

postscript356

TWENTY-FOUR HOUR PARTY PEOPLE

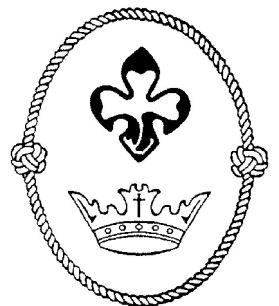


TAIWAN!

Preparing for the World Moot
ANNUAL DINNER!

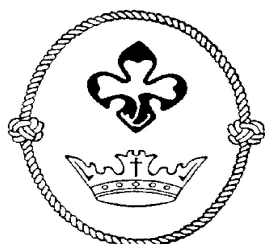
In case you can't remember it
TONER PROBLEMS!

Caused by complex covers



Issue 356 – Second of Trinity 2004
An OUSGG Publication

postscript



Issue 356

Second of Trinity 2004

An OUSGG publication

Editor: Phil Alderton

Co-Chairs: Jacqui Bradley and
Jenny Robertson

Chair-elect: Sarah Berman

Treasurer: Maddy Bunce

Secretary: Phil Alderton

SSAGO Rep.: Mark Hawkins

SaGLO: Katherine Butler

Membership: Jonathan Harvey

Internet: Caroline Berry

N&N: Roger Cotes

Annual Dinner: Caroline Berry and
Sarah Berman

Summer Activity: Alison Parker

Quartermaster: Michael Ramsden

PS Distribution: Jacqui Bradley

Ex-members: Chris Seward

Senior Member: Katherine Blundell

All correspondence, pictures, and articles
to postscript@ousgg.org.uk or by
post/pidge to Phil Alderton, St Peter's
College, Oxford.

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Any items received will be presumed to
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Views in *Postscript* are those of their
authors and might not correspond to
those of OUSGG or related bodies.

Cover montage contains pictures by
Alistair Green, Caroline Berry, and Philip
Alderton – thanks to all concerned.

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Scout and the City

Things I will never understand about Oxford life:

1. Why I can spend hours trekking to unknown libraries to track down the most obscure text on the most niche topic imaginable, only to find somebody took it out five minutes before.
2. Why the photocopiers in the Bod cost 7p per single page (no sneaky two-pages-on-one). Talk about a captive audience.
3. Why I am forced to use a crap web browser on college and department computers.
4. Why people spend hours on *Oxford Romance* instead of, saying, meeting people.
5. Why hall food tastes just the same, despite the college spending thousands on refurbishing the kitchens
6. Why I used to spend hours on *Oxford Romance*
7. Where the kebab vans appear from
8. Why the male-female ratio on *Oxford Romance* is somewhat disadvantageous to us chaps
9. What the dangly bits on gowns are.
10. Why Oxford is considered part of the South-East.

And many, many more.

Phil Alderton, Editor
PS

Inside...

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The next issue is the last issue of the year. As is customary, **all** members are obliged to contribute something, or face public humiliation, ridicule, a plague of locusts, famine, spots, misery, bad debt, and an eternity watching the Oxford Six channel (without the feeds from Sky News).

From the top

Jacqui Bradley & Jenny Robertson, Sofa

Hello everyone!
Well it's 5th week... and the blues have definitely hit – Jacqui's knackered and Jenny's stressed, but term seems to be going OK so all is good!

But there is lots of exciting stuff to look forward to for the rest of the term. Get your navigation skills up to scratch for 6th week when we will be punting, and your competitive instincts honed for the sports day in 7th week

We'd like to say a HUGE thank you to Caroline and Sarah for organising the Annual dinner and Punt and Picnic, it was a great weekend and it was good to see all the old (and not so old!) members.

Hope everything is going well for people..... the chaise longue is now going back into hiding. See you all again soon!

J and J x 🍷



The Sound of OUSGG (2)

Doe-Ray-Me's actually quite hard to parody, here's a second attempt:

Goats, it's cheap, the beer's quite odd
Turf, a drop of golden sun
Vic, a pub, I punt myself
Trout, a long long way to run
Madding, an arty-farty place
Bear, a tiny little space
Filth – a place worse than P T
So ice cream at G – and - Ds

Time was...

“If you take a tin of peaches from the cupboard and look at the mouthwatering illustration you're going to feel a bit let down if you find a lot of dried-up skins inside! In the same way your Scouts expect what's shown on the Scouting 'label' and are soon going to get fed up if you don't give it to them.”

The Patrol Leader's Handbook *,
(The Scout Association, 1967)

* One of the three books in the best series on Scouting ever written, the other titles being the *Scout Handbook* and the *Scout Leader's Handbook*

The Sound of OUSGG (3)

You know, these are pretty lame. Perhaps a third shot?

Us, a club, a SSAGO group
Oxford, a home to everyone
Tutes, some work, I should have done
Bored, I want to have some fun
So, I'm should be in the Bod
Na, I'll sunbathe in the quad
Dam, my essay's overdue
I'll just go back to
OUS-GEE-GEE

Oh, it's no good. Must try harder. Still, it filled up a page...

PS

The Sound of OUSGG

No, there won't be any contrived plotting or bad dialogue. Just the concert version today.

OUS-GEE-GEE

The club that's key

Monday, a night to have some fun

Erik, a panda, he calls himself

Ne'er far from some dire pun

So, we go on lots of trips

Faff, a word to precede so

Tea, we have at NnN

Which will keep us sane in Ox..oh oh oh.

PS

Letters

“Hot spiced apple juice”

Dear Sir,

I’m in trouble. I was supposed to send you the piece Jacqui and Jenny had written for the last edition of Postscript, but I got a bit confused, and sent a previous version. J&J weren’t too happy about that. They said they’d spent a long time writing it. Mind you, I saw them spending significantly longer eating Chinese and gossiping, but they’re keeping quiet about that!! Anyway, Jacqui gave me a bit of a talking to, and said that I should do something to make amends. So I’m writing you a letter to say sorry, and in case anybody’s interested in what those two had to say (and to be honest, I don’t think it’s that interesting, but there you go!), here’s what they actually wanted to say last time:

As you will see from your Jennyfied termcard, Jenny and Jacqui, Partners in Crime, have arrived on the OUSGG chaise longue. How did we end up sitting here? Not the most likely of candidates, what with Jacqui only in OUSGG for a couple of terms, and Jenny attempting to revise for her finals. Oh, well... These things happen!

Anyway...

We’ve planned a summery term, with the odd drink thrown in(!), so now we just have to hope that the weather cooperates. It should be suitably stress-free for anybody with the big Es looming.

It was good to see lots of people at Maddy’s last week. (Thanks to Maddy for letting us have it at hers – we hope your flat mates weren’t too scared!) We think hot, spiced apple juice could play a prominent role in future drinking events. Along with the beer mix, which was apparently drinkable by the end of the evening, although Alison may disagree!

Next week we’ll be having a visit from the OU Juggling Club, who’ll be attempting to teach us how to juggle, but if your hand-eye coordination’s not what it could be, no worries, they’ll also be showing us how to turn balloons

into weird and wonderful shapes. It promises to be a fun-packed evening.

Hope everybody has a great term, and we see lots of you at OUSGG.

Love Jenny and Jacqui x

Well there you have it. It’s now in the public domain, so I hope they’re happy now. But don’t blame me if they’ve screwed up again this time – the latest one was written on Jenny’s computer.

Yours apologetically,

Fred
(Jacqui’s Computer)

“Ill-fitting mushrooms”

Dear Sir,

Re 'Culture Wars', issue 355:

I would like to point out that one of the very best things the Scout Association has done in recent years has been to get rid of the horrible scratchy ill-fitting 'mushrooms', and replace them with the truly excellent new navy activity trousers. In fact there is no mushroom at all in the new uniform - leaders' shirts are, officially, 'stone' - although it looks like beige to me!

Readers will also no doubt have noted that Winter Camp cannot, by definition, be held indoors. Camping means sleeping under canvas (or the stars). If it's cold, we have not only jumpers, but coats, fleeces, campfires (probably deemed too dangerous for the guides) and of course, a decent meal, to keep us warm (today's reality, sadly, is that many Scouts eat much better food on camp than they do at home). So, Scouts 4, Guides 0, I feel.

Yours pedantically,

David Ball, ex-Keble
Assistant Scout Leader, 10th Harpenden

PS

Far Eastern Travels

Mark Hawkins goes *Oriental*

If you've been to an OUSGG meeting of late (and admittedly there have only been four so far this term) no doubt I'll have engaged you in conversation, and subtlety (or not so subtlety) I'll have brought up the topic of my scouting related travels over the summer, so if not (and besides it is good PR) I thought I would write that article I have been promising Phil since he became editor of our esteemed journal.

In the beginning there was (no it is not the *Gospel of St. John*) an N&N meeting in Maddy's room in Trinity, where Alison gave me a load of leaflets (from Rob) about the 12th World Scout Moot in Taiwan, for me to publicise as Scout and Guide Liaison Officer. Having gone home after N&N I read the leaflet and discovered that the Moot was a large international camp for 18-25 year olds, where in international patrols you took part in an expedition through Taiwan, before undertaking a wide range of activities at a fixed camp. 'Cool', I thought and made up my mind to go. I then relentlessly produced my leaflets at every OUSGG opportunity, spreading the word. On returning home I went to my first meeting of Cheshire Scout Network, and upon meeting the Network Commissioner for the first time produced my Moot application form and asked her to sign it – I was on my way to the Moot.

After much more waving of leaflets at my fellow Ventures whilst I was home (no, you guys were not the only ones) I convinced a friend of mine to sign up for the Moot as well. Then came the weekend of first week, or should that be 0th week (I am never sure) of Michaelmas this year I headed out of Oxford (having only just arrived) to the first Moot 'Get-Together' and my first visit to Gilwell Park. My first fellow 'Mootster' (Moot participant) who I met on the train was Satouri a Japanese Scout studying in the UK. Having arrived in Chingford we met up with some other Mootsters at the station to wait for a lift to Gilwell.

I'll spare you all the details of the weekend (otherwise I might fill the whole of *PS* and I have done that previously as editor), save to say I met up with my friend from home and a couple of others from Network at home, and was kept very busy with an array of talks, 'getting to know you' activities etc. During the weekend we heard about

different options of what you could do after the Moot, including a thing called the 'Explorer Belt'. I learnt that the Explorer Belt is an expedition with a series of challenges and a project designed so that you can really find out about a country and its people 'from the inside out'. 'Cool', I thought and after some friendly advice on his recent Explorer Belt from Andy, me and Matt (my friend from home) decided that we would do an Explorer Belt after the Moot. The only snag was that we needed at least one other team member, and an idea of a country to do it in... and it all needed to be sorted that weekend! I won't go into the ins and outs of it (it involved a dark BBQ, a video and an England football match, but not in that order), but suffice to say we found ourselves a couple of girls who also were looking to do an Explorer Belt, who suggested doing it in Malaysia [*I know you're going to rip that sentence to shreds Phil – Mark*] – problem solved!



The UK Moot Logo

Well nearly... we just needed to plan an expedition in a country of which we had no knowledge with a team of people who we didn't know all of that well! We eventually got together on Valentines' Day of all days in a Scout hut in Reading to flesh out some plans and get to know each other better. The weekend was productive – we decided where we were going in Malaysia as well as planning lots more tedious stuff. My Malaysian adventure was taking shape too.

Since then we have had a subsequent Moot get together in the windy North West, when many people's (mine included) tents were blown down (luckily I've since had it fixed by the people at Vango: great customer service), we got to find out more about the Moot itself and we collected some wonderful kit which I will no doubt be sporting at future OUSGG events. We were told the programme for the Moot, including a tour round

Taipei before the event itself, before the opening ceremony. We will then split off into international patrols: teams of 8 scouts/guides all from different countries, and embark on one of six 'Expedition Centres' located in different parts of the island. Each 'Expedition Centre' is a unique experience ranging from climbing Jade Mountain (the tallest peak in the region), to visiting electronics factories, to parachuting! We were told that each 'Expedition Centre' would have at least one cold shower between 30, but that there would be no time limit on usage! The camp will end at Dong Hwa University with international development workshops and activities, white water rafting and an open stage for traditional performances from around the world – Morris dancing anybody? The whole experience sounded well cool – I felt really energised about the whole experience. Anyway getting back to reality (kind of) we had an excellent Chinese meal on the Saturday evening followed by a fancy dress disco. Need I say much about the fancy dress when John was dressed up as 'Tanya the Taiwanese Temptress'...



People we don't know (other than Mark)

Since then I've been busy planning my Explorer Belt, with my team having a meet up a few weeks ago. I am really looking forward to the whole event and have embarked on a (largely unsuccessful) last minute fundraising campaign – yes I've got camp badges and woggles to flog, sorry sell, so I'll be waving these around at OUSGG. Having taken up the whole of *PS* I guess I'd better sign off, needless to say I'll be sending OUSGG a postcard when I am on my travels, and will no doubt have another edition of *PS* to write come Michaelmas 2004....
TO BE CONTINUED.

PS

The Easter Activity. Again.

Jo Miller *helps us fill space*

So... it was only a few of weeks ago, though it feels like months given how busy I've been. The Easter Activity was in Ennerdale, and I thought I'd join in for a couple of days, as much as anything to see whether this old favourite of OUSGG sites was as good as I remembered.

1) It's right round the far side of the Lakes, about as long a drive as you can get. Which is something I noticed more as a driver than last time when I scabbed a lift.

2) It's right round the far side of the Lakes... which means it's not stuffed full of tourists. Which is something I noticed more, having just driven though Ambleside. We passed maybe a couple of dozen other walkers over two days, and most of those were down by the lake. Definitely more sheep than people. Oh, including a sheep that stalked us.

3) The Lake District is spikier than I remembered. This always takes me by surprise, as I go away remembering round hills and come back to find pointy ones. True to form, we walked over rolling fells the first day, and the second scrambled down a barking mad ridge. Which was ... interesting. Hardly scary at all. Ahem.

4) The weather hasn't changed. There's always one day when it's warm enough for shorts and one when it's wet and windy. Though it turned out to be mostly windy, with that clinging variety of wet that means you can only see 20 feet. Or less, if you wear glasses.

5) Wood fires are good for entertainment.

6) Wood fires you can only feed from the top are a pig to light.

7) Top bunks are the warmest.

8) Top bunks are the smokiest!

9)...er can't really remember a great deal else. It was a decent little trip though.

PS

The next steps for Scouting

Phil Alderton is getting more incomprehensible

If Scouting is to progress, the Scout Association must go. The Scout Association is not on the side of the Scouts, but at least indifferent to us, if not openly hostile. There I've said it. The only way out of the current hole Scouting has got itself into is to remove the thing that's blocking the ladder (and openly sawing off the struts). Harsh, I know, but true.

The Scout Association governs Scouting the UK (or at least 'clean' Scouts - remember that UKSA does not have a monopoly). What it says goes. The problem with the Scout Association, for all its good intentions and occasional good works, is how it is governed. This might not seem important, for you might think that young people should be the focus of our concerns, but everything we do is ultimately under the Scout Association's control. And we are excluded from it.

I tried for a long time to describe what the Scout Association is like. The answer is clear: it's the Soviet Union. Everything is hunky-dory, tractor outputs are at all time highs, and we are free and open. Unless you disagree, of course. This is critical - no matter how benign a despot is, he is still a despot. Unreformed, unaccountable bodies do more harm than good, for they cannot be held accountable for their mistakes.

If you object to some Scout Association rule or policy, how can you change it? The Scout Association claims it is democratic and you too can influence the direction it takes. The Soviet Union claimed this too. I can't decide who copied from whom, but the system is roughly similar. The body that makes the rules is the Committee of the Council, which is drawn from the Council. So to make the rules, one just has to get onto the Politburo...er, Committee of Council. To do that, you need to be elected to the Council. Sounds fine, so far? Except to get the opportunity to stand for election to the Council you need to be elected to your County. And to stand for election to your county, you need to be elected to your district. The Soviet Union operated similarly, terming it democratic centralism. You could in theory rise, but it takes a lot of effort and a lot of connections. So we should see this as a triple-lock keeping change out.

As members of the Scout Association, we should control its direction. This should be done directly, not thrice-removed. There has been a lot of uproar recently on uk.rec.scouting about the Committee of the Council's plan to sell off certain Scout campsites (including Longridge). If you object to this, tough. And you can't throw those who made these plans out. This is not how to run a society. Therefore, we need to radically overhaul the Scout Association. The following might seem drastic and dramatic, but I fear it is the only way to save Scouting.

I propose that the Scout Association be dissolved and its Royal Charter revoked, and replaced with a new independent body called the Scout Federation. Every year, all members over the age of 14 vote in a UK-wide

election for a committee of 6. It must be UK-wide, as this guarantees that all positions can be contested, and prevents any one person popular in his own region from being in office permanently. This committee, call it what you wish (I like Steering Group, but that's me) has the sole authority to make decisions, rules, policy etc. At the same time as this election, there is to be a separate election for the post of Chief Scout, who is to be the chief executive officer of the Scout Federation, and will chair meetings of the committee. As such, you can control the direction of Scouting.

All groups currently in the Scout Association will be federated to the Scout Federation. They may choose either to federate directly, or indirectly, for they may choose to form a ring, composed of like-minded groups, and federate collectively. For instance, nautical minded groups could form a ring of Sea Scouts, or those in Wales federate through a Welsh ring. One can see SSAGO federating to this body, the BPSA, and maybe even the Guides. These rings would replace districts, counties, and areas, which will be dissolved along with the Scout Association. Campsites currently owned by such bodies would federate, or vote to form rings themselves. The constitution of the Scout Federation will specify clearly what powers the Federation has and which the groups or rings have. Any changes will require an absolute majority vote of the members and a simple majority vote of those bodies federated to the Federation. This means that the Scout Federation would not be able to interfere too heavily in the day-to-day running of Scouting.

Whilst ideally the Scout Federation would operate along the lines I outlined in issue 354, the principles above do not depend on you accepting that plan too. We need to gain control of our own Association to make it reflect our interests. If you are not convinced, next time the Scout Association does something you disagree with, ask yourself how you can hold those responsible to account.

This, I feel, is the only way to bring about an accountable Scouting body in the United Kingdom. The Scout Association has for too long been secretive, unaccountable, and unresponsive to members' needs. For Scouting to survive, it must go.

Proposed schedule

September 2004 - Formation of Scout Federation, election of Chief Scout and committee

October 2004-April 2005 - Transfer of Scout Association property, responsibilities, liabilities, and functions; SF working with UKSA to ease handover

22nd April 2005 - at midnight the Scout Association is dissolved

23rd April 2005 - The Scout Federation assumes full powers

A Night in Society

Phil Alderton *on the Annual Dinner*

For 1950s concrete, Wolfson College does actually look good. The approach from the front isn't that exciting, but once inside there's a handsome variation on the Oxford Quad theme, with the towering sides making one feel even more cut off the outside world than is normally the case even in the most isolated of places (New College cloisters, for example). Still, it was after going up the plush marble staircase to the reception that Wolfson's secret was revealed. What an incredible view!

Surrounded by colourful modern art and bustling black-tied OUSGGers (past and present), were large glass windows overlooking the gardens, which evocatively led the eye down to the river. It was stunning. An incredible place to have a reception. As was to be expected at reunions of this kind, clusters of people from each generation were swiftly formed, although it was noticeable that on either side of the partition wall in the middle of the room were essentially two divisions of OUSGG, the current and recently-departed on one side, and the older people on the other. Still, the champagne flowed as quickly as the gossip, but all too soon the gong sounded and we were summoned to the Hall.

Now, on first glance it didn't look that impressive - six or seven columns of tables on one side of the room that only seemed to fill up a third of the available space and which appeared to stick out awkwardly into nothingness. However, this feeling disappeared after I began to appreciate not only how big the room was, but how impressive the ceiling was. It seemed to be a kind of step pyramid with an opening at the top. Not only did this give the room a large sense of space, it also meant that (for once in an Oxford college hall), you could actually hear the conversation on your table!

The meal was of good quality, but all too soon it was time for the speeches. I'm hoping someone can remind me of the order, as by the second course my memory somehow becomes less clear (and we can all guess why this is). Anyhow, at some point the National Scout Network Commissioner got up and made a speech, starting it by saying that as a teacher he congratulates some of his pupils on getting into Oxbridge, and telling others that it doesn't really matter. Our glamorous chairs made a few remarks, then Chris Seward got up and alienated half to two-thirds of the audience by introducing the annual awards. Jenny and I were the sheep this time around, but had to be bailed out by Chris due to a mixture of incapacity and finals stress when it came to sorting through the hundreds of nominees and declaring a shortlist. He didn't let us off the public speaking part, though (grr). Sarah and Caroline said a few words and led the toasts. As ever, the republicans amongst us refused to stand for the Loyal Toast, but I don't think anyone cared.

There is, of course, only one way an OUSGGER can allow a posh meal with vast quantities of decent wine be digested by our stomachs, and that's by whirling around in a country dance! Jacqui and Caroline were calling out the instructions, and we all danced quite happily. There was one dance where my quadrille forgot what we were supposed to be doing and ended up dancing whatever steps took our fancy, but it was good fun nonetheless. Standards must be rising - the stripping of the willow did not become the bloodbath it usually is.

I'm sure people will want to write a better version of the meal, of the party in Tristram's house, and of the punt and picnic (HINT! HINT!). I've only sketched a few points of interest for it was a couple of weeks ago now and my memories are bit clouded. Oh, and I'm way past the deadline and have a page to fill. Still, thanks to Caroline and Sarah for a superb evening, and here's to the next eighty-five years!

PS

CONTINUING HIS MISSION, ERI>1 APPROACHES THE HIDEOUT OF ZANIA, A BEAUTIFUL AND DEADLY ASSASSIN...

