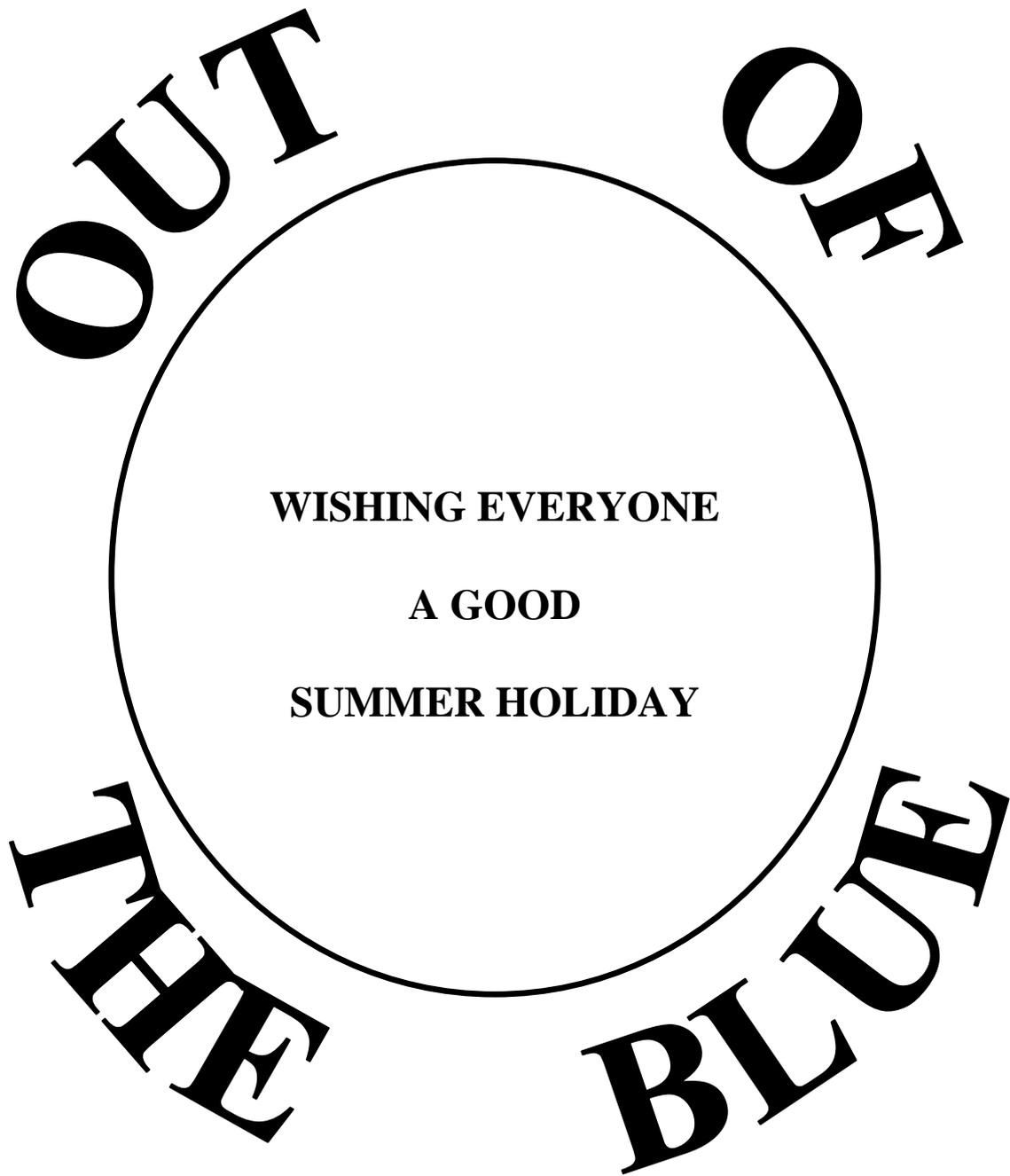


SPARKS HALL, PYNE ROAD, TOLWORTH, KT6 7BN.



REGISTERED CHARITY

NUMBER 1040958

GSL'S REPORT

This is strange having to write a GSL report for OOTB so soon!

The first thing I would like to say is a big thank you to Reg Lefevre for being GSL for the past 5 years and doing a great job!

I would also like to say a massive thank you to Sheila Jones who, after 32 years as Group Secretary, has finally hung up her quill. Sheila has been the backbone of the Group's admin for all this time and has been working tirelessly in the background. A true unsung hero! A big thank you must go to Tina Lefevre for picking up Sheila's quill to carry on as Group Secretary which is a role many people shy away from. I hope everyone will give Tina help and support if she needs it in the future.

I suspect most of you will know me, but for those who don't, my name is John Bowman and I started as Section Assistant in 2006 and became an Assistant Scout Leader with the Troop in 2009 and GSL at our AGM in June. I also have other roles in the County of Greater London South West as Archery Advisor and Archery Assessor. I am also District Scout Leader in Royal Kingston Scout District.

During Lockdown, Scouting was put on "HOLD". Just like everyone, we were affected by the no meeting rule. This meant Beavers, Cubs and Scouts could not hold their normal meetings. The only thing they could do was to go on line and ZOOM became the only way forward. So many young people and adults could not deal with this which meant our attendance numbers dropped drastically. Rachel, who had just taken on Thames Beavers from Faye, was forced to stop as it was impossible to run a Beaver meeting on ZOOM, so Beavers were put on hold.

I am pleased to say that Rachel has a good waiting list for new Beavers to start in September and just like ALL sections she could really use some help! Can you spare an hour on a Friday as a parent helper? It really would make a difference!

The Cub Leaders Lianne and Craig had a similar problem trying to get the Cubs involved and with personal reasons had to give up the Cub Pack which meant we had no Cub Leaders. Along came Megan Taylor (and Ruby and Rowley, her assistance dogs) and offered to run Everest Cub Pack! Megan has been involved with a virtual Cub Pack online during Lockdown.

I think most of you know Megan. She was a Beaver, Cub, Scout and Young Leader at 1st Tolworth. She has done her training and is now a Cub Scout Leader. Megan has also brought two of her friends with her to help who have never been involved in Scouting. Ellie and Jenny have both started their training. Megan also has a good waiting list of young people to join Cubs. Again, could you help on a Wednesday evening?

A big welcome to Ellie and Jenny and hope you both enjoy being part of the worldwide family of Scouts and part of the 1st Tolworth family.

Caroline and her leaders have done an amazing job in keeping the Troop going through Lockdown with ZOOM meetings and different activities, from camping in the back garden to

cooking, but just like everyone else Lockdown took its toll on attendance.

The Troop has gone back to face-to-face meetings outside for the past three weeks and has done really well with Scouts joining in who didn't on ZOOM.

There have been a few changes in the hall during Lockdown. New LED strip lights have been fitted and while we had the scaffold tower, the hall had a spring clean from roof to floor!! So next time you are in the hall with the lights on, remember to have your sunglasses! A massive thank you to everyone who was involved with the fitting of the lights and cleaning the hall.

As it seems we are about to come out of Lockdown with the lifting of restrictions, please keep an eye open for emails or messages from your young person's Section Leader on how things may have changed regarding meetings. Hopefully these changes mean we can meet at the hall unrestricted.

If you would like to help out at any of the sections, especially now we appear to be on the road to recovery, this is the time we need it most! Please contact the Section Leader or myself. gsl@1sttolworthscouts.org.uk

CHAIR'S REPORT

I would like to thank the section leaders and supporters who attended the Group's Annual General Meeting held via Zoom last month, with a special thank you to Mr. Bob Bushell, District President.

Apologies were received from The Reverend Helen Hancock, Vicar of St Matthew's Church; Sue Russell, District Local Training Manager; Mrs. Marilyn Jennings; Mrs. Pat Tomlinson; Mrs. Pauline Littrell; Mrs. Julie Ford and Mr. Richard Ford.

The meeting continued with a brief roundup of the last year from myself and Reg.

Following the approval of the Annual Report and Accounts, the meeting proceeded as per agenda with the elections of Executive members. The current Executive team was duly re-elected. Thanks again to all Executive members for your continued support.

At the end of the meeting, Reg stood down from his role as Group Scout Leader. He will continue serving 1st Tolworth as a valued member of the Group Executive, assisting Richard Ford with Quartermaster duties. Also, as Reg has been involved with the Climbing Wall since the beginning, he was appointed as Climbing Wall Manager.

We all welcomed John Bowman as our new Group Scout Leader and I am looking forward to working with John. We also officially welcomed Megan Taylor as our new Cub Scout Leader/Akela.

Another change is our Group Secretary. Sheila Jones has stepped down after 32 years of service as Secretary, again a person who worked diligently in the background looking after the Group's Admin. Sheila will also continue as a member of the Group Executive. Thank you Sheila for all your dedicated hard work as Group Secretary over the years. Stepping into the Secretary's role is Tina Lefevre and a big thank you to Tina for volunteering.

As reported in our May edition we lost our very long-time supporter, Circle Chair and dear

friend Pat Frith on 25th April, following a long spell of ill health.

Pat's funeral service was held on Monday 17th May in St. George's Church Tolworth, officiated by our friend and Vicar of St. Matthew's, Helen Hancock. It was as well attended as allowed under the Covid restrictions. A plaque for Pat will be added to the Group Gone Home board.

Although we have not used the hall for over a year, making sure everything is safe and in working order is still a priority. We have undertaken the replacement of the six fluorescent lights in the Hall and one in the stairwell. These have all been replaced with "daylight glow" LED lights.

The hall has also had a thorough clean. Using the tower we hired so the lights could be replaced, we cleaned the RSJ's and steelwork that supports the roof. The metal tables that were propped up against the climbing wall have been put into the outside storage area.

The climbing wall has had some work done. Evidently, the karabiner arrangements we were using were no longer the correct method and have been upgraded. The wall can now also be used for a climbing technique called Bouldering which limits the height you can climb up the wall. A red line denotes the height. But the idea is to move across the wall. The benefit of this is that no instructor is required so all sections could do this activity as part of a normal section meeting.

So we have survived our 112th year and are still here.

Moving forward will be dependent on the next changes to Covid restrictions and a challenge. I'm sure, however, that's something we all, and as a Group, do well. Hopefully, we have made all the right preparations and will be back holding proper meetings in the Hall following the summer holidays.

Well, that's it for this month. The summer holidays are nearly upon us so let's hope we have some summer weather and enjoy whatever we do. Please Stay Well and Stay Safe. Next edition will be September.

[Proud to be 1st]
Martin Smith
Chair

THAMES REPORT

The 1st Tolworth Beaver Colony has not met since 13th March 2020 due to Coronavirus.

However, with restrictions easing across the Country our Waiting List has grown and when we do restart Scouting, I hope to have a large new group of Eager Beavers. At this time, I cannot give a date for when the Colony will return but we are prepared for a safe return that will mean our young people can get the most out of their time within the Scout Association.

I look forward to the return of Scouting for Beavers at 1st Tolworth in the not too distant future (I hope)

Rachel Ferris BSL Thames Colony.
beavers@1sttolworthscouts.org.uk
Boys and girls age 5¾ – 8.
Fridays 17.45 – 18.45.

EVEREST REPORT

Megan Taylor, Cub Scout Leader,
Everest Cub Scout Pack.
Boys & Girls age 8 -10 ½.
Wednesdays 18.30-20.00.

TROOP REPORT

It is so good to have some actual face-to-face Scouting to tell you about but, since this report is what we have been doing since the beginning of March, I had better not go there yet!

Comings and Goings

In this time, we have had 10 potential new members from Everest Pack, of whom Oliver, Alfie, Joshua and Reuben are making their mark. We have also been joined by Isabel and Zac. A good time to be with us, now that we are “back” properly.

There are so many of the others that we have not seen for so long now, since before Lockdown in spring last year. Hopefully they will drift back to us. If not, maybe a few e-mails might reveal whether to give up hope or not!

We have said “Goodbye” to Keira C. and Claudia who did not want to continue as Explorers. We wish them all the best for the future.

Zoom Meetings March – May

We did two more “Astronautics “ meetings, about Satellite Photography and Orbits, to finish off the badge for a few. Holly ran an interesting evening about Energy Conservation. We worked out our Carbon Footprint and thought about how we could reduce them. We also considered what we were not happy with, as far as Climate Change and care of the environment went, and how we can play our part.

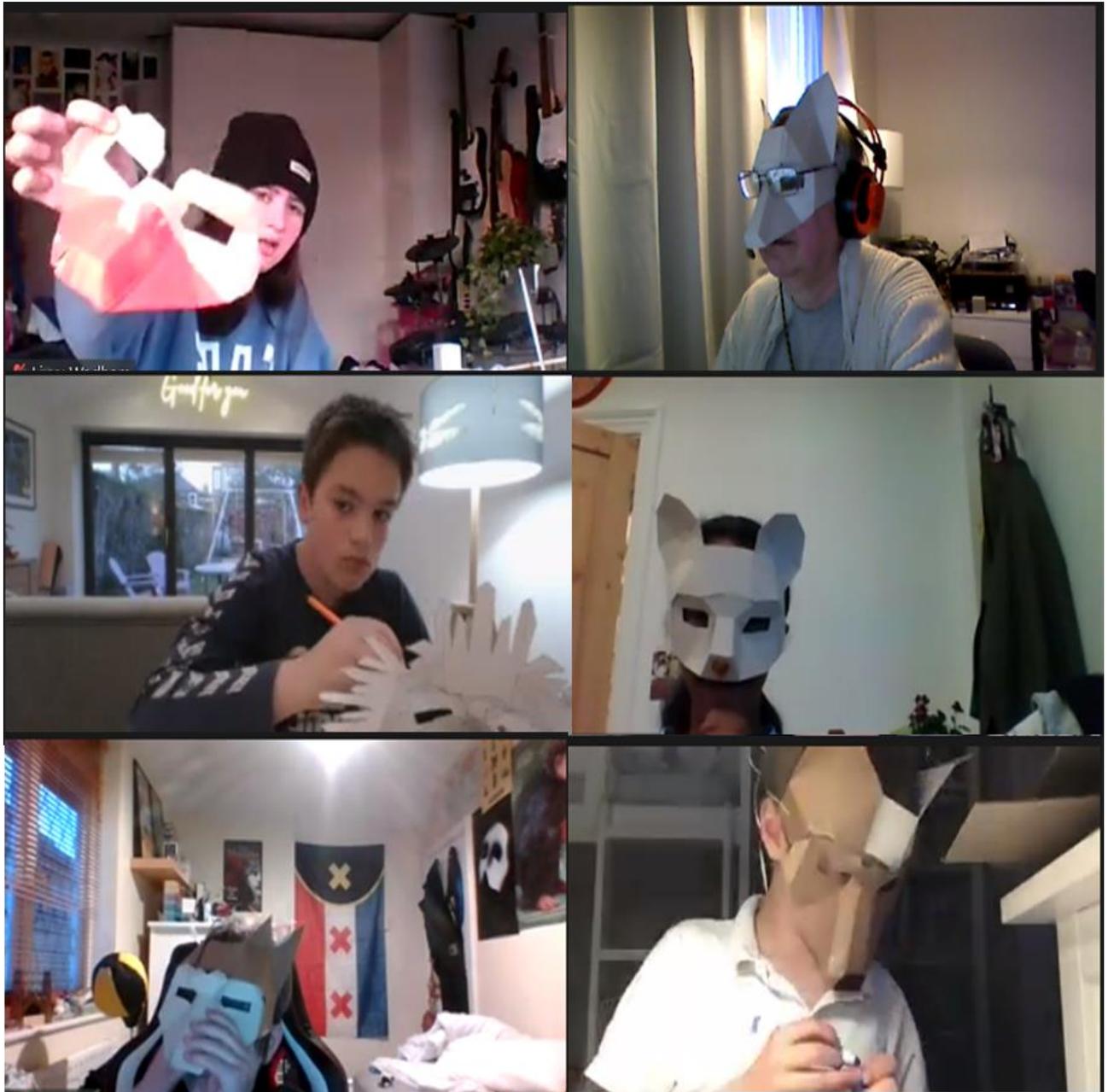
As usual, we played plenty of games - Scattergories, Tenable, Catchphrase. We did a Sing-a-Long and Stuart made a “Where am I?” Quiz when we had to identify various landmarks and match them up with the map of where they were. Tricky, but good for making our brains tick over. We answered a St. George’s Day Quiz when we learned that St. George definitely killed that Dragon using a Breadstick! Didn’t you know? You thought he used a sword, didn’t you? Wrong!!!

We tried a Survival Challenge about being stranded on the Moon and what equipment we might treasure most. (Clue: start with OXYGEN!) Then we came back to Earth and considered what we would need for an expedition closer to home and seeing if we made the best choices. We even tried to brush up on our mapping skills but it is so much easier when we are all together!

Of course, we did some more cooking. This time the theme was Safari. Elephants, Giraffes and mostly Lions appeared gradually and some disappeared too (tasted too good!) in cake and biscuits. Here are some of the pictures:



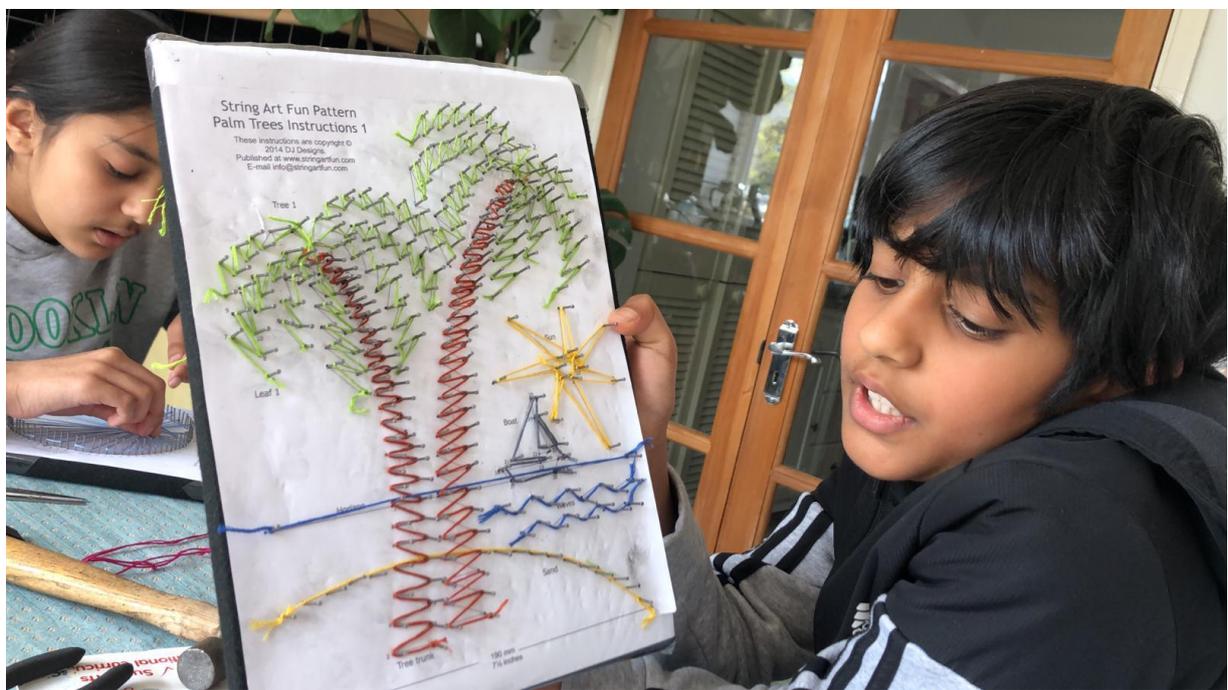
Continuing the animal theme, we had an Origami evening making animal masks. It wasn't quite as easy as it looked but we had a large pack of foxes by the time we had finished.



Virtual Camp

We did another of our Virtual camping weekends, just after Easter. Dens were made indoors. I don't think anyone fancied sleeping outside on this occasion. Well, it was a bit COLD.

On Saturday morning we planted succulents. Stuart had taken lots of leaves off his plants and we each planted one in a pot. Mine is now growing very strongly. Then they had a go at some time-lapse photography – various topics, but OOTB hasn't progressed far enough to show those to you! Then lots of people tackled Pin and Thread Pictures. Out with the hammers and nails then getting the threads in the right places to make a picture. Very impressive some of them were too.



On Sunday morning, we did a whole lot of mini challenges. Kept us busy for a couple of hours finding things around the house, making things, answering puzzles. Great fun!

Face-to Face

We continued to meet on Zoom until Half-Term at the end of May. At last, we got the paperwork done, approved and even some dry weather. Thank you to Martin, Rachel, Megan and Reg for their help.

We have now had three meetings when we have been physically in the same place at the same time.

Our first was just to Alexandra Rec. when we played Football, Jump Rope and Limbo. All to keep our hands off the equipment! It was just great to see so many of you all together. However, it was a bit strange because some people had never seen any of the others actually in person, only on Zoom! All a bit quiet and polite. I quite liked it!!! We got all the over 14s together and they sat down with Millie and John to talk about Explorers and Young Leaders and who wants to do what. It all seems so odd!

Then we had a wet Friday when we did one of those Zoom Challenges I mentioned. The last two Fridays we have been at Polyapes campsite. It all seemed so green and beautiful, particularly the first week, when we were the only ones on site.

We've done Archery (thank you, John!) and Air Rifle Shooting (thank you, Millie), both on the new range that has only just been built there. We brushed up on Axe and Saw use and safety – completely new for so many, got going on fire-lighting and packed tinder boxes with useful stuff for starting fires. Of course, we couldn't have a fire without doing some cooking, could we? How have we coped all this time without S'mors and Hotdogs? So special!

Last Friday, we went to Southwood and had fun making Sedan Chairs and Ballistas, plus a couple of running around games as well.

Matthew and Livvy's team (Matthew, Livvy, Matas, Alfie and Zac) took the longest to make their Sedan Chair but carried Alfie to victory in the race down the field, round the big tree and back again.

Amelie's team (Amelie, Thomas, Sharfin, Oliver, Isabel and Alex) made the most successful ballista, but only firing their Ping Pong Balls slightly further than Luke's team (Luke, Shreya, Warwick, Evannah, Joshua and Adi).

County Bake Off

I told you last time that Evannah made one of the five cakes selected from Royal Kingston to go forward to the GLSW County Bake Off Competition. Evannah came 11th out of the 25 in the County. Very respectable! And she was the highest placed of the Royal Kingston cakes in the County competition, even though she wasn't first when judged at District level. Sorry, have I confused you? Just take it that she did very well!

What's Next?

We are hoping to go to Summer Camp – really! Fingers tightly crossed, hoping against hope. I booked a site at Phasel's Wood, Hertfordshire. Got the booking in around Easter. Here we are, two weeks before the date and we STILL DON'T KNOW if we are allowed to go! We are planning as if we can. Maybe it will happen, maybe it won't, but if we don't try ... there's no chance! Find out next time ...

Once again, thanks particularly to John and Graham, Stuart and Alex for helping me to keep the programme going for the past more than a year, on Zoom. Millie, Peter and Holly are back with us, since we have been outside. The Young Leaders – Giacomo, Jasmyn, Luke and Amelie, have been great too!

Onwards and upwards now, we hope. Enjoy the holidays!

Caroline Marsden.
Scout Leader. Scout Troop.
Boys and Girls age 10½ - 14.
Fridays 19.30-21.30.

CIRCLE REPORT

We're looking forward to resuming our meetings after the Summer holidays.

Margaret Warry. Vice Chair.

SAD NEWS

For those of you who have helped at our November Fayre or who have visited us on the day, you would have seen Father Christmas. The man with the red outfit and real beard sadly passed away on 11 July at 81 years of age.

You may have known him by his real name which was Barry Pegram. Last year he was diagnosed with Motor Neurone disease and a few weeks ago was admitted to hospital with a collapsed lung.

Barry held several Scouting appointments including Venture Scout Leader at Tolworth Venture Scout Unit, Assistant District Commissioner Venture Scouts in the former Surbiton District and District Explorer Scout Administrator in Royal Kingston District.

He was such a nice man, so easy to talk to, friendly, kind and caring. In 1996 Barry was awarded an MBE for services to the Defence Industry. He was Chief Airworthiness Engineer at British Aerospace, Farnborough. Our condolences go to Rosemary, Fiona, Sara and their families.

Graham Warnes

Volunteering - Good for 1st Tolworth

Good for your Wellbeing

According to extensive research –

<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/resources/volunteer-wellbeing-what-works-and-who-benefits>

Volunteering is good for our wellbeing. During the last 18 months due to Covid we have got used to staying local and looking out for our neighbours. People have been shopping for neighbours who were shielding, getting to know each other while clapping for the NHS, holding doorstep drinks etc. As a result we are all feeling more connected to our local area and feel the benefits of knowing others will look out for you in return for the favour you did for them.

As members of the Scout Association our leaders already knew about this feel good factor. They get it when they see your child realising they can cook over a camp fire, climb that wall, take a leap on the zip wire. It's why they give up their time every week.

In 1st Tolworth we have also been really lucky to have a number of ex leaders and associated members who have been running fundraising activities or supporting events like the annual Awards ceremony for years. Unfortunately for us they are not getting any younger and we have said goodbye to a couple of them in recent years as they have sadly 'Gone Home'.

Graham Warnes is retiring from organising the 3 x a year Jumble Sales and many Car Boot stalls that he has tirelessly organised with the support of Margaret (our Group President) and his brother Ken.

These have raised a huge amount of money for us over the years but also provided a community service. They are the epitome of being 'green' by recycling unwanted goods. But the Jumble Sales are also a community event, providing our neighbours with a chance to come together, have a cup of tea and a chat. It would be a shame for them to stop.

So, if you're still reading this....

Could you be our next volunteer? Would you be able to organise the Jumble Sales? Maybe you know someone else that would like to get involved such as a grandparent or aunt/uncle of a Beaver, Cub or Scout?

Maybe this is an opportunity for two or three people to do something together as a subcommittee? (This is how the November Fayre is organised).

If you're interested or want to know more details about what is involved please get in touch by emailing.... gsl@1sttolworthscouts.org.uk

If we get any interest I will organise for us to have a chat either via Zoom or in person and see what can be done.

Thank you.

Gayna Brice.

Group Executive member and November Fayre Committee Lead.