



# Winter 2023 Newsletter

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Lest We Forget

Credit: Henry Watt

## Welcome

It's hard to believe we've come to the end of another incredible year! What started as a once-modest sprinkling of Beavers six years ago, is now a fully-fledged Scouting unit which continues to evolve and grow.

As you'll read about, we now have four active sections within Dunning Scout Group (26th Perthshire), with our latest, the Explorers, now opening up opportunities for those young people who've grown too old for Scouts. We have around 60 children and young people enjoying our programmes, activities and events put on each week by our leadership team and supported by our brilliant adult helpers and by our young leaders.



Across the sections, there have been camps and camping aplenty – from the Howling at Fordell Firs, to Craggan and Meggernie and not forgetting the Beavers Big Sleepover in the PADS tent in Rollo Park.

Over this year we've had plenty to celebrate. Earlier this year, two of our Scouts became the first young people to achieve the Chief Scout's Gold Award within the Dunning Scout Group – the highest award in Scouts. Three further Gold Awards were presented later in the year. We also recognise the dedication and hard work of those achieving the Chief Scout's Silver and Bronze Awards. And there are of course the hundreds of badges that were earned over the course of the year – we like to think we've been keeping everyone busy with needles and thread!

Our leaders have also been scooping awards. At our AGM held in September, all five of the original leaders (Nathan, Fi, Pete, Sandy and Lou) received their five year service award and were surprised by also receiving the Chief Scout's commendation for good service.

We like to think we're giving our young people plenty of opportunities for fun while helping build life skills and lasting friendships along the way. A sense of place in their community is key here too and our participation in Dunning's Remembrance Sunday parade and commemoration remains one of the most important events in our calendar. This year's turn out for tree planting in Kincladie Wood was fantastic, with around 50 people helping out on the day, further underlining our commitment to and responsibility for the community we're lucky to call home.

As we move into 2024, we look forward to growing further, providing opportunities for our young people to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme from within our very own Dunning Scout Group.

For now, please enjoy our newsletter! We've had a helping hand from the young people in Explorers so you'll find write-ups, interviews, photographs, cooking tips, jokes and of course, the beautiful illustration on the front cover all from them. We think you'll agree they're a pretty talented bunch!

Wishing you and your families a very happy festive time and all the very best for 2024!

**Editor:** Sally Dawson,  
Assistant Explorer Scout  
Leader



# Section Updates



## Beavers

From hikes along the Roman road to water fun at Willowgate and from planting and harvesting tatties in the community garden to a BIG sleepover in the PADS tent at Rollo Park, the action has been non-stop for the Beavers this year.



The Beaver Leadership Team is led by Pete Diver and Helen White, supported by other leaders (Lou, Fi, Claire, Anna and William) and parent helpers including Young Leader Henry Watt and there are currently 13 Beavers on the books.

Helen said: "We've had such an exciting year! Thank you to all the Beavers for being such fun and enthusiastic kids. And thanks to our parents for all the help they give.

"We've welcomed two more assistant leaders (Claire and Anna) and are always delighted to welcome many more for all our fun. Season's wishes to all!"



## Cubs

Finishing the year with a total of 19 Cubs, the section has had a brilliant year full of activities, fun and personal growth.

Activities the Cubs have enjoyed this year include:

Climbing, water fun at Willowgate, tree planting, Little Dunning Market and taking part in the Remembrance Parade and commemoration ceremony.

They've also taken part in activity days/camps at Meggernie, the Howling and Fordell Firs.



Leader Scott Hewitt (aka Red Squirrel) said: "It's great seeing the young ones develop and grow in confidence over the year. Moving into leadership roles as Sixers or Seconders, building skills that will last a lifetime.

"I'm always super proud when I see them at larger Scouting events after they leave Cubs and move on to Scouts or Explorers - they are amazing role models for the little ones."

"In terms of personal achievements, for some it is turning up and taking part each week, building their social skills, working with others and becoming confident individuals. We also had Isabella attain every badge possible in Cubs - continuing the trend she started in Beavers!!"

The Cubs are currently working to add another leader and assistant leader to help Scott and Cat, and will be doing an overnight trip to Our Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh in February 2024.



## Scouts

This year has been another fantastic one for the Scouts and for the first time, we were delighted to award the Chief Gold Scout's Award to five of our young people.

Currently there are 19 Scouts and over the year they've enjoyed a range of activities including:

Tree planting in the woods, a summer solstice overnight hike and camp up Craiggrossie, hammock-camping in -5 temperatures at Craggan and an activity day at Fordell Firs.



The Leadership Team running the Scouting programming includes Ewan Cameron, Stephen Broad, Jim Butcher and Nick Ward. Ewan said: "It's been a great year. Henry and Archie were the first pair of our Scouts to achieve the highest award in Scouts, the Chief Scout's Gold Award. It was a very proud moment for the Dunning Scout Group. Rudi, James and Leo (ex-Scouts, now Explorers) also gained their awards later in the year. Congratulations to them all!"



## Explorers

We're delighted to have set up Dunning's first Explorers unit for those young people who are moving on from Scouts. Led by Ruth Emond, Sarah Webb and Sally Dawson with support from helpers, we currently have nine young people attending.

Explorers James and Samuel put pen to paper to share a little more about what goes on at meetings.

They said: "Explorers is a great way to express your love of the outdoors. The age group is 14-18 and it's super fun! We first stop outside Kincladie Wood to collect all our gear. Our shelter is in the middle of the woods and it's about 100 metres from the main Scout shelter."



"We then start a fire and unpack. We also set up our tarpaulin to keep us dry if it rains. We do activities like cooking, whittling and practicing our fire starter skills. We have been on one camp so far – to Craggan. We had the option to sleep in a hammock (even though it was pretty cold, so most of us just slept in tents!). We also practiced cooking birds like partridge, duck and goose, as it would be important to know this if we were stuck without food.

Explorers is absolutely awesome and it's a great way to socialise with your age group and just have fun with your friends.



# So, what's so great about Scouting anyway?

Some of our Explorer Scouts put their interviewing skills to the test and decided to find out! And Explorer Isla took the pictures.

## Martha asks...

**Peter (Cub)**

**M: What do you enjoy most about Cubs?**

**P: Playing wide games with my friends in the summer and toasting marshmallows**

**M: What have you learned since doing Cubs?**

**P: How to light a fire and pack an overnight camping bag.**

**M: What has been your favourite camp?**

**P: The Howling because I made friends from other cub packs and really enjoyed all the activities. My favourite was Lazer Tag.**

**M: How is Cubs different from other activities you do?**

**P: Being outside and learning life skills**

**M: Five words that describe Scouting?**

**P: Fun, Learning, Marshmallows, Running, Fire!**

**M: What would you say to someone thinking of joining Cubs?**

**P: It's a nice place to be and it makes me feel happy being outside.**

**M: What do you want for Christmas?**

**P: A video game. Legend of Zelda: Age of Calamity.**



## Eliza and Kaitlyn ask...

### Beth (Scout)

**E&K:** What's been the best part of Scouts?

**B:** Camping. Scouts is different from other activities because it's outside.

**E&K:** What have you learnt?

**B:** Knife work/safety.

**E&K:** What's been the best camp?

**B:** Craggan camp



### Isabella (Scout)

**E&K:** What's been the best thing about Scouting?

**I:** Earning all the badges in Beavers and Cubs. Highest badge I've achieved was the Bronze Award (Beavers) and the Silver Award (Cubs).

Also, being outside!

I like how Scouts is more laid back compared to Beavers and Cubs.

**E&K:** What were your favourite badges achieved?

**I:** The Chef/Cooking badges.

**E&K:** What's the best camp you've been on?

**I:** The most recent Craggan camp.



### Jon (Scout)

**E&K:** What's the best part of Scouts?

**J:** Camping (particularly Fordell Firs!)

**E&K:** What have you learned or improved on?

**J:** Teamwork skills since coming to scouts.



## Ruby and Dan (Young Leaders)

**E&K: What's been the best part of Scouting?**

**R: I've enjoyed helping Scouts the most through being a young leader.**

**D: That's been the best part for me too.**

**E&K: What have you learnt?**

**R: I've learned tips to keeping warm on cold camps through being a young leader!**

**E&K: What's been the best camp?**

**R: The three-day Craggan camp!**

**D: The Cally Rally camp!**

**E&K: What makes Scouting different from other activities?**

**R: You do practical activities and learn practical skills you can use in everyday life**

**D: You're able to go camping!!**



# How to Make Fondue

By Leo Gray

I asked the Explorers what their favourite memory from the term had been and one answer kept popping up

“Fondue!”

It was the short and inevitable reply to my question. I thought to myself, ‘Well, how about I write about the way we make fondue so you readers can learn from our rookie mistakes and create a fondue which will leave anyone who tries it in awe?’

Be prepared to hear things like:

“I never knew you had that in your locker!”

Or

“Wow, how did you do that?”

“It's a secret,” will be your reply.



These were the thoughts going through my head as I sat in the woods grating cheese. Or more to the point, trying to open a packet of cheese. Now it might sound pathetic that a 14-year-old can't open a packet of cheese. But if you can't feel your fingers for the cold and don't have scissors or a knife, it proves to be a tough challenge.

Some just gave up, others were clawing away at the packet with a few twigs and stones, others were starting to wonder where we left the axe. As you can probably tell, things were getting desperate until one of the leaders brought out a pair of scissors and cut the tiresome packets so we could start grating the massive box of cheese.

At first it wasn't too bad, quite enjoyable even. But after you're about halfway through your first block of cheese it starts to become a tiring process. The only positive thought that entered my head was that I didn't have to grate the holes.

Eventually we finished grating and bravely set off to do our next job. We poured white wine and lemon juice into a bowl, then emptied all the cheese in, then added cornflour and garlic. Then we proceeded to slowly stir the fondue. After about five minutes we took the pot off the flame and impatiently waited for it to cool down.

We piled hot fondue onto our plates and dipped homemade bread (that's a recipe for next time!) into the cheesy mix. It was surprisingly delicious and it left the leaders bewildered and shocked.

"I never knew you had that in your locker!"

"Wow, who taught you to do that?"

One of the Explorers tried to reply but couldn't because the cheese had glued their lips together.

At that moment, I stopped eating and realised how lucky I am to be part of this group of friends and how welcome they made me feel when I first joined them a few years ago. All the memories of making movies, going on camps and throwing fish guts at each other. I also thought of the leaders who had given up their time on a Friday night for all of this to be possible.

Thank you to all those who are part of the Dunning Unit Dragon Explorer Scouts. Or as we prefer to say, the D.U.D.E.S!



# The Recipe

## Ingredients

- 200ml of white wine (Ed - ahem, alcohol-free substitute)
- 1 tbsp of lemon juice
- 200g Emmental cheese (grated!)
- 200g Gruyere cheese (grated!)
- 2 tbsp cornflour
- 2 garlic cloves



## The Method

Pour the wine and lemon juice into a pan and add the garlic. Do this over a medium heat. Add all the cheese, a handful at a time and whisk between each one. Continue to stir until all the cheese is melted then put the cornflour in the pot and continue cooking for a couple of minutes.

Bon appetit! And enjoy with friends!

# And finally...

The Explorers thought it wouldn't be a proper festive newsletter without a few Christmas cracker jokes. Leo was happy to offer the following...

### **How do you turn a duck into a soul singer?**

*Put it in the oven until it's Bill Withers*

### **Why did the old man fall down the well?**

*Because he couldn't see very well.*

### **What is a frog's favourite food?**

*French Flies.*



# Merry Christmas



**See you all in 2024!**

Beavers meets Wednesdays 6:30pm

Cubs meet Thursdays 6:30pm

Scouts and Explorers meet Fridays 6:30pm

<https://scouts.dunning.rocks/join> - if you are interested in joining a Scouts section or volunteering.



26<sup>th</sup> Perthshire (Dunning) Scout Group

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Keep in touch: [scouts.dunning.rocks](https://scouts.dunning.rocks) [facebook.com/26thperthshire](https://facebook.com/26thperthshire)