

## **Scout Section Report 2016-17**

We have had another very busy year in the scout section and have seen the section continue to grow. We have 31 Scouts on role at present and have regularly had a high attendance over the past 12 months.

The review of our year starts in April with the annual St George's day parade and where we had a good turnout. May saw us take our first 'overseas' visit by going to the Isle of Wight for a visit to the UK Sailing Academy. We decided that a trip to the Isle of Wight would make a big change from holding our annual RYA training at Bowmoor. This proved to be a good choice as the Scouts had such a good time that they all asked to go again this year.

In July, we held our 3rd Scout Regatta and this year we increased the number of teams to 21. Teams of Scouts from other groups in the area were invited to join us for a weekend of fun and water based activities. The event continues to prove successful and already plans are well under way for the 2017 event.

Due to the large number of Scouts now in the section, we stayed at out at the lake as long for as possible before moving back to the Wick. When the evenings became too dark to sail we held several land based activities around the club, including a pioneering evening, backwoods cooking, a visit from the Swindon Astronomy club, a firework display with the group and also a 'cardboard city' event where the Scouts learnt about the plight of the homeless and immigrants. Our event was even featured in the Swindon Advertiser as part of a wider national campaign.

The turnout for the Remembrance parade in November was excellent and yet again we received praise and thanks from the Mayor.

We then moved back to The Wick for our winter season and started with a hike from Old Town to Taw Hill. We also an excellent visit to the Defence Academy, photography evening and a night hike through Stratton Woods.

We finished the year with our regular hike near Barbary Castle in preparation for our annual Les Barnes Challenge Hike towards the end of March. This year we entered 2 teams and with both teams having quite a large number of young team members, they both did very well.

Christmas was also a very busy time with the scout post and 2 bag packing events in quick succession. I would like to thank the Scouts and parents/families for all there help with all of these. This is a major part of our fundraising 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 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 to those that helped run the tuck shop by offering to take on the responsibility of providing the Scouts 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 Relph, Scout Leader 1st Swindon Sea Scouts