



Exciting Developments as a new year begins!

February 2020



Following the biggest fundraising effort in the Group's history, the new meeting room (Project Merlin) extension is practically complete and will be ready for use straight after half term. As with all construction work we have had to react quickly to unexpected challenges, to tweak the design to reflect conditions found on site and make many on-the-spot decisions to keep the project on track. My thanks go to Roger Hoad who has from the start been our man on the scene to liaise day-to-day with the contractor, and to the many others who have worked to ensure the room will be ready for use just after half term.

In 2017 we set out to raise £350,000 for the project. Thanks to the magnificent effort of our young people, leaders, friends and parents, and strong support from local councils, charitable foundations and trusts, we have exceeded our target and have raised £425,000, which has enabled us to not only complete the new room to plan but also to fund other improvements and ensure the new space is properly equipped. Details of our amazing fundraising efforts are shown elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Of course new space is a means to an end: we want to ensure that as many local young people who wish to join scouts can do so. For many years we have had a very long waiting list which we have been unable to satisfy. The new meeting room will allow us to open a new Beaver Colony and a new Cub Pack, thus enabling us to take in the region of 60 additional young people into the Group. A "Grow Your Group" kick-off session took place earlier in February and we will work towards starting the new sections full-time immediately after Easter.

Meanwhile, our Scouting activities continue apace:

- Almost 70 Beavers, parents and leaders took part in a Countryfile Ramble and raised £1,300 for Children in Need.
- The 1st Claygate Scout & Guide Band took part in the Lord Mayor's Show in the City of London and the next day led the Claygate Remembrance Day Parade, as well as the many Christmas events around the village
- Our Explorers and leaders took part in the District Winter Activity Weekend in Wales
- Scouts took part in the Night Hike competition and a number of Scouts regularly participate in our kayaking expeditions to Devon, North Wales and the Nene Valley: in addition to enjoying the kayaking experience, a number of Scouts are undertaking training courses

Plans are already being put together for our Scout Summer Camp trip to the West Country and an exciting first trip for the Explorer Scouts to North Spain. And of course our Group Camp will be open to all our young people at Walton Firs from 15th-17th May – I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Hugh Gostling
Group Scout Leader

Beavers Countryfile Ramble



In October, 1st Claygate Beavers took part in a Countryfile 5-mile ramble for Children in Need up Leith Hill in the Surrey Hills. An amazing £1300 was raised.

By taking part in this walk the Beavers also earned the Explore Activity Badge, Hikes Away Staged Badge and completed part of the My World Challenge Award.

Beavers, family members and leaders, 67 people in total, joined us on a Sunday morning for this ramble with a steady but gentle climb to the top of Leith Hill, Surrey's highest point. Upon reaching the top, some visited the tower while others made a speedy descent as the weather had turned very wet and windy indeed.

Everyone had a great time and well done to all who took part.

In November, the 3 colonies had a visit from Sandi and her guide dog, Kane, explaining to Beavers the impact a disability such as being blind has on everyday tasks and the difference that a guide dog like Kane makes. Beavers were extremely interested and kept on asking questions such as, how do you shop? How do you cross the road? How does Kane know what to do?

1st Claygate supported The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association by purchasing 80 pencils and erasers which were handed out to the Beavers when they went home.





District Beaver Party

The Wizard of Oz



120 Beavers from Esher District followed the yellow brick road at Hinchley Wood Secondary school leading to an afternoon of activities and a performance of the Wizard of Oz by actors from Cat's Grin.

To fit in with the performance Beavers made lion masks, tin man's funnel hats, coloured in money boxes made out of plaster, decorated biscuits and played games.

The biscuits were all home made by Debbie and Kim. Thank you so much. Each of the Beavers had to decorate two biscuits, one in the shape of a dog resembling Toto and the other one in the shape of a shoe, the famous shoes worn by Dorothy. I can tell you Beavers just love these biscuits but what is not to like? Icing sugar, chocolate sprinkles but above all a great taste.

During the games session each group had to build a yellow brick road as they made a path to the other side of the hall racing each other. They also played various parachute games always a firm favourite.

After some refreshments the performance of The Wizard of Oz took place. Lots of Beavers actively joined in but the star of the play was the Beaver who was picked to play Toto the dog. One scene in particular springs to my mind when the dog falls asleep in the field of Poppies including snoring so loud but oh so very convincing and the tail wagging. A super actor in the making!

A big thank you to all the leaders, parent volunteers and others giving their time to help young people have a great experience. Especially big thank you to Debbie for planning, organising and buying all the resources.





District Cub Badge Afternoon 8th February



On Saturday 8th February Cubs from all three Claygate packs joined with Cubs from across the District to become aliens and astronauts or to become producers of movie trailers. They were taking part in the District Cub Badge Afternoon at 1st Oxshott Scout H.Q. to gain their Entertainer or Photographer badge.



The Entertainers were told first that Celestial Unknown Beings (CUBS) had been discovered on a distant planet and they had to learn to move and communicate like them - cue music and action songs. The next task was to become either aliens or astronauts and fashion costumes from tin foil before dividing into groups of five or six to make up plays to perform to the other Cubs and leaders.

The Photographers were divided into six groups and set the task of using the iMovie app on iPhones to film and produce movie trailers. Each group had a choice of a number of genres to fit their photos and short videos into with all groups filming around the grounds of Oxshott's H.Q. The next task was editing to produce the chosen movie trailer complete with studio logo, title, cast names, soundtrack (to enhance the mood of the chosen genre) and finally the credits. The finished trailers were downloaded on to a laptop so all the Cubs and leaders could enjoy the premieres of the trailers as they were projected on to a screen.



Scouts Offshore Sailing



A group of 9 Scouts and 2 leaders travelled down to the Hamble River near Southampton on the Friday evening to join the sail training yacht “Thermopylae” for a weekend’s sailing in the Solent.

The yacht is a former round-the-world clipper boat and can sleep 15. It is run by the Discovery Sailing Project, an organisation affiliated with Scouting. A DSP skipper and mates are in charge of the boat and the scouts help with all aspects of managing the sails, helming and mooring. They also have to cook and clean!

On the Saturday morning we headed out of the river and into the Solent, mooring for lunch in Osborne Bay. Unfortunately the rain arrived and the wind disappeared so we had a damp trip under motor to Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight. The weather was a little kinder on the way back on the Sunday. The wind got up and we managed to get in some good sailing but it remained rather damp.

We arrived back at the marina in the Hamble mid-afternoon and , after cleaning up the boat, headed back to Claygate.





Scouts Frost Camp : 1st-2nd February 2020



Frost camp is an annual event for the older Scouts, who camp out at the Scout HQ and cook over open fires.

Unlike in 2019 when it was a “proper” frost camp with sub-zero temperatures, this year the weather was unusually mild. Scouts arrived at lunchtime on Saturday, pitched their tents and dining shelters and prepared their fires.

A pioneering project – an aerial runway – was built for the following day’s going-up ceremony. After dinner of chicken pasta the scouts spent some time inside brushing up their skills for the following morning’s District Scouting Skills Competition.

On Sunday morning the scouts were first in the queue for the cooked breakfast at the going up ceremony and a team departed for Molesey for the competition. Then came the task of clearing everything away. Overnight rain meant all the tents and shelters had to be hung up inside before the scouts headed home at midday to catch up on sleep.



Remembrance Day Parade 2019

The 2019 Remembrance Day Parade was blessed again this year with Sun and decent temperatures. More often than not the day has been fine and makes the context of this special event even more poignant.

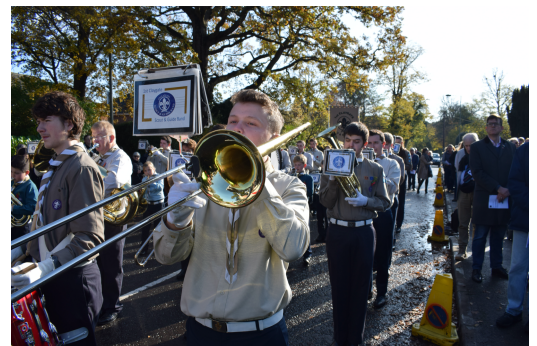
As in past years, 1st Claygate Scout Group and Guides Company formed up in the Hare Lane Carpark with another strong turnout of smartly uniformed young people from all Sections. Young people, leaders and parent groups filled the area, but standing out from the crowds were the scouts and guides each in their own distinct section uniform colours with Section Flags and Union Jack standing to the sky held by their respective flag-bearers. The excellent 1st Claygate Scout and Guide Band led by Bandmaster Robin Wilkinson were playing to the front of the Parade and awaiting John Baldwin the Parade Marshall for his instructions. Leaders were undertaking last minute checks on their charges' uniforms and giving instructions on marching and behaviour. A great turnout of leaders too and setting the standard for presentation. The Parade was called to order with the parents, relatives and friends quickly making their way out to the road to get photographs of their children and the overall impressive group of uniformed persons. A moment being enacted across the Country with the Scouting and Guiding Movements paying their renewed respects to the fallen Service men and women from conflicts defending the Nation and Allies globally.

The Band paraded out followed by the sections youngest to oldest. It's barely 400 yards from the carpark to Holy Trinity Church. But to see the streets lined with the full cross section of society from parents to well-wishers, to bystanders and those working casts a deep impression on the minds of the young people. Traffic stopped, Buses stilled ... Everything stopped for this important ceremony. Arrival comes all too soon at the Church Gates ... All Sections turning to face the War Memorial. The Vicar addressed the Congregation, a short prayer and then the two minute silence. Absolute silence from the young people ... Marvellous! Then the laying of Wreaths with the Flag Bearers setting the backdrop to the scene. The very moving Last Post and Reveille, with the Bandmaster accompanying Daniel Creigh who expertly played these symbolic pieces that contributed so well to this moving occasion.

Thereafter the Flag Bearers broke away to Church in preparation for the presenting of the flags. The sections entering the Church by the side entrance. And yes, everyone had a seat! A very short but well delivered Service that included an excellent talk from a Minister reflecting on the family experiences of war. Engaging and so relevant.

At the Service End, the flags were redistributed back to the flag bearers and the sections reformed in the Church Car Park. After words of thanks from Parade Marshall John Baldwin, GSL Hugh Gostling added his thanks to all concerned.

A moving but fine display of Scouting and Guiding in Claygate with everyone playing their part. Aren't we lucky in Claygate to have such great Scouting and Guiding opportunities for young people and such a great Band to march to! But without the Leaders, none of this would be possible.





Scouts District Night Hike

5th October

Always a popular event, this year's District Night Hike was held in the Churt area and took in Frensham Ponds as part of a fairly flat but still challenging route. Claygate was well represented with a total of five teams, including two competition teams who complete the event unaccompanied.

After some frantic co-ordinate plotting and route checking, the teams were let out into the night to navigate their way to the various checkpoints. Despite some initial directional challenges, all teams made good progress and were all able to complete the full course, a great result given the strict time limit at the end of the night which often catches people out.

On their way round, the scouts were asked to complete a variety of challenges at checkpoints. These ranged from building a chair from staves and rope to encoding and decoding a morse code message that had to be transmitted by torch.

Well done to Claygate team "A" who were second in the competition, only narrowly missing out to Hinchley Wood by 7 points (328 to 335) – unfortunately let down by their knot tying skills. Well done also to the training teams who battled on through the heavy rain that started later in the evening and successfully made it to the end.

Many thanks to the army of parent helpers and supporters who organised the event, staffed checkpoints and walked with the training teams.



Fundraising Updates

Christmas Post 2019



The Scouts ran the Christmas post service this year as usual. The patrol leaders had chosen the **Joel Community Project**, a local homeless charity, to receive half of the proceeds from the post, with the other half going to the group.

All the scouts and many of the parents were involved in collecting mail from the yellow boxes around the village, sorting at the scout centre and delivering to residents of Claygate. We raised around **£550**. This is a useful community service which is appreciated by Claygate residents.

Thanks to everyone who helped.

Treasurer's Update : Christmas Fundraising & Subs Update



Our Christmas activities were once again very successful. We:

- Sold and delivered over 330 Christmas trees and wreaths to local residents
- Provided a Christmas card postal service to local addresses
- The Claygate Scout & Guide Band played at Carols on the Green, Walton Sainsbury's, Carols round the Campfire and, accompanied by carol singers, around the village on the Sunday before Christmas
- We supported the Claygate Village Association in putting up and taking down the trees and decorations on the Parade and the Old Village
- We ran a successful tombola, Christmas crackers and BBQ at the Lights Switch-On.

In addition to raising funds for our Group, the above events have also raised funds for the Joel Community Night Centre in Kingston and the Queen Elizabeth Foundation for the Disabled.

The last four months have also seen our most successful fireworks event, despite restrictions on numbers due to the building works; the most successful jumble sale ever, raising over £2,000 for Scout Funds, and a second Burn's Night dinner and Ceilidh which saw a fantastic meal prepared, as ever, by Ed and Debbie Bowles and friends, followed by great Scottish music and energetic dancing.

Our successful fundraising allows us to keep subscription increases to a minimum. From 1st April subs will increase by £1 per term to £50, plus £20 if your son/daughter also plays in the band. We are grateful for all those parents who register for Gift Aid – without this, subs would have to be at least £10 per term higher.

Gary Ernest
Group Treasurer





Winter Walking

EXPLORERS

On a mildly chilly Friday afternoon in January, Explorer Scouts set off from Claygate, the Dittons, Weston Green and Esher heading for the Brecon Beacons in South Wales. The Explorers woke up early on Saturday morning to a very chilly and frosty morning in the

Brecons, the sun was shining and the sky was clear, not a rain cloud in sight. The Explorers set off for a day's winter walking from numerous starting points, but all ending up on the summit of Pen Y Fan, some of the routes were long, some were steep, and some were long and steep, but all the Explorers were rewarded for the efforts with a snow capped summit and some breathtaking long distance views.

Following the descent came some much needed relaxing and preparing for the next day, this involved everyone enjoying a well earned shepherd's pie, the dishes were conquered and sandwiches made a day in advance.

Sunday saw another beautiful sunny day, with the Explorers ready to take on their next challenge,

Whilst Saturday had seen the Explorers tackling the highest part of the Brecon's, Sunday was all about trying to get to the lowest part as they set off for a day's caving.

As always the Explorers took this in their stride before the long drive back to Surrey.





Carols around the Camp Fire



We launched into Christmas – and formally ended the last term of 2019 – with a carol service with a Scouting twist! Yes, it was carols ... but round the camp fire too.

This was the fourth year we have held this event, and it proved to be another great evening.

The evening was led by our own band. To get us underway, there was a candle lit procession through the grounds and woods at Scout HQ, with the camp fire crackling and the band quietly playing.



We then sang carols round the camp fire and Hugh led a reading so that we all remembered the meaning of Christmas. Returning through the candlelit pathway, we went back to the Scout Centre for mince pies, mulled wine and refreshments provided superbly well as always by Debbie, Ed and friends. A very Scouting Santa also paid a visit to the Beavers!!! After the break, the band led us with some great Christmas songs – including a very entertaining “Twelve Days of Christmas” in which everyone entered into the spirit with gusto!

The evening proved to be a great way to end the Scouting year, combining Christmas and Scouting traditions. It was great to see so many people attend.

Calling all musicians

Our band is looking for new people to join – whether you already play an instrument or are interested in learning one. The band runs a senior band for accomplished musicians, a junior band and a training band for those just beginning. Rehearsals take place on a Friday evening at Scout HQ. Band membership is open to all involved in the Scouting (cubs and older) and Guiding movements in Claygate.

If you are interested in joining, or just wish to find out more information, please contact Robin Wilkinson, our Band Leader : bandmaster@claygatescouts.org.





A Busy Autumn for the Band



Last term was a busy one for the band – and also very successful. Despite a very high number of events, the band were superb at each and every one, representing Claygate scouting with pride. Here are some of the highlights.

Marching with the Band of the Scots Guards: On Saturday 20 October we travelled to Wellington Barracks in central London, the home of the Guards divisions of the army. We were able to watch the Band of the Scots Guards prepare for their regular duty leading the 'Changing for the Guard' parade at Buckingham Palace. Then, after a short rehearsal, we were able to join the band in marching on the forecourt of Wellington Barracks. As always, the musicians of the Scots Guards band were friendly and welcoming – and the day was certainly a memorable one. Well done to all.



Brookwood Military Cemetery: On Sunday 3 November we supported Woking Scouts for their annual parade at the Brookwood Military Cemetery. This event creates a link to the band's performance last year at the First World War Memorial at Ypres, Belgium, where the band performed in 2019. During the second world war, the daily Act of Remembrance continued at Brookwood throughout the German occupation of Ypres. That Act of Remembrance still takes place every month at Brookwood. The band's attendance at the parade was warmly appreciated by Woking Scouts.





A Busy Autumn for the Band



Lord Mayor's Parade, London: The following weekend, the band once again marched through central London during the annual Lord Mayor's Show. This is a huge event (long and tiring too!!!), where the band perform in front of thousands of people lining the route – and millions watching on TV!!! This year, the BBC coverage featured some brilliant shots of the band – who looked and sounded great. Another triumph for all band members – putting Claygate on the national stage.



Remembrance Parade, Claygate: The following day, the band were back on parade, leading the Remembrance Parade in Claygate. Daniel Creigh (Explorer) deserves particular praise for playing a faultless Last Post!

Day Centre Christmas Fayre: The following weekend the senior band supported the Christmas Fayre, helping to raise funds for the Claygate Day Centre.



Christmas Events: Into December, the band performed at the Christmas Lights event in the parade, led the singing for the 'Carols on the Green' event, were at the heart of the Group's end of term event 'Carols Round the Campfire', and raised £1,200 for Project Merlin playing carols at Cobham in Sainbury's and around Claygate.

So A busy busy period, But the whole band should be proud of their achievements and the standard of their performances through the period. Well done to all.



Looking ahead to 2020 Looking ahead, the band have a range of important engagements already in the diary. For example: The **annual concert** takes place on Saturday 7 March. In June, the band will be supporting the closing ceremony at ScoutAbout 2020. And then in October, we have our trip to Disneyland Paris, where we'll be leading the Disneyland Halloween parade. So lots of fun to come!

Annual General Meeting

The Group's AGM was held on 13 October and was well attended. As you might expect, Project Merlin, the extension to the scout hall, was a focus for discussion. As well as dealing with standard AGM business, the meeting heard a summary of Group events and achievements from Hugh. Awards were presented to young people as well as leaders and other adult members.

After formal business had concluded, we were treated to a presentation from the young people who attended the World Jamboree. And last, but not least, the afternoon finished with one of our younger Group members introducing us to his 3 pet sheep and explaining what was involved in looking after them.

Stuart Ballard
Group Chairman



Claygate Beer Festival Fri 5th June and Sat 6th June 2020

Following the success of last years beer festival inspite of the weather, we are planning an **even bigger Festival this year.**

We are working to secure up to **32 different beers and ciders**, along with the Gin Bar which proved to be a very popular addition last year. And of course a range of street food.

The Festival will be held on the evenings of **Friday 5th and Saturday 6th June**, from 6-10pm, for 18+ only. We will again hold a **family afternoon from noon-4pm on Saturday 6th** with a bouncy castle and other fun activities for children.

We encourage you to buy tickets in advance – last year we sold out completely for the first two sessions. **Tickets will be £5** (including a free collectors' glass) and will be available to purchase online from early April.



More details will be available in March on the website: www.claygatebeerfestival.org



(The band at the Menin Gate, Ypres – September 2018)

1st Claygate Scout & Guide Band Annual Spring Concert

Saturday 7th March 2020

Doors - 6.30pm

Concert - 7:00pm

Holy Trinity Church, Church Road, Claygate. Surrey. KT10 0JP

For details of how to buy tickets please go to:

<http://band.claygatescouts.org>

(and click on the links)

Tickets also available on the door

All tickets - £6

(Children Under 16 – free)

Any inquiries to: bandinfo@claygatescouts.org

Dates for the Diary



As ever, we have a wide range of activities for 2020, the indicative calendar is set out below. This will enable you to detach it and pin it to your notice board at home. As ever some dates change so the latest calendar is available on the Group website, so always check, or you can sign up for updates.

MONTH & DATE	EVENT	Beaver Scouts	Cub Scouts	Scouts	Explorer Scouts	Network Scouts	SASU	Band	Group Support
February									
28th-01st Mar	District DofE Skills Weekend				EXPLORERS				
29th	Maintenance Day at HQ				EXPLORERS	network*			
March									
07th	Band Concert								
08th	District Cross Country Run				EXPLORERS				
14th	District Scout Day Hike								
21st	Maintenance Day at HQ				EXPLORERS	network*			X
22nd	County Cub Cooking								
24th	District Wide Games				EXPLORERS				
27th-29th	4 Inns Walk				EXPLORERS	network*			
	Peak District								
28th	District Cub Day Hike								
28th	Jumble Sale								
29th	Esher District Target Shooting Comp (Scouts)								
April									
23rd	New Parents and Link Meeting				EXPLORERS				
	Scout Centre								
25th	Claygate Clean Up				EXPLORERS				
26th	St George's Day Parade				EXPLORERS	network*			
May									
01st-03rd	Plant Sale								
01st-03rd	County Scout Lightweight Expedition								
15th-17th	Group Activity Weekend				EXPLORERS	network*			
	Walton Firs								
June									
05th-07th	Beer & Food Festival								X
14th	District Archery Competition				EXPLORERS				
19th-21st	District Cub Camp								
22nd	Explorer Raftless Race				EXPLORERS				
26th-28th	County Camp - Scouts Scoutabout				EXPLORERS	network*			
28th	Band at Scoutabout								
July									
04th	County Chief Scout Gold Award at Claygate				EXPLORERS				
TBA	Group AGM				EXPLORERS	network*			X
07th	Explorer Archery/Volleyball				EXPLORERS				
11th	Claygate Flower Show								X
18th-26th	Explorer Summer Camp				EXPLORERS				
25th-01st Aug	Scouts Summer Camp								
26th-07th Aug	European Jamboree - Poland								
	Poland								
September									
10th	New Parents and Link Meeting				EXPLORERS	network*			
12th	District Fishing Competition				EXPLORERS				
13th	District Beaver Party								
TBA	District Explorer Scout Cooking Competition				EXPLORERS				
26th	Jumble Sale								X
October									
10th	District Night Hike								
10th	District Cub Sausage Sizzle								
11th	Going Up Ceremony and 111 year's celebration				EXPLORERS				
TBA	District Shooting (Explorers)				EXPLORERS				
15th	District Scout Cooking Competition								
29th-31st	Band 20th Anniversary Tour Disneyland Paris								