



The Bulletin

Newsletter of the Greater Western Sydney Region

Issue 404 - NOVEMBER 2012



Proudly supported by BIGW

COLEMAN AUSTRALIA – BACKYARD CAMPOUT

Join Coleman Australia for the first ever National Backyard Campout on **Saturday, December 1, 2012.**

Pitch your tent in your backyard and you'll be part of the event!

Get your Scout Group involved and camp outside your Scout Hall.

Coleman Australia is so excited about Scouts joining in that they have designed a special camp blanket badge for those who register and participate. What a great way to start summer!

<http://www.nsw.scouts.com.au/latest-news/coleman-backyard-campout-december-1-2012>

Rosalie Batistoni
Communications and Development Manager
Scouts Australia NSW



REGION WATER FUN DAY

Sunday 9th December 2012

**ANGLE PARK
CHIPPING NORTON LAKE**

9.00am till 3.00pm

Come and join the rest of the pirate crew for a fun day on the water!

- There will be ropes to haul and treasure to find!
- Gold for the best Pirate outfit of the day!
- Climbing wall
- There will be a food stall selling drinks and hot food.
- There are limited BBQ facilities available.
- PFD's will be supplied to all participants on the water.

Don't forget to bring: a hat, your Scout Scarf, sunscreen, bottle water, towel swimmers and river shoes (must be worn while in water or boats).

Only \$5.00 per pirate or \$20.00 for a family of Buccaneers.

Little Nippers under 5 are Free

You will need to register using the A1 Form available from

www.greaterwestscouts.com.au

with payment to the Region Office

by Friday 30th November 2012.

NO registrations permitted on the day.

GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY REGION OFFICE

6 Baden Powell Place, Winston Hills 2153

BUSINESS HOURS: TUESDAY to THURSDAY 9AM TO 3.30PM, FRIDAY 10AM TO 4.30PM

Phone: 9639 2488 Fax: 9686 2510 Email: gws.region@nsw.scouts.com.au

Website: www.greaterwestscouts.com.au

FROM THE REGION COMMISSIONER

I was invited to attend and participate in a Grey Wolf presentation at 1st Winston Hills Cub Pack recently. There were four Cub Scouts receiving the award on the night in front of the Pack, family and friends. The Cubs who have worked hard in earning this prestigious award are James Brush, Jayden McEwan, George Sollom and Nicholas Verwoerd. Congratulations to these four young people.

The Adult Recognition Awards Dinner was held on the 18th October, with one hundred and ninety four people in attendance and the night was once again a success. One of our patrons, Julie Owens, Federal Member for Parramatta and Doug Menzies, Chief Commissioner NSW, were our special guests and assisted with the presentations on the night. Forty eight Awardees were presented and it was interesting to hear how many hours of voluntary work is done in this Region. Thanks to Kim and Maggi from the Office and Geoff McGrath and David Stopps for making the night a success.

The list of Leaders eligible for 2013 Adult Recognition Awards was distributed to all Group Leaders last week and nominations are to be emailed to Region Office by close of business on 25th January 2013.

Awards of Certificate of Merit, Silver Arrowhead and Silver Wattle need a citation of less than 1500 characters. Silver Koala and above need the National Form and citation (form to come next week).

In order to assist Leaders to complete citations, we have decided to run another **citation writing workshop at Bundilla on Saturday 1st December 2013 at 2.00pm**. Please email me to confirm your attendance and bring a pen and paper. Samples will be supplied.

Along with my family, I attended the Kings Langley Spring Fair and was pleased to see Scouting represented by both Kings Langley Groups. Well done on your promotion of Scouting and the opportunity to raise funds.

I have to report that Tracey Hansford, DC Parramatta, has been "*under the weather*" for a number of weeks now. We wish Tracey a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing her back running the District shortly.

Don't forget that invoices for the third payment of fees is now out with your Groups and we ask that you mention that this needs to be paid by the due date.

I have just returned from the Chief Commissioner's Conference and have to report that **the membership fee has increased slightly to \$ 34.00 per quarter for the 2013/2014 Scout year.**

I have been advised that 4th Castle Hill Group is unfortunately going into recess, due to a lack of numbers. The Leader and youth members have taken up positions at another group within the Hills District.

I had the pleasure to visit the Cub Scout Baanya at Bundilla and it was great to see so many young people out camping and enjoying the outdoors. Well done to RC Cub Scouts, Anne Thompson and the other Leaders who made the weekend a success and enjoyable for the young cubs.

I have also had the opportunity to talk to a number of Leaders at Jamboree Shakedown Camps which were held at Bundilla over the past few weeks. Hope you enjoy your trip to Queensland.

It is with pleasure that I announce the appointment of Belinda Francis as Assistant Region Commissioner Scouts. Belinda is very busy at present with Jamboree duties as a member of the NSW Jamboree Team and also as an Assistant Scout Leader at West Pennant Hills Valley and will commence her duties with the Region Team in early 2013.

My wife and I are having a couple of weeks break touring in our caravan, and my deputy, David Stopps will be filling in for me during my absence. I will have my laptop and mobile phone with me and will be able to keep an eye on the affairs of Region while I am away!

Until then....carry on Scouting

Neville Henderson - Region Commissioner

Email: rc@greaterwestscouts.com.au

GWS Region Office Christmas Closure

The office will close on
December 21st, 2012
and reopen on
January 29th, 2013



Kim and Maggi

JOEY SCOUT REPORT

Keeping the Out in Scouting

As summer approaches it would be a good idea to take advantage of the great weather and take our activities outdoor. Why not organise a one hour bush walk at a nearby nature reserve? This would qualify for the **Trek About badge** as well as help your Joeys further explore there local environment. Why not give the walk an environmental theme and start them off on the **World Environment Badge**? You could also make it more fun and invite another Joey Mob along and make it a **Buddy Badge** activity.



Trek About Badge - \$2 each
Send your details and cheque to the Region Office.

Last month I wrote about term Programs and long term Programs. If you need any assistance, bring your questions to a Wandarrah or just give myself or either of our District Joey Leaders a call, we are more than happy to help, that's why we are here.

No doubt we are all preparing for Christmas and final week activities. Please email your Christmas ideas to me and I'll collate and share them at the final Wandarrah for the year. One tip - have your Joeys write their letters to Santa and you'd be surprised what items they will ask for. Let the parents post them so they can see what items are on the wish list!

See you at Wandarrah, Hop Hop Hop

Brian Zarth - RC Joey Scouts

Email: joeysgreaterwestscouts.com.au



Joey Scouts having fun!

CUB SCOUT NOTES

CUB BAANYA was held at Bundilla on October 27 to 28. We had 150 Cubs, Leaders, Parent Helpers and PL's in camp. The weather was very good to us and everyone had a great weekend.

Sincere thanks to my Region Team who did a sterling job of organising and running their bases as well as their District teams and campsites. A big thank you to members of Westmead Pinnaroo Scout Fellowship, Shirley Robinson and all the Leaders who came in to help run bases, Paul Thompson for organising afternoon tea and David Stopps who was always there to lend a helping hand. Thank you also to our RC, Neville Henderson for taking time out of his busy schedule to visit us. Finally, a very special thank you to Jo Hillyard, CSL 1st Blaxland (Keego Pack) who ran one of the best campfires ever! Bravo Jo! My apologies to everyone that the badges were not ready on time - I will get them to you asap.

WANTED: A CSL approached me over the weekend about a new chum whose family is doing it very tough at the moment. Would anyone have a spare size 8 shirt for the boy, so she can invest him?

CUBOREE 2014: I am sure that most of you are aware that the next **Cuboree** will be held in **January 2014 at Cataract**. We really need to find out who is planning to attend and what roles they would like to take on. I know that some Cub Scout Leaders have already been approached by their DLCS to take on various roles at Cuboree.

Our Cuboree Meeting will be held in the Rotary Hut at Bundilla on Friday 7th December, commencing at 7.45pm and concluding with some delicious Christmas party fare. Please come and join us if you are planning on attending Cuboree. If you can't make the night but are going to Cuboree, please email me or speak to your DLCS, so we can allocate you to the job/role you want.

We also need **Venturer Scouts and Rovers** to help us on the **GWSR base**, so we would love to hear from any one who could come along and lend a hand. Please come to the meeting or email me - thank you.

Anne Thompson - RC Cub Scouts

Email: cubs@greaterwestscouts.com.au



Congratulations to these
Cub Scouts who have earned
their Grey Wolf Award.

EMILY CRIGHTON - 1ST BLACKHEATH
AJIT PILLAI - 1ST CARLINGFORD

1 - 2 - 3 - WOOF

TRAINING REPORT

The final training courses for the year are now being organised and run. For those on e-learning please plan your training for next year, as courses will not be offered as regularly as in the past and then, only at a restricted number of venues.

Choose a course close to home and work towards finishing the e-learning modules by the application date. Courses have to be applied for one month prior to the advertised date.

The major concern I have, is that the first training course for Joeys, Cubs and LOA's is on **2nd and 3rd February 2013** at Cataract. The closing date for applications will be **2nd January 2013** - so all applications need to be submitted before everything shuts down for Christmas. I would like to encourage all Leaders doing e-learning to aim for this course. Otherwise you will have to go to Glenrock at the end of March or wait until June for Pennant Hills.

I have been asked by Doug Menzies to just remind everyone about the protocol for wearing the Gilwell scarf. The Gilwell Scarf can only be worn at Gilwell reunions or when giving and receiving training. It is not to be worn in general public and/or when youth members are present.

Kathy Cuneo RC AT&D

Email: training@greaterwestscouts.com.au

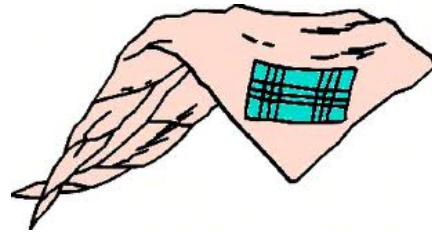


This photo was taken at the recent GWSR dinner, after Tricia Shaw, State Commissioner Cub Scouts received her Silver Kangaroo Award.

Pictured from left to right: **Betty Truscott, Tricia Shaw, Peter Nickl and Shirley Robinson, all proud recipients of the Silver Kangaroo Award.**

Photo: Martin Shaw

THE GILWELL SCARF



In 1919, William de Bois MaLaren, a Scottish businessman, purchased Gilwell Park, a 55-acre estate on the edge of Epping Forest, London, as a training centre for Scouters and as a campsite for Scouts. In his honour, the Gilwell staff wore a scarf made of MaLaren tartan.

To reduce the expense of the tartan scarf, a substitute scarf was devised. This was made of dove grey cloth (the colour of humility) with a warm red lining (to signify warmth of feeling), and a patch of MaLaren tartan on the apex of the scarf. In 1924 use of the scarf became restricted to Wood Badge holders only.

The Gilwell Scarf is worn only on occasions when performing or receiving training. An exception, when a Gilwell Scarf is not worn on *training occasions*, is when you are present by *invitation*, representing your role in an official capacity.

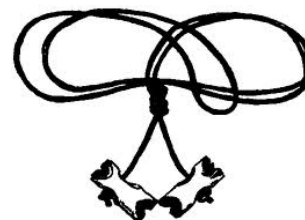
Therefore, if a Leader visits a Training Meeting in a District other than their own, they would normally wear their ordinary Scarf.

It is never worn on general *public occasions* and certainly never when youth members are likely to be present.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE 1ST GILWELL PARK TROOP

Gilwell Park was opened for use on June 2, 1919. Francis Gidney, the first Camp Chief at Gilwell Park, conducted the very first Wood Badge course there from September 8 to 19, 1919. It was produced by Percy Everett, the Commissioner for Training and Baden-Powell himself gave lectures.

The course was attended by 18 participants and other lecturers. Following this first course, Wood Badge training continued at Gilwell Park, and it became the home of leadership training in the Scout movement.



APPOINTMENTS LIST 23/10/2012—5/11/2012

APPOINTMENTS

ONG, Alexander Barong	Appt TL (J)	1st Carlingford Joey Mob
SMITH, Ross Arnold	Appt TL (S)	4th Castle Hill Scout Troop
OVERLAND, Joshua Hugh	Appt TL (S)	2nd Castle Hill Scout Troop

TRAINEE LEADERS NOT PROCEEDING

COLLETTE, Belinda Susan	TL (S)	1st South Penrith Scout Troop
WATSON, Nicola Jane	TL (CS)	1st South Penrith Cub Pack <i>Glenmore</i>

TRANSFERS

MCLEAN, Charlie	Fr JSL To DJSL	2nd Abbotsford Joey Mob Blacktown District
NAPIER, Quentin Robert	Fr Appt TL (G) To ACSL	1st North Rocks Scout Group 1st North Rocks Cub Pack <i>Barloo</i>
NEAL, Stephen Robert	Fr Appt TL (S) To ASL	1st South Penrith Scout Troop 1st South Penrith Scout Troop

RESIGNATIONS

MORANDIN, Levi Richard	Member	Hawkesbury Black Horse Scout Fellowship
MORANDIN, Shelby Mae	Member	Hawkesbury Black Horse Scout Fellowship



VOLUNTEER POSITION VACANT GWS Region Commissioner (Rovers)

The Region Commissioner (Rovers) works within the Region to encourage, promote, support and develop the Rover section in conjunction with the Region Rover Council.

This is an exciting and challenging leadership position within our Region. It is preferred that applicants have previously been involved within the Rover section, or at least have a good knowledge of the Rover section.

A detailed job description is available upon request to Neville Henderson (rc@greaterwestscouts.com.au).

Written applications should be forwarded to:

Private & Confidential
Positions Vacant: RC (Rovers)
GWSR - Scouts Australia - NSW Branch
6 Baden Powell Place
Winston Hills NSW 2153

Alternatively, applications may be emailed directly to rc@greaterwestscouts.com.au

NATPAC

On the October long weekend Scouters travelled from all over Australia to meet at Bundilla for the annual **National Performing Arts Council** conference. Dennis Ankor, National Chairman of Natpac led the discussions and most of those present were involved in various Gang Shows and Showtimes.

The conference was hosted by the Sydney based Gang Shows and the Leaders spent the weekend sharing information and discussing creative expression and how that could be realised within Scouting. This year the two workshops focused on financial administration and WH&S practices within the shows.

A special guest speaker was Neville Tomkins, International Commissioner, Australia, who addressed the meeting on opportunities to help scouts in East Timor.

The conference was a great success with wide ranging discussions and great opportunities to explore new territory in offering the very best Scouting to youth through the performing arts. The sun shone on beautiful Bundilla where we all enjoyed great surroundings, great food (thanks to the Cumberland Gang Show Fellowships) and great company.

Jeanie Wood
Musical Director, Cumberland Gang Show

RADIO, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ARCS & SPARKS AT CHERRYBROOK

I'm always a bit apprehensive turning up to 35 Scouts, especially this evening as there was only Lillian and me. This Group is very supportive and brings in extra Leaders and parents when we visit, so I showed Sharyn (hair stand photo) and a parent what was involved with the Car Ignition, Jacobs Ladder and Plasma Ball demonstration; setup Lillian on the Magnets and magnetic fields table, and I took the Electrostatics table.

The Scouts divided into three groups and rotated to each activity in turn. The Van de Graaff was working very well on this warm dry evening as you can see from the photos. Scouts tend to gravitate to effects that interest them and we encourage them to experiment. One Leader asked 'if they could put more plastic chairs out to get them ALL charged up?' Soon there were 18 or so being shocked, as individuals joined the group from the floor or let go the chain.

Hair Raising!



Electric chain



JOTA/JOTI BASES AROUND GWSR

I did the rounds on Saturday morning:

1st Kings Langley - Radios outside under an orange tarp [2 x *Blue Mts Amateur Radio Club members*]. Ten computers setup in the hall for JOTI.



Winston Hills - The Guides were setting up their Radios and hall activities, Scouts had two table squares of computers for JOTI nearly wired up. (no activity at Northmead).

Penrith - Karl Humphreys was set up with his portable radio station and new tent 'shack', at the Badgery Creek Rd hall. He was assisted by another *Blue Mts amateur*. They were using the GWS call sign VK2SCJ on the weekend. Other activities included Amateur Radio-connect-together, use of GPS, a couple of ropes and pole pioneering bases, and a water rocket base, which turned into a water cart base.





Glossodia - some Scouts and three Rovers were practicing rope knots for construction. They were joined later by Carl Harford from the *Blue Mts Amateur Radio Club* who set up his radio for the Scouts.

Kurrajong - When I arrived, the Scout Leader, was assisting two *Blue Mts amateur radio members* to secure their longwire/dipole antennae into the highest trees. They were hoping to send and receive slow scan pictures on HF.

Glenbrook Scout Hall - This is now being leased to the *Blue Mts amateur radio club* as their meeting room. They initially were not going to have a radio base at the

hall due to internal upgrades and storage arrangements, however they received a call from a Scout Leader requesting a radio base, so four of them responded with a quick clean up, and enabled about 15 Cubs and Scouts to talk on the radios.

PS. If your Group was assisted by Amateur Radio members during the weekend, please make sure you have given them a JOTA badge, or send to the club or Karl or I to give to them.

FUTURE NIGHTS 2012

Mon 5th Nov	1 st Whalan Cubs	Measure Up
Sun 11th Nov	5th Met. Joey Scout Fun Day	
Fri 16th Nov	1st Oakville Scouts	Water Rockets
Wed 21st Nov	1st Carlingford Joey's & Cubs	Water Rockets
Sat 24th Nov	Springwood 95th	Table activities
Mon 26th Nov	1st Erskine Park	Joey's & Cubs Sound
Thurs 6th Dec	1st Glossodia Cubs & Scouts	Hover
Wed 12th Dec	1st Dural Cubs & Scouts	Water Rockets
Wed 19th Dec	1st Ermington Venturers	Chemistry

THE RADIO, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TEAM

John Leahy	john.leahy@nmi.gov.au Home: 4572-1549 Work: 8467-3592
Karl Humphreys	ets0@bigpond.com.au (M) 0408 205 649
Lillian Ewe	lillianewe@hotmail.com

SCOUT MUSEUM

Are you looking for a place to take your youth section for a day outing?

Then why not try the new Scout Museum at the Armoury in Silverwater ?

Open on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month from 9.00am to 4.00pm.

There are loads of fascinating Scout memorabilia items to interest all ages.

For bookings or further details please contact: Denise Davies on 9481 9411.

REGION ACTIVITIES TEAM

Many Districts and Groups are now starting to look at their Programmes for 2013. While the State and Region calendar offers some great activities to be involved with, like ScoutHike and the Region Jamborette just to name a few, now is a great time to start looking at and locking in some dates for a Canoe Course, or perhaps an Abseiling Course for next year.

The 2013 Calendar is on the Region Website, so now is the time to start looking at when the next course is running. Of course if you have a larger group we may be able to do a “*dedicated*” course for you. This can often mean we can run the course a bit closer to your area. A good example of this is the number of Blue Mountains groups that have taken the opportunity to run canoe courses on Wentworth Falls Lake (although - I am not sure whether it's better to dodge Rivercats or icebergs)!

Whilst on the subject of Canoes, I spent an enjoyable day at Putney helping out on a recent Canoe Course. As I explained on the course, canoeing is a bit like bike riding. It takes a bit of practice, especially those “J” Strokes, but once mastered, it opens a whole new world of opportunity to experience new things.



Scouts out on the water learning the finer skills of 'rafting up'.

Photo: Mark Fell

Don't forget our **Water Fun Day** coming up on Sunday 9th December at Chipping Norton. It has a Pirate Theme this year, so you can come in your favourite pirate outfit ...and that's mums and dads too! Need to practise your pirate speak, “...arrgh me hearties!”

While locking in dates to your diary, don't forget **Cumberland Gang Show Auditions** are on **1st December** at Pennant Hills Scout Camp. 2013 is shaping up to be an incredible year for Gang Show, with a number of fairly major changes being planned in the format and structure of the show. Keep an eye on the Gang Show website www.gangshow.asn.au for all the latest details.

Many questions are being asked about the new SIS-10 Training system which was supposed to come into play on the 1st November. The whole concept of having skills which are externally recognized is a great step forward for Scouting. As I indicated in a previous Bulletin, the changeover is proving to be a mammoth task to implement, and is taking far more time than was initially thought. Let's not get caught up with deadlines! At GWS we will simply wait until such a time when we can do a smooth transition over to SIS-10. In the meantime we will continue to run all activities on the current system, with the same care and diligence we have always shown.

You know that adventurous fun, and be activity safe thing I am always going on about!

Mark Fell (DINGO) RC Activities

Email: activities@greaterwestcouts.com.au

ROCK RELATED ACTIVITIES

Missing A1 Forms: Sorry that the A1 forms for activities in October, November and December were not available when they were needed. This was caused by the change-over to the new greaterwestscouts website.

Next Year's Program: The complete Rock Programme for 2013 will be on the beprepared.com.au/gws website any day now. Also, A1 forms for January to June should be available too.

Coming Activities:

Canyon Trips: Sunday 2nd December to River Caves and Deep Pass Canyons. No abseils or swims, so suitable for Scouts. Also Sunday 10th February to Wolgan View and Glowworm Tunnel Canyons (4WD transport needed).

Caving Trip: 17th and 18th November to Wee Jasper.

Venturer Canyon Course: 24th and 25th November.

Abseil Course: Tuesday 12th February (theory at Bundilla) and 16th and 17th February (practical at Bowen Mtn. and Yellow Rock).

Rescue Course: Sunday 24th February at Bowen Mountain.

Special courses for individual groups can be arranged by contacting Rick Jamieson

The complete year's program is on our web site

www.beprepared.com.au/gws

A1 forms are on the greaterwestscouts website in the **Activities** calendar section. Applications (on the A1 Form) should be sent to the Region Office two weeks before the course. Two-day and three-day courses cost \$30, One-day trips \$10, Scout Proficiency Badge courses \$10 (one-day) or \$20 (two-day). **No charge for theory nights.**

Rick Jamieson
RRA Coordinator
Phone:
4572 1321
Email:
rickj15@bigpond.com



***GWSR Venturer
abseiling
at Yellow Rock***

REGION CANOE COURSE

Here are some photos from a recent Region Canoe Course attended mainly by **Holroyd District Scouts**. The Course was held at Kissing Point Wharf in Putney. The Scouts had two fantastic days of canoeing, even though the weather was windy on the first day and overcast on the second day (making the water seem much cooler)!

All the Leaders and parents who assisted and ran the course deserve a huge BRAVO for braving the elements with the Scouts. Thank you.

Julie Overton (Kim)
1st Greystanes Scout Group

Visit our Website at:

<http://www.1stgreystanes.webs.com/>



THE RAT HAD A BIRTHDAY!

By Matt Vella VSL
1st Kings Langley

On the 15th and 16th of October the annual Golden West Venturer event **Rat Skin** was invaded by teams from GWSR. Rat Skin is a reverse Dragon Skin format, with teams of Leaders competing against each other - it has been run for many years by Golden West Region.

This year's theme was **A Very Ratty Birthday Party** with teams and activities required to develop their own ideas on the theme. The beautiful camp location of Wollemi National Party, Newnes was used as the base for all teams with the surrounding National Park and old mining town used.

This year included three team of Leaders; Frank Barr's **The Hazo Partygoers Team**, the very imaginative name **Team Caving**, lead by Mark (Dingo) Fell and the only complete team of Venturer Leaders, **The Lolly Bags** (full of sugar) lead by Matt Vella. While all the teams were competitive during the day it remains a credit to the way Rat Skin committee organise the event, that the Leaders were often found camping together, sharing stories of the day around a campfire well into the night!

As the weekend progressed, the three GWS teams remained neck and neck regularly trying to outperform each other at each event. Frank's team **The Hazo Partygoers** continued to hold a strong position and scored high points by using their combined experience of many previous **Rat Skins** and methodical approach! The youthful and speedy approach from the fit **Team Caving**, meant they finished all the bases in the quickest time of any teams on both days! Whilst the calm and patient Venturer Leaders from **The Lolly Bags** saw them complete all bases, gaining some of the highest individual scores.

Each year, Rat Skin throws in additional puzzles which the teams need to solve. This year included a cryptic jigsaw puzzle using the piece obtained from each base. As a surprise, in the pitch black of Saturday night, the teams were challenged to a wide game. Conducted in the bush area of Newnes, the teams were required to seek out ten Venturers dressed as various characters using torch light. The uneven terrain and dark location was challenging, but some teams, including **Team Caving**, obtained the required puzzle pieces and completed the construction of the **glow stick party hat** in the quickest time, closely followed by a number of the Rover teams!

The final results saw a clean sweep by GWSR, with **Team Caving finishing first**, **The Hazo Partygoers second** and followed closely behind by **The Lolly Bags** in third place!

Thank you to the Venturers from 1st/2nd Blacktown, 1st Kings Langley and 1st Kellyville for providing such entertaining bases on both days. We hope they enjoyed tormenting their Leaders with challenging bases including **Blindfold Rats**, **Rare Diseases** and **Sticky Substances**.

If you would like to know more about attending the 2013 event you speak with Frank, Mark or Matt.



JOEY SCOUTS VISIT CAREFLIGHT

1st/2nd Merrylands Joey Mob invited 1st Greystanes Joey Mob to join them on a visit to CareFlight Westmead. CareFlight is a non-government, self-funded helicopter service that cares for very sick patients who need to be moved between hospitals, and/or severely injured patients who need to be treated at an accident scene, attended by critical care specialists.

Thanks to a Joey Scout Mum from 1st/2nd Merrylands who organised the night, we were able to sit and play in the mock-up display helicopter and we were also lucky enough to sit in the pilot seat of the real operational CareFlight helicopter that is worth five million dollars !!

The night was attended by over 20 Joeys and another 20+ family members from both Mobs and we all had a fun and very informative evening.

We need to pass on a huge "HOP, HOP, HOP" to 1st/2nd Merrylands Joey Mob for organising the visit and inviting us to join them.

Julie Overton (Kim)
1st Greystanes Joey Mob



Photos:
Julie Overton



SCOUTS MEET IAN MOSS!

How lucky were Scot Heinrich (1st Hawkesbury) and Jayson Hawkins (1st Oakville) to meet up with Ian Moss (Australian rock musician and guitarist with Cold Chisel), at this years Blues and Roots Festival at Windsor in October. This is an annual fund raising event for 1st Hawkesbury, where the Scouts keep the spectator areas clean and collect the aluminium cans. This year we had the added help from Jayson, who wanted to carry out his Community Service. Thanks Jayson for your help. Thanks also to Gary and Lyn Hudson who *chipped in* and gave us a helping hand as well.

Phil Heinrich
Group Manager
1st Hawkesbury Scout Group

Ian Moss signs autographs.

*Photo taken by
Greg Foster*



Trekking the KOKODA TRACK 2012

By 'Fred' Bernie Kaltenbacher
Region Leader, Activities

Born in 1944 and with VJ Day on August 15, 1945, I grew up on stories of how close war had come to Australia and the atrocities committed upon Aussie Diggers by the Japanese in New Guinea. As a kid I was always fascinated by the bayonet scar on the arm of a man that lived just up the road from us.

Since the age of fourteen, I have read books about the war in the Pacific and of the battle fought for Kokoda, a nondescript outpost in Papua New Guinea, but important to the war because of its airfield. As I read, I was inspired by the determination and bravery displayed by the **Chocos** (a derogative name given to the **Militia**, which was made up of civilians volunteering to be part time soldiers raised for *home defence* and the A.I.F. (Australian Imperial Forces), as they fought a rear guard action, back along the Kokoda Track.

This small force of Aussies, and some fifty members of the Papuan Infantry Brigade, stood against a well equipped and battle hardened Japanese force which outnumbered them 6 to 1. I read of the assistance rendered to them by the native people who came to be known as the **Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels** - without the assistance of these natives carrying supplies forward and the injured back, history would have been very different!

The Diggers had to fight, fallback, ambush, fight, counter attack, fall back and keep repeating this as they withdrew along the narrow path, which snaked its way across the mountains and mud of the Owen Stanley Range, towards Owers Corner, some 96 kms away. Had the Japanese reached Owers Corner, it would have been a simple push on to their goal of Port Moresby. As we know from history, the Japanese advance was stopped at Ioribaiwa, with the Aussies dug in on Imita Ridge, just a day's march away from Owers Corner!

Owen Stanley Ranges and Kokoda Track were evocative phrases that generated in me, a "want" to go and walk the Kokoda Track and to experience, to a small degree, the effort of the Diggers who were only born some twenty five years before me.

PNG was not a tourist destination in the 1960's and the practicality of turning my want into action eluded me, and lay dormant except for the annual pause to commemorate VJ day each year. This year reality raised its ugly head and I realised that, as I had left it undone for 54 years, it was going to be now or never, and so I broached the idea of planning the trek with my

family and then contacted Graant Bennett, a bushwalking mate of mine who had been one of my Senior Scouts with 1st Springwood in the late 1960's. My son, Warren (Waz), who had just been *booted* from Blaxland Kalangadoo Rovers, my seventeen year old Grandson, Riordan Drake (Weirdo), a 1st Springwood Venturer and my mate, Graant Bennett (Snap) all jumped at the opportunity to do the trek.

We had all bushwalked together many times and instantly agreed that we did not want to go with a tour group, where we would be told what to do and when, have porters carry our packs and act like tourists! We wanted to plan our own independent trek, be self reliant and carry our own gear. However, we did choose to hire a local guide, as this is their way of earning an income and would contribute to the people of the Track. As it turned out, this was also a requirement for gaining a permit from the Kokoda Track Authority, so was a good decision.

Gathering information about PNG and trekking the Kokoda Track was much more difficult than I thought. Whilst gathering information from Blogs, Tour Group websites and from emails to a person who had been a guide on the track, we learned of dangerous crossings of raging rivers with grade 4 and 5 rapids, hills as high as skyscrapers with inclines > 60 degrees and mud that you could lose an elephant in!

People, with whom I spoke to about PNG, stressed the high crime rates of Port Moresby and the need for residents to enclose their homes with high fences topped with razor wire. They told of gangs of **Raskols** that roamed the city living off their wits and the opportunities presented by unwary visitors. Hotel websites promoted the security of their accommodation and advised patrons to never go outside the compound.

How would we get to or from Kokoda? There were Public Motor Vehicles (PMVs), just open back trucks with a tarp, but they were unreliable with timetables, often unroadworthy and subject to being held up and robbed. In addition, we would only be able to catch one if we were able to squeeze on, which meant that we may not meet flight schedules. So how were we going to get from Port Moresby to the start of the Kokoda Track, walk it and travel back to Port Moresby and back home in reasonable safety?

We decided to walk the Track from Owers Corner to Kokoda as I was having problems with my right knee, and had had an operation on it some three months previously. By walking South to North, we would be ascending the steepest hills rather than having the steep descents, which would put a greater strain on my knee. We would also encounter the harder parts of the Track earlier on while we were fresh and the easy bits at the end.

The trip was planned to take 17 days with 10 days allowed for walking the Kokoda Track. We would arrive in PNG on day 1, meet our guide, Andy Kombi, on day 2 and on day 3 start the Kokoda Track. This left us 3 days at the end to look around Port Moresby and for Graant and Warren to go scuba diving, before flying out on day 17. We booked accommodation at Sogeri Lodge for 2 nights and arranged for them to transport us from the airport to the Lodge and then take us from the Lodge to Owers Corner.

To clear the clutter of contradictory information regarding available transport from Kokoda, we contacted PNG Scouts. We not only gained concise advice from the Chief Commissioner PNG Scouts, Mr Sere Kala OBE, but he undertook to arrange our transport from Kokoda to Popondetta in time to connect with our flight back to Port Moresby, arrange accommodation in Boroko (near Port Moresby) and organise sightseeing, and a day at his village, Gaire, where we would be taken out fishing and snorkelling.

Having ironed out the details of flights, transport and accommodation, my wife, Therese, and I set about planning the party's combined menu, keeping very much in mind that we wanted to keep pack weights below 20kg. Therese and I drew up the menu, being mindful of the need for nutrition, variety, taste, morale and ease of preparation at the end of each day. After drawing up the menu and having it accepted by all the party, came the task of purchasing, cooking, dehydrating and vacuum packaging of the meals and all other bits and pieces of tucker. We then weighed and distributed gear and food to ensure equal weight of packs. The target of not more than 20kg was met with the 4 packs packed with all the usual necessities of tents sleeping bags, spare clothes, Trangie, billies, mess kits, food, first aid, Satellite phone, Spot and 2 litres of water each, finally weighing in at 18.5Kg.

A Spot is a GPS device that, when activated, sends an email message back to home, giving coordinates and a link to Google Earth. It can also be used to send an S O S to emergency services. Spot was lent to us by another of my old Senior Scouts, Ian Bailey, who was awarded his Queen's Scout in 1968 and this allowed the families to see where we camped each night and relate it to our itinerary.

Tour group itineraries for the Kokoda Track, usually are for 6 or 8 days, with some groups offering a 10 day trek. We planned a 10 day itinerary to allow for ample time to look around and absorb where we were, and in consideration of my age and knee. The tour groups we encountered were up and walking between 6.00 and 6.30 am while we were still in bed. We found that starting out between 8.30 and 9.00am still had us arriving into camp anywhere between 2.00 and 4.00pm. In fact, Deniki Village to Kokoda on day 10

only took us 2 hours, so all in all, it wasn't as hard or difficult as we had been lead to believe.

However, having said that, I must point out that we experienced the best possible weather. For a start, there had not been any notable rain for 3 weeks prior to us starting out. During the 10 days of the walk, we had an afternoon thunder storm that quickly turned the track on the hills into rivulets and waterfalls, rain the following afternoon and a couple of overnight showers. Consequently, although we slopped through sections and long areas of mud that nearly topped our boots, we didn't encounter the mud that the Track is so infamous for.

Walking the Track has a sort of sameness each day, but it is without boredom. As I sat at Alola Village in the evening of day 8, with Kokoda Plateau in view, I didn't want it to come to an end. The beauty is everywhere, from cascading waterfalls that dissect the track at every turn, fast flowing streams with dodgy looking log bridges, magnificent views out to mountain sides mottled with various shades of canopy, and picturesque villages nestled on ridges with their traditional huts surrounded by green grass, populated by friendly and gentle people.



Riordan arriving at Alola



A typical log bridge!



The memorial at Isurava Battlefield



Fred, Snap, Waz and Weirdo at Brigade Hill

A highlight of the walk was the privilege of meeting Ovuru Ndiki in his village of Naduri. He is the last Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel and at 108 years of age and now uses a wheelchair.



A surprise on the walk was to bump into Mitchell Hayes at The Gap lookout. Mitchell is a Venturer who attended an abseil course with his Dad, that I had run for GWSR and on which Riordan was an assistant. Mitchell and Warren also knew each other from Scouting events. Mitchell was walking from Kokoda to Owers Corner on a 10 day itinerary with a tour group.



Waz with a mortar bomb and a hand grenade

Shadowing all this beauty are the rusted weapons and munitions that make you mindful of what occurred here 70 years ago and to imagine the horrors of the close quarter combat and the spirit of Courage, Endurance, Mateship and Sacrifice. A spirit that held together an under-trained, unprepared and ill equipped group of young boys and men of the Chocos and the Diggers of the A.I.F. as they fought against the Imperial Japanese Army, which had not experienced a defeat, as it swarmed down towards Australia.



Mitchell & Fred (Small world isn't it?!)



The end of the Track at Kokoda

After our arrival at Kokoda, we were met by Mr Washington Yaruso, the Provincial Scout Commissioner for Oro Scout Association PNG, who would drive us to Popondetta, and show us around before dropping us at the airport. Sadly, it was time to say goodbye to our guide, Andy, who became a fellow companion around the cooking fire and the card games at night. He is a truly nice bloke and fitted in with us, as if we had known him for years. Andy caught a charter plane from Kokoda, with porters from a tour group.



Arriving at Popondetta, Washington assisted us in negotiating our way to the teller in the incredibly crowded bank to withdraw some more Kina for the rest of our stay in PNG. Washington then took us out to see the site for the new Scout complex and to meet some local Scouts, before driving us to Oro Bay and then back to the airport.

We were met at Jackson Airport, in Port Moresby, by Chief Commissioner Sere Kala and adorned with leis by his five year old granddaughter. Sere showed us around the city and introduced us to the personnel at PNG Scout HQ. The following day Warren and Graant went diving at Loloata Island while Riordan and I went down to the markets at Boroko. Unfortunately, we were unable to purchase cultural souvenirs as we were unsure of Australian Custom's regulations. The visit to Gaire Village and going out to the reef for fishing and snorkelling was fantastic. With Sere's help, we were able to see and experience PNG in a way that most tourist or trekkers cannot.

From what I observed, in the very short time in Boroko and Port Moresby, I got the feeling that the "risk factor" of PNG has been somewhat overstated. True, the houses in Boroko do have high fences topped with razor wire, but in the main, the fences are a bit dilapidated and wouldn't present too much of a deterrent to someone that really wanted to get past them. Driving and walking around Port Moresby with Sere, during both day and night, we saw street vendors and groups of people everywhere, but none that gave the appearance of "trouble", and at no time did we feel uneasy or nervous.

Without doubt, there would be crimes committed in Port Moresby and surrounding areas due to tough socio-economic conditions. Many families have moved to the city to find work that doesn't exist and there is no social benefit scheme to assist them. Desperation leads to crime, but I didn't get the impression that things were as bad as reports make them out to be. Naturally, when you go, be aware, be vigilant and take care, but I don't think you should be paranoid.

Rovers and Venturers can and should plan extended walks in and out of Australia and would gain greatly from doing so. However, I believe it would be a more meaningful experience for Rovers and Venturers if they brushed up on their history before walking the Kokoda Track. I would also advise anyone, to do as we did, walk it as an independent party, relying on yourselves and your mates to complete the 96 kilometres.

Mr Sere Kala said that he would be pleased to see more Australian Scouts undertake the journey and, as Chief Commissioner PNG Scouts, he would be more than happy to plan an "after Kokoda" program that would show the parts of PNG that tourists miss. Likewise, Mr Washington Yaruso also offered his assistance to any Scouts visiting Popondetta. Venturers, Be Prepared to Look Wide. Start to plan your trip to the Kokoda Track and PNG for 2013. Do it now and don't let the idea rest in limbo until you retire! You will need to be walk fit so some training will be necessary. We did the trip for under \$3,000 including spending money and airfares ex Sydney. Please contact me for more information via my email:

kaltenbacher@bigpond.com



**Sere Kala
Warren
Mrs Kala
Riordan
and
Fred**

HOLROYD DISTRICT PACK HOLIDAY

Cubs from Holroyd District descended once again on the 1st Greystanes Scout Hall for their annual District Pack Holiday. The theme was **Pirates - Band of Misfits**. The Cubs from 1st Pendle Hill, 1st Greystanes, 3rd Merrylands, 1st Westmead, 1st Granville, and 1st/2nd Merrylands enjoyed activities including knotting, launching water bombs on catapults, hunting for island insects, an **Out and About** walk to Central Gardens with mapping and mast making activities. Of course there were many pirate training activities and the popular evening *pirate* movie. The Leaders commended the excellent behaviour of all the Cubs who attended. Thankfully the weather was on our side. A huge thank you goes to all the Cub Scout Leaders in Holroyd District who made this camp possible and so much fun for everyone.

Julie Overton JSL, 1st Greystanes



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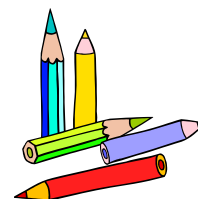
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QuickCraft Resources



Photos: Julie Overton



*1st Oakville Cubs checking out
Group Leader, Frisbee's boat.
Photo: Brian Zarth*



CUB SCOUT LEADER 1ST OAKVILLE SCOUT GROUP

1st Oakville are in desperate need of another Cub Scout Leader or two, and a female volunteer would be just perfect!

If you, or someone you know, are interested in learning more about the Group and this rewarding role, please contact our Group Leader, Roger Bisby on 4572 3640

PLEASE NOTE

All articles for the **DECEMBER** issue of **THE BULLETIN** must be submitted to the Editor by **December 3.**

**NO LATE ITEMS
WILL BE ACCEPTED**

THANK YOU

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