

# GLOBAL GATEWAY

Andy Slaney takes a look at the International aspects of the Explorer Scout Programme to encourage your Unit to step through into a world of opportunity



## LOCAL INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Let us start close to home, where anyone can experience the international flavour of Scouting. This is a very easy option because the rest of the world travels to you. They bring their customs, their culture and their friendship to you. Remember – these large international camps also offer a huge range of activities and events for you to enjoy, many of which you will never be able to organise and experience outside such a gathering.

Now is the time to start thinking about applying for next year's international camp. Put this article down and do it now! Start by flicking to the Classified advertisements at the back of this magazine, and then take a look at ScoutBase UK. If you still cannot find what you are looking for, then contact your Assistant County/Area Commissioner (International), who will have a list from Gilwell Park with details of all the events as they are announced, inside and outside the UK.

## Alton Towers – a camp against the odds

For this month's success story we focus on an annual event that began way back in the early 1990s. The concept was pretty simple. Organise a weekend camp at the local campsite, only plan one activity for the Saturday and there you go. Sounds so simple to me, but some people reckoned it wouldn't work.

Let me explain that the campsite is about 45 minutes (on a coach) from Alton Towers theme park and the Saturday activity was a visit to the park. About two coaches worth of Venture Scouts attended that first event, which convinced the organisers (from Belper District in Derbyshire) that they should run another event the following year. They improved on the first year by putting on a disco when everyone returned on the Saturday night. Since then, the event has been a huge hit on the Venture Scout calendar. Numbers have stabilised at between 300 and 400, and the event welcomed Venture Scouts from all over the country. The disco expanded into both the Friday and the Saturday evenings, with fancy dress being demanded for the second night.

However, the 'it won't work' brigade hadn't finished with this event yet. With the advent of two new Sections to replace the Venture Scout Section, the organisers have made a very brave decision. They have taken the event and split it in two. This year, for the first time ever, there are going to be two Alton Towers camps.

One is aimed at the Scout Network age range and the other is aimed at our very own Explorer Scout Section age range. There have been a few muted mummings that this won't be as successful as the previous format, but we will see.

## Event details

**Date:** 3–5 October 2003

**Venue:** Drum Hill Campsite, Little Eaton, Derbyshire

**Cost:** £30 (this includes transport to and from Alton Towers and the ticket to the theme park, camp fees and all activities)

As a change to the previous Venture Scout events, they have introduced activities on the Sunday morning and the Saturday evening. The disco will still happen on the Saturday night, but you can also expect some funfair-style activities. There will be a non-alcoholic cocktail bar as well.

Please note that the organisers are asking that Units are accompanied for the weekend by at least one Leader. More information and booking forms are available at [www.countyevents.org.uk](http://www.countyevents.org.uk)

Just in case we get the odd Network Member reading these pages, your event is the following weekend (10–12 October).

## FURTHER AFIELD

This brings me nicely to the next option – ensuring that you have a truly international dimension to your Explorer Scouting. How about applying to attend another country's international camp? These are very similar to ones held in this country, but you will be the international visitors. There is normally an opportunity to see more of the host country before or after the camp,

possibly through Home Hospitality with a group of local Explorer Scouts. The experiences and the activities at camp are usually similar to those on offer in this country.

## ORGANISED ACTIVITIES

If I still haven't come up with a suggestion that appeals to you, try this one. Kandersteg International Scout Centre, set in the Swiss Alps, becomes a



Be sure to experience the local culture

Basically, what I am trying to get across is that the returns on the investment in an international experience are much, much bigger than the initial financial outlay.

## OVER TO YOU!

It is now September and I am aware of four large international gatherings that took place over the summer period in the UK. If my abacus is not mistaken, that comes to 10,000 young people who felt part of the worldwide family of Scouts, and who experienced first hand what international Scouting is all about. You will be able to read the reports

from these events in future issues of *Scouting Magazine*.

Can anyone have missed the fact that 2,500 young people from the United Kingdom went over to Thailand last December to 'Share our World, Share our Culture' with the rest of the world?

So, from the World Jamboree to an international gathering on your own doorstep – and let's not forget all the options in between too – where does your Group want to go for their taste of international culture? What are you going to do about it? For the sake of the young people in your charge, do something. Hopefully the suggestions below will help you.



International camps are a great way to meet other Scouts from across the world

Each and every one of us in The Scout Association is a member of the worldwide family of Scouts. Now don't argue, yes you are, it says so in the fourth of the seven Scout Laws! So, if it is one of the Laws, what are you doing to make it a reality?

International is one of the Zones in the new Programme. We should all be including an international aspect into our Explorer Scouting. I know, I know – it's too expensive, it takes a lot of time, effort and trouble to organise, there's a lot of red tape to deal with and it just isn't really worth your while for the returns you get... or maybe you were able to think of a different excuse from any of these? I would argue that they are just that – excuses.

## POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

When you hear of the stories of the young people who, after a trip to Kenya/Romania/Nepal with their Scout Group, spent working in a busy township/remote village community, decide that their vocation in life is to work in South America/Mozambique/Croatia helping those less fortunate than them, how can you say it isn't worth the effort? How many participants at a Jamboree (and I quote) "go along to the event as a boy and return as a man"? Note that I am quoting two individual people and they were both referring to a male Scout, but that this applies equally to female Scouts, so please do not start writing irate letters to the Editor!



mini international Jamboree for a couple of months every summer due to the number of different groups camping there each week. Indoor accommodation is available if you would rather not lug all your camping gear out there with you.

The staff are drawn from countries throughout Europe (and further afield) and allow you to experience a huge range of activities. These include various hikes – to a glacier, to an Alpine dairy or to watch the sun rise – as well as mountain biking, white water rafting, and abseiling. There is also an all-weather toboggan course in the town if you want to try something different. You can arrange this all yourselves or through travel companies who will make the arrangements for you. Again, check out the adverts in this magazine.

**ON YOUR OWN**

These same travel companies can also arrange tailor-made packages to other places too. I know of one Unit that spent ten days in Austria using one such company. My only warning on this type of experience is that it could potentially become a camp in a foreign country as opposed to the international experience provided by the other choices.

However, it shouldn't take a lot of imagination or effort to arrange some

**Contact Details**

You can write to Andy care of the *Scouting Magazine* office or email him at [scouting.magazine@scout.org.uk](mailto:scouting.magazine@scout.org.uk)

sort of local experience for the Unit. This could include visiting the nearest Scout Group. You can also arrange days out away independently from the tour operation (which could include completing challenges involving getting information about the locality). When I was in Tignes earlier this year on a skiing trip, I picked up a brochure listing some great events going on in that area during the summer months – scuba diving, glacier skiing and mountain biking, as well as walking in the Alps. What more can your Explorer Scouts ask for?

**WORLD CLASS**

My last suggestion is attending a World Jamboree. I won't dwell too much on this idea as many pages of *Scouting Magazine* last year and this year have already included information, reports and reviews from Thailand. I would just say don't consider it as an expensive holiday for the chosen few, and do your utmost to ensure that as many young people as possible are able get to attend what will undoubtedly be the pinnacle of their Explorer Scouting lives. This is even more important when you consider that the United Kingdom has the honour of hosting the next World Jamboree in our centenary year, 2007, and EuroJam in 2005.

**IT'S TOO EXPENSIVE!**

Whether you are going halfway round the world or just around the corner for your international experience, it is going to cost money. Some Counties/Areas and Districts are really geared up when it comes to international events and the individuals involved pay very little, so it can be done. However, if you adopt this route, it will cost you some time.

**Raising the money**

Look at the fundraising options you have and ensure that you maximise their full potential. For instance, don't go and organise monthly jumble sales that raise £100 over the year when you could organise one large casino night and raise the same amount of money on one evening.

Think big and be ambitious, but adopt a sensible approach. Events that are destined to fail should be cancelled before any costs have been incurred. I have heard of many fundraising events

**CAN YOU HELP?**

If you have any good quality images of Explorer Scouts that you would like to see appear in *Scouting Magazine*, then please send them in! We are very short on photographs of Explorer Scouts taking part in both indoor and outdoor activities. Please note that uniform, where shown, has to be the correct uniform, and for adventurous activities, the safety guidelines of The Scout Association must be followed. Hard copy images and digital images are acceptable (as long the images are of high resolution). Please mark each image/CD/email clearly with your name and contact details (but do not write in pen on the back of photos) so the images can be returned to you and, if printed, can be credited. Send your photos to Explorer Scout Photos, *Scouting Magazine*, The Scout Association, Gilwell Park, Chingford, London E4 7QW or email [scouting.magazine@scout.org.uk](mailto:scouting.magazine@scout.org.uk)

where hundreds of pounds are raised with just one night's effort.

**AWARD WORK**

One final international opportunity that hasn't had a mention yet is the Explorer Belt Award. This was intentional for a couple of reasons. Firstly, it is only available to Explorer Scouts who are over 16, and secondly it is designed to be completed in small groups (typically three or four members).

It is certainly a worthwhile and effective way to get to see a foreign country. The requirements stipulate that you must spend at least 30 hours travelling in the country over ten days, that you must visit at least four different towns and villages, and you must complete major and minor projects during the expedition. Your *Unit essentials* folder contains more information on the specific requirements of this Award.

**WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?**

There's a wealth of information out on taking your Group abroad, from ScoutBase to asking your Assistant County/Area Commissioner (International) and other Leaders if they've got any recommendations. So go, seize the day and start your Unit's world spinning. ■



THIS MONTH'S THEME IS RELATIONSHIPS. WRITTEN BY MELANIE PALMER

TIME	ACTIVITY	ZONE	METHOD	INSTRUCTIONS
Build up to JOTA	Jamboree on the Air	Relationships, International	Technology	Encourage the young people to get online and have a look at the World Scout Bureau website about the Jamboree on the Air ( <a href="http://www.scout.org/wse/jota.shtml">www.scout.org/wse/jota.shtml</a> ), which this year is happening on 18-19 October. Explorers could find out more about how it works and get involved with a station, talking to people on the other side of the world.
One evening	Relationship role-plays	Relationships	Role-play, Discussion	Role-play relationships with parents involving arguments, differences of opinion and so on. Could they improve their relationships with their parents?
Two or three hours	Moving In and Moving On	Relationships	Working together, Projects	As a Unit, plan how you can build relationships with the Scouts moving up. What was it like when you first came to the Unit? How could you make the experience easier for new Members? Create a strategy for joint activities, Moving In and Moving On, and a Moving In ceremony.
One evening	Relate	Relationships	Visit	Arrange a visit from a representative from Relate or a family planning clinic to discuss relationships.
One evening	Teams for a challenge	Relationships	Discussion, Technology, Games	Watch a clip from <i>Big Brother</i> , <i>Castaway</i> or similar. Ask the Explorers to discuss the relationships shown, the types of people involved, and what types of people they think they would survive being 'stuck with' for a long period of time. Would they choose different people if they were going to be in a challenging and dangerous environment, such as an expedition? Would they still want someone to entertain them, or would they prefer someone determined to lead them in a trek to North Pole. ascent of Everest, or undertaking a round-the-world yacht race? Relate this discussion to potential future experiences in university or college. How do you deal with people who you don't get on with in these confined situations? You could also discuss team building for Scouting and Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions.
One afternoon or evening	Assault Course	Relationships	Games, Working with others	This is a really good activity for incorporating into a whole District or County event, using an assault course (a ready-made children's adventure playground can be used and needs minimal adaptation for this). The Explorer Scouts work in teams of four to carry a heavy weight (ideally this should need two or perhaps three to carry it to make it really awkward) and three unbroken eggs around the assault course. They need to work as a team to do this in the fastest time with penalties for broken eggs and dropping the weight.
One evening	Bring a friend party	Relationships	Fun	Throw a party (theme of Unit's choice) and make it a 'bring a friend' party. This will not only be a fun way for the Explorers to let off steam as they get back into the school year (or begin work for the first time), but it is an opportunity to sell the Section to young people from outside the Movement.