

It's cold and snowing up here in Bury St Edmunds as I sit writing this. I'm torn between hoping it will stop snowing because getting home will be difficult and wishing it would carry on snowing so that the child in me can get out and have some fun!!

I have been looking at the **census figures**, which are again not too good - we lost a total of 46 people last year. Some of those were due to the demise of my old group, the 12<sup>th</sup> Hastings, and some were due to leader problems in other groups. Quite a lot were Explorers, which worries me.

I am very aware that we need a Young Leader unit and have made some progress with this. I will try to get it operational for the term after Easter. I hope this will solve some of the problems we currently have with this age group.

The majority of groups have changed very little in terms of numbers and one or two have increased significantly. Well done to **3<sup>rd</sup> Hastings**, who increased last year by an amazing 34, **1<sup>st</sup> Hastings** who increased by 7 and **1<sup>st</sup> Brede** who increased by 5, neither of which sound much, but in percentage terms it's excellent.

We have a proposed District Development Plan which is currently being discussed at various levels and which we hope will give us some firm united direction for the next five years. As soon as it is finalised we will invite you all to a launch event and get it rolling.

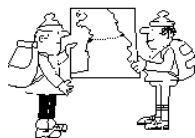
Sorry I have not been around much lately, but as you know I am working away much of the week and it's BT that pays me, so they get second refusal on my time (family first!). In the meantime thank you for all you continue to do for scouting and if it does snow, invite me to your snowball fight!

**Mike Botten, District Commissioner**

**Congratulations** to Graham March, Steve Rowden, Oscar Shoesmith, and Dominic Giles of the 6th Hastings, and Robert Dennard and Lee Burgess of the 24th Hastings on achieving the Chief Scouts Award. They received their certificates at the County Award Ceremony in December.

### Troop Incident Hike (Sunday 28th March)

Will Leaders please get their entry forms and £5 fee into Kevin Harmer as soon as possible.



Our Scout Shop will be **closed** on the Easter holidays of Mondays 5th and 12th of April.

It will **open** on Saturday 3rd April, 9 - 11

### 'District Skills Roadshows'

A reminder to Leaders, especially new ones, that the District Skills Roadshows are still alive and available for your Beaver, Cub, Scout and Unit section meetings.. We are now into our seventh year, having visited over 300 venues and made presentations to over 4,500 members ! We limit our section visits to one per week so are booked well in advance, mostly in excess of six weeks, so you need to book early.

We run your whole evening for you, which includes games. Skills evenings cover separately, knotting, pioneering lashings, compass & mapping, splicing, stoves & lamps, knife, axe & saw, resuscitation and first aid (the last two with the help of Andy Bishop).

Knotting for Beavers is really special, as they tie their knots with sugar laces over simple outlines, then eat them when completed !

Contact **Roy Gaved** on 01424 752992  
or email [roy@gaved.com](mailto:roy@gaved.com)

Alternatively fill in a Skills Roadshow booking form on the District Website [www.hastingscouts.org.uk](http://www.hastingscouts.org.uk)

### Our Scout Shop - Your Annual Divi Group sales 1.1.03 - 31.12.03

	<u>Total sales</u>	<u>Discount</u>
1st Hastings	£601.28	£48.10
3rd Hastings	£1057.13	£84.57
4th Hastings	£429.09	£34.33
5th Hastings	£263.68	£21.09
6th Hastings	£1160.28	£92.82
7th Hastings	£262.43	£20.99
9th Hastings	£316.83	£25.35
11th Hastings	£787.82	£63.03
14th Hastings	£367.03	£29.36
18th Hastings	£350.59	£28.05
24th Hastings	£543.29	£43.46
1st Brede	£410.49	£32.84
1st Northiam	£280.14	£22.41
1st Rye	£139.87	£11.19
1st Sedlescombe	NIL	
1st Westfield	£655.12	£52.41
Fellowship	£ 56.00	£ 4.48
Explorers	£153.50	£12.28

Cheques will be winging their way to GSLs in the next couple of weeks. As for many previous years the discount has been based on 8% of total sales.

We are very grateful to **Janice** and her team for the terrific job they do for us so reliably and consistently (she took over from Pat Sands 17 years ago) and for this annual bonus.

## Fellowship

We have organised a coach trip to the Dominion Theatre, London, to see the musical '**We Will Rock You**'.

Saturday 24th April. 10am Silverdale School  
Arrive London approx 12.30. Time's your own.  
Show starts 7.30 pm.

Coach will leave theatre 11pm. Arr. Back 1am  
Cost £45 per seat (incl. coach). First come first served.  
All adults in the District, with their families, are welcome.

\* \*

There will also be a day's shopping trip to **City de Europe** Calais, on Sunday 12th December, cost £15. Again, everybody welcome.

\* \*

**Members**, please contact myself or the contact name if you can help with any of the requests sent out earlier this month.

**Fiona Adams**, (732160)

## Census

Total	2003	2004	
Beavers	142	156	+14
Cubs	276	233	- 43
Scouts	191	197	+ 6
Explorers	43	26	- 17
Ldrs, Helpers & Fellp	136	130	- 6
District membership	788	742	- 46

## Beaver Scouts



All the letters for the 18th Birthday Party have now been distributed -if you want more contact me.

Please pass all monies to me as soon as possible - end of March at the latest.

New Beaver Scouts joining Colonies after March but before the Party can, of course, come, but please let me know as soon as they show an interest as I need to arrange transport for everyone. Two coaches are booked at present.

I am delivering the badges on my travels round the Colonies. It may be worn until the end of the year and Beaver Scouts that move to Cub Scouts may continue to wear the badge for the same period.

**Ben Richardson**

Please note my new address, telephone & E mail number.

Tel: 01424 -718554. Mobile: 07880 966226  
Email: enivre@tiscali.co.uk

Our thanks to **TRADE PAINTS**  
for printing this newsletter

## Computers

There are a few second hand computers donated by a local company for use within Scouting and which were intended for the Kenya project. However, financial and practical problems have ruled that out and they are now available to anyone within Scouting.

They are basic computers with Windows 95 and MS Office. Anyone interested should contact **Ben Richardson**.

We would appreciate a small donation to the Kenyan Street Scout Project.

**Vicki and Martin Harper (210838)**

## Appointments Sub-Committee

There were two meetings in January (13th & 26th ) to reduce the backlog of new applicants accumulated towards the end of 2003. We now have an excellent, experienced team to serve on the Committee along with Ann Brownhill, Gareth Moore and Hilary Zeberdee. Tony Davis, Roger Plumb & Ken French. There will only be 4or 5 at any one session.

Future meetings: 10th May, 22nd June.

**Ken Russell, Chairman**

**DIARY**

### MARCH

W/E 13/14 LIONS HALF MARATHON  
W/E 27/28 OVERLAND HIKE  
SUN 28 TROOP INCIDENT HIKE (Kevin Harmer)

### APRIL

MON 12 FELLOWSHIP EASTER EGG HUNT (HelenHayler/Stuart Old)  
TUE 20 DISTRICT EXECUTIVE 24th headquarters (Ann Brownhill)  
FRI/SAT 23/24 COUNTY PATROL LEADERS FORUM (Andy Bishop)  
SUN 25 SAINT GEORGE'S DAY (Ben Richardson)

Make a note of the dates for this year's **Gang Show - 18,19,20 November**

**Items for April Tom Tom should be with me by Wednesday 14th April**

ERIC STOKES tel:426029 11th Mar 2004  
Email: Eric@stokes7980.freemove.co.uk