

Third Alton Scouts

Endeavour Troop Report 2021-22

Introduction

It is time again to report on what the Scouts have been up to over the last year. This year has focussed on getting back to normal after the months of lock-down. In 2020-21 I reported that we had missed summer camp two years running for the only time in over forty years. This time I am able to report that we are now back to normal and have recently returned from a week away in the Channel Islands. I cannot say how good it is to get back into the swing of things.

A Little Bit of History

Before I started as Skip with 3rd Alton the Group had become very popular and, so much so that there were three Cub Packs, named after Saints George, Andrew and Patrick, and in consequence the Troop had split forming two Troops named Endeavour and Enterprise. Beavers had not even been thought of in those days. For various reasons the two troops recombined and the names Endeavour and Enterprise both dropped. For very many years we had but a single troop. Group numbers started to swell again and it became necessary to split the troop once more and resurrect the old names. This year I am therefore writing my first report on the new 3rd Alton Endeavour Troop, back where I started really with 3rd Alton so many years ago. I am only too happy for the Troop to take the name of my fellow Yorkshireman's, Captain James Cook, famous ship.

Summer Afloat

In August we had a narrowboat camp, this was our first 'Nights Away' activity since March 2020 and was well worth waiting for. The boat was owned and run by the Angel Community Canal Boat Trust who are based in Islington and aim to provide skippered, affordable boating for all groups of all ages. Six of our Scouts and four from Portchester Sea Scouts spent a week on the Regent's Canal in London and River Lee in Hertfordshire. This 'camp' gave plenty of time for all the Scouts concerned to learn new skills, do some good activities, teamwork and badgework, and, of course, make new friends. It was very interesting to see how the older Scouts coped under the pressure of organising all the duties associated with a narrow boat: making sure that someone is always on the tiller; that there are lock crews ready; that the cabins and communal areas are clean and tidy; that food is bought and the meals are ready and on time; that each day's schedule is met; that the skipper has his regular mugs of tea, etc, etc. Interesting to watch indeed but always achieved with good grace.



Major Activities for Endeavour Troop



Our resumption of what may perhaps be called 'normal Scouting' included a local hike camp held at Bramdean Common in October. After some two years with no camping everyone was a bit rusty and old skills needed to be retaught even to some of the senior Scouts in the Troop. This camp included a map-reading exercise – if that went wrong then no-one would find the camp site so there was a really good incentive to get that bit of the weekend right. We also welcomed one of the Scouts' fathers, Toby Maynard, who demonstrated the skills needed to carve and whittle wooden spoons.

The spring term started with a couple of visits to the observatory at Clanfield by both Troops, one group had a rather misty evening but the other was very lucky and were able to observe the moon very clearly and see some superb deep space objects.

In March we took part in the Monopoly Run, again for the first time in two years and between the two troops and the Explorers managed to enter a record seven teams (i.e. nearly fifty Scouts, Explorers and leaders). This was a really excellent weekend and Scouts had the option of competing as a long day out or staying overnight on the Dockland Scout Project's ship the Lord Amory which was welcoming its first guests for two years.



Spring Bank Holiday weekend saw a small number of Scouts and leaders set off for France to take part in the Normandy Cycle Camp. This was a long weekend away with the aim of visiting many of the historic sites associated with the WWII D-Day invasion in the Caen/Bayeaux/Arromanches region. The camp is organised in the form of a treasure hunt and the Scouts had to navigate their way a number of waypoints over three days. By the time everyone had got back to the ferry everyone had cycled nearly 100miles.

Summer and Back to Camp at Last

As I write this, it is only a few days since we returned from our first full summer camp since 2019. We went back to Guernsey where we have had several very enjoyable summer camps in recent years. The weather was exceptionally good and this, together with a very enthusiastic group of Scouts from both troops, made for a very productive and happy camp. As with our trip to France, cycling was our sole means of transport and by the end of the week we saw a great improvement in everyone's cycling ability (and map reading!). Activities included: high ropes, exploring by bike, keel-boat sailing, stand-up paddle boarding, air rifle shooting, geocaching and coasteering. It really was good to get back to 'proper' camping after so long living with Covid.



Thank You

Let me finish with a big word of thanks to our leaders: Mike and Paul and Young Leaders Toby and Noah. Without all their support we would not have been able to hold weekly face-to-face meetings last autumn and the quality of our Scouting would have been considerably lower. I would also like to say thank you to Pam who joined us a leader in September and then re-established the 3rd Alton Enterprise Troop in January. I must also say thanks to all the other leaders in the group, especially Matt who, behind the scenes, was organising several of the activities we participated in, and all the Mums and Dads for their support in all sorts of ways.

Adam Brook,

Scout Leader, 3rd Alton Endeavour Scouts

