

News from the Groups

3rd. Dubai
Camel Colony (3rd Dubai) campout at Emirates Marine Environmental Group campsite, Jebel Ali, Dubai UAE 17 February 2005 – by Debi Evans (Chipmunk) BSL

Issue 67, May 2005

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Editorial

It doesn't seem very long since the last issue of Far and Wide but as we have rearranged the publication dates it is only two months. I think the change has caught some of my colleagues out, as I do not appear to have much to put in it. So just to remind everyone see table below:

<u>Last date for FAW</u>	<u>Mailed to Groups</u>
15 th November	December
15 th February	March
15 th April	May
15 th August	September

All items for inclusion should be sent to me as I have broadband and therefore can receive photos more easily. Please send a write up with your pictures even if it is just a short one. Please note my change of email address, it is now elliott0647@yahoo.co.uk.

The Camel Colony Beaver Scouts (3rd Dubai) were very privileged to be invited to be the first group to camp out at the EMEG campsite on the last natural beach in Dubai. This area is being preserved as a wildlife sanctuary and conservation area; it is home to breeding turtles in April; there are many species of marine life to be found here and wildlife is abundant in the adjacent desert. Fish are being bred and studied here and then released into the Ocean. It is a safe environment and a wonderful experience for our Beaver Scouts and parents alike to learn something of the beautiful part of the Middle East in which we all live (albeit most of us temporarily).



Each Beaver Scout brought along a parent and a tent, and we pitched camp at 4pm. At 5pm we gathered on a raised sheltered area, enjoying the breeze off the sea whilst our host, Major Ali Sowedi, a local and the man behind EMEG, welcomed us and explained about the environmental project he is undertaking here. We then were treated to a falcon display (traditional

Arab style) and the boys were able to have one of these majestic creatures on their arms for a photo.



Our hosts had caught a local fish for each boy's dinner and these they took great delight in wrapping in silver foil, and we carefully placed them on the campfire. A fish supper followed – very tasty indeed, the fish being similar to mackerel, - and rice. We were encouraged to eat in the local style – with the fingers –, which the boys thoroughly enjoyed! Campfire singing, jokes and stories followed, and then we listened to Major Ali explaining about the stars as we relaxed around the fire on a beautifully clear starlit night in the desert with the sound of the sea lapping the shore nearby. The sea-air exhausted everyone and boys and parents alike went off to bed by 10pm. We awoke at 7am and feasted on traditional Camel Colony camp fare of Cocoa Pops and chocolate muffins! Then we split the boys and parents into 3 groups and spent the morning doing 3 activities, rotating after 45 minutes. The first group did a wildlife walk with a local expert (which involved a short 4-wheel drive to a corner of the reserve and then looking for animal tracks in the desert terrain and our group actually saw a hare (very rare in the daytime!). The boys noted that grass had started to come through the sand, as well as many succulent plant shoots – it has been an unusually wet winter. The second group did a 'litter pick' around the whole area, including the mangroves, which are newly planted. The third group went with the Fish Doctor and took many different species of fish out of the nets and studied them in their buckets of water. The boys were delighted to be

able to handle the fish. All the fish were later released back into the sea by the boys, which made a happy ending to a fantastic campout! We hope to continue a happy relationship with EMEG as we have been promised mangrove seedlings for each boy to take home in September, to nurture and then return to the site to plant on the edge of the sea to create a mangrove habitat. Together with our 3rd Dubai Cub Pack and Scout Troop we are working towards our Environmental Award.

Scout Camp 3rd. Dubai style
By Robert Corkill Cober PL.

On Wednesday 23rd February 3rd Dubai Scout troop went on a 3-day 2-night camp at the Emirates Marine Environmental Group (EMAG) site near the Abu Dhabi border. The site is on the beach in an area of coastline, which is dedicated to breeding and conserving indigenous endangered species.

Day 1

We arrived at the campsite at 4 p.m. and needed to set up camp before sunset at 6.30. Weather was warm and a little windy. Tents were set out in a semicircle near a manmade lake, which was home to huge endangered crabs!

We were very pleased to learn that our leader Gil had ordered McDonalds' for us all that evening. However the arrival of the burgers was not without incident as the delivery vans managed to get stuck in the mud by the lake and had to be abandoned there!

Later that evening Major Ali, the director of EMAG gave us a fascinating talk about the history of stars in the UAE and how the Arabs used them for navigation. It was a clear night so visibility was perfect. We were able to see Orion and the Pole star.

Day 2

Up at the crack of dawn for Flag Break, followed by cooking a breakfast of bacon butties and pancakes cooked by the new scouts towards their camp badge. It was delicious!



Now it was time for the Raft competition. Each patrol designed their raft in the sand and then chose bits and pieces from the variety of equipment such as barrels, wood, bamboo, ropes etc to build their raft. Later we were able to test the rafts by floating them across the channel. This resulted in many wet bodies! And some Scouts realised they needed more practice on knots! However the Tigers triumphed in this task by not getting wet and managing to transport their buckets across the channel and back.



Insert picture: rafts go round the island

After lunch we had the Falcon demonstration.



That night we had freshly caught fish from the lake, which the Tigers had caught with

nets, their prize for winning the raft competition. It was cooked over the fire and so were the marshmallows for the midnight feast!

Later that evening we played wide games such as Capture the Flag and The Bomb.



Day 3

Up early again for breakfast cooked by the leaders this time. Time to break camp! Tents were inspected for sand content and then put away.

After this we were invited to a Fish demonstration and dissection. We were taught how to diagnose the age and length of a fish by counting the scales. Then came the Dissection. The Fish Doctor opened up a small fish and showed us its brain and heart. The heart was about the same size as its eye!

After a lunch of hot dogs we departed for home, exhausted but happy and in need of a shower before school the next day!



Many thanks to our hardworking Leaders for another memorable camp.



Tsunami Appeal

Two more reports of the tremendous efforts made by the groups to, aid this appeal. Well done everybody.

1st. Falkland Islands
By Jan and Tim Miller

We have chosen today, Baden Powells birthday and the day when we think of all the other Scouts around the World to close our fund. We are ending with a party tonight at Cubs when all the boys are dressing up as someone from another country!!



We have raised a grand total of £1,231.50. We advertised in the local Penguin News for jobs which we could undertake in aid of the Appeal and had a number of offers (quite a few were beyond our capabilities. Such as cut down a tree and strim 3' high grass but luckily as we run a landscaping business, we were able to send our blokes in and then the Cubs and Scouts tidied up afterwards!)

1st. Stavanger
By Paul Gray

I recently took our Cub Pack to the Pratt and Whitney Engine Facility for Norway, which is based here in Stavanger. At the same time I invested one of the Cubs under one of the engines. Unfortunately I don't have any pictures of the investiture, but I do have a picture of us visiting the Engine Shop.

The Jobs included stacking peat for the Governor (he has peat burning stoves) Weeding around the Standard Chartered Bank building, Weeding private gardens, fence painting and helping out at the local old folks clubs Bring and Buy Sale, as they wanted to donate the money to us as they thought it was a lovely idea for a group of youngsters raising money to help other young people.





Insert picture: weeding at Milly Andersons!

The boys have been really interested in this project. Especially as Tim showed the boys on a map one night how Stanley would have been affected if the same Tsunami had hit us! The boys were quite pleased that it would wipe out the school, then they realised it would also wipe out the hospital, all the shops, the churches, the power station and our drinking water!!

People around the Falklands did see an unusually high tidal wave surging up estuaries at least 24 hours after the tsunami disaster, so it did travel some distance !

Late news

Good news...our final total has gone up to £1,372.92 , we had 3 late donations from some very generous people !!

The Falkland Islands has a whole has been raising money for the general tsunami appeal and the fund stands at the moment at approx. £22,000.00...Not bad for a population of 2,000 Islanders and 1,800 servicemen and civilian personnel!!

1st. Fuengirola

Just thought we would let you know how well the unit did when we decided we wanted to help the Tsunami appeal.

This really affected some of our members as we are based on the coast here in Spain and the thought of the wave hitting here was a possibility and disaster the children could relate to. For me it had even more significance as I was staying in Phuket the week before. The Tsunami caused the hotel to have the lower two floors flooded with the loss of lives and much damage.

So when the idea to raise money was mentioned this seemed a very good cause to support.

We decided that we would aim to collect a 100 metres of euros as this was something different here in Spain and could easily be explained in any language.

So on Saturday 19th March we arrived in a popular shopping centre in Fuengirola and laid out our 100 meters admittedly we cheated by doing 5 lengths of 20 meters as this fitted better and was easier to control.

The unit members along with the help of the Guides and Brownies were armed with buckets and proceeded to stop anyone walking through the shopping area. Some people were approached more than once but thankfully it was taken in the best spirit and with the support of a local radio station we managed to reach 70. metres, a total of 3044 euros. We had agreed that we would split the proceeds with a local charity that is supporting an orphanage in Sri Lanka and the Scouts own appeal fund.

So hope that our donation of 1522 euros will help some of the Scout units to restart. The other money will go to help in the orphanage where they are interested in finding out more about Scouting for the children they are helping.

From Carol Wright GSL 1st Fuengirola Scout Group Malaga SPAIN.

Leader Training

Firstly I must apologise to anybody who has been expecting to hear from me and hasn't yet. I have been having problems with my emails and some have not been getting through to me and some I have sent have not got through to you. I have now changed my email address to elliott0647@yahoo.co.uk and I now request a read receipt so that I know it has reached you. I know these can be a bit of a pain but please click on yes and that way we can improve communication. Some of you are on Provisional Appointments and these have a maximum life of ten months. During that time you must complete the Getting Started modules (1, 2 & 3) and send your evidence for validation and a copy of your Personal Learning Plan to me. When those modules are complete then your full warrant can be applied for.

The Adult Support team at Gilwell is gradually producing more modules in either workbook format or as CD-ROM which will all be very helpful to BGA Leaders as we rely very much on distance learning.

If you are back in the UK at any time for holidays etc. then please let me know as I would like, if it is physically possible, to meet you. It is so nice to put faces to names and have a chat about any issues you might have that I can help with. If anybody is interested there are Section Leader training courses at Gilwell from 17 – 22 July (SLT4) and from 21 – 26 August (SLT6). Accommodation can either be in the White House or camping. The cost for the course is £375 for indoors or £199 for camping. Applications should be sent to Jackie Johnson, Course Administrator, The Scout Association, Gilwell Park, Chingford, London, E4 7QW. Applications for financial aid should be sent to Sarah Hobbs in the International Department at Gilwell.

Lastly Congratulations to Paul Gray, 1st. Stavanger on the award of his Wood Badge. Paul is now back in the UK but I know will continue to support the other Leaders in Stavanger as their Training Advisor, thank you Paul.

Heather Elliott

Cub Scouts – April 2005

In January I suggested an idea using mirrors. I have just finished reading The Da Vinci Code by Dan Brown. Codes and mirrors come into the book and I got to thinking of codes and mirrors and Cubs. With the date of 05 05 05 coming up I thought of a programme with mirrors.

There are all sorts of reasons for using codes and Cubs love working with them as long as they are not too long and not too difficult. There is the reversal of letters codes. That is where you write out the alphabet and write out the numbers from 1 to 26. Then you shift the letters so, for example, the number 5 is now the letter A. Write out a message in numbers and the Cubs undo it.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C	D

The numbers 653 will give you Bay.

There are codes where you draw an X and put one letter between each arm of the X. Then draw a cross and put another letter in each arm. Then you draw the first X with a dot in each corner and put another four letters in the arms of the X. Do the same for the cross. Carry on until all 26 letters are used up. Then you write the message using angles and dots.

You could use codes of pictograms or hieroglyphics depending on the theme of your camp or meeting. Cubs could help make the code in preparation for the outing.

You can use codes at camp to lay a treasure trail. Each tent team could have a different message to a different treasure.

There are codes in Dan Brown's book you can use. And there is mirror writing. When I did this with my Cubs I found some of them were very quick at putting the paper up to the light and reading the messages that way so if you want to avoid that you will have to back the messages with card.

However, what should the messages say if it is just for a pack meeting? Here are some suggestions. These are the messages I used written out in mirror writing. They are short. The Cubs enjoyed discussing them as they unscrambled them.

- 1 Cub Scouts
- 2 Do your best
- 3 Do a Good Turn.
- 4 Cub are honest.
- 5 Cubs play fair.
- 6 Cubs help others.
- 7 Cubs like Badges
- 8 Cubs work together.
- 9 Cub Camp is fun.
- 10 Play by the rules.
- 11 Use it or Lose it.
- 12 Use your Vote.
- 13 Back the Bid
- 14 Stay alive in 05.
- 15 5-a-side Football Competition is soon.
- 16 Cubs think of others before themselves.
- 17 Eat 5 fruit and veg every day.

Some of the suggestions like 'Back the Bid' is one known to the children in the UK as London bids for the Olympics. 'Stay Alive in 05' is the present road safety campaign. I'm sure you can find local replacements.

I hope this inspires or helps you with your pack camp / holiday. As always, drop me a line if you find this useful or if you need more information.

Astrid Roberts ACC (Cubs)
astridroberts@aol.com

The Chief Scout has made the following awards for Good Service – we join him in sending our congratulations to the recipients:

The Bar to the Silver Acorn

<i>Sonia Carr</i>	DC & CSL	1 st Oman Scout Group; Oman
Bob Spargo	County Secretary	British Groups Abroad
Bill Turnbull	Chairman, Mid Herts District Scout Fellowship; formerly BGA Co-ordinator, International Office, HQ.	

The Chief Scout's Commendation

Cathy Magnay	CSL & Group Contact	1 st Kampala (Crested Crane), Uganda
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Welcome, Farewell – and Congratulations

Farewell, and many thanks to the following Leaders who have left BGA:

Natalie Alabakis	ABSL	3 rd Dubai Scout Group, United Arab Emirates
Jean Blundell-Caulfield	BSL	British School Scout Group, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Catherine Bolton	ACSL	1 st Sharjah Scout Group, United Arab Emirates
Quentin Fogg	ACSL	3 rd Dubai Scout Group, United Arab Emirates
Paul Gray	CSL	1 st Stavanger Scout Group, Norway
David Hamilton	Troop Assistant	British School Scout Group, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Kenneth Lenton	SL	1 st Fuengirola (The Ark) Scout Group, Spain
Katharina Lialios	ASL (Provisional)	St Catherine's Attica Scout Group, Greece
John MacPherson	ASL	3 rd Dubai Scout Group, United Arab Emirates
Scott McDonald	ACSL	British School Scout Group, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
John Milne	Group Contact	1 st Stavanger Scout Group, Norway
Chris Robson	ACSL	1 st Dhahran Scout Group, Saudi Arabia (EP)
Glynn Stirling	BSL	1 st Dhahran Scout Group, Saudi Arabia (EP)
Anuradha Vye	ACSL	3 rd Dubai Scout Group, United Arab Emirates
Lesley Walker	ABSL	1 st Stavanger Scout Group, Norway
Ruth Welford	ACSL	1 st Sharjah Scout Group, United Arab Emirates

Service Awards:

Congratulations to the following Leaders who have received Service Awards:

Service Certificate 5 Years

<i>Sarah Nolan</i>	BSL	British School Scout Group, Riyadh; Saudi Arabia
<i>David Simms</i>	ASL	3 rd Dubai Scout Group, United Arab Emirates

I'm sorry to advise you that 1st Dhahran Scout Group, Saudi Arabia (Eastern Province) has now closed.

Best wishes to you all

Bob Spargo, County Secretary