

Apollo Scout Troop

Annual Report April 2007 – March 2008

The troop has grown slightly in numbers over this period (from 27 to 30), a few Scouts having decided to move on to concentrate on other commitments while these places and more have, been taken by new members coming up from the Cub Packs and a few others joining us to try out the movement for the first time. Some Cubs and newcomers have tried the troop for a short time but decided that we are not for them; we understand this and always leave the door open for them to return if they wish – which has resulted in some successful returns to the troop. We have been very pleased to retain the commitment and interest of a solid core of Scouts over a long period with the majority of Scouts staying with the troop from the age of 10; of these a group of seven 14 – 15 year olds are preparing to move up to Explorers this summer. We will miss them, but wish them well in their future Scouting and look forward to seeing them on joint activities where the troop may benefit from their additional skills and wider experience.

The exceedingly committed team of leaders and helpers that run Apollo Troop have done an excellent job again planning, organising and putting on Monday night troop meetings, activities and events. We have been pleased this year to welcome Colin Clark as an additional Sectional Assistant who brings along his skills in camping and hill walking.

In April 2007, 3 Scouts from the troop had a successful week on the SWAN Norfolk Broads Sailing Expedition learning to sail 24' Broads cabin yachts in a whole week of glorious weather.

The troop were honoured to be part of the Centenary of Scouting celebrations with a very smart turnout for the Peterborough St. George's Day Parade where the Scouts of the City of Peterborough were presented with The Freedom of the City from the Mayor in Peterborough Cathedral and invited to a picnic tea on the Embankment. In August, members of the troop gathered in Cathedral Square as part of the international Sunrise Ceremony to celebrate the Centenary and some went on to be entertained in the Mayors Parlour at the Town Hall with some visiting American Scouts.

The major outdoor event of the Centenary year was the Centenary Camp at Ferry Meadows over the May Bank Holiday weekend with Scouts and members from all sections from all over Peterborough attending. The troop camped as patrols in traditional patrol tents, cooking most of their own meals and taking part in a wide range of activities; while the leaders also put on a very busy cooking base for all to visit. Saturday was a glorious day for weather but Sunday and Monday were atrocious for wind and rain. However our traditional patrol tents (that had been ridiculed by some as old fashioned) stood up to the weather better than a lot of modern ones and were standing proud at the end of the camp on a miserable Bank Holiday Monday when other troops had abandoned camp. Leaders from the city who organised the camp and centenary celebrations were so impressed by the troop's skills with traditional patrol tents that we were invited to provide demonstrations of pitching and striking at the Peterborough Festival's Party in The Park which proved a successful recruitment event. Thank you to Graham and the other leaders who enabled the troop to take part.

Contingents from the troop took part in the County Competition at Mepal and the County White Water Canoeing Day at Cardington organised by Cambridgeshire Scout County. We were able to take advantage of these excellent activities again because of the support of parents and Explorer Leaders taking care of the Scouts.

During a glorious weekend in July the Scouts camped at a site overlooking the sea at Overstrand in North Norfolk, but not in our famous Patrol tents, but this time in polythene bag shelters for the first night and then bivouacs that they built from natural materials the next day. As this was a survival skills camp the Scouts also cooked meals of dehydrated food on lightweight stoves and backwoods meals on open fires lit without using matches. The weekend was rounded off by a dip in the sea.

As has become traditional the summer term was rounded off with a cycling event and barbecue in Ferry Meadows Country Park.

In the autumn we returned to one of our favourite stamping grounds: The South Shropshire Hills and had an enjoyable weekend navigating the Long Mynd by foot and the lanes by car. As is traditional, Mick Pummell coached the Scouts in preparing a banquet. The weekend was concluded with exploration of the Snailbeach lead mines.

Scouts from the troop took advantage of the following events put on by Nene District and Peterborough Division: canoe camp; visit to the Milton Keynes Snozone; Peterborough Gang Show (as performers and audience); Great Hucklow hill walking weekend; and the adventure of Zatego.

Further activities put on by the troop leaders and helpers included: hikes and navigation; wide games and night exercises involving rockets and mysterious packages; and scuba diving.

The troop did their duty to the group and the local community by helping dig a trench for a new pipe to be laid at the HQ, helping with two clear up sessions at Orton Longueville Church Yard and attending the Remembrance Day Service at Holy Trinity Church.

Easter was early this year, consequently the SWAN Sailing Expedition was in March. We still had a small contingent from Apollo Troop but in contrast to the year before the weather was against us with flooded boat yards delaying the start of the week, 4" of snow on the boats being rather inconvenient and gales at the end of the week. However the Scouts from Peterborough, including 2 from Longthorpe, had a good time and were a credit to the troop.

Further details and pictures of the above events and those already planned for the coming year can be found on the Group website <http://www.2ndenescouts.uk.com>. We always welcome: offers of help with troop meetings and events; and suggestions for activities. Please get in touch with one of the leaders if you would like to help with a specific event, have any suggestions or become part of the regular leadership team.

Greg Jones

Scout Leader – Apollo Troop