

Mini Smoke Signals October 2022

Its that time again when we publish Smoke Signals (Annual Review Edition) celebrating all our achievements over the past year.

This year we are issuing a Mini Smoke Signals. I am writing this report so we can still celebrate what has been going on in each section over the past year. 2nd Farnborough have had another brilliant year. We now have an average of 12 boys and girls in each section which is great and we have more waiting to join Beavers. We have welcomed a new Section Assistant, Emily, in Beavers also known as Rowan. Unfortunately Tom (Mouse in Beavers) was just settling in when his company moved him to Exeter so we are Leaders down in Beavers and also in Cubs and we have a waiting list which at the moment is growing on a daily basis. I would love to increase numbers but to do so we would need more Adults to join the team.

At last year's meeting we were preparing to go back to face to face, with Leaders adapting their programmes. I am pleased to say that since then things have gone back to the "new " normal with inside and outside meetings, without having to revert back to zoom. Gradually we were able to introduce activities which we had not been able to do which gave all the sections the opportunity to gain at least 2 challenge and 3 activity badges. Camping was also back and we were able to offer this to all sections. The Cubs/Scouts did an Autumn Water camp at the Quays. the Beavers/ Cubs went to Frimley Lodge for a Christmas Themed weekend and the Scouts/Cub spent Jubilee weekend at an activities camp.

The leaders have continued adapting their programme so that our young people were able to work towards the Chief Scout Awards. We had success in all sections congratulations to Beavers Jamie, Felix, Griff, Ben and Joshua for gaining their Bronze Award, Matt and Max the Silver and Thea her Gold during the past year. The group has been able to stay solvent with a grant from the local authority which has helped pay the bills, insurance and capitation. With external fundraising cancelled for 18 months, I was glad that the Sponsored Fright Night Hike went ahead last year boosting our funds. Gift aid is essential to boost our funds so if you pay tax and have not signed up please ask for a form. Rushmoor lottery has been as successful this year, we win in 2 ways, we get a share from ticket purchases, the fund and you can win too.

There has not been much work done on the hut apart from the work party that spruce up the outside areas. We have again been let down again by a roofer. A dad has recently been to look and thinks he has found the problem and is willing to fix it for us. The floor was replaced 20 years ago and is approaching the end of its lifespan it will take a lot of man hours to replace and was wondering if anyone works for a company that participates in volunteering days for charities that maybe could help us out. If you have an suggestions please let me know. We paid our tribute to our patron the Queen with a minutes silence, flying the flag at half mast, ying some flowers with a message and making and sending a card to the King at Buckingham Palace





The week after last years meeting was Remembrance Day, the Beavers collected red leaves and we made enormous poppies which were placed outside St Mary's Church as there were still restrictions about services indoors. This was followed by a really messy week making bird feeders. Everyone enjoyed building the indoor cave system and they could not wait to try it out. Unfortunately our Christmas activity was cancelled but we were able to have our Christmas Camp. Although it was early December we celebrated early 15 Beavers and Cubs enjoyed themed crafts, foods and games in Frimley Lodge Park. The weather was kind so we were able to collect wood for the campfire that evening where we sang Christmassy songs, complete the obstacle course in the woods, go on a bug hut and complete a glow stick hike.



At the beginning of the Spring term 3 Beavers gained their Chief Scout Award and moved up to Cubs and we welcomed 3 new Beavers. We began the term by making tiger bookmarks which also linked in with Chinese New Year the following week. The tie dying evening and archery were both popular evenings. After half term we had 2 visitors Jim a gardener came to help plant potatoes and Kris who works in dentistry talked to the Beavers about dental health and everyone had a chance to clean some giant teeth. We spoilt that the following 2 weeks when the Beavers used skittles sweets in the experiment badge. We continued with the Global Issues badge learning about endangered animals. We finished off the term with an evening bowling at Bowlplex



The weather was generally kind to us during the Summer term so most of our meetings were outside. Many of the Beavers attended the District St Georges Day Parade and we continued the theme by making and destroying dragon pinatas. The Star Wars themed meeting wasn't spoilt by us having to move indoors. The bees have been well looked after as everyone made some lovely bee hotels. For the Queens Jubilee families were invited to celebrate with us we played some themed games followed by afternoon tea and cakes.



After half term the Beavers did their bit for the environment by litter picking. They also went to Frimley Lodge Park where we put up tents/shelters did a bug hunt, obstacle course and a wide game. The Beavers made some great mini gardens for judging at the District Beaver Fun Day which was great fun but extremely hot. The Canadian canoe session at the Quays and a water activities evening were a great success. It was great to finish the term at the canoe club canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding which was a first for the Beavers.



5 beavers gained the Chief scout Bronze and have moved up to Cubs.



The first meeting after the review the Cubs learn't about Diwali and created some amazing rangoli patterns and coconut sweets. They also created a red leaf poppy and an individual foam poppy for Remembrance Day. The building of the indoor caving system was a great success and things got competitive to see who could get through it the fastest. The Cubs scarves were looking a bit deshevelled but looked much better after an evening of ironing and folding. Some of the pack also attended the camp at Frimley Lodge Park and although having a busy day they all stayed awake to watch the 2 themed films before bedtime. The Christmas activity was cancelled but it was rearranged at the end of the Spring term.



The Spring term is when we test the Cubs skills. We began by using pioneering skills to build a ballista. For Chinese New Year everyone created a tiger mask they also prepared and cooked a stir fry meal. The masks were worn while performing the song Roar to the parents to gain the entertainers badge. The rifle shooting meeting was cancelled due to extreme weather conditions. After half term the Cubs cooked pancakes over a tin can oven with varying amounts of success. Finding out whether substances were acid or alkaline for the Scientist badge was a enjoyable evening. The last skill was to make a paracord keyring. On the last week of term everyone met at Lazer 7 for the rearranged Christmas activity, the Cubs and Leaders had a great time.



The Summer term is when the Cubs can experience more adventurous activities. The group had a good turnout at the St Georges Day Service and looked smart parading in front of the Mayor. The Cubs had built rockets that were too powerful to launch at the hut so we took them to Hawley Farm park where they flew brilliantly. The following week was spent riding around Hartland Park and track, part of the cyclist badge. The pack helped the environment by building bee hotels which they put up at home and at the hut. We were lucky to get a session paddleboarding at Horseshoe lake where 1st Cove Cubs joined us. For many this was their first attempt and they all did really well some even stood up.



Parents and Cubs all had an enjoyable time celebrating the Jubilee with games and cake. The Cubs also did a litterpick, Rifle shooting, boat making, completed their athletes badge, canoeing at the Quays and kayaking, Canadian canoes and paddleboarding at the Lido.



2 Cubs gained their Silver Chief Scout award and have now moved up to Scouts.



After half term the Scouts took part in some teambuilding challenges which included building a structure out of sweets and cocktail sticks to hold the heaviest weight. Thea and Tino took part in the District Master at Arms competition and won the pipe blowing section.

Spring term is the creative term. There were some brilliant candles and camp burners created over a few weeks. The troop tried ice cube curling for Olympics week, The scouts really enjoyed putting together the glowstick costumes and dance routine which they created for the entertainers badge. Building fires and cooking on them is compulsory for Scouts and they have spent many evenings trying different methods. We spent a few weeks completing the set tasks such as 1st aid, map reading, physical, knotting and general knowledge for the District Superscout competition. The group supports the charity CSSEF and for part of our World Challenge we again went and helped them test donations at their shop Just for Kids in Camberley. Everyone really enjoyed Clip and Climb which was our end of term activity.



We were lucky to be the 1st to try out the new Tomahawk sessions many did score and Anthony managed a bullseye. The following week some scouts joined in the paddleboarding session on Horseshoe lake. Since we built our new outdoor basketball posts there have been many competitive games. For our jubilee meeting parents were treated to a BBQ by the Scouts. There were some good scores at the rifle shooting but the balloons & Pringle tubes stayed intact.



During the Jubilee weekend some of our scouts joined 10th Farnborough and 1st Cove at Herons Wood campsite for a long weekend of activities. Everyone was able to experience an assault course, archery, zip wire, grass sledging, go karts, wide games and a campfire. The weather was challenging and tested our tent pitching but our camp remained dry not sure about the others.



Everyone gained either the athletes or athletes plus badge at Frimley Lodge park. The Scouts that avoided the sickness bug had a great evening Kayaking at the Quays. 2nd Cove invited us over for an evening of sports. Mixed teams played numerous running, balancing, throwing, and pulling games. We experienced their opening and closing ceremonies which are different as they are sea scouts. Usually the scouts vote against a hut water activities evening but this year everyone who took part had a great time getting soaked. The term ended with a visit to the Lido for canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding which was a great success.



2 Scouts have moved on and are hoping to join the local Explorers