

*South West Notts
Explorer Scouts
Newsletter*

EXPLORERS[♣]

This Newsletter is sent to all SLs and GSLs in SW Notts District, so that you know what Explorers are doing, and therefore can encourage your Scouts to move up.

International

You will recall from the last couple of newsletters that Explorer Scouts from South West Notts made a summer expedition to Rotterdam in 2015. There they met some Dutch Scouts of the equivalent age-group (also called Explorers), and they agreed that the Dutch ought to come to England this year. In the true spirit of youth-shaped Scouting neither side consulted their leaders first!

However, the visit went ahead and in July Explorer members of the Menno van Coehoorn Group from Bergen Op Zoom camped at Walesby for a few days, before moving on to London (via Stonehenge!). Unfortunately they arrived at Walesby before all Nottinghamshire schools and colleges had broken up. Nonetheless some Explorers from SW Notts were available to guide them around Nottingham and then join them at Walesby for part of their time there.



Just chatting.



National and Group flags

While talking to one another, it was revealed that the Menno van Coehoorn Explorers plan to camp in Belgium next year, and it seems that enough friendships have blossomed between the British and the Netherlanders that both sides would like to meet up yet again - provided we can resolve any clash of term times in 2017!



Incidentally, the name of the Group comes from Menno, baron van Coehoorn, who was a Dutch military engineer in the service of William, Prince of Orange (later William III of England). Baron van Coehoorn revolutionised the building of fortresses in flat terrain; the Group flag shows a typical "vesting" with arrow-shaped outworks for defence of the ramparts.

Dunno about other people, but I think I would prefer the colour of the Netherlands shirts to our own.

ACANAC 2017

Those of you with long memories will remember that in 2010 some Portuguese Pioneiros visited Nottingham, and then in 2102 our Explorers joined them for their Acampamento Nacional, or ACANAC. The next ACANAC is in 2017, so an alternative to the visit to Belgium is to go back to Portugal. SLs will have had an email asking them to notify our District Explorer Scout Commissioner about Scouts likely to move up in the 2016/2017 school year, and ACANAC is the main reason for this; last time we had to make flight bookings very early, and to raise funds even earlier. We don't want any Scout who moves up at, say, Easter, to miss out on travelling with the other Explorers.

Japan Jamboree



Maybe it seems a long time ago, but there was one last task for the Jamboree participants - Jess and Lilly gave a presentation at the District GM for 2015, held at the Town Hall.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Explorer badge programme is very much aligned with the DofE scheme. For much of this year our reporting of this topic has been a bit humdrum - "training events have been being held outside normal Unit meetings, on Tuesday nights" - but at last that training has paid off, with 5 qualifying expeditions held in the summer. (For those not familiar with the DofE scheme, each team of Explorers has to complete both a practice and a qualifying expedition; one of the problems is that the rules state that the team has to be the same for both expeditions, no mix-and-match, so finding two sets of dates on which everybody is available while steering around family holidays, is no easy task!)

Matt Styles writes:

We had a team from Pioneer go out on their 3day/2night canoeing expedition from Nottingham to Newark, as well as their practice expedition from Trent Lock to Nottingham beforehand. Apart from being much more speedy than they thought they would be, the group had an awesome time and even got a cheeky paddle in a shallow bit of the Old River Trent. There are talks of doing their Gold expedition in France in 2018 after some more training and practice.



We also had two Bronze DofE walking teams go out on their 2day/night expeditions in Vale of Belvoir. They only got lost a couple of times but it was scorching hot (see left below) so it could have been worse! One group has started planning their Silver area and the other is thinking of



doing their Silver by canoe or kayak! Also not in photos here we had a group go out walking who are considering cycling for next year, and another



Silver walking group going out hopefully later this summer. In a couple of years time we could be looking at a big group of Queen's Scout Award holders meeting Her Majesty if we all keep up the fab work!

(Again for those not familiar with the higher echelons of Explorer/Network qualifications, Queen's Scout = DofE Gold plus some extras.)

Other News

Gilwell 24

Pioneer and some Tornado went to Gilwell 24 again this year after having such an awesome time last year. Activities started at 9am on Saturday and finished at 9am Sunday - we managed until 8am Sunday before the excess tiredness left us longing for a snooze on the minibus and a cup of tea back at camp! There was everything from climbing to zorbing, axe throwing to 3G swings, mountain boarding, crafts, inflatables, rave, circus skills, segways, woodturning, zip wire, rifle shooting, scuba diving, campfires, talent shows, technology zones, and loads more I can't remember! It's definitely a good event to watch out for next year! It's also in the amazing Gilwell Park (The Scout Association's HQ) in London which is stunning.

National Scout Memorial

Matt Styles, Pioneer ESL, had the honour of being invited to the opening of the National Scout Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum where one of his Explorers from Wales was also visiting. A group of Network members, supported by a champion leader fundraised over £150,000 to fund the project. It was a very solemn and thought-provoking day and the stonemason really captured the campfire moment in his work.



You can see information on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ScoutMemorialProject> or on the NMA internet page <http://www.thenma.org.uk/events-and-news/news-stories/national-scout-memorial-dedicated-at-the-arboretum/>. The National Memorial Arboretum is nearby in Staffordshire and definitely worth a visit with your Group: <http://www.thenma.org.uk/>

Weekly meetings, etc.

Despite the summer term for Explorers being a time of weeping and wailing as GCSEs and A-Levels take their toll, there has been a variety of light-hearted activities at the regular meetings, including chair football at Magellan (the chief point of which seemed to be to take aim at the ESL), origami catapults and “pin the tail on the donkey” (which apparently kept moving) at Pioneer — and some music.



Activities outside Scouting

Our teenagers do have lives outside Scouting and exams. One helped to organise a charity event for NCS Framework, one attended a “mathematics camp” at Cambridge

University, and two went to Tanzania on George Spencer Academy's school-building project.

Coming Events

As well as the international events under consideration, on the 13th and 14th November this year SW Notts Explorers will be taking part in the County-run Lake District hill-walking weekend. And, of course, there's Gilwell 24 2017...

Contact Information

There are 5 Units in the District, Tornado in Stapleford and Pioneer in Inham Nook, meeting on Mondays, Magellan and Discovery both meeting in Beeston on Thursdays, and Sharman, the Unit for Young Leaders, meeting when and where necessary for training. Explorers can be members of Sharman and one of the other Units as well, and Young Leaders are free to take part in any District or County Explorer activities.

If you have Scouts approaching the transfer age (between 13y6m and 14y6m), in the first place please contact the ESL of the Unit to which your Troop normally transfers Scouts.
Discovery - Louise Bosworth, Magellan - Tom Genway, Pioneer - Matt Styles, Tornado & Sharman - Anne Linsdell

If that Unit doesn't suit the Scout, they have the choice of any Unit, and the following can advise:

Chris Coats, District Explorer Scout Commissioner, coatscg@gmail.com, tel: 0115 9522849
or the editor of this newsletter:

Richard Pratt, District Adviser, richard.pratt62@alumni.imperial.ac.uk, tel: 0115 9436965.

If Scouts wish to find out more about Explorers, they can look at the Explorer website <http://www.explorers.swnotts-scouts.org.uk>, or if they are on Facebook the two FB groups **SW Notts Scouts** and **SW Notts Explorers** also carry postings.