



From the County Commissioner:

This month, in wishing all GME members, friends, and supporters wherever they may be, Seasons Greetings I would like to share a poem I came across recently.

"Is there a purpose? Why are we here?"
A little boy asked as the yuletide drew near.
"I really do hope that someday I will know
the reason we stand out here in the snow,
ringing this bell as people walk by,
while thousands of snowflakes
descend from the sky."

The mother just smiled at her shivering son
who would rather be playing and having some fun
but soon would discover before evening was done
the meaning of Christmas
the very first one.

The young boy exclaimed, "Mother where does it go?"
"All the pennies we collect - every year in the snow."
"Why do we do it? Why do we care?"
"We worked for these pennies,
so why should we share?"

Because once a baby - so meek and so mild
was born in a manger - so humble the child
the son of a King - was born in this way
to give us the message
he carried that day.

"The present God gave the world on that night
was the gift of his son to make everything right.
Why did he do it? Why did he care?
To teach about loving and how we should share."

And a final thought to lead us into 2012 - "Getting what you want is not nearly as important as giving what you have."

May the true Spirit of Christmas "*to teach about loving and how we should share*" be with us all now and throughout the coming year. Happy Christmas and a joyous, fulfilling and action-packed Scouting New Year to you all.

Andrew

Inside this Issue

- Awards
- Reach for the Stars
- Swineshaw Lodge
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Cub Swimming Gala
- From the Clough
- Winter Camp
- Jubilee Camp
- National Notice Board



"The meaning of Christmas, you see my dear son,
is not about presents or just having fun
but the gift of a father - his own precious Son
so the world would be saved
when his work was all done"

Now the little boy smiled - with a tear in his eye
as snowflakes kept falling from out of the sky -
rang louder the bell as the people walked by
while down deep in his heart
at last he knew why.

Awards

There is only one person to congratulate for gaining an award from the Chief Scout this month therefore this section is a little shorter than usual

Our congratulations go to **Andrew Hill** (ACC Programme) who has been awarded the Award of Merit.

Reach for the Stars

On Saturday 24th September 5th Stalybridge Cubs commenced their "Reach for the stars sleepover" at the Scout Head Quarters. Fourteen Cubs and three leaders made the exciting journey to the Manchester Science and Industry Museum via the train, an interesting experience for all involved especially for the other train passengers! Once at the Museum the cubs took one giant leap for mankind and entered the Planetarium, they were sent into outer space with the presence of a spaceman in a genuine space suit aptly named "Neil Armstrong". They gazed at the night sky and were immersed in constellations and galaxies. The Cubs heard star stories of powerful kings (Cepheus), elegant Queens (Cassiopeia), beautiful princesses (Andromeda), heroic princes (Perseus) and of course evil sea monsters (Cetsu).

Back on earth the Cubs spent the rest of the day in the Museum undertaking experimental science including dancing while recycling and recreating earthquakes. The evening became even more star studied with Stalybridge's answer to Britain's Got Talent. A panel of four judges were ready and rearing to laugh /praise/cheer while the Cubs took the stage with their well-rehearsed performances. The judges were treated to magic tricks, stand up comedy, opera singing, and dancing. The eventual winner being crowned for a brilliant rendition of "Close every door to me" from Joseph and his amazing Technicolor dream coat. The cubs and leaders then all sang their hearts out during a session of karaoke.



Next day's adventure the Cubs immersed themselves in all things aviation including designing paper aeroplanes, the planes and gliders were launched (some better than others) and in true scouting style the Cubs efforts were far better than the leaders attempts. The afternoon brought traditional Scouting skills involving lighting fires and backwoods cooking. All the Cubs involved gained their Air Activities, Entertainers and Astronomer Badges. The Cubs truly have reached for the stars and thoroughly enjoyed it; they are all looking forward to many more things to come as part of the group's centenary celebrations.

CHIEF SCOUT'S GOLD AWARD RECEPTION ~ Wednesday 25th January 2012

The next Chief Scout's Gold Award Reception is being held on 25th January 2012 at Linnet Clough. Please ensure that any of your Scouts who have gained this award – the highest in the Scout Section, have the opportunity to attend. For a copy of the application form to attend, please go to the County Website and download the form. Completed Application Forms to be submitted to County Office (or by e-mail to John Dawson) not later than **20th January 2012**. John Dawson ACC (Scouts)

Tel: 07726 170875 e-mail: scouts@gmescouts.org.uk

Swineshaw Lodge: Environmental Partnership Award / Balanced Programme in a Day.



We couldn't have asked for a better day with glorious autumn sunshine and unseasonably warm weather. A big thank you to everyone who participated especially those who gave their afternoon to ensure the event went well. With over 100 Scouts (young and old) taking part in the activity we are expecting literally hundreds of trees next year.

The day started with a forage through Walkerwood Nature Reserve followed by a 3 mile hike, yes it was only 3 miles, to Swineshaw Lodge.

Plant pots were made from recycled news papers and potted into compost donated from the Local Authority. After a quick talk on the reasons for the exercise a 3 mile hike back to start point.

Hopefully, you will all have the seeds sat in trays of water waiting for germination in the spring.

In the New Year we will be looking for volunteers to attack the Rhododendrons to clear the area for our very own Jubilee Woods Project. Watch this space for more details and remember Swineshaw is there for all to enjoy.

Finally, have you updated your records for the badge requirements and ordered your Hikes Away Staged Activity Badge for those budding hikers.

Happy Camping - Cliff

GME Scouts Calendar 2012



Have you managed to get your hands on next year's calendar yet?

If not then make sure that you do as it contains all of the County's dates for next year and almost all of the dates and venues of the sectional activities.

Get your copy now so that you are able to put into your diary the next Chief Scout Gold Award ceremony, the Queen's Jubilee Camp (see details later in County Life) or even next years Christmas camp at the Clough.

To get a copy please ask your DC or contact the County Office.

Wanted: Volunteering opportunities!

It's the autumn, which around areas of South Manchester such as Fallowfield and Withington means one thing – the return of all the university students.

If you are a resident of South Manchester watching the return of tens of thousands of students have you ever thought how many of those students were, or still are members of The Scout Association and wondered about the potential for new volunteers for Scouting?

Every year over a thousand students from The University of Manchester give time to local communities through volunteering, working with literally hundreds of organisations across Manchester. For many of them it is one of their university highlights, something which makes them feel a part of the city they have chosen to be home. The University has a comprehensive volunteering programme, supported by a team of staff who source a range of opportunities and promote them to students. Last year's students gave just under 50,000 hours of their time to a range of causes through this programme.

So how can you benefit? Whilst in most Scout Groups the cry is usually for more volunteers, at the university's volunteering team it's for more volunteering opportunities! GME already advertises a range of opportunities to students, seeking out new Section Leaders for local units. However if you are looking for any other roles that are specific to your Group or District you can advertise these to students on the university's volunteer vacancy service. Go to www.manchester.ac.uk/getvolunteers for more information on how to get your roles advertised online.

Not all students can make a regular commitment. The team therefore organise regular day-long volunteering events which students can sign up to take part in. These usually involve a task that needs lots of pairs of hands for a day, such as tree planting and other environmental projects, stewarding events or DIY. If you have a job that needs doing please contact volunteers@manchester.ac.uk or call 016 275 2828 and ask to speak to a member of the volunteering team to discuss what may be possible.

Scout Support Team

John Dawson is forming a support team for the Scout Section and is looking for leaders and adult supporters who think they could provide experience and/or assistance in any of the various forthcoming events, such as; Survival Skills Camp / Activity Badge Day / Chief Scout's Award Receptions / Troop Leadership Weekend / Winter Camp ... and other ideas. If you feel that you would like to be part of the Scout Support Team, please give me a call - John Dawson ACC (Scouts)

Tel: 07726 170875 e-mail: scouts@gmescouts.org.uk

Cubs Swim to Victory



Cub Scouts from various Scout groups came to Ashton Swimming baths at the beginning of December for their swimming competition; seven teams took part in 16 races to determine the winning team.

The races included egg and spoon race, walking backwards and collecting ping pong balls (for the non swimmers). For the swimmers they had to swim a length of the baths doing front crawl, backstroke, breast stroke, and four lengths for the relay race. The winners were 3rd Ashton Cubs which is the first time they have won for a long time, runners up were 2/1 Hurst and 250th Manchester came in third.

The District Cub Scout Leader Andy Morton said it was a great competition and enjoyable evening of friendly camaraderie between the Cub teams, he went on to say thank you to all the leaders and to the staff of Ashton Pool for their help.

LINNET CLOUGH

SCOUT CAMP AND ACTIVITY CENTRE



At the Clough

Christmas Weekend



We had a great weekend celebrating Christmas at the Clough. The parties were fully booked and we had Carols by Candlelight.

Thanks to everyone who attended and we hope to see you again next year.

Site Services Weekend

We are pleased to say that the November Campsite Services weekend was extremely successful with all involved gaining the badge. Our next Site Services weekend will be on 17-19th February 2012. We are taking bookings now; the cost is £15 per person which includes food, instruction and the badge if they are successful.

Good News

We have been awarded a grant from the Macnair Trust to buy three new pedal karts. We should have them early in the New Year so why not book now to try them out?

We have also been successful in applying for a Woodland Trust community tree pack. These trees will become the Queen's Diamond Jubilee copse, when they are planted in February.

Well Done

We are extremely pleased that Gareth Hunter, our apprentice, has gained his NVQ level 2 in Activity Leadership. We look forward to working with him again next year as he works towards level 3.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee Camp

We are holding a celebration camp at Linnet Clough on the weekend of 1st – 4th June 2012. The cost is £35 per person and includes all camp fees and special activities including street party, street market, and film premiere. Bookings must be made in writing and accompanied by £30 deposit.



Thank you

We owe a very big thank you to all the volunteer Service Crew, Junior Crew and activity instructors for all the time that they have given to the Clough this year. The Camp Site and Activity Centre could not operate without them. We also appreciate the tolerance of their families when they spend so much time with us.



Everyone at Linnet Clough wishes you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope that we will see you here soon.

Linnet Clough can be contacted on 0161 427 1688 and linnetcloughcamp@aol.com



Explorers Winter Camp

Shake off the Christmas excesses and get the New Year off to a good start by taking part in the County's Annual EXPLORER Winter Camp

WHEN? Friday 27th - Sunday 29th January 2012

WHERE? Linnet Clough Scout Campsite & Activity Centre



What have we got this year that
QUAD BIKING
LASER TAG
SNAIL RACING
THE CUBE
SCRAPHEAP CHALLENGE
WII
FENCING
AND MANY MORE



How Much? £20 per Explorer (under 18) £10 per Leader (18+)

If you would like to join us for this action packed weekend, please complete the booking form below and return along with a £10 per Explorer by Sunday 15th January 2011 to:

Greater Manchester East Explorers, 133 Eastern By Pass, Openshaw, Manchester, M11 1AX

Booking Contact: Lyndsay Bateman / Tel: 0161 223 3486, 0759 019 1064 / e-mail: lyndsaybateman@ymail.com

.....X.....

Winter Camp Booking Form – 27th to 29th January 2012

I would like to book Explorers and Leaders on Winter Camp.

I enclose £10 deposit per Explorer (Cheques made payable to 'G.M.E.C.S.C'.)

Unit Name Unit Contact Name

Address

Postcode E-mail Address

Contact Tel. Number



Information for Unit leaders

Welcome...

We are looking forward to welcoming you on site for Winter Camp. Without leaders and helpers, young people would not be able to attend Winter Camp.

To make your weekend as smooth as possible please read through the information below.

Explorer Winter Camp is an activity camp running right in the middle of winter. You can certainly expect the extremes of British weather. We may see snow, ice, torrential rain, and bright sunshine (Although not all at once hopefully). Combine that with our activities and we've got ourselves a weekend of excitement and fun.

Arrivals and Registration:

Reception is located in the Storm Hut on the Scout Field. Please register upon arrival (Reception will be open from 6:00pm to 7:30pm). To assist with smooth running, we ask that only a single representative book your group in. To register you will need your Booking Confirmation, completed list of all Young People and Leaders attending and either cash or cheque to pay the balance (Cheques should be made payable to 'G.M.E.C.S.C'.)

Please note that refunds cannot be given for lower numbers of attendees as activities and activity sessions will have been pre-arranged for the numbers booked.

On arrival you will be issued the Programme, Map with activity locations and Badges. Once you have pitched camp please return to reception and let us know the location of your campsite.

Saturdays Programme: Activities will start at 10am and finish at 5pm on Saturday, with a designated lunch break between 1pm and 2pm.

Sunday's Programme: On Sunday we will again be holding the Scrapheap challenge for which you will require pioneering equipment. This year's challenge will start at 10am on the Sunday morning and you will have until 12midday to construct something adequate to deal with the challenge. The information will be sent to you by email on Sunday 15th January 2012 to give you adequate time to plan and prepare for it

Winter Camp will be popular, so don't delay – book today!

When? Friday 27th to Sunday 29th January 2012 (finish 2pm)

How much? £20 for young people (under 18) and £10 for leaders/helpers (+18)

Contact: Chris Kippax / Tel: 0751 330 0110 / e-mail:

Explorers@gmescouts.org.uk

Greater Manchester East Scouts ... Winter Camp

Welcome to the sub-zero adventure



When? Friday 13 to Sunday 15 January 2012
Where? Linnet Clough Scout Campsite & Activity Centre

Bored of being indoors in Winter? Want to get outside and do loads of activities?
Come along to Scout Winter Camp!



So what's lined-up for the weekend?

High Ropes / The CUBE

See how you react at heights. Teamwork and communication are key here to negotiate around the high level course.

Leap of Faith

You may have the guts to conquer the high ropes, but are you brave enough to throw yourself off a platform?

Either Archery or Air Rifle Range

Have a go or hone your skills at these activities.

Saturday Night Sports & Leisure

Visit a local leisure centre for swimming and sports.

Troop Activities

Drop-in activities organised by the Troops attending Winter Camp.

How much? £17 for young people (under 18) and £10 for leaders/helpers (+18)

If you would like your Troop to join us for the weekend, please fill in the slip below and return along with a cheque for £10 deposit per Scout and a self-addressed, stamped envelope by the 31st December 2011 to:

Greater Manchester East Scouts

County Office, Youth Service Resource Centre, Reddish Vale Road, Reddish, Stockport SK5 7HQ

Contact: John Dawson, ACC Scout Section / mobile: 07726 170875 / e-mail: scouts@gmescouts.org.uk

Winter Camp Booking Form – 13th to 15th January 2012

I would like to book ___ Scouts and ___ Leaders on Winter Camp.

I enclose £10 deposit per Scout (Cheques made payable to 'G.M.E.C.S.C.')

Troop Name & District _____ Group Contact Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ E-mail Address _____

Contact Tel. Number _____

Please note that we need to know numbers of attendees by 31st December 2011, as activities and activity sessions will have been pre-arranged for the numbers booked.

Information for group leaders

Welcome...

We are looking forward to welcoming you on site for Winter Camp. Without leaders and helpers, young people would not be able to attend Winter Camp.

To make your weekend as smooth as possible please read through the information below. Be brave, be challenged, be amazed by this brilliant, if cold, weekend of thrills and spills for Scouts.

Winter Camp is an activity camp running right in the middle of winter. You can certainly expect the extremes of British weather. We have seen snow, ice, torrential rain, and bright sunshine. Combine that with 'on and off-site' activities, we've got ourselves a very exhilarating weekend.

Ensure each groups/sections attending send Nights Away notification to DC / CRBs for all adults on site.

Arrivals and Registration: Reception is located in the Lynmouth Building, within the Cub field. Please register upon arrival (Reception will be open from 6:30pm to 8:00pm). To assist with smooth running, we ask that only a single representative books your group in. To register you will need your Booking Confirmation, completed list of all Scouts and Leaders attending and either cash or cheque to pay the balance (Cheques should be made payable to 'G.M.E.C.S.C'). Please note that refunds cannot be given for lower numbers.

Activities will start at 9:30am and finish at 4.30pm on Saturday, with a designated lunch break between 12.30pm and 1.30pm. The Leisure Centre is booked from 7:00pm to 9:00pm on Saturday evening. Please could Troops organise their own transport arrangements to and from Avondale Leisure Centre.

Certain activities require parental permission in order to participate and permission forms must be signed by the parent or guardian for an individual to participate. Permission forms are available on the GME County Website <http://www.gmescouts.org.uk/downloads/booking-forms.aspx>

Sunday Troop Programme: On Sunday activities will run from 10am to 1pm. Because of the nature of some events, participants may get particularly muddy, so please ensure that your group have adequate changes of clothes and shoes.

TROOP ACTIVITIES

We would like every Troop attending Winter Camp to organise and run an activity on Saturday and Sunday. Drop-in activities such as football/five-a-side, volleyball, orienteering, hot air balloons, kite making are just some suggestions (please advise which activities your leaders are able to organise and run during Saturday & Sunday).

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE CAMP AT LINNET CLOUGH

Friday 1st – Monday 4th June 2012



During the bank holiday weekend we will be holding a special camp to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Groups are invited to join us for this commemorative weekend. Activities will include:

- ❖ A day at Royal Ascot Races
- ❖ The Queen's Jubilee Street Party (with entertainment) – Bring your own food!
- ❖ Street Market (featuring stalls representing Great Britain and the Commonwealth)
- ❖ Royal Camp Fire and Beacon Lighting
- ❖ Royal Premiere (film night)
- ❖ Royal Hunt (laser game)
- ❖ Royal Tournament – your group can take part
Jubilee Hat competitionplus lots of other activities.

Groups will be invited to bring an activity/game and also to provide a stall for the Street Market (further details will follow booking).

COST: £35 per person - includes 3 nights camp fees, event badge and programme activities as detailed. **BOOKING:** Places will be limited and allocated on a first come first served basis. Bookings will only be accepted in writing and accompanied with a deposit of £30.

For any further enquiries please contact Linnet Clough: Telephone/Fax: 0161 427 1688
email: linnetcloughcamp@aol.com



Scout Activity Badge Day Saturday 17th March 2012

Would your Scouts like the opportunity to come to Linnet Clough and gain a 'Badge in a Day'?
Date for your Diary: Saturday 17th March 2012 - Full details will be issued in the New Year...

John Dawson ACC (Scouts)
Tel: 07726 170875 e-mail: scouts@gmescouts.org.uk

National Notice Board

- **Gift Aid:** The Scout Association has noticed an error in the guidance for treasurers that was launched this year. Please be advised that some of the wording on page 14 is wrong and should have read *'From 2013 you will be able to claim Gift Aid on "one-off" small cash donations of £10 or less up to a total value of £5,000 per year, per charity, without the donor filling out a Gift Aid declaration. To take advantage of this, you will need to have been recognised by HMRC for Gift Aid purposes for at least three years, have been operating Gift Aid successfully throughout that time and have a good tax compliance record. Full details of this new scheme for charities will be not available until 2012.'* in the paragraph starting Gift aid can be collected.
- **Skills for Employment:** The programme team is trying to build a resource to help young people recognise and sell the skill sets that they have gained in the movement. If you think that you would make a good case study then please contact the team (programme@scouts.org.uk) with a brief summery of how you feel you gained a job through your scouting skills.
- **Car Insurance:** please be aware that Scout Insurance does not cover you for transporting Scouts to and from events. Scouting is usually classified as a social, domestic or pleasure activity and, as such, would be covered by most motor policies. However some insurers might have conditions around volunteer driving, or might want you to contact them to let them know if you do volunteer. Further information can be found on the Unite Insurance website.

Message from the editor.....Andrea Clark

For those of you that haven't already noticed December is definitely here the evenings and morning are cold (well colder than normal) and twinkling lights, decorations and trees are starting to appear in Scout huts, town squares and peoples houses throughout the county. To most that will mean just one thing; it's not long until Father Christmas comes down the chimney to deliver presents to all the good Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, Explorers, Network and Leaders!!!

The more savvy of you out there will realise that this is the last issue of County Life for the year. The next issue will not be until February 2012 (yes that is my Christmas present from county for being good this year).

I know over the last couple of months that County Life has been getting to you a little later, so I ask if you can help me keep my new year resolution of getting it completed by the first of the month by sending all of your articles to me by the 27th of January 2012 for the February issue and the 24th of February for the March issue. Please send your articles to Countylife@GMEScouts.org.uk

Andrea



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year