

## **Scout Section Report 2013-14**

We have had a busy year in the scout section, with a couple of changes in the leadership team. Unfortunately Ellen has had to step back to being an Assistant Scout Leader due to her work commitments but I have agreed to take over as Scout Leader. We have also been joined by Ruth, who has some fantastic ideas for future activities.

We have 21 scouts on role at present.

The review of our year starts in May, when the scouts participated in 2 training weekends to enable scouts to improve their sailing and gain further RYA qualifications. Over the 2 weekends all our new scouts attained their RYA level 1, whilst a number of our older scouts completed their RYA level 3 and some of these went on to gain the Start Racing qualification.

June saw our annual visit to the Malvern Challenge, which most scouts and leaders agree is always the most looked forward to camp on our calendar. This is a weekend camp in the Malvern Hills for approximately 3000 scouts and guides. The aim is to complete an 8 mile incident hike, which is always enjoyed although I think the disco, talent show, and fairground rides have something to do with it. Unfortunately, this year will be the last one as the farmland will no longer be available to the organisers.

In September we held our inaugural Scout Regatta, where we invited 10 teams of scouts from other groups in the area to join us for a weekend of fun and water based activities. The event proved so successful that we have been asked to run it again this September.

In October we moved back to The Wick for our winter season and started with a hike from Old Town to Taw Hill. We also had a treasure trail hike around Cricklade in November, an excellent visit to the Defence Academy in December, rock climbing at the Link Centre in January and finally a night hike through Stratton Woods.

We had a team enter the Scout Chess competition again this year and well done to our Nick, Ilario and Aidan for finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> in the competition.

The Scouts have also worked hard over the winter on a number of badges including the Fire Safety Badge as well as the Astronomer Badge, which they completed in January following a visit from the Swindon Stargazers Astronomy Group.

We finished the year with our regular hike near Barbary Castle.

Christmas was a very busy time with the scout post. I would like to thank the scouts and parents/families for all their help with the Christmas Post, which is always a very busy time for us. This is a major part of our fund raising for the group, and we all know how tempting sat by a warm fire can be instead of selling stamps and delivering cards in the cold. Thank you!

I would also like to thank the scouts that took time out of their evening to help with bag Packing, I know it was also during the Christmas Post period but we were offered the chance and felt we could not say no.

I would like to say a big thank you to all my leadership team and our helpers, especially when we are down here at the lake, as we would not be able to have so many children on the water without your help. I would also like to thank the new 'tuck' lady for offering to take on the responsibility of providing the scout and leaders with a warm drink after a night of fun on the water, and to all the parents for bringing the scouts down to Bowmoor every week.

Thank you everyone!

**James - Scout Leader 1st Swindon Sea Scouts**