



Scouting East



The Journal of East Belfast Scouting

No. 410

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

From the Editor



Hello everyone,

After a few months absence, I thought perhaps it was time to put together another issue of the Newssheet. I hope that all of our members, Leaders and their families are coping as best they can in these unprecedented and challenging times. Betty and I recognise that this is a very difficult time for many and that family responsibilities and work commitments must take priority. At the time of writing, new covid restrictions are about to be introduced, with schools closing again for a short period in an attempt to break the circuit of transmission of the virus. Many of our Leaders are facing increasing demands or uncertainty about employment or adapting to working from home, some are shielding themselves or caring for family members who are shielding or unwell, and many are understandably anxious and cautious. A few of our Sections had recently resumed a programme of limited outdoor activities, including 27th and 30th Packs, and 7th and 30th Troops and the response from those young people taking part and their parents has been very positive. The benefits for the mental health of our Cubs and Scouts are readily apparent but have to be balanced with stringent measures to mitigate risk of virus transmission and Leaders are right to be cautious. The District Executive have co-opted a small sub-group to review and advise the DC and Executive on approval of risk assessments and our thanks are extended to them for their work to date, especially constructive advice and meticulous attention to detail to ensure that safety is paramount.

From taking soundings in the District, Betty and I do not sense a strong push within East Belfast to resume meeting indoors although Scouting had moved to Yellow on 1st October in line with EA guidance. We will carefully and fairly consider any risk assessments submitted by Groups wishing to resume meeting indoors, but we share concerns expressed by many of our local sponsoring authorities about resumption of indoor activities on church premises and would wish to liaise closely with our Ministers and Kirk Sessions, Select Vestries and Church Councils and maintain good relationships. While we will support any

Groups wanting to meet outdoors provided risk assessments are submitted and approved and current restrictions permit, we will not push any to do so before they feel ready. We would though encourage all Leaders as far as they are able to keep in regular contact with their members, perhaps with virtual meetings or badgework projects and challenges.

Face to face meetings at District level have been paused for now, but we will attempt to arrange a virtual Executive and Scouters' Meeting in the coming weeks. We recognise that there are significant concerns amongst Groups about the 2021 census and (increased) membership fee and the District Team and Executive have been voicing these concerns at County and NI level and pushing for assistance in securing financial support through grants and bursaries. We will keep you updated.

As far as possible, can we encourage Leaders to respond to HQ requests to update mandatory training and ACCESSNI renewals so we can quickly scale back up to face to face meeting at the appropriate time? Please forward any training certificates directly to me and I will update records on Compass. If you need me to send the links again just ask. Similarly, if there is interest in completing some of the Woodbadge modules or Young Leader training scheme one –to-one or in small groups via Team or Zoom let me know and I will try to facilitate this. I am also looking into whether it might be feasible to offer First Response renewal for very small groups at a time, using a combination of remote and face to face activities, and prioritising those Leaders who have resumed face to face Scouting and need to renew as soon as possible.

As a District, we were very saddened to learn of the death of Mike Loder, a stalwart of 10th Belfast and East District, and a much-loved District Vice President, on 28th August at the Somme Nursing Home where he had spent his last few months. Our thoughts continue to be with Mike's family and his wider Scouting family at 10th, particularly the Troop Leaders, Charlie and Colin, who had such a close association with Mike over many years and have been touched very deeply by his passing. Although numbers in attendance were restricted due to current circumstances, many of us were grateful to St Colmcille's for streaming Mike's moving Funeral Service online, and to his family and 10th for the invitation for the District to provide a Guard of Honour for Mike's final journey to Redburn Cemetery. Thank you to all who participated. I know that 10th are planning a further commemoration of Mike's life and huge contribution to Scouting locally and wider afield when circumstances permit and as a District we will assist and support in any way we can.

In the interim, take care everyone, and stay safe,

Best wishes, *David*



News from 30th Pack

30th Cubs resumed a limited programme of outdoor activities in late August, with small groups meeting initially on Thursday evenings and now on Saturday afternoons. The response from the Cubs and their parents has been very positive and all of the extra effort that has gone into minimising risk while running activities is rewarded by seeing the fun and enjoyment the boys are having. With a number of the older Cubs transferring to the Troop which has also now reopened (including Jack Fuller who was awarded the Audrey Beggs Cub of the Year Cup for 2020), we have been able to welcome 8 new recruits moving up from Beavers. Cubs and Leaders have divided into smaller groups for activities including an outdoor quiz- with teams walking around the local area to identify clues – flags displayed in windows of houses of families connected to the Pack and members of the local congregation. We also had a Monopoly Run based on having teams take socially-distanced photos at well-known local landmarks in the Gilnahirk/Knock area. A highlight was our outdoor Cluedo game where following the grim discovery of the body of Dr Black (Explorer Ben) bludgeoned to death in the Gilnahirk Graveyard, teams of sleuths had to travel around the local neighbourhood to track down and interrogate suspects – Col Mustard aka Simon in Tullycarnett Park, Prof Plumb aka David at the Primary School, Rev Green aka Stephen C in the church grounds, Mrs White aka Alison in Abbey Park, Nurse Black – Carol outside the Health Centre and Miss Scarlett (Rachel) loitering near the Cherryvalley shops. The culprit was eventually unmasked as Mrs Peacock – Donna- complete with fur coat and peacock feather and her accomplice Chloe the dog- apprehended in Gilnahirk Park with the lead piping.

Alongside these activities we have recently partnered with Mobile Team Adventure for activity sessions including Slippery Slope, Canoeing on the Lagan, and Laser Tag. Cole's Granny Sharon, one of our Beaver Leaders, also joined us as an enthusiastic cox for one of the rafted canoeing teams but thankfully didn't get thrown into the Lagan at the end!! A huge thank you to Stella, Michael and Daniel for their help in organising these activities for the Cubs. We have also completed the cyclist badge, with a small group cycling along the Comber Greenway to Billy Neil Playing Fields. As a good turn, some of the Cubs have been helping to tidy the Church Garden of Remembrance and plant snowdrop and crocus bulbs as part of the gardener and environmental conservation badge requirements. Alongside the outdoor activities we have started to work again on some virtual badgework. Some of the Cubs are completing the Communicator badge and have made contact with penpals from Cub Packs in Florida and Alabama. Although we have no plans to meet together indoors for now, we are glad to have been able to have some face to face contact via these outdoor activities and hope to continue with more activities throughout autumn and into winter, weather and current restrictions, permitting.

David, CSL 30th

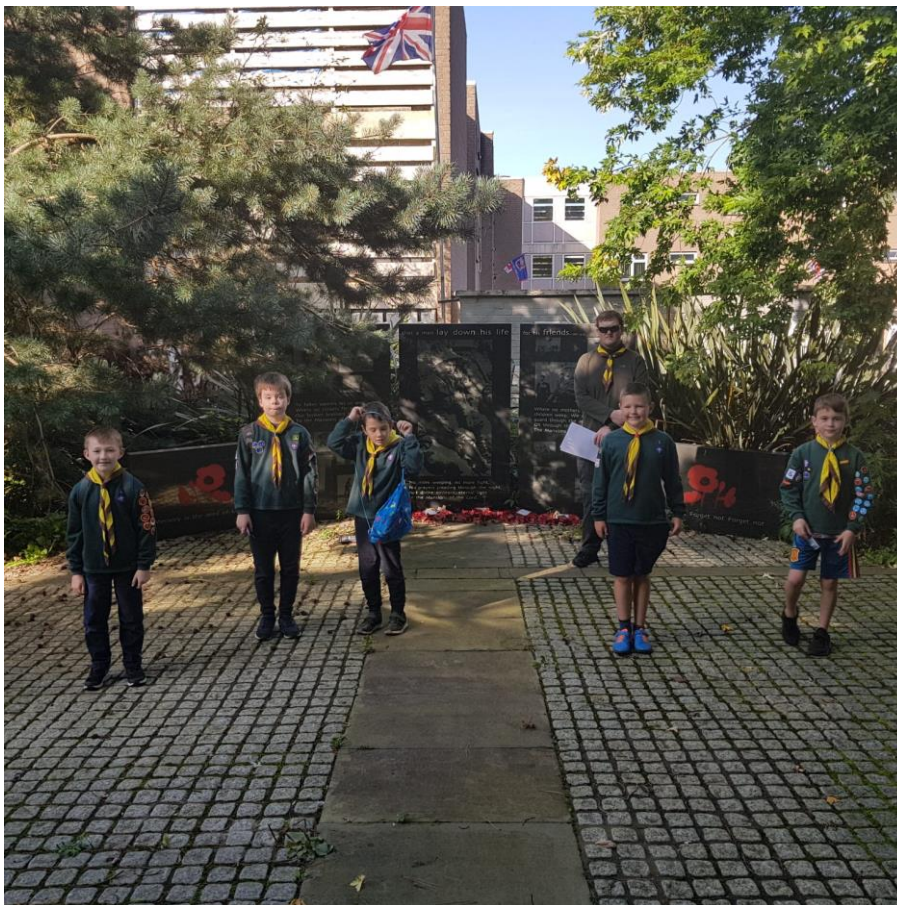




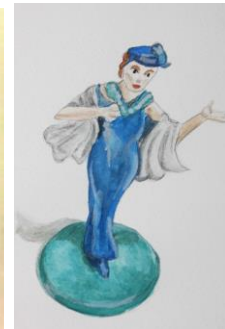
Flag Hunt and Gardener Badge







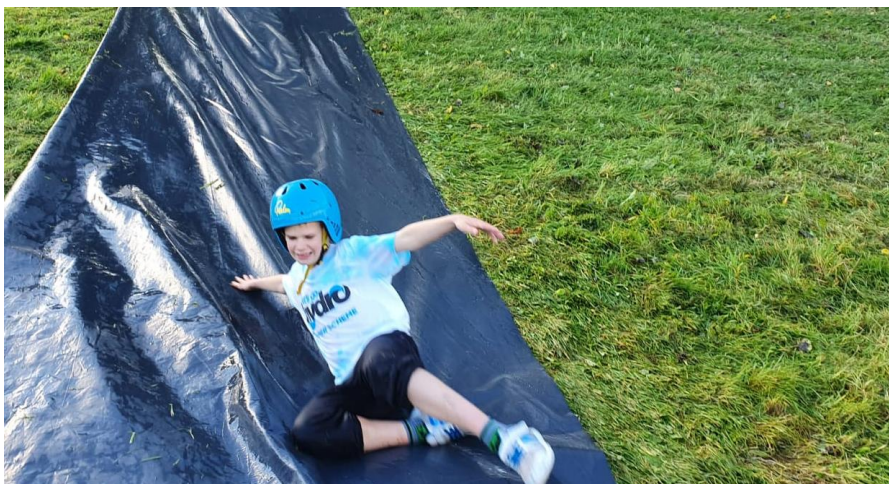
Gilnahirk Monoploy Run / Local Knowledge Badge



Cub Scout Cluedo







Slippery Slide





News from 30th Troop

30th Troop has also resumed meeting outdoors on Thursday evenings or Saturday afternoons, and with an influx of some very enthusiastic senior Cubs numbers remain high although some of the PLs will be pensioned off to the Ballyhanwood Unit at Christmas. Stevie has sent the following report:

Hello everyone from the 30th Gilnahirk. We are glad to be back after the summer extended summer break. On our first activity we met at Barnetts Road and cycled along the Comber Greenway to the Billy Neill pitches Dundonald. We enjoyed cycling on the pump track and on the paths through the trees. We then played a game of rounders and football on the open space there. Enjoying the late afternoon sunshine we cycled back to our meeting point. On our second meeting we met during the evening in Castlereagh and Stephen C held a lesson on campfire safety and construction. We then split into smaller groups of three and four, socially distancing of course. The boys had a chance to light their own fires and toast the obligatory “s’mores”. The following week we had a very competitive geocaching session at Belvoir Forest Park. We hope to continue our Autumn term with more outdoor activities - our next meeting is team games in Tullicarnett Park.

Stay safe everyone,

Stevie W, 30th SL





Forthcoming Events

All face to face District events have been cancelled until further notice
but some meetings will be scheduled by Teams /Zoom



**News & Views, Letters & Comments,
Reports & Announcements to the Editor:**



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Not later than **30th November** for the December issue please!