



NEWS from...

The UK Uganda Network

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So many tales from Uganda 2003

Over 130 Scouts from England descended on Uganda this August for Uganda 2003. But it is not just the welcome, the meeting and camping with Ugandan Scouts that they will remember and talk about for years to come. The various groups undertook building and restorative projects for local communities and Scouts, as well as seeing the stunning African wildlife on safari and sight seeing at Lake Victoria, the source of the Nile and the Bujugali Falls. 20 Scouts undertook their Explorer Belt, the most challenging of awards, travelling 100 miles through rural areas of Uganda where some villagers have never seen a white person before.

Those who took the opportunity to climb Mount Elgon, the second highest peak in Uganda reached the peak at 3am for an incredible sunrise whilst others took part in amazing white water rafting on the Nile. In this newsletter we give just a taste of their activities. As one group said, they packed a weeks experience into every day.



Basketball match to open restored court in Mbale

Scouts from West Sussex and other areas restored the basketball court as part of their multitude of tasks in Mbale. Its completion was marked with a match between Mbale SS and a Uganda 2003 Select. Before reaching Mbale the group went on Safari. Their first task on arrival was to paint the outside of two buildings at Mbale Secondary School. They also visited the Children's Restoration Outreach Centre for local homeless and orphaned children and spent some time at the Bulangria Disabled School in Palisa. After all their hard work the group relaxed by tackling the four day climb of Mount Elgon.

New playground and water boreholes

Scouts from Epsom and Ewell split into two teams, one going to Mayuge and the other to Tororo. In Tororo after camping overnight with friendly and welcoming Ugandan Scouts they met the Mayor and other local dignitaries. The playground

equipment which they had ordered arrived so their first task was digging holes, placing the equipment and cementing it in. Within days the playground was full of children enjoying themselves. The Mayuge team visited schools where trees the group had sponsored had been planted. They also started work on the first sponsored protected spring. Both teams then ran a variety of games and activities at the District Camp. Camping with Ugandan Scouts was an experience in itself. The teams split again changing places. In Tororo they extended a water pipe to what will be the Tororo International Scout and Guide Centre. The second group visited a small village Bugoto, where some enjoyed home hospitality in mud huts but they were shocked by the high levels of poverty and disease. No clean water and no electricity. Afterwards in Kampala they met a water board official. He agreed to locate a water hole in Bugoto to be operational by April. After all their efforts both teams saw magnificent wildlife on safari at the Queen Elizabeth National Park.

Schoolrooms erected, football field flattened

Scouts from Surrey and East Sussex started their Uganda 2003 in Kenya on Safari before arriving at Lukotaima to a massive welcoming ceremony. The 11 days spent there had a great affect on every member of the team. They achieved a great deal despite finding that the pit for the toilet block they were going to build had been dug in the wrong place. However, a new 30 foot pit was dug, capped and the work completed to head height with door frames being put in. Great progress was also made with the double classroom building. On arrival it just had concrete foundations. When they left the brick work was to roof height the roofing beams were on and the roof was about to be put on. The group have provided funds to complete the roofs. Further funds are needed for doors, windows, painting and plastering but the rooms can be used in this state. The group also cleared termite mounds to provide a nearly flat football field with white metal goalposts. After leaving with the grateful thanks of the local Ugandans for the books and educational equipment they left behind, the group split. Some climbed Mount Elgon others visited the Sipi Falls or took part in white water rafting.

Mike Bell hands over Buwenda. See story overleaf.



UK Uganda Network

The UK Uganda Network supports the aims and objectives of The Scout Association and the development of the Uganda Scouts Association by promoting ways in which members of both Associations can contribute to the understanding of each countries culture and people.

...more reports from Uganda 2003

Completion of Avonja Project

The Avonja Project began in 1993 when Avon Venture Scouts made a 10 year commitment to build the equivalent of 'Woodhouse', Avon's own Training HQ, on a 10 acre site at Buwenda, 3 miles from Jinja at the source of the Nile. Their aim was to construct a training building and camping ground, to plant orchards and develop vocational training projects. The building work had been carried out with African Scouts from Jinja working alongside Avon Venture Scouts and Leaders. Many close friendships have been forged. Each year since 1993 a party of Avon Venture Scouts completed another part of the project. This year with the 10 year commitment fulfilled Avon Scouts have been running activities at the site and formally handed over Buwenda to Ugandan Scouts with a plaque to mark the successful completion of the project. A memorial service was held for Colin Bennett who spent 10 years on the project before being called home in April. If you would like to view the wonderful facilities, and stunning views at the campsite go to www.avonscouts.org.uk/jinja.



• The memorial service for Colin Bennett.

Explorer Belt successfully completely

The Explorer Belt participants did a little sightseeing, the source of the Nile, Bujagali Falls and Jinja Town before meeting their Ugandan Scout partners. There were a few anxious faces as they set off on their 10 day, 100 mile hike, each pair with a Ugandan Scout, but regular checks by the Support Group found them all in good heart. It was all smiles when they returned with all their projects completed. After a great party in the Kamull Country Club and a days rest, they went white water rafting before going on safari. Now they have to complete the award with a unit/district presentation when they return home. Should be some tales worth listening to.

Delayed start for Soroti and Masindi Groups

One group heading for Uganda 2003 were delayed at Heathrow by aeroplane problems but the hospitality and swimming pool at Jinja on arrival were all the more welcome. Scouts from Surrey and East Sussex worked with Ugandan Scouts on a project at Soroti where they have recently been given twenty acres of old farmland for scouting use. North Hampshire scouts' project was at Masindi.

Network visits to East Africa

David Bull, the Scout Association's International Commissioner and Africa Network co-ordinator Jonathan Cooksley recently visited Keyna. Jonathan took with him a computer for the Youth Educational Project donated by Berkshire Scout Enterprises. David Bull then travelled to meet the Uganda 2003 contingent while Jonathan went on to Tanzania to look at possibilities for activities over the next few years.

Come to the next Network Meeting

To find out more about what Africa has to offer, join the next Network Meeting at Chalfont Heights Camp Site in Buckinghamshire 24th-26th October. £30 inclusive of indoor accommodation Friday and Saturday night and full catering Saturday & Sunday. Pay on the day but book accommodation now.

E-mail: marion@ugandanetwork.org.uk

Ugandan Village in Queen's back garden

Congratulations to Betty and Peter Scurry for the Ugandan village at WINGS (Windsor International Guide and Scout Camp) held in Windsor Great Park. Venture Scouts artistically produced a splendid gateway spelling out the name with twigs. Activities included the building of seven rondavels during the week, constructing a fence and making furniture. Traditional Ugandan costumes were available to dress-up in and there were crafts such as creating bark pictures and painting on canvas, like the pictures on sale in Ugandan craft markets. Visitors had the opportunity to cook and taste food such as cassava, yam biscuits, sweet potatoes, mangoes, pineapples and bananas. With the ability to handle 90 young people an hour the 'village' was a great success.

Bulangria Disable's Association

The Vocational Workshop project is progressing well. When complete the workshop will allow the disabled members to produce goods to sell and make themselves self-sufficient. £9000 has already been sent and the land has been registered, the walls built and the roof is set to be put on. The BDA has its own Scout Group who are very appreciative of the support of UK Scouts and have sent gifts to Berkshire Scouts and Her Majesty the Queen.

Further funds are required and two of the project team, Maureen Chandler and Betty Scurry are again taking part in the Flora Light Challenge for Women, a 2 mile fun run around Hyde Park. Sponsorship in their attempt to beat last year's contribution of £345.50 would be most welcome.

News from network members

Northumberland

Project Manager, Geoff Breedon MBE says plans are progressing for the start of the Mityana Community Enterprise Project. This project is to develop a former technical college into a centre for the use of both scouting and the local community. A party from Northumberland Scouts will be visiting in the summer of 2004, continuing a 15 year link with Uganda.

Northampton

Northampton scouts have provided financial backing and other assistance to the Outspan School at Bwaise since 1995. We hear from Keith Shackleton that they have now replaced the instruments and equipment for the Outspan School Band.

West Lancs

Dawn Riddle has confirmed that West Lancs are going to Uganda in 2005. New contingent leader is the experienced Dave Marsh. Assistants leaders

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