

1ST SANDLEHEATH SEA SCOUT GROUP



WATERLINES

Feb 2008

Spring Edition

Explorer Camp: Kandersteg 2007



This is a significantly cut-down version of the diary written by Andy. A more complete copy can be found online at:

<http://www.sandleheathseascouts.org.uk/waterlines/waterlines-kandersteg-2007.pdf>

Day 1: Tuesday 7th Aug. We're on our way!

We all met up, loaded the coach, said our farewells and left for Switzerland!

Day 2: Wednesday 8th Aug. We've arrived!

As day broke we were travelling through France towards Luxembourg. After one comfort stop, we managed to leave without Chris, I've never seen a man run so fast to catch a bus!

We crossed the border into Switzerland early Wednesday morning. We could see the mountains ahead getting larger and darker, as were the clouds and the rain! We passed through several villages with chocolate box chalets and scenery as we headed up the valley. The mountains, and the weather, closed in.

The final stretch of road takes you up a snaking zigzag ascent, before you enter Kandersteg, a beautiful community village with a fantastic backdrop of mountains. The International Scout Camp (KISC) is at higher altitude than any mountain in the UK. Bizarre to think that we had come all this way to sleep under canvas for a summer camp!

It was chaos! Hundreds of soaking wet Scouts, leaders and KISC staff were trying to leave after the Kanderjam week and we and other coach loads were arriving. The scene was reminiscent of people being evacuated from a scene of natural disaster. We were greeted by our Ventures Abroad

representative, Sarah-Jane. Sarah explained that because of the weather and Kanderjam, they were struggling to cope – many of the pitches were under water or knee deep in mud. They had relocated us to a fresh pitch on higher ground.

After fighting our way through Scouts trying to escape and making our way through mud pools we decided the pitch allocated was okay, but there were no tents! These were still on the main site, wet and muddy! After negotiation, we were provided with new tents and we set to, erecting them (without instructions). Within a couple of hours we had set up camp and were flying the New Forest West District flag. Just in time for dinner!

We made our way to the KISC "Chalet". We had decided to opt for all our meals to be provided. The food, which was varied and adequate, was served in the chalet on a self service basis. The thought of having to do our own catering, including buying provisions and a mile walk back to the site each day was not appealing – especially in this weather!

The KISC Chalet was great – it was warm and dry! This is the hub of the site, where the administration, catering, shop and "posh" accommodation was based. There was a reception, shop, information office, meeting rooms, laundry rooms, drying rooms, an internet area, and loads of Scouting memorabilia all around the place. After dinner, we had a walk around the site, and planned our activities and excursions for the week.

As we settled down in our tents for the evening it was still raining.

Day 3: Thursday 9th Aug. Day trip to Trummelbach falls and Interlaken.

The good news was that the tents performed well, and we had survived a wet night. We woke and started stirring at about 6:30 and guess what? It was raining! The cloud cover was low but undulated and looking around Kandersteg we could see the snowline. Yes, here we were on a summer camp and within half an hour's walk from the site we could be building snowmen! We needed to leave at 8:00am, so it was important that we got all our kit together for the day out before breakfast.

We assembled at the chalet for breakfast, which was great: warm, dry and you just helped yourself to a buffet of cereal, yoghurt, fresh fruit, cold meats, cheese, jams, spreads and a plentiful supply of tea, fresh coffee and hot chocolate.

As we were staying on an "all inclusive basis", making up a packed lunch followed on. This included freshly baked bread, cold meats, cheese, spreads, jam, crisps, cartons of juice, lemon tea, chocolate bars, nuts, fruit etc. Enough to survive the day.

We boarded the coach and set off. As we drove up the valley you could see waterfalls spouting and hurling themselves from the mountains into the valley carved out by a glacier during the last ice age.

The coach driver parked up at Trummelbach, from where we made our way through the visitor entrance and started walking up the path and steps, which were awash, to a funicular lift that took you through the mountain and up about 200m. At the other end, you were at the top of the falls and followed the river, via a walkway, that cut down through the mountain and gorge. The path opened out at scary platforms, where you could view and appreciate the falls, and force of the water!

Our friendly local coach driver then took us along a route that followed the shore of Lake Thun, gave us a tour of Interlaken before dropping us off. The staff at KISC told us there was a chocolate factory in Interlaken, though our coach driver was not aware of it. To boost spirits it seemed a good idea to find it! We walked along the main high street, window shopping, and came across the Schuh Chocolatier! Mandie and I asked if this was the chocolate factory and the lady said "yes, would you like a tour?". We said "yes please" and booked a tour for 2:00pm.

By the time that we gathered as arranged it had stopped raining and the cloud base lifted, exposing the beauty of the mountains around us. Could this be a turning point in the weather as was forecast?

We piled into the posh chocolate shop and were led by the ladies to a presentation room, adorned with marvellous chocolate paintings and sculptures.

The young lady Chocolatier told us all about how the three types of chocolate (dark, milk & white) were produced and we were able to sample the goods. She demonstrated how truffles were coated and even made a hollow Easter Bunny. As part of the entry fee we were given a 10SF voucher to spend in the shop. This is when the shop assistants really had to earn their money, 20 thrifty Scouts trying to get the most out of spending their fortune!

It was still not raining when we got back to KISC! We had a quiet evening on camp meeting up with other Scouts.

Day 4: Friday 10th Aug. Walk to Oeschinensee.

We got ready to set off for our first hike. The cloud was clearing and it was going to be a good day. I announced to the group that we were going to Oeschinensee, pointing over to the other side of the valley and mountain, faces dropped and I was questioned "how are we going to get up there?"

We were told that this was a walk for younger Scouts so it seemed an ideal way to break everyone in gently. Just one week earlier, over 2000 Scouts had raced up this hill to the lake to remake their promise as part of the sunrise celebrations to mark 100 years of scouting.

We walked, through the quiet and scenic village of Kanadersteg, the chocolate box chalets adorned with flowering plants. We followed the signs to Oeschinensee which took us to the woods at the base of the valley where the various paths ascended the hillside. Unfortunately, the path which we took was for fitness fanatics, every hundred yards or so you were expected to stop and do a work out as shown on a sign, needless to say most of us didn't take part in this. It was a long hard slog up to the edge of the lake and Café Lager. In places the hill was very steep. The zig-zag paths from the beach at Bournemouth are about half as steep as the path we took. From here at 1600m we could view the glacial lake and the snow dusted cliffs and mountains behind a fantastic backdrop. It must have been memorable for the Scouts re-taking their promise on the 1st of August. We did our own thing and we took the opportunity to invest Charlie and Tamara as Explorer scouts.

Alex, Dan, Becky and Amelia clubbed together and hired a rowing boat for an hour, rowed out to the middle of the lake and had lunch.

Callum on the other hand stripped off and went swimming in the glacial lake – mad dog! But completed a part of his KISC challenge, well done!

After lunch we walked along the valley to the area where they had constructed a 600 metre toboggan run made out of stainless steel pipe, it might sound tame but it was awesome! After a

couple of goes on that, we made our way to the cable car that took us down the mountain to Kandersteg, where we were able to spend time looking in shops.

Back at camp, we made our way to the chalet for dinner and back to camp to get dressed for International camp fire Evening.

We met up with the Gloucester Explorer group on the way to the camp fire circle, which was like an auditorium made of quarried stone surrounded by pine trees with a stainless steel fire plinth in the centre – really impressive! The whole theatre was filled with Scouts of all ages from all countries. Entertainment was provided by different groups and the KISC staff staying at the site, the two memorable skits were the “Funky Monkeys” and KISC staff’s animated act. Many of the explorers swapped a scarf with a scout from another country. Josh being an old master at this ended up with an impressive haul of badges and other memorabilia.



Left:
The walk up to Oeschinensee

Below:
Summer toboggan run

Below middle:
Brrr!

Bottom left:
The unit at Oeschinensee



started our journey to Brig. The first part of the journey was through a 10 mile tunnel that emerged at Goppenstein. The railway followed the contour of the valley giving us sight of the Swiss Alps to the South.

Within a short time we arrived at Brig. From Brig we had to take a coach to the thermal pools a few miles up the valley.

It is amazing that we had travelled a short distance to the other side of the mountain, but the weather was glorious. As good Scouts we were all prepared for all weather conditions and were able to ditch the warm jumpers and wet weather gear at the first opportunity.

The Brigerbad thermal baths had many pools including an Olympic size pool, hot pools, grotto, flume and river pool. All of these were heated by thermal springs to a temperature of up to 42 Celsius – that’s hot! The main stream was a nice warm 30 Celsius. The views around the valley were fantastic, snow capped mountains and it was hot!

Day 5: Saturday 11th Aug. Day trip to Brigerbad Hydrothermal pools.

Morning was great, dry and broken cloud with the early sun lighting up the peaks and moving down the mountain slopes. It was going to be a good day! After breakfast we made our way through the village to the railway station. We boarded the train, which in the Swiss way was on time, and

Most of us made a beeline for the open pool with rock ledges for diving and jumping off. At alternate hours the Flume ride and river pool are set going, the flume ride was great. I could do that all day, though Charlie and Jodie did manage to get stuck! The river pool was a new experience: high pressure jets propelled the water and created currents around a circuit that meant you could swim with the flow (like most people) or against it if you're a strong swimmer.

After we changed and had an ice cream we got the bus back to the station at Brig for our return train to Kandersteg.

We arrived back in KISC for dinner and spent the night socialising with other scouts on site, the Gloucesters were a friendly group and became good friends on camp.

Day 6: Sunday 12th Aug. Day trip to Stresa – Isola Bella.

Today was a big day out – a trip to the Italian lakes! We boarded the coach, which drove onto the train and through the tunnel at the head of the valley. The coach journey took us through the valleys and mountains of Switzerland, over the Simplon Pass and into the Italian Alps, from where the road descended to Lake Maggiore and Stresa. The weather was hot and sunny. The coach driver dropped us off by the lake side and, after Mandie and others had raided the cash machine, we negotiated a deal with a local boatman to take us to the beautiful island of Isola Bella, where we visited the grand palace, gardens and grounds had coffee, bought souvenirs.

We caught our boat to the “fisherman’s Island” where we had excellent pasta and ice cream lunch with drinks in a lakeside restaurant, before heading back to Stresa to meet the coach driver. The coach journey followed the same route as we came, with a stop off at the famous Simplon pass hotel. The route we took offered some breathtaking scenery and the opportunity to see how different Italy was to Switzerland. We arrived back at KISC late but dinner had been prepared and left for us. This was a long tiring day, but worth the drive.

Day 7: Monday 13th Aug. Walk up Gasteretal Valley & International Barbeque.

After breakfast we were taken by minibus up the valley and entered a tunnel that took us up the Gasteretal gorge emerging in the Gasteretal valley. Because the tunnel and road are single track, the traffic control arrangement was that you could only drive up the gorge on the hour and only come down the gorge at half past the hour. We arrived at a house/café, here we split into two groups. Our group was lead by Mandie. We set off up a

Wanderbag (path) that followed the line of the river, passing chalets and a play area the famous five could not resist playing in. At one stop there were cows with bells which took an interest in us, they were very friendly and enjoyed attention, but how could they rest or sleep with that racket going on all the time?

Mandie had this thing about performing a dance and chant every time we crossed a bridge. Unfortunately there were many footbridges to cross, and Martin was becoming more and more irritated by this as the day went on. We reached the head of the valley, an area strewn with rocks surrounded by cliffs, above which you could see the melting lip of the glacier in the upper valley and beyond the snow covered peaks behind forming part of the same group as the Jungfrau and Eiger that we were to visit on Wednesday. After a break for lunch, we made our way back down the valley via a path on the other side of the valley crossing streams and meadows where you could pick and eat raspberries and alpine strawberries. A rock feature was pointed out that looked remarkably like a face carved in the cliffs. Another geological feature was the exposed cave system in the cliffs above which was spouting water, apparently in winter the waterfalls coming out of the caves freeze and is climbed by experienced ice climbers and cavers. On the way down we stopped at a café which gave us great views of where we had been, and they served chips!

The last part of the descent was back down the gorge that we had driven up, the path followed the river and was very steep, Ben commented on how certain parts could be navigated in a kayak – yeah OK! On leaving the gorge the view opened out, we could see KISC and Kandersteg below. By now it had started raining again.

Back at camp, we made our way down to the chalet for the “International Barbecue” run by the volunteer staff. There were hundreds of Scouts queuing for their Bratwurst and burger.



Fortunately, we were fast tracked in and got our grub before the Scouts!

Day 8: Tuesday 14th August. Rafting & Canyoning on River Senne.

We walked to the station to catch our train to Spietz and from there caught another train to Boltigen (following a swollen grey river that, as it turned out, we would be rafting along). From the pretty village of Boltigen, we had a short walk to the Hotel from which the water activities were based. We all had to be fitted out with full wetsuits, spray tops, helmets, and high flotation buoyancy aids. Once dressed, we all met up in our groups downstairs, the canyon trippers were bundled into the back of a truck and were taken up the valley. Those canyoning were roped together and set off down the river sliding, jumping, abseiling, swimming or walking down the river. After a couple of hours they arrived back at the hotel.

The more intrepid, or stupid, amongst had opted for Rafting! This was great, our skipper gave us commands which enabled us oarsman to navigate the boat down the river, negotiate rapids, rocks and fallen trees. After negotiating a difficult stretch of river, we would wait for the other rafts to catch up.

After a while we had gained confidence, working well as a team. It was hard work but very exhilarating – you certainly did not feel the cold!

We were taking on another stretch of rapids, travelling at speed there was a boulder in our way which we hit and breached on. I was thrown out head first but managed to grab the raft lifting rope on my way out which I kept hold of with both hands. The force of the water was taking me under, even with the Buoyancy aid on and I could only gulp for air by using all my effort pulling myself up on the rope and then submerging again in the cold water. Between, coming up for air, I could see and hear Mandie shouting at me: “let go”! I let go taking a last gulp of air and water, I was taken under and came up down stream. The next thing I knew was I was bobbing along and still had hold of my paddle. I fought through the rapids desperately trying to swim towards the river bank, in the force of the torrent I was being turned over, but after what felt like hundreds of yards my feet started to hit the rocks on the bottom of the river and I managed to get to the riverside. I had made it and survived!

Because the raft was breached and stuck on the rock, all the crew had to be taken off the raft so the skipper could re-float it. A rope line was belayed from the river bank to the raft, each of the crew then had to jump into the river (rapid) and swim to the riverside to be caught by an instructor and pulled ashore. Martin was first to go, with the rest of the team in the raft watching carefully how it

should be done. Having seen what was required of them (and the look on Martin’s face) no one in the raft was keen to follow.

Once everyone was off the raft, our skipper pushed the it off the rock and took off down the river single handed, heading for the bank I was on. We continued on, following the river, but had to beach and carry the raft at one rapid because fallen trees had blocked had our route. Eventually we reached our landing point, phew! What an experience. After getting changed in a car park we made our way to the railway station at Boltigen, for our return trip to KISC.

We had an evening chilling out, which for some of us was the best thing we could have hoped for! Josh had sorted out a barrel of fire wood and later that evening we had a camp fire and practiced our rendition of the Proclaimer’s “walk 500 miles” which was our adopted song for the trip.

Day 9: Wednesday 15th Aug. Jungfrau and Eiger trail.

After a coach trip to Lauterbrunnen and coffee at the railway station, we boarded the carriage which had been reserved for us as “Ivon Valley Explorer’s”. The train was a funicular train that took us up the hillside through woodland and meandered up the side of the valley via Wengen (the venue for last years men’s ski slalom) to the alpine resort of Kleine Scheidegg. Here we had to transfer to the Jungfrau funicular rail train. By now we had clear blue sky around us, the scenery and views were awesome. There were hundreds of tourists around us waiting to catch trains, so pre-booking was definitely a good decision. A few hundred yards after setting off we entered the Eigerwand tunnel ascended slowly through the mountain stopping off at the Eigerwand viewing point which is a “window” in the west face of the Eiger and Eismeer viewing station. Just a taste of the altitude and spectacular scenery we would experience from Jungfrauoch. The Jungfrauoch or top of the world (at 3454m) is the highest point in Europe accessible by public transport. Boy was it worth the trip, the panorama took in France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland with spectacular close views of the Allersch glacier, Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau. After what seemed like an age we arrived at the Jungfrauoch station, which was like a London underground station but cold. From the station a whole complex had been constructed within the mountain: an ice palace, restaurants, observatories, research stations, view points, leisure areas where you could, ski, toboggan, experience glacier walking, or set off and explore the alpine peaks and glaciers.

After an English fully dressed photo shoot (an Australian group stripped naked for theirs) we met

back at 2:00 to catch the train to Eigergletscher, which is part way down the mountain.

From Eigergletscher station we walked the Eiger trail, aiming for Grindelward to meet our coach for the return trip to KISC. The weather was still clear, and we set off on the well walked goat trail which traversed the Eiger below the infamous North Face. The views were stunning. The walk was mainly a straight-forward descent of about 1500m and 7 miles distance but it was hard on the feet, so we took stops every half hour or so.

We were due to meet the coach in Grindelward at 5:00. The heat and strenuous walking had slowed us down, we had to miss our opportunity for a coffee and ice cream en route and set a fast pace to the finish. We got there bang on 5pm! Our coach was not there. As others started arriving, collapsing, taking boots off and complaining about having blisters I started making phone calls to KISC, no one was there. I enquired at the railway station, how long would it take us to get to Kandersteg by train? You could arrive back at 9:15 and it would cost 85SF per person. As I walked back to the coach park, I was greeted by a Double Decker coach with everyone aboard, an alternative coach and driver had been sent to collect us. Phew, what a relief!

This evening was the international disco evening which was held at the ice rink in Kandersteg village, so after dinner the lads and lasses headed off for the evening.

Day 10: Thursday 16th Aug. Visit to Thun and return journey.

Our last day at KISC, we set to packing and cleaning the tents ready for the next Scouts to occupy. It had started raining, just as the day we arrived! We really had been lucky with the weather, the forecast for the next few days was not good. We said our farewells and got our kit loaded on the coach. We set off to Thun, where we had a few hours to explore the town and buy gifts for our friends and loved ones. Then we were on the road heading for Calais. The trip back seemed to take less time, as it does when you are returning from somewhere. It felt good to be back in England.

The camp made so many lasting memories for all of us that they cannot be reflected in this Diary of events [especially now that I've halved its length - Ed]. The entire fund raising effort that we undertook before going and all the organising had been worth it. We had packed in so many activities into a short space of time which gave us all experiences we hope to repeat and stories will be told of this camp for many years to come.

What a great camp!!

Andy Brookes – Explorer Leader

Group Chairman

After many years of service to the Group, Nick Bunt has stood down as Chairman. He joined the committee about 10 years ago as secretary when his son, Richard, joined the Troop as a Scout. After a few years as Secretary he became our Chairman. Throughout this time Nick has worked hard for the Group, and has been an important part of the team that has helped the Group build our new Scout Centre and acquire an excellent fleet of boats and canoes for water activities. With his energy and enthusiasm he has led an Executive Committee which has not only worked hard for the scouts, but also, because of Nick leadership and humour, enjoyed their task. We will certainly miss Nick, but fully understand why he has found it necessary to stand down. We hope he will continue to keep contact with us.

Nick would not stand down before finding us a new Chairman. Shortly before Christmas he was put into contact with David Hales, who had just moved into the area, having previously been involved in Scouting. After meeting the Executive Committee David agreed to take over as Chairman and so we would like to welcome him as our new Chairman.

Ros White – Group Scout Leader

Kayaking the Upper Dart

Below: Jacob running Euthanasia



The D. of E. Award News

I arrived at Graham's house at about 7am feeling very nervous. We loaded the boats and went down to Ringwood car park to meet the Explorers. It was not as cold as it had been the previous week, which was good, but it was still quite chilly. When the other leaders and explorers arrived, we loaded to boats on to another car and all jumped into Chas' car for the long ride down to Dartmoor.

The fact that all of the Explorers were older, bigger and scarier than me made me even more nervous. Also the horror stories of people paddling in to stoppers by accident and getting 'mauled' by them for 10 minutes definitely didn't help my confidence. Upon arrival we swiftly got the boats down and changed into our gear. Whilst we were waiting for the leaders I got talking to the explorers; they didn't look at all nervous about the river despite it also being their first run as well!

After the short walk to the river my confidence started to build, I was still nervous but feeling kind of confident. The river was very bony and rocky but that didn't bother me, I was just happy to be afloat again. I don't really remember the order that the river went in; I just remember four major parts, Boulder Rapid, Cannonball, Euthanasia and Pandora's Box. At Boulder Rapid we got out and picked our own line down, then we all ran it separately. I really enjoyed that bit, there had been no rolls yet so I was still quite confident. At Cannonball I think was starting to tire, I was going over regularly and was very scared of the rocks that rushed past my head when I was upside down. It was a great rapid, we ran it twice, and second time round I hit the side and flipped yet again! At Euthanasia I was very nervous and had lost a lot of my confidence. I watched everybody else run it and in the end decided that it would be wrong not to run it. I capsized as expected but the fact that I ran it gave me the confidence that I needed to finish the river. We portaged Pandora's Box because it was too low to run, but we did a big seal launch instead, which was awesome!

After Euthanasia I paddled the rest of the river with a lot more confidence, and, despite my millions of capsizes and getting caught in a stopper, I made it to the take out without swimming once! I thoroughly enjoyed the whole trip, it was great fun and I would definitely do it again given the chance. I would like to say thanks to Graham, Ross, Chas, Tim and all of the other paddlers who made the day a great success. Thanks.

Jacob Collings

Did you know that in 2006/7 42,531 young people gained a Bronze Award, 15,785 gained a Silver Award and 6,371 gained a Gold Award. Overall, in 2006/7 the total number of Awards gained increased by 5.6% over the previous year. In achieving the Awards during 2006/7, young people spent over four million hours on sport and skills and gave in excess of two million hours of voluntary service to the community. The value of this to society is over £13.5 million. To complete the Expeditions Section they collectively walked, rode, canoed or sailed over two million miles.

Did you also know that 87% of participants continue with the activities taken up as part of their Award and 61% still volunteer in their community after completion.

85% of participants believe it improved their self-confidence, 83% said that participation had taught them how to work with different types of people and 78% said it helped them improve their decision-making skills.

Those figures are, of course, for the whole of the UK but we have many young people at Sandleheath who are heading towards increasing those national figures by being active participants in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

So, if you are not already registered for the D. of E. Award and are between 14 and 25 come and join us at our month meetings and find out more.

Meetings for the first part of 2008 are:

Monday 4 February 6.45 pm at Scout HQ

Monday 3 March 6.45 pm at Scout HQ

Monday 7 April 6.45 at Scout HQ

We will then move to Spinnaker on a Thursday night whilst the "on the water activities" continue during the warmer months.

So, if you want to join in the fun, want more information or registration forms please contact me on 01725 510397, email at pat@REMOVED or pat.savage@REMOVED or visit the Duke of Edinburgh's Award website at www.theaward.org.

Pat Savage - D. of E. Award Group Leader

GB

4th February 2007

In this caving experience, I went with some leaders down the cave GB in Mendip. There were four of us, me, David, Ros and Graham. We were underground for roughly 3-4 hours.

I was nearly 15 but 16! This was because the cave had an age limit of 16. There are two main reasons. One, so the formations would stay beautiful and preserved. The people who owned the cave thought this was the age at which you would respect the cave and realise how vulnerable it was. The other reason was because it was rather a challenging cave, as I was to find out...

We drove there in the Land Rover on a lovely morning. Little did I know what I was letting myself in for! We got down to the cave entrance and then I realised that I had forgotten my gloves on the bumper of the car. I ran (waddled) back up this grassy hill and then back down again. What a waste of energy. Of course David loved this, watching a child run in a stiff oversuit up a hill.

We entered the cave via the man-made cover. We went down and entered in to a chamber. There was a large rusty ladder leading into a passageway. Little to my surprise this was where we were going! One by one we climbed up and in. We did this without a lifeline as I felt I did not need one.

One main route through through the cave has several side passages of which the entrance series is one. At the end of the main passage, a beautifully decorated continuation can be accessed up a climb. A short distance along this passage, a large, decorated chamber can be reached through a choke above.

A clear section of the cave remember was rather chilling! We had to crawl through a passage way that was filled with water almost to the roof! This I learnt was called a duck. (Not a sump as there was a slight amount of room to breathe!). I crawled through after David which came out to another small chamber. We were going through to get to a grotto with lots of formations. At the time I was questioning whether it was worth it.

As Graham was volunteering to wait there, I wondered 'Oh God, what have I let myself in for?!' But then I saw something... it was... well... bad. There was a small, tight, awkward squeeze ahead. And not only that, but it was almost totally submerged in water. I felt, a little sick. But, inside I wanted to do it!

I edged on as David was clearing out some water and passing the tub back to me. The adults were all joking as to how it would be lovely and warm and send Amelia through first to soak up all the water! Uh no!

I crawled through and goodness knows what my face was like. The worst feeling, cold water leaking down your neck and into your oversuit. (As we went through on our backs). I've never mover so quickly!!! i came out the other side and I was like...arghhhh! I couldn't believe I had done it.

Feeling rather cold, the passage eventually widened into a chamber. We waited for the others that were scrambling around trying to fit through. I suppose it was easier for me as I was slightly thinner! We got to the grotto, which admittedly was spectacular and totally amazing. I must admit though at the time, I went rather quiet and scowly! Looking back afterwards though, the stalactites, stalagmites, straws, flowstone, gour pools and more. I will never forget it! I think it was worth it, mind I didn't think that at the time. We made out way out, going back through the cold dips and into a massive chamber! I've never seen one so big! I could imagine a river flowing through here due to the ice melting from the last ice age.

We also visited a place called 'The Bridge'. This was a rock, which joined over the main passage. It really was like a bridge. We climbed round the side being wary of various formations. We were also walking on flowstone.

Eventually we made our way out of the cave. (To my relief). On the way out, I did go quiet as I was, well a little cold! We got straight in the Land Rover and drove back to MNRC to get changed. Ahhh warmth!

Amelia Phillips - for D. of E. Bronze

Scout Shop

The District Scout Shop operates from 1st Poulner Scout Group. The HQ is situated next to the flyover on the A31 at Poulner. The shop is open from 6.30pm - 8.30pm every Wednesday evening except during school holidays.

Beaver and Cub jumpers and Scout shirts can also be obtained outside these times by phoning Mike and Betty Ingrem 01425 657134 to arrange collection from 21 Hilbury Park, Alderholt, SP6 3BW.

Sally Hall

Grants

Congratulations...

Recently we were awarded £351 from the New Forest National Park Sustainable Development fund to purchase New forest wildlife guides. We also received £2450 from The Scout association with the Trinity House Fund towards the cost of a new Laser Bahia and trailer. We have a number of grant applications outstanding at the present time for more canoes and dinghys and will await the outcome with fingers crossed.

To Ros White on her MBE "For services to 1st Sandleheath Sea Scout Group and Hampshire Scout Caving Club".

To Richard Ward, who has received his D. of E. Silver Award.

Mandie Dawson

Group Programme

February	Friday, 29th - Sunday, 2nd	County Winter Camp
March	Monday, 3rd Saturday, 8th Saturday, 15th & Sunday, 16th Saturday, 29th Sunday, 30th	D. of E. Meeting (at the HQ, 6:45pm) Scout Centre Spring Clean HSCC Caving days (Scouts & Explorers. Details from Ros) SALLIE Night Hike (Scouts & Explorers) District Chick Law competition (at Sandleheath)
April	Monday, 7th Friday, 18th - Sunday, 20th	D. of E. Meeting (at the HQ, 6:45pm) County Explorer Camp (at Ferny Crofts)
May	Thursday, 1st Friday, 2nd - Sunday, 4th Saturday, 10th Saturday, 17th & Sunday, 18th	Start of water activities at Spinnaker District Camp (near Burley) Group AGM, presentations & hog roast HSCC Caving & Climbing days (Scouts & Explorers. Details from Ros)
June	Tuesday, 10th Tuesday, 17th Tuesday, 17th Tuesday, 24th	Beaves & Cubs at Spinnaker Fordingbridge Cubs: Rowing (at Spinnaker, 6:30pm) District AGM (Poulner) Fordingbridge Cubs: Canoeing (on the Avon, 6pm)
July	Tuesday, 1st Saturday, 5th Sunday, 13th Sunday, 26th - Friday 1st	3rd Ringwood Cubs: Canoeing (on the Avon, 6pm) Solent Sea Scout Sailing Regatta (at Spinnaker) Chernobyl children (at Spinnaker, 1:30pm) Scout & Explorer Summer Camp (Cleavel Point, Purbeck)
September	Tuesday, 9th Saturday, 20th Thursday, 25th	Beavers & Cubs at Spinnaker Solent Main Regatta (at Testwood) Last evening of water activities at Spinnaker

Waterlines, February 2008

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Useful Phone Numbers & Addresses

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