

FOSSnews

The Newsletter of the Friends of Strathaven Scouts

A New GSL for Strathaven Scouts



Scouts near the Frundenhutte on their summer expedition to Kandersteg in Switzerland.

It's been 19 years since I left Strathaven Scouts. At that time I had left Ventures and was helping with the Cubs. Work commitments and then University led me south and it was another 5 or so years before I got involved again with Gavin Miller and Douglas Campbell. Having heard that none of the Scouts had ever been on summer camp we set about organising and running a Scout summer camp at Invertrossachs in 1996, the first for a few years. It was a great success and some tradition was restored.

I have heard tales of various ups and downs since then, but I take on the role of GSL excited not only about the future of the Group but also the amount of potential there is. Since becoming involved again in May 2012 (thanks Graham...) I

have seen the activity in the Group grow.

I am delighted that Fraser Dodds has returned, re-starting the Thursday night Scouts. Fraser brings back a great resource in terms of ability and experience. The Troop now had 5 leaders in Fraser, Frazer, Nick, Gavin and Naomi, has grown from six or seven Scouts to nearly 20 and in time I am more than confident it will be up with the Friday numbers of around 35.

There is a waiting list for Beavers, and some spaces in Cubs. The Friday Scouts are healthy, and are working very well as a Troop having just returned from a fantastic trip to Kandersteg. Iain Park is working to improve the Explorer Section which has great potential. We have a great bunch of leaders in all Sections,

and a committed Exec, they bring huge value the Group.

Nevertheless we, as always, depend on people coming forward to support us, and that is where I see FOSS members as a substantial resource. I see FOSS as an adult support section, and a great resource.

I don't want support from FOSS financially, I am more interested in the potential of the people. The members are made up of past GSLs, Committee Members, Leaders, Scouts and parents. You have a huge amount of experience and advice to offer, and I welcome any you will give.

We need adult support to maintain the quality of the Group. If you have skills to help with badge work, camp planning, sectional support or becoming a leader we would welcome you. We are currently looking for an Explorer leader to replace Iain Park in 2014, and help for other Sections is always welcome.

One of the main weaknesses we currently have is a shortage of adventurous activity permit holders. We have great equipment in the store including kayaks and archery equipment but we have no approved instructors. We are also short of ML holders and this is severely hindering our hill time. If any FOSS member can help please get in touch. We will help you gain/regain the required standards, and you don't need to offer a big commitment.

Finally, a big thanks to Kath and Jim Kerr who bowed out of service this year. Kath stood in as acting GSL for a good few years and has kept it all together. We wish you well.

Trevor Boyes, GSL

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Explorer Unit Growing But Needs Help

The Explorer Unit grows and continues to have an active programme but urgently needs support.



Explorers chilling out at Steall Waterfall.

Thanks are due to Jim Kerr who was the Explorer Leader for the past year but has had to give up the role due to pressure of work and family commitments. Graeme Lapsley is continuing as Assistant ESL but with the prospect of the Unit having to close down due to the lack of a second leader Iain Park has taken on the role of acting Leader meantime.

With a regular flow of enthusiastic and well trained Scouts moving up each year from the Friday Troop, and the likelihood of a similar feed from the Thursday Troop in a year or so, it would be a tragedy if there was no Explorer Unit in Strathaven for these young people to continue their Scouting experience. Apart from which it would be sad to see the end of 47 years of continuous Venture and Explorer Scouting within the Group.

An earnest appeal is therefore made

to all readers of FOSS News to consider, if not themselves, then anyone they might know of who would consider becoming the Explorers' Leader.

There was no Unit expedition or camp in 2013 but five of the Explorers joined the Friday Scouts on their immensely successful visit to Kandersteg in July and returned from it with renewed enthusiasm.

The Unit has started up again for the new season in good heart with about twelve prospective members and a female member for the first time in a year or two. Hopefully Abby, daughter of Thursday Scout Leader Gavin Miller, will encourage some of her friends to join her.

The new Board appointed at the AGM in August is Iain Wright as Chair, Gary Wilson Treasurer, Euan Cutting Secretary, Mathew Campbell Quartermaster and Adam Brown as fifth member.

The Board has drawn up a full and varied programme until the end of the year leading up to the annual visit to Berthas at Roybridge with the emphasis on getting out and about. A key item will be the construction by the Explorers of the replica bridge over the Powmillon in December in connection with the Centenary Book launch.

There was a good start to the outdoor activities at the September holiday weekend when three of the Explorers with Iain Park trekked into the heart of the Ben Alder Estate and camped for two nights on the excellent site at the east end of Loch Ossian which has been used by Strathaven Scouts and Ventures Scouts in the past.

Weather throughout the weekend was excellent and the party made successful ascents of two of the nearby Munros, Beinn Eibhinn and Aonach Beag, a successful trip.

Active Year for the Beaver Colony

Bagpipes, badges and burgers - it's been a busy year for the Beavers. Fiona Campbell tells us about it.

This year we have had a great deal going on. In January we had a visit from Mr Norrie Mort and Mathew Campbell who brought their bagpipes and violin and entertained us at our Burns supper. The haggis was piped onto the stage where the boys both young and old had haggis, neeps and tatties and a small glass of their "other national drink".

Later in the year Mrs Miller came along to help the boys with their scientist badge. We made volcanoes out of small drinks bottles and then used household goodies to make our volcanoes explode!

All under strict health and safety guidelines of course.

Another creative night followed soon after to help the boys to gain their Imagination badge using large boxes of lego. With some encouragement from the Scouts Gordon and Adam they made their own models and designed transport of the future.

The weather this year has been very kind to us and we were able to get out with our parachute one night. We went down to the Allison Green and had an evening of running games followed by ice lollies to cool us back down. What a

change to get out for a night.

The summer BBQ was a family affair this year, around 60 boys, girls, ladies and men descended on the Strathaven Airfield for an evening of games, food, sunshine and laughs. Mr Brendan Keeley was chef extraordinaire and cooked burgers and sausages for us all for which we are incredibly grateful. I can safely say we had a great night.

My thanks this year to Adam Stephenson, Gordon Moon, Lucia Spidaro, Maria Spidaro, Euan Cutting and Abbie Miller who have all helped the boys this year to enjoy themselves.

Friday Cubs

Ali Moon reports on dancing, fundraising and outdoor fun for the Friday Cub Pack.

This was another busy year for the Friday Cub Pack. Having discovered that the Cubs have a number of multi-talented parents we made good use of their skills throughout the year. The boys enjoyed participating in yoga, dancing (Gangnam Style rather than Billy Elliott!), indoor tug of war and art activities to name a few.

As part of our Community Challenge award the Cubs raised £146.00 for the Scottish Poppy Appeal after a visit from their local ambassador, Andy McIntosh. We also teamed up with Strathaven Academy and supported their task of collecting & donating 250 backpacks for The Marys Meals Appeal. As a result of the generosity of parents, friends and the Scout Executive Committee we were able to fill 25 backpacks and hand them over to Mrs Martis and the sixth year pupils spearheading the project.

Due to the good weather in the summer term the boys enjoyed a number of outdoor activities in the park and local area learning tracking and navigation skills with the assistance of our parent helpers, Scouts and DofE volunteers.

Thank you to all those who supported the Friday Cub pack over the last 12 months and we look forward to another action packed year.



Top: Lego night for the Beavers.
Bottom: A Cub games night in the hall.



Executive Committee Report

Julie MacAulay provides details of the essential and successful fundraising undertaken in 2013.

The Scout Executive Committee have had another busy year fundraising on behalf of the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorer Scouts. Our seven committee members are responsible for raising the funds necessary to provide financial backing for the supply and maintenance of facilities, equipment and activities of the 1st Strathaven Scout Group. Our main fundraisers include our Christmas hamper raffle, auction, 200 Club and donations from FOSS.

We raised £370.18 selling raffle tickets for our Christmas hamper raffle. Congratulations to Michelle Harris who bought the winning ticket. We would like to thank everyone who donated goods for the hamper, sold raffle tickets and of course everyone who purchased tickets.

Well done to all the hardworking Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorer Scouts and parent helpers who helped raise the fantastic sum of £1,500 by tidying the local area during our Big Clean Up in September. This money was donated to ACT to help fund Reindeer Day and new equipment for the local playpark. All the boys taking part were awarded their

Jubilee badge.

This year's Scout Auction and raffle raised the fantastic sum of £2,230.99. Many thanks to everyone who donated auction lots, their time, bought raffle tickets, donated raffle prizes, baked and came to the auction to spend their hard earned cash.

The Committee are encouraging all parents to join our 200 Club. This involves the entrants purchasing a number for £15 per year with the chance of winning £45, £30 or £15 every month (£250, £150 and £100 in May)! If you are not a member of the 200 Club we would urge you to contact Rhona on 01357 522447. Monthly winners are posted on the notice board in the Scout & Guide Hall and on the S1 Strathaven website.

Friends of Strathaven Scouting donated an enormous £1,282.26 to the committee during the year ending May 2013. We offer our thanks to all those who contributed.

Historic Gift Aid was reclaimed. This generated £3,309.49 of additional funds. A £250.00 grant was also received from South Lanarkshire Council.

This year, we were able to make the following donations to the Group:

An additional £2,000 donation to the Hall Management committee for their Building Management Fund (over and above our agreed annual payment)

£150 to Friday Cubs to help fund their Christmas pantomime trip
£500 donation to help with the renovation of Avondyke, a Scout camp just outside Stonehouse

£70 to help fund PR boards advertising RS50 and HHI
£3,350 donation to Friday Scouts to help fund their trip to Kandersteg in Switzerland

£24 was given to Friday Cubs to purchase backpacks for their Mary's Meals Backpack Appeal

£100 to fund the food at the Beaver's summer BBQ

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped them throughout the year. We couldn't do it without you!

We are always looking for new members. Please join us and be part of the Scout Executive Committee. For more details please contact Julie on 01357 521583.



Handing over cheques from the money raised by the Round Straven 50.

Camping Fun for Thursday Cubs

Cillia McCleary on fundraising, camping, mud and an action packed year for Thursday Cubs.

Thursday Cubs have again had a busy year. We discovered a brand new badge, the Scottish Challenge Badge, which we naturally did right away! This entailed walking the height of Ben Nevis, learning Scottish poems, raising money for charity and many other activities. Each Six learned a poem and performed it during a mini gang show in front of parents, family and friends. This helped us raise £100 which we split between Barnardos and a befriending group.

Apart from our Gang Show, where we found an amazing amount of talent, we also raised money for MacMillan nurses by joining the World's Biggest Coffee Morning - albeit we did it the night before! The Cubs served family and friends with tea, coffee and of course cakes and biscuits. Lots of folk came and the boys worked hard all night.

We took the Sixers on a mini camp which included a games night in the hall where we played tennis with oversized bats and had a good laugh. Then the

best bit, chips, before we went out for a night hike. Thankfully it was a lovely night and the wee stroll was enjoyed by both Cubs and Leaders.

The highlight of the Cub year is obviously camp. This year the weather had been OK running up to June so we booked a field at Waterside and off we went. Friday night was great; warm, midgeless and best of all dry. Everyone played a fantastic wide game (where the leaders obviously won), had supper, went to bed (and slept) only to be wakened during the night by rain. Did I say rain? I meant a monsoon!

However we were undaunted and headed to the woods to learn how to build bivouacs. We all know now that ferns are not just soft to lie on but also waterproof (and you thought camp was all games). We learned about trees, flowers, tracks, animals and birds; found some old ruins including a fireplace and then did some cooking on an open fire.

As if that wasn't enough, we also had a camp fire after dinner. It was a great

day despite the rain.

Sunday dawned rainless! We did the athlete's badge - running, jumping, throwing and skipping. I have to say, watching boys skip is funny! Unfortunately when the rain goes off, the midges appear so on with the midge nets.

After lunch we did what every self-respecting Cub comes to camp for - the assault course! This year there was no lack of mud (courtesy of the previous days rain) and we headed off into the forest yet again for some mayhem! Suffice it to say it was very hard to pick this year's grubbiest cubby but Max certainly deserved the title.

Can I just add a personal thank you to everyone who has helped with the pack in any way over the year - parents for sending the boys every week, helpers on Thursdays who give up their time weekly and folk who came along to camp knowing that they would probably get wet! I can only say that the boys love it and it is because you give your time and talents.

Handing over funds raised during the completion of the Scottish Challenge badge.



After a year of intense fund raising, we arrived at Kandersteg on the 29th June 2013. Twenty five Scouts and five Leaders taking a flight from Edinburgh to Basel and then a very easy train journey to Kandersteg. In addition an advance party of two Leaders drove from Strathaven to Kandersteg in a van bringing all the rucksacks, tents, food and equipment.

Lady luck was definitely on our side. Kandersteg had had two weeks of very heavy rain and although we were met with mist and rain on arrival, from the next morning the weather was glorious.

On day one we were to hike up the valley and take a cable car. The mountains still had plenty of snow on them and the Scouts enjoyed some unexpected body sledging in shorts and t-shirts in 20 degree temperatures.

An international barbeque in the evening was a lot of fun. In full uniform, wearing kilts, Strathaven Scouts were cheered into the BBQ area by a few hundred Scouts of different nationalities ranging from American, Spanish, Irish, Dutch and Chinese. This was a fantastic opportunity to meet Scouts from other countries and exchange badges and neckies. They did like the attention being paid to them!

Day two brought a 3 hour train journey for our trip to the Eiger. This took us through some of the most beautiful surroundings, passing places like Interlaken on the way; a stunning Swiss lake surrounded by stunning villages and mountains.

We finally took a spectacular high glass train from Grindelwald climbing very steeply to the base station. We then hiked up an extremely steep track for 2km to the top of the ski lift. with the temperature now hitting 25 degrees - exhausting but well worth it.

Following a snow covered trail we then hiked along the base of the Eiger. Looking up to the mountain itself you could just make out tracks in the snow where climbers had recently climbed through the infamous "spider", an area of the mountain permanently covered in snow. Climbers have become very superstitious about this part of the mountain due to the number of fatalities at this particular point.

The Scouts enjoyed a full day of hiking across the base of the Eiger and finishing back at Grindelwald. For some, they had to overcome an element of anxiety and, with the support of the other Scouts in particular, everyone felt

Scout Summer Exped

Graham McCall provides a vivid report of the hugely successful Scout and Explorer Summer Expedition to the International Scout Camp at Kandersteg in Switzerland.



Hiking some of the treacherous paths in the stunning Swiss Alps.

a real sense of achievement. Having a go at skiing in only hiking boots was a lot of fun too! We had an exhausted Troop at the end of the day and fantastic photographs.

Hiking up to the Frundenhutte at 2562m is something of a Strathaven Scouts tradition and this was our activity for days three and four. It is the highest of all the mountain huts in the area and takes between four and five hours from Kandersteg station. 20 Scouts and six Leaders took part in the hike. It was a steep climb with some unforgettable views of the glacial lake and surrounding mountains. Due to late snow in the area the path had just been declared open with a few tight squeezes between the rock-face and snow melt. The Scouts loved it!

Frundenhutte is a spectacular mountain hut of some size with very very comfortable alpine beds. After breakfast in the morning it was a fairly rapid decent for a well-earned but very cold swim in the glacial lake.

Back on site our campfire and songs in the evening brought in a few Scouts from other countries. We did make a lot of noise!

After all the hiking, you would have thought the Scouts would be exhausted. No! Spirits were high and so were the rope challenges on day five. Graded

from green to black, easy to hard, low to high, the Scouts and Leaders with harnesses and karabiners made their way across what was a challenging obstacle course through the tree tops.

A couple of the Scouts were scared of heights. It was excellent to see them overcome their fear and enjoy the experience from start to finish. A fantastic barbeque lunch prepared by two of the Leaders was a welcome addition to the day.

After lunch, we were then split into three groups, put into wet suits and helmets for an afternoon of canyoning in a nearby river. Jumping off waterfalls in a superman pose and sliding over rocks and rapids had everyone smiling.

Tiredness now setting in, 32 take away pizzas with free drinks hit the spot. We won't forget the look on the pizza takeaway owner's face when we placed the order!

Day six brought some well earned free time to explore Kandersteg, buy some gifts and swim in the outdoor swimming pool which was fantastic. That evening we joined the International camp fire for a sing song.

It was a fantastic trip and a wonderful experience for all the Scouts. Thanks go to those whose kind donations helped make this superb international Scouting experience possible.

dition to Kandersteg

Foreign expeditions are often the highlight of a member's time in the Scout movement. Current Scout Sam Park recounts the many highs of a superb trip.

It took us about three trains to get from the airport to the town closest to Kandersteg. It was raining when we arrived, but it didn't dampen anyone's spirits, as we were all so excited about the next week or so. Fortunately two leaders had driven over a while before and had all our main rucksacks and the tents dry.

There was a big group effort from everyone two put up the remaining two tents. We got this done pretty quickly and then explored the site. We had dinner in the dining hall and did a bit more exploring. We went to bed quite early that night and had a great night's sleep; at least until we got woken up at 7 o'clock the next morning!

When we went to breakfast everyone was still pretty happy to be there. After that we got a cable car a bit of the way up a mountain. Let's just say everyone wasn't so keen on it... We then walked all the way back down which took most

of the day.

The next day we went up to the Eiger which is about 3,970 metres high. We got a few trains (almost the wrong ones a couple of times) and a bus to get to Kleine Scheidegg where we walked right underneath the North Face. It was spectacular. We walked right back down to Grindelwald in the valley.

The next day was amazing. We had a lazy morning and, with a few staying behind, we made our way up the mountains to the Frudenhutte. This took all afternoon in the baking heat. We passed through some snow which was very nice.

Eventually we saw that hut. It was actually the flags in front of it, but who cares. At around five we arrived, everyone knackered and glad to get a seat. We had one of the nicest dinners ever though it was very simple and then we went upstairs to bed although none of us could get to sleep very quickly.

In the morning we went back down, it was a colder and wetter day. When we got to the lake we all rushed into the water as it was very refreshing. We got back to the campsite around midday and had lunch.

The next day we went to a high ropes course in the morning where you are in the treetops and clip in and out of wires to complete obstacle courses. In the afternoon we went canyoning. You get to slide, jump and swim down a river in a big gorge. This was one of the best bits of the trip and I think quite a lot of people also thought so.

The next day we just stayed around the site, went into town and went to the pool. Many people got burnt that day as it was very hot. Lots of people bought traditional Swiss items (penknives and chocolate!) It was the last full day but it was really good.

On our day of departure we got up really early so we could get away early. We took down the tents, packed our sacks and sent them away on the trailer. We then went to breakfast then got the many trains back. Overall it was an amazing week and I think I say that on behalf of everybody.

Spectacular scenery - the members of the expedition visit the North face of the Eiger.



FOSSAS - Back to the Peak

Matthew McVeigh reports on an enjoyable weekend of activities in the Peak District with FOSSAS.



This year saw the Adventure Section return to the Peak District for the first time since we had been snowed off in 2010. It was a welcome return to one of the best climbing locations in the UK for the keener rock jocks and, having eschewed bunkhouse living (for this meet up at least), we were able to stretch out and relax in our rented farmhouse. Proper beds are a luxury we haven't previously experienced on FOSSAS outings and the bargain deal we'd bagged gave us an excellent base for activities.

We convened in dribs and drabs on a sunny Thursday in May in the former mining town of New Mills. Some of the group had travelled early for some climbing routes but Neal Poad and I chose to explore the local shops (and hostelry) that afternoon before the others arrived. Chris Baird, Duncan Campbell, Michael Shorter and my brother Dan soon joined us and we soon settled on the comfy sofas for a lengthy catch up with each other.

Friday morning and the sun shone, breakfast was taken in the conservatory (I could really get used to this) and we soon split up to head off on our chosen activities. Neal and I headed to a long crag of short, easy routes perfectly suited to my abilities (or lack thereof). We had an entertaining day which, after my first

tense (and, I'm ashamed to say, furiously swears) ascent was an absolute delight. The rock was superb, I enjoyed the climbs which Neal was kind enough to drag me up and he got some easy soloing in to tick off a crazy number of routes.

Later in the afternoon we traveled across the Peak to meet up with the serious climbers to find them attempting, well, it was an E5 and let's just say its name is far too rude for this newsletter! Duncan managed to hook up the last moves for a successful ascent while others failed, I'd swear he'd applied some rock adhesive to his hands as there was simply nothing to hold onto near the top. How he stayed on the rock is a complete mystery to me.

The hardcore crowd had one more route in their minds, an off width crack (I don't know what it is with Duncan and off width cracks, every year...) called Goliath on an imposing crag well off the road at Burbage South. Duncan, Mike and Chris all fought the rock as Neal and I watched on, gradually creeping further and further towards the top with each attempt. After taking a huge flyer off the route Duncan finally topped out and we left, the rock jocks battered and bleeding, and had a well earned drink on the way home.

Back at the farmhouse Dan returned for dinner. He had headed off for a long

solo hike taking in over 25 miles of the best of the Peak. He was training for the Trailwalker charity challenge with a team of friends later in the year which would see them walk 100km, this was just a short training route. His team later completed this in an impressive 26hrs 15mins.

The Inch boys, Fraser and Donald, were yet to arrive, but we couldn't wait and headed along the road to a tremendous little pub in a dead end hamlet along the road from us. As we quaffed the excellent cask ale they finally rolled up with a tale of how they had got marginally lost and attempted to get into a random house, confusing it for our accommodation. Fortunately the police weren't alerted to their nefarious activities.

Saturday brought clouds and an unfavourable forecast. Over a huge fry up we all decided that a lazy day was in order, with Chris headed home even Duncan and Mike were happy not to brutalise their still gashed hands, arms and legs further. Thus we traveled to Buxton for coffee and cake, charity shop excellence and Duncan beating the bookies before heading back for a final night in the pub for a meal.

Once again we'd had an excellent few days of catching up and activities, look for us on Facebook for 2014's event

RS50 2013 Most Successful Ever

Every year the RS50 gets bigger and better. Graeme Small reports on our most successful year.



Left: Start of the 15 mile route, Right: Cormac McConville, our youngest 50 mile finisher!



Bigger and better than ever! That is the view of organisers and participants of this year's Round Strathaven 50 charity cycle event. It has grown in stature every year since the first RS50 was held in 2002 and now attracts cyclists from all round Scotland and a few from south of the border.

In a move to enable the organising committee to have forewarning of how many might take part entries were invited this year online using the facilities of Entry Central and this encouraged 350 cyclists to sign up beforehand for the 50 mile event. Some of these were unable to take part but a further 82 entered on the day and a total of 410 set out on the challenging 50 mile route around the South Lanarkshire countryside.

It was particularly challenging this year on account of the stiff breeze which the cyclists had to fight. This did not prevent some of the experienced Club cyclists from completing the circuit in just over 2 ½ hours. Nor did it stop young Cormac McConville from completing the fifty miles and becoming the youngest boy to achieve this, beating last year's record holder Gregor Robb by just a month. Cormac is a member of the Friday Cubs and of an East Kilbride Cycling Club. His parents Ronan and Vicki and the rest of the family have been staunch supporters of the RS50 since its outset.

Another record was broken in the afternoon 15 miles event with five year old Michael Ferrero from Stonehaven again beating the previous holder of the title from last year, Eilidh Maclean, to become the youngest to complete the 15 miles.

Four year old Samuel Mulvey made a

noble effort to cycle round the 15 miles but was defeated by the strong breeze. He'll be back next year to try again.

There were 75 family entrant groups for the afternoon run. This included a total of 235 cyclists from age four to over eighty and brought the number of cyclists who took part over the two events to a marvelous total of 645.

The mass start of the 50 milers in the morning was set off by double amputee and athlete extraordinaire Chris Moon who also completed the route in good time.

Another change to this year's event was the use of the facilities of Kirkland Park Primary School for the start and finish. This proved to be very satisfactory.

The food, which is provided for the cyclists at the two check points in Sandford and Glassford and at the finish, has always been one of the attractions of the RS50 for many of the regular cyclists.

Having run out of food last year when the number had reached over 500, the organizers were worried about how to cope with this year's much increased number. However, the Strathaven folk rose to the occasion and a great number of donations of home baking and sandwiches were received and the event's reputation for its culinary excellence was preserved. The RS50 committee wishes to thank all who donated the food for their great support.

Thanks as always are due to the army of supporters who acted at the school in the starting team or around the route as marshals and safety supervisors. Without these members of other local organisations and individuals this event could not continue and it certainly could not cope

with the numbers it now attracts. Dales Cycles again provided good back-up support for the cyclists.

Thanks are also due to the South Lanarkshire Council and the members of its Roads Department who were very supportive of the event and performed miracles in getting all of the roads which had suffered considerable damage in recent months into good order in time. The roads throughout the fifty miles route were in better condition this year than in any of the previous years the RS50 has been run.

The following are some of the comments we have received by e-mail from participants or were posted on Facebook:

"Brill event again. A culinary delight in the sportive calendar!"

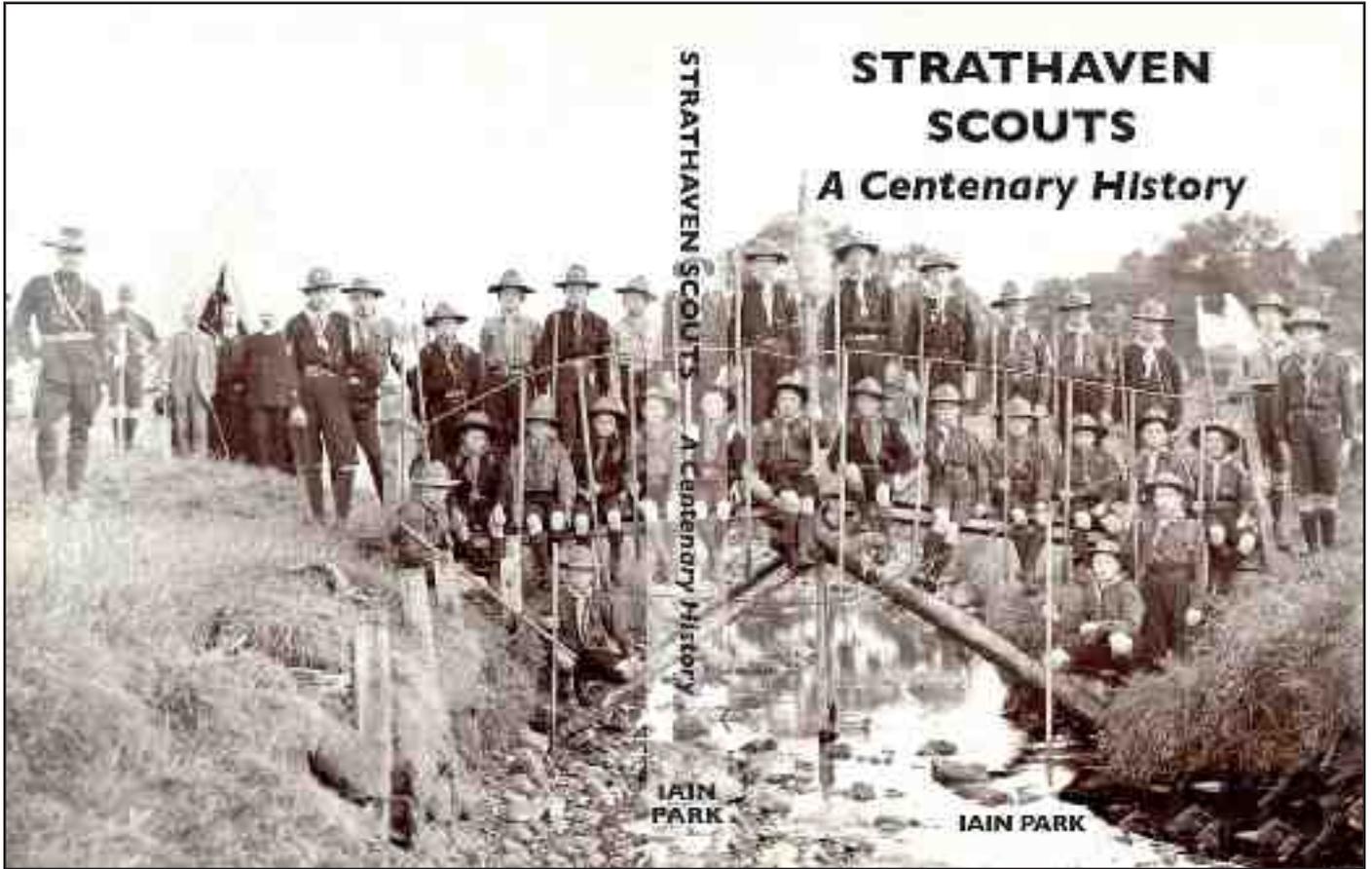
"Congratulations to the team for organising such a fabulous event. A wonderful example of a community getting behind a joint project - only wish we could emulate you in our neck of the woods!"

"First time doing the event on Sun, and it was a superb event. Well organised and a great feel to it too! Definitely be back next year. The cakes/coffees at the end were a welcome surprise too."

"A really well organised event, signposting and stewarding were excellent and words can't describe how good all the home baking and sandwiches etc were... Many thanks to all organisers and volunteers, will definitely do it again next year! Well done."

Strathaven Scouts - A Centenary History

Iain Park provides details of the much anticipated book detailing the first 100 years of the Group.



It has been a long time in coming but this time I can say with confidence that the story of Strathaven Scouts' 100 years is about to be published and the book entitled *The Strathaven Scouts – A Centenary History* will be available from about the end of November.

It is a high quality hard backed production of 256 pages including photographs covering the 100 years. 300 copies are being printed and will sell at £14.99 each. We have been able to keep the cost to what the FOSS Committee thinks is a reasonable one thanks to a generous grant received to help defray the publi-

cation costs from the South Lanarkshire Rural Partnership LEADER programme.

I wish to thank all members of FOSS who have assisted me with written items for the book, information, and photographs or in any way over the last few years and also the members of the FOSS Committee and of the Scout Executive for their support of the project and, in the latter case, for their promise of financial support, if needed.

I am pleased to report that the book contains a foreword in the form of a letter from the Chief Scout, Bear Grylls, congratulating the Strathaven Group on its

100 years of successful Scouting.

As I have said in my own introduction to the book I expect that there will inevitably be errors or omissions in it despite intensive proof reading and editing and I apologise to anyone whose name appears incorrectly or may not be included or if I have left out something which others may consider to have been of importance.

I hope that those who read it will find the book to be an accurate account of the Strathaven Group's 100 years and that for FOSS members it will bring back happy memories of their time in the Scouts.



FOSS Reunion
Left: Bagging the summit of Geal Charn.
Right: Relaxing in Pitlochry.



FOSS Reunion Weekend

Taking in a Munro summit, a long hike, luxurious accommodation and food and drink aplenty; John Miller rounds up another super FOSS reunion weekend.

Whatever the purists think about a comfy bed, porridge, bacon eggs, fried potato scones, beans and fried tomato it is a great help to start your day off the right way.

A nice warm shower, a nice warm house, no grass in your tea, the news to watch on telly whilst the others are scrimmaging for a place round the electric cooker wanting to show their prowess on the hot plate, can't be a bad way to start a FOSS weekend of difficult climbs to challenge all.

Well this is how it started, the group who congregated on the Friday night slowly arrived full of anticipation of another good weekend 'fossing it' with friends old and new. This is a weekend to look forward to and all those who took part would agree that they had been. Although the accommodation is plush by comparison to some wee cottage high in the alps of Scotland that's not the point. The point is that FOSS are us, together again, for a good weekend of friendship and challenges, some on the cooker, some on the hill.

Those who battled north to Pitlochry this year included Iain Park, Graham Stewart, Graham Naismith, his son, Michael, Bibby & John Miller, Doc Podboy (U.S.A.), Miles Hutchison, Stewart Graham, Graeme Stuart, Donald & Jess Mcleod plus their two grandsons, Ian Gow and Tom Sutherland along with Murphy, a newcomer to the group.

Tom Sutherland joined us on his first visit to the U.K. Tom is an Australian doing missionary work in India for Health Help International, a charity set up to carry out good work in Africa and India. Already the Scout group, including Iain Park, have visited Zambia where they helped build a grain mill for the local people. Iain has visited Tom on several occasions in India and since Tom was in the UK Iain felt it would be good to let Tom see Scotland and join FOSS at Pitlochry.

Murphy is Bibby and John's latest acquisition, a 3 1/2 year old rescue Labrador who when reading this report agreed with every word of it. He had a ball, not to say he put on weight even though he pulled John round the climb on Saturday. John Addy's dog was perfect (he was on home territory).

Friday night was catch up night and a few tales were told round the table,



Graham, Doc and Michael enjoy catching up at the FOSS Reunion.

Fossers getting to know one another again and picking up from where they left off last year. We all shared in an excellent meal provided by Bibby.

John Addy should be mentioned at this point, since John very kindly agrees to let FOSS have the house for the weekend, which it is greatly appreciated. John is a great man to have in your team since his knowledge of the hills is up there with Iain's.

Some "medicine" was taken on Friday to ensure Saturday's climb was easy on some of the old limbs, as it happened it wasn't needed.

Saturday morning is an absolute treat and a huge fry up is provided to gird the loins for the day ahead. Main gas controllers were Graham and Graeme with Donald at the helm, boy they can cook.

Our guest from the States, Doc Podboy, always saves himself for this breakfast as it is nearly as big as the ones he gets at Sinoquipe (home of his district camp site in Pennsylvania).

Preparations for the day ahead were made and the group split into two, those on a mission to crack off a Munro and those who had done that some time ago and preferred something a little more dignified.

Those for the Munro climbed into the cars and sped north on the A9 to the Drumochter Pass, the others set out for a long walk round the hills near Pitlochry. They enjoyed much better weather as it happened.

At Drumochter the mist was pretty low and it carried rain causing the visibility to be poor. However, undaunted, the group set off to bag three Munros. Due to the really bad weather only one was

put in the bag, Geal-charn (917m).

To say it was a pleasure to get back to Pitlochry is an understatement. However, again the spirit of the group on the hike remained high and everyone completed it without difficulty. Some great conversation was had and some very good compass reading happened just to prove we were Scouts (almost anyway, I pretend I was nearly a Scout).

The group on the long walk also had a very good day and returned hungry but otherwise in good shape.

Moulin Inn sounds like somewhere in Paris but it is one of the fine hostelryes to be found in this part of the country. In the evening we retired there for dinner (this is really Scouting) enjoying a fine meal.

Of course we then returned to the cottage for further discussion about the day and everything else in the world. A little more medicine was taken to ensure the limbs stayed in pristine condition after all our exercise.

Alas, on Sunday morning, because of the poor weather conditions, it was decided not to venture on to the hills. However, since the rations had been purchased for another strength providing breakfast the cooks got busy and surpassed even the Moulin with a superb meal appreciated by all.

All too soon the time came for us to depart and wend our various ways around the globe promising to return next year, wherever.

Those reading this article who would like to come to a FOSS weekend and haven't yet really should. It brings good food, great chat and above all excellent fun - try it!

News and Events Round Up

FOSS AGM

The FOSS AGM will be held on Tuesday 3rd December 2013 in the Scout and Guide Centre starting at 7.30 pm. The brief business element will be followed by a short slide presentation on Scout and FOSS activities in 2013.

We will launch the Scout Centenary Book with copies available for purchase and refreshments will be served. Please come along and support the Committee, take the opportunity to meet up with your fellow members of FOSS and our other supporters and also of getting your copy of the Centenary Book.

2014 Round Stra'ven 50

The date for next year's RS50 (the 12th) is to be Sunday 17th August 2014. It grows bigger and more successful every year.

Keep the date free, get on your bike and into training for this annual personal challenge and well established local community event but more importantly help us to raise even more money for our selected Charity and to help the Strathaven Scouts and Guides. Between them they received £9,000 this year.

FOSS Website

The FOSS website is the place to find all of our latest news and announcements. Details of each year's Round Stra'ven 50 are available in advance.

Reports and photos of the activities undertaken by both the Group and FOSS can be found.

We are grateful for the support of David Miller who acts as our webmaster and provides hosting for the site. Find us online at:

www.friendsofstrathavenscouts.org.uk



The Explorer contingent of the Kandersteg trip enjoying the exedition.

Centenary Book

News of the above is included elsewhere in the newsletter and a flyer is also enclosed with details of the book and with a cut-off form to be returned to reserve your copy.

Because of its size and weight we shall be obliged to add a small extra sum to the cost to cover postage.

It is due to be published in November and copies will be sent or delivered to those who have ordered them, but a formal book launch is planned at the AGM when they will be on sale.

Reunion Weekend 2014

Next year's FOSS Reunion will be held over the weekend Friday 16th to Sunday 18th May 2014. The destination has still to be agreed. John Miller's report of this year's reunion has again captured the spirit of these annual get togethers and will hopefully encourage you to join the regulars at next year's.

Come along for the social gathering even if you don't wish to join in the hill climb or walk on the Saturday. Final details will be published online and included in next years Interim Newsletter.

Editor's Note

It gets harder and harder every year to come up with new ways of preparing an editorial rounding up Group news. I was delighted that our new GSL, Trevor Boyes, provided me with an excellent alternative to having to struggle with that task this year!

Thanks go to Iain Park for collating articles and photos and all the contributors without whose hard work we would have no newsletter (and in many cases, no Sections being run). Thanks also to all the FOSS members who continue to support us.

FOSSnews is the official newsletter of the Friends of Strathaven Scouts, who exist to support Scouting in Strathaven. It is published by them at the Strathaven Scout and Guide Centre. Copy editing and desk top publishing by Matthew McVeigh, to whom comments can be forwarded. Printing by Bill Sturrock, Print Matters, 16 - 18 Swan Street, Brechin, DD9 6EF whose price represents a very generous contribution to FOSS.