

Southport Scout News – No. 241. 14th December 2014

Readers also are referred to:-

www.southportdistrictscouts.org.uk

www.merseysidescouts.org.uk



Warmest Best Wishes for a Happy and Blessed Christmas and a successful and peaceful New Year in 2015 – to all members and their families and friends. Brian (Ed.)



A pause for thought

(Reprinted, with permission, from “The Wirral Horn”
December 2014)

Did you notice during the first week of November that Christmas arrived not only in the supermarkets but on the television adverts as well? I am expecting Christmas trees will be available quite soon.

I think we all look forward to “putting up” the tree and adorning it with the decorations and lights; I certainly do!

Have you ever wondered why we arrived at the tradition of the Christmas tree, I know that we think it was introduced in Victorian times, but it was way before then.

The Romans used to decorate their homes with evergreen branches and ancient European people had trees within their homes on which they hung fruit; this grew in popularity including many churches setting up their own Christmas tree. Alongside the tree were wooden pyramids on which stood candles. Eventually the candles were placed on the tree - the ancestors of our modern lights and our decorations replaced the fruits.

In the early 1800's German and Dutch immigrants brought their tradition of Christmas trees and introduced them, not only to us but to the rest of the world.

The Christmas tree is just one part of our celebrations; but let us not forget the true message of Christmas; love, peace, goodwill to all men and the promise of eternal life that a special baby, born in a stable, brought to the world.

“May the true gifts of the Christmas message be yours for ever.”

“AARON”

Dear Santa,

I don't want much for Christmas; I just want the person reading this to be happy.

Friends are the fruit cake of life:- some nutty, some soaked in alcohol, some sweet but mix them together

and they're my friends.

Love ya.

COUNTY ADULT Awards EVENING

The last newsletter carried two unidentified photographs from the County Presentations. The two Leaders receiving awards were:

Byron Chapman - Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service

Robbie Smith - Chief Scout's Commendation for Good Service.

2nd Southport Scouts and Spearhead Explorers have recently done a joint activity together.



The Scouts and Explorers took part in a trading post. The evening was a great success and the Scouts got to see what happens at Explorers. One of my Scouts said "we had a great time, the trading post was really fun and it was good meeting the explorer scouts. I can't wait to move up to Explorers now" - Joe Robertshaw, 2nd Southport Scouts.

Rich Blake

SL 2nd Southport Scouts

Last chance to book for KISC and De Kluis in summer 2015!

Does your scout group have a thirst for adventure? Well we have the perfect news for you! We still have places available for your very own international exploration in 2015 to **Belgium** or **Switzerland**. Whether it's your first time abroad, or you're a seasoned traveller, both of these fantastic destinations will give you stories to tell, and memories to last a lifetime.

<http://www.ventureabroad.co.uk/>

FROM THE ARCHIVES:

GOLDEN YEARS 1931 - 1939

The major District event of the year, and for several years past, was a Rally held on Saturday afternoon July 18th 1931. This was reported in the **Southport Visiter** on July 21st:

"BOY SCOUTS - SATURDAY'S LOCAL RALLY

Over 400 Rovers, Scouts, Sea Scouts and Wolf Cubs took part in the Annual Rally of the Southport and District Boy Scout Association on the University School ground, Knob Hall Lane, Cambridge Road, Southport. It is anticipated that the Groups in the Association will be still further brought together during the present year now that a commencement has been made in the right direction.

There were eleven Groups at the Rally, viz, the 2nd Southport (Christ Church), 3rd Southport, 8th Southport, 11th Southport (Sea Scouts), 16th Southport (St John's Ainsdale), 19th Southport, 24th Southport (St Andrew's), 27th Southport (2nd Formby), 30th Southport (Ainsdale Wesleyan), 38th Southport, 39th Southport. The Scottish Pipe Band of the 219th Liverpool (St Andrew's) came over for the Rally and amongst other visitors was Troop Leader Nicholas Roth, a Hungarian from Budapest, where he is a member of his country's Scout movement.

The proceedings opened with a March Past by all the groups, the salute being taken by the Lancashire County Commissioner, Col. A.D. Melly, V.D., D.L., J.P., who was accompanied by Scouter W.F. Thomas, Assistant County Commissioner for Training; Scouter H.W.G. Hutton, District Commissioner, Ormskirk; Captain F.C. Poulton, District Commissioner for Southport; Scouter W.E. Bowker, Assistant District Commissioner for Southport; Major J.H. West, Hon. Secretary.

A programme of competitions and games etc. was arranged and the following are the results: -

Signalling (Examiner - Capt. G.B. Cranshaw): - 1st - 3rd Southport, 2nd - 2nd Southport, 3rd - 16th Southport.

Tent Pitching (Examiners - Scouters G. Sykes and L.H.

Rendell): - 1st - 3rd Southport, 2nd - 39th Southport, 3rd - 16th Southport.

Verbal Despatch (Examiners - Scouters G.P. Knight, L.H. Rendell, and H.W.G. Hutton): - 1st - 2nd Southport, 2nd - 30th Southport, 3rd - 3rd Southport.

Sand Tracking (Examiners - Scouters W.F. Thomas, W.

Mahood, and E.B. Hewlett): - 1st - 30th Southport, 2nd - 2nd Southport, 3rd - 39th Southport.

First Aid (Examiners - Scouters W. Mahood and E. Alty): - 1st - 39th Southport, 2nd - 38th Southport and 16th Southport (tie).

Games (Examiner - W.F. Thomas): - Owing to the general excellence shown in this competition no distinctions were made at all.

During the afternoon an exhibition of tumbling was given by the 1st Lathom Troop, an exhibition of boxing and a demonstration of tents and camping.

The thanks of the Association are due to the District Commissioner, Capt. F.C. Poulton, O.B.E., and Mr W.E. Bowker for the trouble they have taken in the organisation; to District Scoutmaster E.B. Hewlett, who was responsible for the ground

organisation and for conducting the competitions, and to Miss K.M. Dean for the voluntary provision of refreshments”.

A Happy Danish Christmas Tradition.

Sylvia and I were lucky to spend a long weekend with family in Copenhagen recently and to experience an annual tradition. On the Saturday we were taken to a nearby railway station to sidings where a very old locomotive was ‘in steam’ with a train of equally old-fashioned carriages attached. The area was full of families with lots of very excited children making for pre-booked seats. Father Christmas was there to greet the travellers and to give sweets to the children.



With a full passenger load we shunted back to the main line station and when the line was clear, joined the main line and set off. Our timings had to be carefully co-ordinated with the busy main line services as many of the computer-controlled trains ran without drivers!

We travelled at ‘steam train speed’ which was not as great as the fast electric locomotives. During almost two hours with frequent stops to allow fast trains to pass – or for other unexplained reasons we travelled through villages, fields and forests with excitement rising. Every family seemed to have a hearty picnic and good supply of books and games to keep children happily occupied. Some had brought stoves and coffee percolators!

We eventually left the main line for a single track line which wound through woods and countryside to a ‘station’ which was simply a name sign and a few pieces of temporary flooring on the open site. There were portable wooden steps and a railwayman’s hand to help us alight.

A walk of about half a mile through field and forest brought us to a single storey ancient farmhouse, alongside heavily planted areas with a large variety of coniferous trees. The selection was huge – both in variety and in size. Each family went into the wooded area to select and cut down their own chosen Christmas tree. Some had brought saws with them – others used the ones provided by the forester.

Whilst the selection and cutting was in hand there were barns offering food and drink and stalls full of mainly

home-made ‘craft’ items with candles and pine branches prominent. Favourite drinks were mulled wine or hot chocolate heaped with whipped cream. We also ‘met’ a Danish delicacy – small bite sized fried dough balls (like mini doughnuts) served warm and dipped in generous piles of icing sugar and jam. Delicious and ‘more-ish’! The selected trees were brought back to the central area to be measured for height (and price) before being ‘sleeved’ in netting. Trees then were passed to railway staff and labelled with the owner’s name - for loading onto a truck for transport back to the train. In the central area there were open fires for warmth in the bitter cold producing the enchanting smell of burning pine and birch logs.



There was not much time spare before we headed back to the ‘station’ to await the arrival of the train. It had had to go elsewhere to turn around and arrived on time reversing along the single track with a man dangerously perched on the back. Push chairs and prams went into one van and

Grandsons Oscar & Oliver tree cutting. labelled trees into another. We resumed our reserved seats – and we were off. It now was approaching 3.00 p.m. and as it grew dark we discovered that our compartment had only a very feeble gas light so we travelled home in near darkness – again with frequent stops for fast trains and other ‘reasons’. One of these was to wait for the traffic to clear for us to pass along the main street of a quite large village. (I suspected that the line was outdated and only used for trains for this special annual event.) Arriving back at the start point it was quite dark with few lights, but the homeward bound families happily collected trees and children, carefully stowing



everybody and everything in or on cars.

We concluded that this had been a particularly happy and memorable event and one which would live long

with children amongst their very special Christmas memories. We were privileged to share their preparation for a Danish Christmas.

Brian

Abstract from: Chief Commissioner's Blog:- 28/11/2014

The importance of good leaders.

Studying a successful group

“In Leicestershire, I heard a presentation from David Stanford, Group Scout Leader of the 1st Bowden. He shared their story of having taken the Group from less than 40 members to a current 186! Particularly of interest is the fact that the Group has three Scout Troops, two Cub Pack and two Beaver Colonies, very much reversing the trend we see elsewhere.

“David explained that there was very little magical, in his words, about the Group’s success. He said that it was entirely built around the leaders in the Group – recognising the importance of the team and social interaction, publicising their activities and events and very much making parents feel part of the Group.

“Some of the more interesting elements included the fact that leaders are not expected to pay the membership fees for their children participating in the Group. It was also interesting that they described their meeting facilities as very small but that this simply meant that they needed to work around them in providing exciting programmes for their young people.”

Enjoy the little things in Life for one day you’ll look back and realise that they were the big things!



Official World Scout Shop

Scout Fun Badges

<http://www.worldscoutshops.com/scout-fun-badges-c102x2134948>

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE MESSAGE:

From: The Scout Association

To: All members

Dear Colleagues

You may have seen reports of a BBC investigation that has made claims concerning the amount of compensation paid and highlighted two instances of historical abuse within Scouting.

We apologise to all those who have been abused during their time in Scouting. The safety and support of young people in Scouting is our number one priority. Any abuse of young people is abhorrent and we are deeply sorry for anybody hurt by the actions of abusers. We strive to ensure these abuses do not take place.

These incidents took place in 1978 and 1986, where correct procedures were not followed. The abusers involved in these events were placed before a criminal court and have been punished for their crimes. To our great regret, some individuals who seek to abuse young people have used their positions to violate the founding principles of Scouting and have breached our stringent processes. Subsequently, this small minority, have abused a young person or persons.

We are confident that this type of response was extremely rare at the time and would not be replicated today. Where there is any evidence of wrong doing, this information is automatically passed on to the Police. This is in line with a clear written code of conduct, that we have had in place for the last 20 years, which requires all adults in the Movement to report suspected cases of abuse to the appropriate authorities.

We have been completely open and transparent with the BBC and have cooperated fully with the making of their report. **Please see the full response here.**
Below - Ed

The safety and welfare of young people remains our number one concern, which is why our 100,000 adult volunteers all undergo compulsory safeguarding training. We also ensure this training is refreshed throughout an adult’s time in the Movement. Today we have in place sector leading safeguarding procedures.

There are 10 million former Scouts in the UK and 550,000 current members. On rare occasions, a tiny number of abusers manage to circumvent our processes. Where discovered, these abusers are immediately reported to the relevant authorities. We remain vigilant to the threat posed by potential abusers and continually review our policies and procedures to ensure this threat is mitigated.

We remain proud and grateful for your work as a volunteer in Scouting in improving the lives of young people.

If you have any concerns, please contact safeguarding@scouts.org.uk. Also please also visit our web site for more detailed information and background to this matter.

From: Gilwell

To: All members
10/12/2014

BBC news report 10th December 2014

You may have seen tonight's BBC News reports about safeguarding issues in the Scout Movement.

This is our public response to that report

- We apologise to all those who have been abused during their time in Scouting. The safety and support of young people in Scouting is our number one priority. Any abuse of young people is abhorrent and we are deeply sorry for anybody hurt by the actions of abusers. We strive to ensure these abuses do not take place.
- The Scout Association is a membership organisation with 550,000 members and operates across the United Kingdom. Just over 100,000 of our Members are adult volunteers. Since Scouting started in 1907 well over ten million young people and adults have been involved in the Movement in the United Kingdom.
- The suggestion that 50 adults have initiated claims against the Scout Movement in the period October 2012 to December 2014 and that £900,000 has been paid out to victims is factually incorrect. We have reviewed the appropriate files to seek the information they requested and can confirm that since the Movement started in 1907, 48 civil actions relating to child abuse have been made against the Association. Of these claims, 36 civil actions have been instigated since October 2012; all actions relate to historic cases. In common with many other charities, organisations and institutions, we experienced an increase in reported historic cases since 2012
- In the period October 2012 to December 2014 we have paid around £500K in compensation to victims of abuse. To our great regret, some individuals who seek to abuse young people have used their positions to violate the founding principles of Scouting and have breached our stringent processes. Subsequently, this small minority, have abused a young person or persons.
- In appropriate circumstances we want to ensure victims of abuse receive compensation in a timely manner. This is the right thing to do. We have never used gagging orders to silence those who have been abused.
- We have operated safeguarding processes designed to keep our youth members safe since the Movement was created and these have often

been at the forefront of good practice standards. Our capacity to keep young people safe is always evolving and improving.

- Before the advent of computers, we operated a paper based reference system designed to prevent those who sought to harm young people from becoming volunteers with the Movement.
- As soon as the criminal records disclosure scheme became operational we made use of the system. In fact we played an important role in supporting the original implementation of the scheme during the trial stage of the system's development.
- As a membership organisation with 10 million former members and with hundreds of thousands of current members we regularly keep our files under review and will always report any issues of concern to the police that are identified during this work. These policies are proactively enforced by our adult volunteers.
- As part of this commitment, the NSPCC reviewed our safeguarding processes in 2008. More recently, they have reviewed and offered us advice on where and how our vetting and appeals process interacts with the criminal records disclosure scheme. Earlier this year we also began work to review our membership files. Any issues of concern that need to be reported to the Police will be referred immediately
- In addition to these processes all our leaders (100,000) have to undergo compulsory safeguarding training.
- We take all these actions because we are committed to report any issues of concern to the relevant authorities.
- In terms of the wider question of our involvement in the Government Inquiry, we are committed to cooperating fully and offer for consideration the safeguarding lessons we have learned over the last 107 years of working with young people in a voluntary setting.

Having read this information and you wish to report any matters of concern about an individual or individuals in Scouting then please contact the safeguarding team using safeguarding@scouts.org.uk

If you have general enquiries about safeguarding policies of the Scout Movement then please contact the Scout information centre on 0845 300 1818

If approached by the media on safeguarding matters and asked to comment please do not comment without seeking advice and support from the Media team located at Headquarters. They will provide support. You can contact them via this link scouts.org.uk/media-centre

Wayne Bulpitt

Matt Hyde

UK Chief Commissioner

UK Chief Executive

The Scout Association

