



South East Belfast News



Firstly I'd like to thank John Lyons for the countless hours of work he has put in as the previous editor of this newssheet. I feel privileged to be chosen to run SE Belfast News, and hope to continue this publication in a way that is just as informative, as well as entertaining as it has always been.

For those who don't know me, I am a 21 year-old journalism student who has been a member of 37th Belfast for 7 years. The experiences I've gained through scouting; the friendships I've made and countries I've had the opportunity to visit have taught me valuable skills I undoubtedly will apply in my later life.

You can contact me with stories or ideas for the newssheet at mattsterling27@hotmail.com

I hope everyone enjoyed a well-deserved rest period over the Christmas period, and we are all looking forward to another prosperous and fun year of Scouting.

Matt

WOOD SMOKE

by Maurice Johnston

A happy New Year to everyone! I hope you all enjoyed the break. As some of you may already know, the cubs turn 100 this year! To commemorate the occasion, Belfast County are planning a large birthday camp at Ardnally in May. Please try to attend this one off event. Details have already been circulated to leaders. A cub pack from Liverpool are visiting Ardnally at the end of August and have requested that other packs in the District join them for a 100 birthday camp. If you are interested then let Phil Patterson know and he can co-ordinate the arrangements with the various groups.



Over New Year the 37th Explorers visited Paris. As well as the usual sights they also visited the Bataclan Theater and had the opportunity to read some of the messages left by the international community outside.



Census 2016

It would be appreciated if all GSL's could make sure their online census is complete by the end of January. This will allow me sufficient time to calculate bills etc. I have also sent out a form to collect the information about those in the Explorer section. Please email this to me when completed by the end of the month.

Training

I will be running a safeguarding course at the end of February. The dates and times are in the calendar below. Please email me (mau.johnston@btinternet.com) to confirm you are attending.

Compass

Last month I advised that Compass was accessible to GSL's. At the minute it only deals with leaders and those involved with Network. GSL's should log on to it and check who is registered for their group as part of the annual census.

Ardnally



Ardnally's many trees are one of its attractions. In addition to providing some shelter they provide us with wood for the campfires and help to screen out the city that surrounds it. Many of the trees in Ardnally however are old. As a result we have undertaken a detailed survey that has revealed many of our trees are dead and some a danger to property. Over the next few years we will be removing the dangerous trees before they cause damage. In December we began the process, in which around 10 trees were felled while some others pruned and reshaped. We will continue to plant more trees at every opportunity. The wood from the fallen trees has been left to dry out for the new camping season.

Competitions

If your Beavers, Cubs, Scouts or Explorers want competitions there are numerous events organised in the next few months. The scout section has a new dodge ball competition launching this month. Details for all competitions are outlined in the calendar below.

62nd Belfast Explorers trip to Iceland

by John Lyons

62nd Explorers visit to Iceland at Halloween. DC Maurice offered to lead a party of us there and was almost killed in the stampede to get everything booked.

Eventually 13 Explorers plus Maurice, Ricky his assistant and John, 62nd Scout Leader assembled at Aldergrove for the 2 hour flight into the West. We landed after dark so had a problem to find our accommodation which was 2 lodges in remote country almost 40kms away. Ricky and Maurice drove the 2 x 8 seater vans (The Insurers regarded John as too big a risk to drive at his age).



A brief stop at KFC to delay the onslaught of starvation by ever hungry teenagers meant we arrived at our Lodges after the warden's bedtime. He handed us the keys, as we found out how everything worked by ourselves.

Next morning we awoke to a white landscape as snow had fallen and the scenery was like a chocolate box. The next few days just flew as we viewed the site of the oldest Parliament in Europe, saw waterfalls of prodigious power and height, and geysers which blew boiling hot steam 30ft into the air at unpredictable intervals. We also swam in open air pools which were about 40°C but the air temperature was almost zero. The hot water comes from underground, and provides the locals with the cheapest power in Europe so the pools were almost free. Quite pleasant when you got used to it. A barrel of freezing water was also available for the really hard men. I was told by some it was refreshing after the lukewarm water of the pool. There were other descriptions!



Meals in restaurants in Iceland are very expensive, so we mostly cooked our own - and very good they were! Most of the Explorers spent the next couple of hours in the lodge's outdoor hot tubs as though they had not already been swimming in hot water much of the afternoon. Finally another couple of hours poking at their mobiles or playing board games, took us to bedtime.

The Northern Lights stubbornly refused to make an appearance as it was cloudy most nights and full moon on others.

A visit to the Iceland rip off - known as the Blue Lagoon - is an obligatory part of any visit to Iceland. It is a small lake in a disused quarry where the water is even warmer than the swimming pools and due to some substance in suspension is like swimming in pale blue milk.

The Scouts rounded off a good year with 6 of them completing their Chief Scout Gold Award and were at Belfast City Hall on January 8th for the presentations.



District Calendar

Please note Belfast County now publish information about their events on Facebook.

Search "Belfast County Scouts" to be added to the group.

Event	Date	Venue	Time	Notes
District Cub Quiz heat	January/February	Arnavally	TBC	Contact Phil Patterson
Belfast Cub Swimming Gala	15 th January	Valley Leisure Centre	17.45 to 20.00	Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
CSA/QSA Presentations	8 th January	Belfast City Hall	7pm	NISC
District Scout Dodgeball	24 th January	Arnavally	2pm - 4pm	Contact David Hanna scouts110@virginmedia.com
Scout Climbing Competition	TBC	Tollymore OPC	TBC	NISC
Safe Guarding Course for new leaders and young leaders	28 th February	Arnavally	3pm to 4 30pm	Confirm your place with Maurice mau.johnston@btinternet.com

District 5 a side football heats	February	TBC	TBC	Contact David Hanna
District Beaver Unihoc	February	TBC	TBC	Contact Debbie Gaston
Scout County 5 a side final	4 th March	Valley leisure centre	19.00 to 21.00	Entry by District heats held in February Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
NI Cub Table Quiz final	5 th March	TBC	TBC	NISC
County Beaver Unihoc	5 th March	TBC	TBC	Entry via District heat in February Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
NI Scout Archery final	TBC	TBC	TBC	NISC
Explorer Ready Steady Cook...	12 March	TBC	13.00 to 17.00	Contact Norman McKee Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
NI Beaver Unihoc final	TBC	TBC	TBC	NISC
County Scout Urban Sports Night	16 th and 17 th March	T13	19.00 to 21.30	Belfast County (Des Grant) Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
Scout PI Training	March	Crawfordsburn	TBC	NISC
Belfast Cubs 5 a side	3 rd May	The Pavilion Complex, Stormont	19.00 to 21.00	Stephen Mallet Belfast County Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
Scout County Flag Competition	6 th to 8 th May.	Crawfordsburn	7pm	Belfast County team (Des Grant) Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
Arnavally Walk	7 th May	Arnavally	9 30am	Meet in Belvoir Forest car park
Beaver Rally Day	May/June	Crawfordsburn	10am	NISC

Explorer overnight Pioneering Challenge	13 th to 14 th May	Ardnally	7pm	Belfast County (Contact Norman McKee) Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
Belfast Cubs County Flag	14 th May	Ardnally	9.30 to 16.00	Belfast County. Contact Stephen Mallet Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
Cub Centenary Camp	27 th – 29 th May	Ardnally	7pm	Belfast County. Contact Stephen Mallet Belfast County Scouts on Facebook.com
NI Cub 5 a side football final	4 th June	TBC	TBC	NISC
June	AGMs	TBC	TBC	TBC
Canoe Expedition to Canada	29 th to 12 th July	Ontario	8am	Further details from NISC or Maurice Johnston mau.johnston@btinternet.com
Explorer Belt expedition	1 st July to 17 th July	France and Belgium	TBC	NISC