORT 1st APRIL 2020-31st MARCH 2021

CAR BOOT SALES £1770

As Margaret continues to have breathing problems and is still awaiting an operation, all Car Boot sales were attended by my brother, Ken, and myself.

Due to the Pandemic, we attended 22 sales between Saturday 1st August and Sunday 6th December. Five events raised over £100.

Venues attended on Saturdays were 6 at Priest Hill Ewell and 4 at New Road Shepperton. Sundays were 9 at Apps Court Farm Hersham, 2 at Hook Road Arena, Ewell and 1 at Dorking rail station car park.

When we arrive at Shepperton at 06.45, we have 45 minutes in which to display our goods until the dealers and treasure hunters are allowed in. The remainder of the public then enter at 08.30. For all sellers it is a marvellous situation and is the only site I have attended which doesn't operate the scheme of letting sellers and buyers in at the same time.

OUTDOOR FAIRS

The Richmond May Fair and Ham Fair were postponed and then cancelled.

JEWELLERY SALES £352

Margaret checked through all the jewellery donations and over 90% was accepted by the jeweller as gold.

THANK YOU

I should like to thank Ken for his invaluable help.

Graham Warnes

POSTAGE STAMPS

The charity "Dog A.I.D. (Assistance in Disability) is collecting GB and International stamps. They request that they are cut from envelopes leaving about 1cm/1/4" of paper around each stamp. Thanks for doing this.

Please hold on to them for the time being.

Margaret Warry
Group President

JULY'S EDITION

The closing date for contributions to the Editor is **FRIDAY 18TH JUNE.**