

5 to 25

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BEXLEY COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY YOUTH ORGANISATIONS LTD

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The articles and views expressed in this publication may not be those expressed by the Editor nor the Council.

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GLK NAMIBIA 2007



Summer 2007
The Girlguides
visit Namibia

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Membership of the BCVYO Ltd is afforded to the actual leaders of groups within the London Borough of Bexley and they are entitled to vote at the AGM, although anyone with interest in the BCVYO Ltd can stand as a trustee.



BOB'S BIT

Another year, another Christmas and another **5to25** newsletter, full of photos of your achievements! Thanks also to those of you who claimed your grants early which caused us a slight financial crisis. Most of the money has now gone, so if you were thinking of claiming, get in quick, before it runs out. The Local Network Fund is now closed and only a few of you benefited. K2 Explorer Scouts were the luckiest with £6,500 for new canoes and equipment. Only four other groups put in claims that I know of – and it was so easy! No doubt other grant streams will come along soon. The BCVYO also managed to get some extra funding from ChangeUp, a government initiative, which has enabled us to buy display boards, a lap top and some advertising material.

I hope you have all seen the postcard size flyers, which you can have should you wish. They have been given out all around the borough with several responses, both adult and youth.

We continue to help people get their children into your groups or clubs, with more and more asking via our web site, which is slowly building up steam.

The BCVYO committee continues to fight for more money on your behalf – the current climate being no exception, and we still hope to be providing you with the great service for the coming years. In the next issue of **5to25**, due in April, we will let you know more on this matter.

Some members of the committee have also been active in the production of the Bexley Youth Strategy, which has an upcoming consultation event, being held twice on 26th and 28th January. If you are interested in attending, please contact me on the numbers on the cover, or for anything else you need for that matter!

The Annual General Meeting, for which I asked for ideas, is booked on the 10th June, at Crayford again – nice Hall! In an effort to make it more appealing we've made it a Tuesday instead of Wednesday.

...Will it work? ...Is that more exciting? Keep the date free and watch this space!

Dear Bob,

Just a few words to thank the BCVYO for their help and support in organising our exhibition at Hall Place, 'Scouting in Bexley – The First 100 Years.' Having never organised anything on this scale before, I am grateful for the contacts in Scouting, both locally and nationally, you supplied in order to source many exhibits.

One area where your support was essential was funding. The grant from The Arts Council of Bexley proved vital for the cost of frames, information literature, etc. and again thanks are due to The BCVYO for liaising with the Arts Council.

On 10th June we were asked by Hall Place to hold an open day which we called 'Meet Bexley's Scouts.' Again your borough-wide contacts were welcome and the day was a success. We hope to

make this an annual event, so you haven't heard the last of us... Both the exhibition and open day proved to be a success with both Scouting and non Scouting visitors.

I see from the last edition of **5to25** that the Boys' Brigade will be 125 in 2008 and Girl Guiding 100 the year after. I do hope both organisations decide to hold exhibitions at Hall Place. It benefits its members in many ways; apart from the free publicity, it's good for morale to show off your past and present. This must help with recruitment and funding. It also answers the frequent question, 'I didn't know they were still going!'

Tim Harlow, Organiser
Scouting in Bexley – The First 100 Years

HAPPY 21ST!

The photo below shows the 2nd Erith Beavers celebrating their 21st Birthday. We held it at the Tiger's Eye, Thamesmead, in October 2007. We had great fun at Tiger's Eye, which is a fun indoor soft play area, we also had a yummy cake. The boys went home tired out. Beavers love to party – hence the banner!!!

The leaders are Tracey Fermer, Daniel Fermer, Daniel Deehey, Elaine Fermer, Christine Rogers and Stuart Campbell. Jennie Rogers took the photo.

Elaine Fermer
2nd Erith Beaver Leader

The last issue's
Wordsearch winner is:

PHILLIPPA CUTHBERT

from the 8th Welling Brownies.
Congratulations! A £20 cheque for
your chosen group is on its way!



GLK NAMIBIA 2007

As you may know, a team of 12 local Senior Section members and three leaders spent two weeks working at a mission home for orphaned and abandoned children in Namibia this summer. GLK Namibia 2007 grew out of an idea to develop meaningful service projects for Senior Section members in Greater London Kent County.

At a social event on a bleak day in February 2006 I found myself in conversation with someone I vaguely remembered from school whose brother-in-law had worked on a project in Namibia called Beautiful Gate. Within hours of that conversation, I contacted Beautiful Gate and asked if they ever took groups of volunteers. When they e-mailed saying they would be delighted to accept a team, I got in touch with the County team, and presented a proposal for the project a few weeks later, which was accepted! Flyers were designed and the marketing began.

Lengthy application forms were sent out and trickled back a couple of weeks later. I booked a venue for the selection weekend and suddenly the project morphed into an exciting reality.

The selection event was carefully planned; I needed to make sure applicants would be able to cope with what would be a tough and intensive experience, without scaring them away. The selection weekend provided various challenges. A fictitious world summit was specially designed, whereby applicants adopted the identity of a country

and were given a secret agenda to work to, giving the selection panel a chance to see how different group members worked together and tackled obscure problems.

The unexpected descent of thirty eager Brownies was the main feature of the Sunday; the applicants had to rapidly put together a plan to entertain the Brownies, who gave feedback at their meeting the next day, focussing mainly on the girls' hairstyles and earrings! A powerful time of reflection enabled the applicants to think carefully about the HIV/AIDS situation which continues to have a profound impact on the make-up of Sub-Saharan Africa. A powerful story of a young African boy who had gradually lost his entire family to the disease was told. HIV/AIDS has lowered the projected life expectancy in 2010 to as low as 30 in some African countries.

Once the successful applicants had been offered places on the project, the next ten months involved fundraising £1,000 per person, raising awareness of the project through selling badges and attending Girlguiding UK's prestigious Annual Event in Edinburgh. Three training weekends were held where participants were trained in areas such as HIV/AIDS epidemiology and awareness; methods of problem solving; and writing funding proposals. The group devised the 'GLK Namibia 2007 Toolkit' from scratch; all of the activities reflected key issues such as trust, gender equality, working together, friendship and health. The team are extremely grateful to Guiders and others across the County who donated vast quantities of craft materials, compasses, soap, badges, CDs, parachutes and toothbrushes.

Air Namibia allowed us to take 30 kg of luggage for



free, which enabled us to take kwik cricket and rounders equipment. The children had never seen most of what we arrived with, and I had an e-mail from Namibia the other day saying that the children are still wearing the bracelets they made with our team in August! We took over 100 toothbrushes with us and led several health sessions. Most of the children had never owned a toothbrush. We also took CDs with us to make jellyfish as part of an 'under-the-sea' themed activity.

The following day we were alarmed to find that many of the children had ripped the tentacles off their CD and had tried to sell it. Others had tried to watch their freebie CD on the village DVD player.

Our remit for the project developed dramatically in the run-up to the trip. In the initial e-mails in 2006, I had agreed that we would be assisting with some of the activities at the centre. A week before we left for Namibia, I received an e-mail telling us that we would be running three complete 2-day adventure camps for up to 60 children at a time! The group were un-phased by this and actually running entire camps was a better idea than chipping in to the programme. It enabled the group to spend time with the same children each day, learning their names and understanding individual personalities.

Beautiful Gate is located in Katutura, a desperately poor



township in Windhoek known locally as 'Namibia's Soweto'. It is a dangerous place, beset with HIV, bad sanitation, death and illness. The crime rate is high, and this was reflected in the way the door was locked and a huge metal grate slammed over it as soon as we had gathered inside on arrival.

The Centre could only accommodate 60 children per day, and throughout the day, other children would stand at the gate, peering through it, begging for food, water and anything we might be able to give them. The sixty who attended had been identified as the most needy in the area.

They were fed a main meal and two healthy snacks each day. Meal-times were a harrowing experience; we regularly found ourselves having to stop the boys stealing food from the girls; this is widely accepted in the home as there are so many mouths to feed. There was never a scrap of food remaining on any plate; every morsel was devoured.

The majority of the activities we ran were designed with a specific purpose. With the younger ones we did a 'trust trail' whereby the children had to lead a blindfolded friend round an obstacle course carrying a cup of water which

had to be deposited in a bucket at the end; this helped the children listen to specific instructions and to trust each other. The oldest age-group enjoyed the 'pebble people' activity, whereby they were each given a large pebble which they were encouraged to turn into themselves or someone they respect. The variations were fantastic and prompted a talk about identity, how the young people view themselves, and how they view those they look up to.

Beautiful Gate has impacted many children since its establishment in 2003. As well as providing holiday camps such as those we ran, it provides a pre-school as well as weekly youth clubs. Opportunities for young people living in the surrounding area are extremely limited. Families often consist of a grandmother and twenty orphaned grandchildren, living on a pension equivalent to less than \$2 a day.

Beautiful Gate exists to provide a safe, social space for local people. They recently purchased a larger building and have been able to expand to cater for more children and young people. They

are developing their youth centre, which will eventually include a library, homework room, kitchen facilities and all the things you would expect to find in a youth club like snooker tables, table football and space to relax. It is essential to engage the young people in positive activities.

The Guiders amongst you will have come across the GLK Africa Challenge which was designed to raise awareness of the project, and of African life, art, craft and music. Units were encouraged to complete five challenges, raise a minimum of £20 for the work of Beautiful Gate Namibia, then send off to receive the special edition GLK Africa Challenge badge. When the Namibia group were selected to attend Girlguiding UK's Annual Event in Edinburgh in May, the Challenge went national.

The response to the Challenge has been overwhelming. To date over £8,000 has been raised which will be used to help develop the youth centre at Beautiful Gate. Thanks

to all those who have completed the Challenge. The Challenge is running until December 31st 2007.

We are still selling our limited edition Namibia cloth and pin badges. Please e-mail international@glkguides.org.uk if you are interested in buying badges or receiving a newsletter with more details of the project.

The Namibia project had a profound impact on us all. Whilst we were only in Namibia for two weeks, the impact of the experience will stay with us. We each hope we have made some small difference to a child at Beautiful Gate.

I wish to thank everyone connected to the project for their support, especially the County Commissioner, County Executive and Guiders. I also wish to thank the team for their commitment and the other leaders, Sue and Pauline, for their unstinting support.

Helen Beecher Bryant

GENERATION GAME

Three generations of one family took part in the Great North Run recently, including 81 year old Don Beven from Welling. Don is a Vice-President of the East Wickham and Welling Scout District and has been active in Scouting for well over 60 years. He is an inspiration to many Leaders and young people in the District, having been the driving force behind both the district's Sunrise Ceremony and ScoutFest100 celebrations earlier in the year, as well as many other events and activities over a number of years.





Don ran with his son, Keith, 57 and grandson, Alan, 24 in aid of Breast Cancer Care and completed the 13 mile course in 3 hours and 1 second with Keith one second behind him. Being the younger member of the trio, Alan was able to finish in just over 1 hour 34 minutes. All three have the unique distinction of attending different World Scout Jamborees. The Great North Run starts in the centre of Newcastle, crosses the River Tyne into Gateshead and winds its way through to Jarrow ending by the South Shields coast covering

21 kilometres, which is 13.1 miles. Don has been in training for this event for some time and in previous years has run the London Marathon.

As part of his fitness regime, he regularly walks around the south east countryside. In the Great North Run he was one of the oldest participants; the eldest being only five years older than him. Don raised about £1200 for Breast Cancer Care, a charity which is close to Don and his family.

GUIDES MEET CHIEF

At the end of July, 27 members of 4th Erith Guides took part in a six day holiday at Blacklands Farm Guide activity centre near East Grinstead. We were staying in Weavers which is the new accommodation building. During the holiday we went to Brighton and had a trip on the Bluebell Railway. The Guides felt like VIPs to have their own reserved carriage. We also took part in plenty of the on-site activities including climbing, abseiling, crate climbing, archery, swimming and grass sledges.

wellington boots would be asked to take them off before going inside.

The afternoon of the opening arrived and the girls looked extremely smart in their uniforms. We welcomed the Chief Guide, Vice President and Chief Executive of Girlguiding UK together with Region and County Commissioners, invited guests and friends and supporters of Blacklands. After the building was opened the Guides showed the guests around the building and proved to be great tour guides.

Our personal highlight though was after all of the guests had headed off to a marquee to have tea. The Chief Guide stayed behind so that two of our young leaders, Victoria and Lauren, could make their Young Leader Promise to her. This was certainly a special moment and the two of them will remember it for a very long time. It was a lovely way to end our stay at Blacklands

Anita Munns
4th Erith Guides



When we made the booking we were unaware that the building we were staying in was to be officially opened by the Chief Guide and Vice President of Girlguiding UK on the Friday of our stay. Fortunately we were told in advance so everyone was able to make sure they had all their uniform to wear for the opening. We had been asked if we would show the invited guests, and other groups staying at Blacklands, around the building after it was opened. Because it was quite muddy on the grass, due to heavy rain a few days before the opening, there was much debate as to whether or not the Guides should ask the Chief Guide to remove her shoes before going in the building, so that there were not muddy foot prints everywhere. In the end it was decided that shoes were okay but anyone wearing



ANIMAL ADVENTURE

Recently, we met a most genial chap called Chris. He brought some of his pets to meet us at our hall. Most of us keep a pet or two at home, but none of us could admit to having pets like Chris! He introduced us all to his 13 year old pet tarantula, which quickly separated the few arachnophobes from the rest of the group. We were then introduced to a bull frog which would have completely covered a dinner plate! He was quite docile, and rather cartoon in appearance.



Next we got to see Chris feed a dragon and a lizard, and the girls were allowed to feel the texture of each of these reptiles – a most surprising experience! Lastly, Chris introduced us to three of his pet snakes. We looked at two snakes which were about two feet in length, then Chris offered us the opportunity to have a snake slither across our legs, so all the brave Rainbows sat on the floor in a line. Chris untied a duvet cover and a 16 foot boa constrictor made her way out of her bag and pinned us to the floor. She weighed 5 stones, so once we were down, there was no getting up, but we learned how soft and strong she was and even the more timid Rainbows stroked her beautiful scales.



It must be said that the younger the children, the easier they accept such creatures, and with the expert information brought to us by Chris, all our Rainbows made us very proud with their appreciation of our unusual visitors.

Fay Blake (Puddle)
3rd Barnehurst Rainbows

GUIDES RUN LONDON

On Sunday 16th September we joined ten other teams to take part in a City Run treasurer hunt event for Guides aged 13+ and Senior Section members. We met at London Bridge station where we were given our instructions, maps and questions and then it was time to set off.

Each group chose their own route and had a map showing where we had to go for each of the questions. There were also four check points and we had to make sure we went to each one otherwise our score for the questions would not count. Our team was called Erith Elite 1 and the team from our Guide unit was called Erith Elite 2. During the day we went to lots of places off of the main streets and away from the tourist attractions which we would not have gone to had we normally of been in London.

Looking for the answers to the questions also made us look at everything and was amazing the sorts of things you normally would not see. It was hard trying to find some of the answers and there was a real sense of achievement when we didn't give up after walking up and down the same street three times and then found the answer. There was a frequent shout of "look, there it is!"

A lot of the questions were about who lived somewhere, the names of buildings, checking dates. Whoever put the questions together had really worked hard. We walked miles during the day and had aching feet at the end. Despite that though we were really pleased that we had been to the site of each of the questions even though there were a few questions we could not find the answers for and a couple we had to take a guess at.

At the end of the day we met up with the other teams at Southwark Cathedral and we then went to Pizza Express for a cake and drink. Whilst we were eating our cake the scores were worked out and then the results were read out in reverse order. As it got to fifth place neither of our two teams had been read out. Our Guide team finished third and we were amazed to hear that we had won the tie break question and finished first. Our prize was a gift voucher each for the cinema at Bluewater.

Thank you to everyone who helped to organise the day. It was really fun and we hope we can do something similar again in the future.



Kate, Rachel, Kirsty
and Bernadette
Erith Elite 1
Erith Ranger Unit

BIG HEART BEAVER RAISES £300



At this year's annual Heart Foundation sponsored swim at Lamorbey swimming baths, Beaver Scout Brandon Stockford from the 3rd Sidcup Scout Group raised £300 for completing the maximum 30 lengths. What also makes this an incredible feat is that Brandon is only 7 years old. In recognition for his achievement, Brandon received the trophy for the person raising the most sponsorship within the boys' category. The trophy was presented by Dallas Lewis (pictured) who is the acting chairperson of the Sidcup Branch. Brandon celebrates his delight with fellow 3rd Sidcup Beavers, Dallas Lewis and Beaver Leader Ian Dunn.

Photos taken by
Ms. Joanna Smith



WORDSEARCH COMPETITION

A prize of £20 will be awarded for the first correct entry drawn out of the hat. All you have to do is find and mark each of the words shown below, then return this page with your name, address and the name of the voluntary youth organisation of your

choice. There's no limit to the number of entries from an organisation, so why not let all of your members have a go? The deadline for returning completed entries is 1st April 2008. The winner will be announced in the next issue of *5to25*.

N	V	Z	B	G	N	Q	C	B	P	W	D	S	V	E
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B	F	K	T	U	I	K	C	T	X	S	T	A	L	L
A	H	S	A	U	Q	S	E	C	A	X	S	L	E	A
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L	L	A	B	T	O	O	F	Q	B	S	A	A	B	E
G	Y	M	N	A	S	T	I	C	S	A	T	M	A	S
C	R	I	C	K	E	T	S	R	B	H	L	Y	L	A
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H	I	R	V	S	B	Y	N	I	P	R	Q	E	R	V

In an effort to introduce you all to sport, these words are all to do with sporting activities:

- ATHLETICS
- CRICKET
- HOCKEY
- SNOOKER
- BASEBALL
- DARTS
- MARATHON
- SOCCER
- BASKETBALL
- FOOTBALL
- NETBALL
- SQUASH
- BOWLS
- GOLF
- ROUNDERS
- TENNIS
- CHESS
- GYMNASTICS
- RUGBY
- VOLLEYBALL

Name:

Address:

Youth Organisation:

