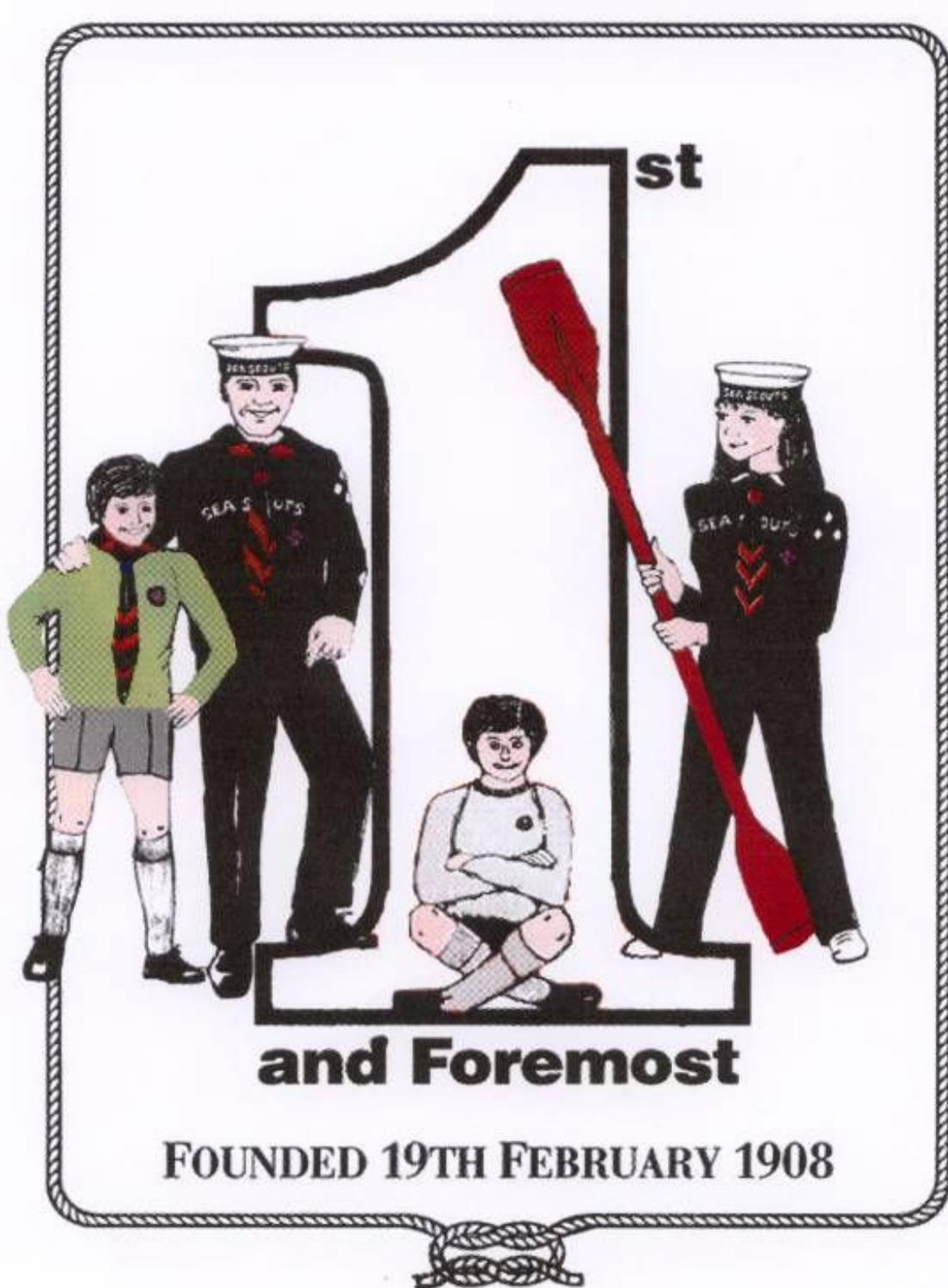
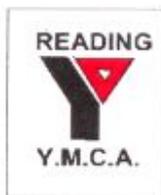


First Reading



February 2010



Issue 187

February 2010

Chairman's Thoughts

As Chairman, I am delighted to be able announce that on 18th September 2009 the Tender Documents were returned for our Boathouse Costing, so after many years of wondering how much it would all cost, we now have four prices to choose from. The Tenders range in price between £395,000.00 - £465,000.00. (I must admit I was truly stunned at the prices Tendered.)

We already have a substantial amount of money in our funds; this has been raised by years of fund raising, insurance claim money and many donations, large and small from our supporters since the fire happened. We do however need a great deal more in order to complete this project.

Our plan now, is to ask for a detailed breakdown of the costs in the Tender Documents. When we have these, the building committee will be able to discuss areas where we may be able to save costs.

In the mean time we will be calling on our Leaders to join together to begin the task of filling in Grant Application forms. We will try to bring in funds from as many sources we are able to. Support from Parents is vital for this to succeed.

We held a BBQ evening at Englefield Social Club for leaders and their families in September, where we announced to everyone the Tender figures. Thanks to everyone who came. We are sorry for the lack of music due to a technical fault with the disco equipment. We do however thank Nick Woodhouse for lending his disco to us and Simon Tott for setting it up.

I would like to THANK everyone who came to The Chairman's Christmas Party on December 5th. The pig racing was once again very popular with all ages from the Beavers up to the Leaders and Parents. My Thanks also go to Nick Whitehead for the disco, Martin and Alan King for bringing along the pig racing, and Lemon Plaice for delivering the sausage and chip supper. The raffle would not have been so successful without the donations of prizes from companies, parents, leaders and supporters. You will be delighted to know we raised £746 for the Boathouse project.

Donations to our boathouse fund can also be Gift Aided. Please send your donations to:-Kevin Ware, Chairman 1st Reading YMCA Sea Scout Group, Reading YMCA, Parkside Road, Reading.

Kevin Ware - Group Chairman

Boathouse Report for 1st & Foremost

The Chairman & I have spent a lot of time with the architect on finalising the plans and specification for the new boathouse; although to the outsider there will appear little difference. With the aid of Reading Borough Council we have completed the soft landscaping plan, that's the trees, plants and grass (yes we even have to specify the grass!)

We have also done the hard landscaping plan – paths, paving slabs and concreting, and the campshedding (that's the work on the river bank to stop it falling into the river). We have to be careful we do not encroach on the river bed or the Environment Agency will charge us rent for the river bed we occupy!

None of the above is very exciting but all this and other things have to be carefully described in the specification, and we had to check 46 pages of detail! All this had to be done before we could go out to Tender.

But now the more exciting bits

- John Lewis Reading very kindly provided 14 members of staff, ladies and gentlemen, on two days to assist in clearing the boathouse site ready for building. We had a large bonfire and the Fire Brigade visited twice to make sure we were not setting the Warren Canoe Club on fire!
We have sent a very big 'thank you' to John Lewis.

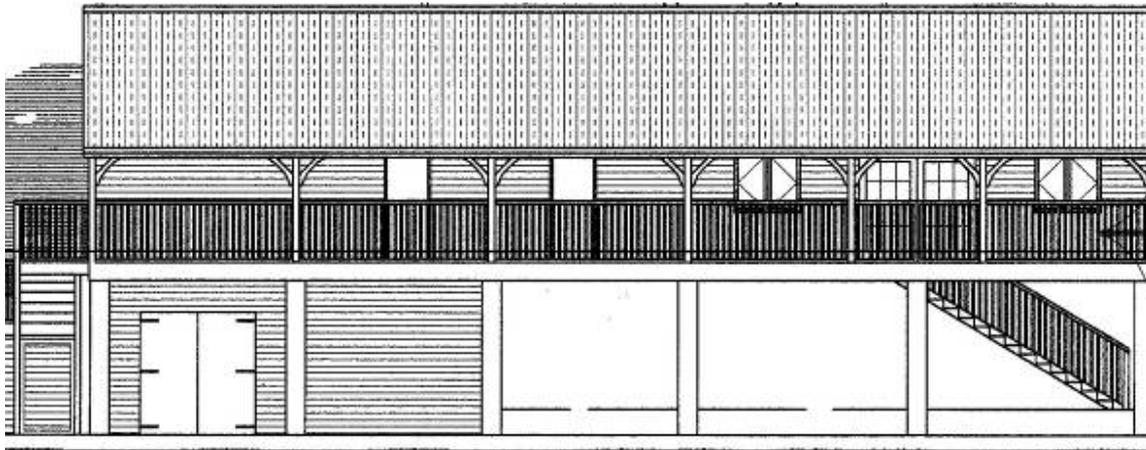


- The most obvious thing you will notice is that 6 elderly and very overgrown trees have now been felled so that their braches will not overhang the new boathouse and contractors can get plant onto the site. What you will not have seen was the Tree Surgeon's Landrover and trailer running up and down the bank between the Warren road and our site. **Very exciting but please don't try it yourself!**
- The specification has now been sent out for competitive tender, but as the Chairman reports elsewhere the costs are higher than we expected. **However we MUST start building before March 2010** when our Planning Permission expires, so we are working with the architect to see if we can reduce the cost.

I have applied to both Lloyds Bank and Abbey for financial help toward our new boathouse, but unfortunately we do not match their criteria for help. **However the Good News, I also submitted the same details to the Gosling Foundation and they will make us a grant of £10,000 payable when building commences. Thank you very much Sir Donald Gosling.**

Mike Wyatt - Chairman Boathouse sub-committee.

Boathouse 9th January 2005



Late report and update from last few days

AT LAST A NEW BOATHOUSE

The old one burnt down in 2005, but 2010 will see a new one.

We have had to compromise. A fully fitted out building together with all the other work that should be done will cost approximately £350,000, which is about £90,000 more than we have available, but there is a way forward.

If we omit some of the necessary work there is just enough money to build the shell of a boathouse which on the outside will look like the picture but the inside will be empty. Well not quite, we must by law have a disabled toilet and a fire alarm system but the rest will be bare, only a few lights and not even any painting inside, although the outside will be fully painted, and all the windows and doors will be fitted.

The boat-store will be underneath with walls and doors, and there will be a new slipway and the concrete in front of the building will be complete but, the disabled chairlift and the new steel steps to the road will be missing,

The old grass area will have to be left as mud, and perhaps most importantly there will be no walls inside the building, and no changing rooms or toilets except for the disabled one until we have more funds.

After a competitive tender, a contractor has been awarded a contract to do the building work for the shell. A Letter of Intent has been issued and we hope to see work starting at about the end of February.

The old trees around the site have already been felled, and you will shortly see the whole site fenced off, as contractors start to drill the 10 metre deep holes for the foundations. Next the 3 metre high pillars will be built with a concrete floor on top, ready for the boathouse.

So how can we get the missing work done? We must undertake massive urgent Fundraising.

We are splitting all this work into a number of priced jobs and we will then see if we can get charities or companies to sponsor the missing items, and in addition we want help from **YOU**.

Former Scouts have already raised some £20,000 towards the boathouse, and the present Beavers, Cubs, Scouts & Explorers have all raised money in various ways; one Scout having raised £1000 by his own efforts.

Thatcham Kitchen Design have offered to install the kitchen and all its equipment free of charge, and another benefactor has agreed to fund £1000 to pay for the flagpole that every Scout Group must have. The Group also held a 'Pig Racing Disco & Raffle, and the profit of £708 will now pay for the vanity units in the Girls changing room.

The Freemasons of Cadogan Lodge in Caversham have now come to the Group's assistance and on Friday 11 December Mr. Ian Thomas, the Worshipful Master of Cadogan Lodge presented a Cheque for £250 from his members to Scout Leader Clifford Coombes. Clifford said 'The boys and girls in the Troup will be most grateful for this donation towards our new boathouse.'

Kevin Ware the Chairman of the Group Executive said 'This donation will pay for the supply and installation of the toilet in the girls changing room.

Perhaps somebody else would like to buy the equipment for the boys as they are most anxious to have a toilet as well!'

Mr. Ian Thomas of Cadogan Lodge said that the Scouts carry out valuable training to boys and girls of all races and faiths, or of no faith, and he hoped that the Freemasons' donation would act as a spring board for others.

Now how can YOU help? If you are a Beaver, Cub, Scout or Explorer, I hope that the leaders will be able to find some activity that **YOU** can individually be sponsored for to raise money yourself. If you can help please contact your Leader the Chairman

Kevin Ware or email: [Kevin @thatchamkitchens.co.uk](mailto:Kevin@thatchamkitchens.co.uk)

If you are a Parent or an Ex-Scout, have you a business contact that might be able to help? If so please ring me or email me and let me know who it is. This is most important; it would be very embarrassing to find that several persons had all asked the same firm, or different branches, for the same thing!

Mike Wyatt

Ground Breaking Ceremony

As Mike Wyatt has reported above our aim is for work to start work on the new boathouse at the end of February and it is our plan to have a Ground Breaking Ceremony at some time in March. We would hope to have as many people as possible at this event. If you would like to attend would you please let us know and provide us with either a **telephone number or email address** and we will let you have details and dates later.

Pause for Thought

Do you keep things? I do! I recently found my Scout Record Card from the years 1943 to 1949 and I've also still got my neckerchief and woggle. What good memories they bring back, plus a few sad ones, including the death, while we were at camp in 1946 of Skipper Frank Jennings.

Also there is a photo of my wife Rosemary and me, taken in Germany in 1949 when Eric Coombes, Kurt Schueller and I were part of the 80 young people from Reading on a youth holiday to Düsseldorf. She must have fallen for my Sea Scout uniform and I fell for her when she agreed to darn my Scout socks!! A holiday romance that has lasted 60 years, which we celebrated with a cruise on the Rhine this year.

As I look back (old fogies like me do that a lot!) I realise how much I owe to the Troop Leaders of those days and to the training for life they gave me. I doubt very much whether I really thanked them for all they did and gave for me and all the Troop members. It is too late to say thanks now but it is good to keep in touch.

So when you get the chance do tell all your Scout Leaders and Helpers **now** how much you appreciate what they do, the time they spend and just being themselves. And give thanks to God for health, strength and for all His many blessings.

Over the hooks in a school cloakroom was a sign 'These hooks are for teachers only'. Underneath a student had written 'and may they be used for coats as well'.

Was it YOUR Mum who saw an advert for a kitchen utensil which said it was so good it would cut housework in half..... So she bought two!

Cub Scout Graham put his hand up and asked teacher "Is it right to punish someone for something they haven't done?" "Of course not", replied teacher. "That's good" said Graham, "because I haven't done my homework".

That's all for now folks. Be prepared to keep smiling!

Ken Mills



Beaver Log Chew



How time flies when you're having fun! It seems impossible that we can have raced through the summer and that it is time to recap on last terms events already.

We finished off May with some musical entertainment as the Beavers turned their hands to junkyard modelling. Using the instruments that we created we were able to give a rendition of 'The Music Man' to our brave parents at the end of the evening. Prior to half term we also ran a meeting which focused on 'Life at Camp', with the aim of preparing both the Beavers and their parents for the sleepover which was planned for the summer holidays.

The summer term is a busy one for us as like the other sections, we try to go out and about as much as possible while the weather allows. We embarked on a riverside walk which took us on a stroll from Sheffield Bottom Lock and along the canal. It was well attended by both the Beavers and their parents, and we learnt a lot about the importance of keeping the waterways clean. In light of the subsequent news story regarding the Beaver Scout who drowned during a similar trip in Suffolk, it was encouraging to reflect in the well organised nature of our section, and the way in which the rules surrounding any excursion are followed rigorously, to ensure the safety of all.

Linking in to both the Health and Fitness, and the Friendship Challenge badges; John, Kate, Paige and Molly attended the District Beaver Sports Day in June. Although not attended by as many groups as we had hoped, those who were there enjoyed a great day out in the sunshine and were rewarded with a certificate of attendance. The 1st Reading space hopper race was also well received by all participants.



Waterfest was a great success and provided a good opportunity for our group to get into the public eye. Ratty and I saw a number of Beavers at our fundraising stall as they came to try their luck at the 'Treasure Island' and 'Splat a Brat' games. We would like to extend our thanks to the Scouts who took their turns at drumming up business to give Ratty and I a break, and I understand that we made a profit from the stall so it was a job well done.

As part of the outdoor Challenge and Activity badges, the Fathers day hash gave mums a break and encouraged dads to come along and help the Beavers follow a trail through Clayfield Copse. One again the weather stayed fine and we managed not to lose anyone in the woods.

We also organised a trip to Dinton Pastures to go pond dipping where we found all manner of underwater beasties, and had a good time at the playground on the way back to the car park.

This years Pirate Party was really relished by us all, as we have had to cancel it for the previous two years due to bad weather. Grandpa Beaver joined us with the good ship 'Moonflower' and Ratty bought her boat 'Sara Ellen' to join in the fun at the Waterside Centre. The Beavers and I had a chance to paddle a bell-boat and I was given my initiation to the event by having the pleasure of walking the plank. There were some great pirate outfits on show and an even more astonishing array of water pistols (thanks Mr Chairman!).

During the summer break, Ratty Kit and I had to find the fortitude to spend an entire 24 hours with our Beavers during our sleepover. It was a chance for our Beavers to gain their 'Nights Away 1' badge, and for our parents to have a night off! The Robin Hood theme meant we had visits from Prince John and the Sheriff of Nottingham during our banquet. We also had some other VIP guests during the weekend including Harry Beckett, Margaret and Richard Ellison who joined us for the campfire songs and Granny and Grandpa Beaver who came to read us a bedtime story. And who can forget our very own Mike and that very short green outfit!

It was a great event for all involved and we extend our thanks to all the other volunteers who helped to make the event happen. Ratty and I were assessed for our Nights Away permits and so hopefully this means that we should be better equipped to run more sleepovers in the future. At the end of camp we also had to say goodbye to Angie, Michael, Luke, Jacob and Patrick as they swam up to Cubs so we wish them lots of luck.

Refreshed after the summer holidays, we have arrived back at the YMCA to begin the autumn terms events. After some furious recruiting by Kit, we are able to say hello to our new Beavers Archie, Richard, Seraphia, Gabriel, Clodagh and Cecelia; we hope that they are enjoying their time with us so far.



So far we have been on a visit to the Mayor, Cllr Fred Pugh, in the Mayor's parlour where we lucky enough to try on the Mayor's ceremonial robes and chain (which Kit really enjoyed!), and some of the Beavers even managed to carry the solid gold mace used to open and close the Reading Council meetings. Archie and Richard were also kind enough I 'help' local MP Martin Salter give a TV interview outside the civic offices, which I must say he handled admirably.

The rest of the autumn term is packed with more adventures, including an outing to the police station, and a visit from local dance group 'Blue Flame Dance'. We will be attending the District Sausage Sizzle and Campfire later in October, and there is still Bonfire Night, Halloween and Christmas to come. It is going to be a busy few months!

Otter - Beaver Colony

The Cubs

We had a good summer down at the Warren boat house with the opportunity for all to get onto and (sometimes not intentionally) into the water. A number of our Cubs achieved their Paddle Power Start award which is governed by the British Canoe Union (BCU) and a well done to both Cubs and Instructors.

There were various land based activities including two BBQ's where all were invited and parents/guardians given the opportunity to experience the river as the Cubs do (without the jumping in bit)! In another evening we took a hike down the Warren lane, venturing into the woods and returning in the pitch dark. We also saw the Cubs pitch tents on the lawn, run a sack race and get thoroughly soaked with water games (Foxy didn't escape dry that night)!

Each year Reading YMCA hold an awards ceremony combined with its' AGM. This years' Cub-Scout award was presented to Joe Newton by the Mayor of Reading in recognition of his volunteered support during Beaver sessions.

Our activities have covered the requirements for badges such as Athlete, Road Safety, Personal Safety, and Water Activities. Several Cubs have also shown evidence to gain badges of interest to them such as:

Alex Reynolds taking part in chess tournaments outside of Cubs for his Hobbies badge;
Nathaniel Tegg gaining his Book Reader badge;
Nicholas Roberts for Animal Carer.

We have placed an activity plan on the YMCA notice board and are working for a cub camp on April 30 – May 3 with a further camp in September.

Jon – Cub Leader

Boat House Tidy Up

We were really lucky this summer, as John Lewis agreed to clear the Warren. This came about because Jane (Foxy) approached her manager after a meeting at work where her Partners were asked if they knew of any charity that needed help in the community. Her manager came to the Warren on a Tuesday evening to look at what was to be done and also meet some cubs and see what we got up to and how we would benefit from their work; next thing we had the go ahead.

On July 28th & 29th John Lewis arrived, we had approx 20 partners each day, digging scrapping cutting and making bonfires. Ian, Tracey with Vicky and Elizabeth and Jane with Michael made sure that the warren was open and they supplied hot drinks and food, bacon butties on the Tuesday and burgers and sausages on the Wednesday.

We also had few a Scouts and Cubs come along and help us The two days were great fun especially as we had three visits from the Fire-brigade - two on Tuesday and one on Wednesday due to a neighbour who didn't like our huge bonfire and smoke... mind you there was loads and loads of it. Local police popped in for a cupper to see what we were up to and were very impressed by John Lewis. I am sure that all parents have seen the end result; what a fab job they did and we could find them again next year doing the same! It just leaves me to say a great big thank to all Partners at John Lewis Reading.

Jane

Scout Leader in Charge	Mike Davidson	
Assistant Scout Leaders	Cliff Coombes	Simon Tott
Assistant Explorer Leader	Jade Coombes	Matt Bonewell
Cub Leader	Tracey King	
Assistant Cub Leader	Jon Evans	Heather Chaplow
	Jane Shellard	
Cub Helper	Ian Sherwood	
Beaver Leader	Caroline Ware	
Assistant Beaver Leader	Michelle Willett	Jenny Copeland
President	Harry Beckett	
Chairman	Kevin Ware	
Group Treasurer	Mike Stephens	
Minutes Secretary	Helen Jowett	
Group Executive Members	Martin Foley - Judith Westwood - Mike Wyatt	
	Stephen Sherwood	
Reading YMCA	Vic Hills	

TROOP REPORT

We currently have 38 members with 4 to join the Explorers after the Christmas break, and 6 joining us from our Cub pack. Our Leader strength remains the same with Cliff, Jen and I as the main Leaders and with Claire and David as instructors.

It's been nice to see the return of Elaine, Rob and Ben who have helped out during their summer break from university. Congratulations to Vicky King and Gareth Davidson for there promotion to Patrol Leader.

We had a busy summer, with plenty of water activities taking place. In June we attended Waterfest where we put on a display to the public of our equipment and skills. We have run a number of open water rib sessions out on the Solent which has been enjoyed by those who attended, and we will be back out there in the early spring.

Our summer camp this year was held at St Brides, in Pembrokeshire. This proved to be a most successful week where we enjoyed plenty of activities and nice sunshine. It was well attended by both Scouts and Leaders, with most of us enjoying kayaking, swimming, and a rib boat ride around Ramsey Island to see the abundant wildlife. We also had a day at the theme park with the white knuckle rides. Thanks to all the Leaders and staff for making it a most memorable camp.

The boathouse has been opened most weekends and Cliff has run various canoe safety courses. We have also had fire lighting, cooking, axe, saw, and basic Scout craft skills sessions. In the forthcoming months, Cliff will be running white water canoe trips.

We returned to the YMCA on the first Friday in October with our main aim to finish off many of the awards that have been worked on during the summer months. We have 2 Scouts very close to gaining their chief scouts award so with a little push we hope to announce a forthcoming presentation.

These will be a valuable addition to our census, as we will be due for our Royal Naval Inspection next year.

Our Halloween party was enjoyed by all; most of the Scouts and Leaders got into the spirit and dressed up. Well done to James Scott and Georgia Blake as the prize winning best dressed Scouts, and to Gareth Davidson for his alternative costume of Little Red Riding Hood, complete with stockings, suspenders and high leg boots!!

We are taking part in the Grapevine Challenge; the 1st event was a games challenge with 3 of our Scouts taking part. We also took part in the District Swimming gala.

Troop meetings will continue at the YMCA with our last meeting on the 18th December as our party night.

- Our winter camp is 5th – 7th March 2010 at Chalfont heights scout camp.
- Our summer camp is 31st July – 7th August 2010 Venue to be confirmed.
- I'm also planning to run a back to basics weekend camp, probably in the early spring. This will be held somewhere local where we can light fires, build shelters and practice our backwoods cooking. This appears to be a popular weekend, with most of the Scouts wanting to attend.

Mike Davidson - Scout Leader

SWIMMING GALA 2009

Every year in November we participate in the District swimming gala at Central Swimming Pool. There are three events per age group, with a mixed relay and diving event. We want to give a big well-done to the cubs and scouts who saw 1st Reading achieve 3rd place overall and performed admirably in their own events.

Under 9 ½ cubs

Ben Lawrence
Luke Chapman

Under 11 cubs

Ciaran Marshall
Alex Reynolds

Under 12 ½ scouts

James Scott
Sam Evans
Zoe Gibson

Under 14 scouts

Josh Williams
Vicky King

We also took home some medals with Alex Reynolds gaining 2 Bronze for Breaststroke and Freestyle, Sam Evans a Bronze for Freestyle and Gold in Backstroke. Both Alex and Sam also won joint Gold in the Diving event, taking home not only a medal yet also a Trophy.