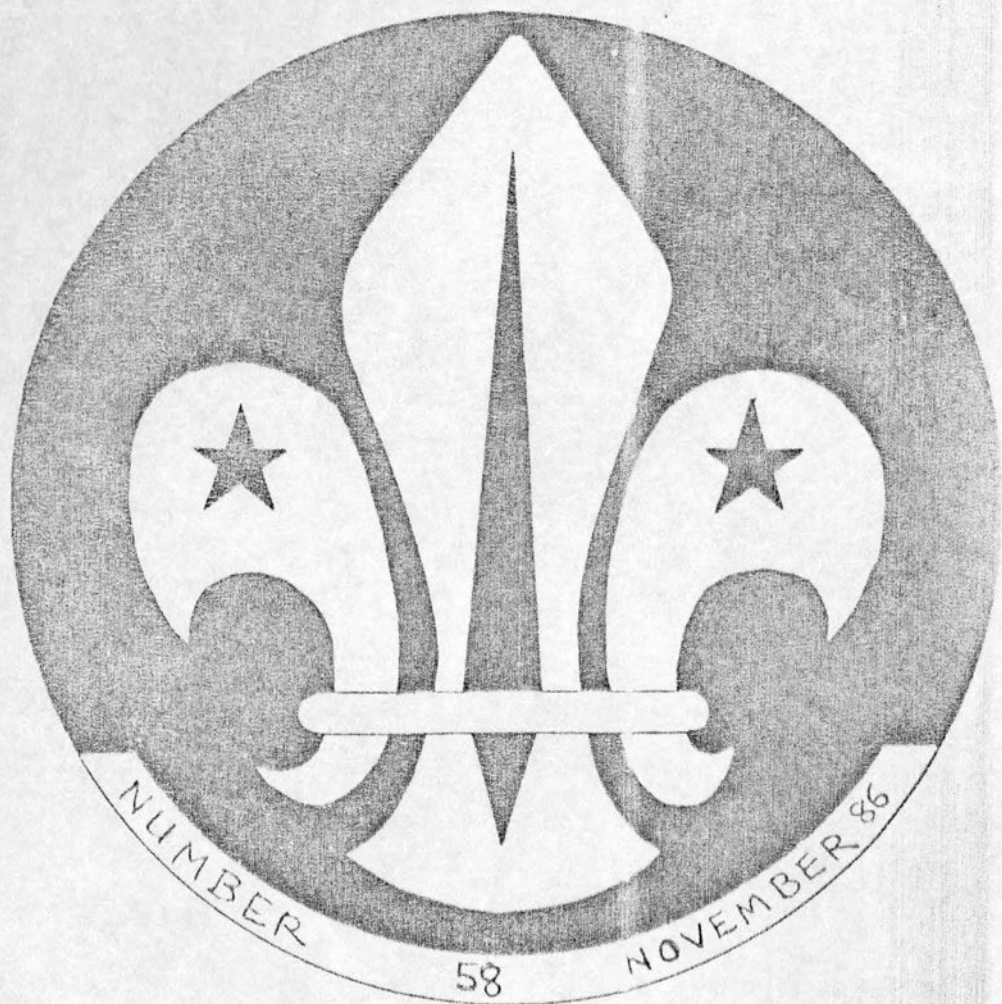


VENTURE

44



VENTURE 44 The magazine of the 44th Gloucester
Sir Thomas Rich's School Venture Scout Unit

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James Foster

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Leaders	Frank Henderson Phil Brown
Instructor	Andy Manders
Chairman	Jason Stone
Secretary	Steve Clutterbuck
Treasurer	Adam Foster
Recorder	James Foster
Quartermaster	Joe Clyde
Executive	Ian Heathcock Ally Smith Derek Dalby

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

The Annual Reunion will be held in the Bowls Club Pavilion on SUNDAY DECEMBER 21st this year, from 8.p.m. to 11 p.m. As last year there will be a buffet supper. I hope as many as possible of you pld timers can make it!

ASSOCIATE SUBSCRIPTIONS are now due, and could I please be notified of CHANGES OF ADDRESS for despatch of futher issues of VENTURE 44. Happy Christmas to all of you and your families.

F.H.

SECRETARY'S NOTES

This is the first magazine to appear for six months, and although this may seem to indicate that little has been happening, this is far from being the case.

With a large number of experienced members leaving school in July, a membership problem was foreseen. However a number of newcomers have been recruited; Richard McGregor, Tim Cowell and Andy Clyde (the third of that distinguished dynasty!) became members, followed in November by Gareth Ross, Justin Sargent, George Evans and Steve Gladwell.

Since returning to school various activities have taken place. We are indebted to Lee Rounce for the construction and fitting of new double doors at the back of the hut, and the seemingly never-ending repairs are now really progressing. The regular visit to North Wales was a success - more on that from Ali Smith in a later issue. Ali, Adam Foster, Joe Clyde and Tim Cowell represented the Unit with distinction on a survival weekend in the Forest of Dean. In the Raft race we had varying degrees of success, as our new experimental design failed to make it to the starting line! Yet another new design for next year, perhaps?

Most of the old executive has gone now, after successfully steering the Unit for a year, and particularly we must thank Jase Stone who did a great job as secretary, and Dave Wright for being a dependable and secure treasurer.

Most of you will be aware that chairman Graham Dalby had a bad motorcycle accident in July, and has had to be in hospital in Cheltenham and then Frenchay. After several operations he has now returned home, and even visited the hut on his crutches last week. I am sure all readers of this magazine would like to join me in wishing him a speedy recovery.

Steve Clutterbuck

ANNUAL REPORT 1986

This report will be brief and hopefully to the point. I propose to say nothing about the year's activities, as they are covered in earlier issues of the magazine, with the exception of the summer expedition to Norway which will be the subject of the next issue.

I am amazed, and perhaps a little horrified to think that the Unit has now come of age and is eighteen years old. Amazed because it has survived so many crises, and horrified because it means that I, as it's first and only V.S.L. must be "getting on" a bit now....

Looking backwards is easy and can be gratifying as the memory is highly selective. There were the "good old days" when Venture Scouts were giants, performing many great feats of daring and superhuman endurance, when all became Queen's Scouts as a matter of routine, when galas and marathons and trophies were won, when mountains were conquered, rapids shot, and gardens dug....

Looking forward is less easy when dark clouds loom on the horizon; new rules and regulations, new forms to fill in; Scout huts falling down; reorganisation of the education system.. All of these factors may perhaps be seen as exciting challenges to a younger leader, but I am sorry to say that I do not see them as such, and seek now the ingredients of a survival kit.

What are these ingredients, then, that are necessary for survival? Some are achievable, though at least one - a new hut - is impossible! However, of those that can be included I would say the essential ones are as follows.

An effective and enthusiastic executive which can plan and put into practice a worthwhile programme.

A membership which will readily give things a try, and make positive progress in the Scout Training scheme.

Support from parents in fund-raising and other activities - room for much development here.

If these three can be guaranteed, we should weather any storms ahead, and maybe a nineteenth Annual Report will appear in 1987!

F.H.

44th GLOUCESTER VENTURE SCOUT UNIT

Summary of Income and Expenditure for period September 5th 1985 to August 31st 1986

<u>INCOME</u>	£	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	£
Membership Subscriptions	408	Capitation fee	191.40
Associate subs	115	Entry fees	101.40
Jumble Sale takings	144.10	Citizen Advert	7.42
Disco Profit	108.75	Equipment purchases	313.62
Whist Drive profits	36.20	Hut repairs	155.46
Tuck Shop, share of profit	229	Transport expenses, sundry	48
Sweat shirt sales	76.50	Sweat shirt purchase	104.29
Tree felling, etc	52	Raft building	27.77
Dinner Dance profits	34	Cultural event subsidies	12.50
Bed Race	398.76	Bed Race	276
Interest on Deposit a/c	12.36	Bed construction, etc	34.49
North Wales payments	175.16	North Wales Expedition	185.66
Norway Exped. payments	2008.83	Norway expenses	2000.60
		Easter hike subsidy	29.44
		Leisure Centre	20.55
		Reunion, Slide Show	63.31
		Postage, Venture 44	11.30
		Badges, etc	3.80
		Wreath	15.
		Sundries	14
Total Income	<u>3798.66</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>£ 3616.01</u>
Balance of Income over Expenditure	<u>182.65</u>		
Balance brought forward 1985/6	<u>356.78</u>		
Balance carried forward to 1986/87	£ <u>539.43</u>		

This statement was compiled from the financial records of the Unit presented for audit by the treasurer, Adam M. Foster. The books were audited and found to be correct by the Hon. Auditor, B. McBurnie on 13th September 1986.

Local Hero

It was just a year ago that PETER GREEN made the headlines when he risked his life in a successful rescue at sea. After being pursued by our insistent reporters, he reluctantly wrote an account of the events that led to him being awarded a medal by the Royal Humane Society Now, strap on your life-jacket and read on.....

During Hurricane "Kate" last November, I was serving as third officer on the Shell tanker "Erodona" - (Shell ships are named after shells - hence the odd name. We were sailing between San Juan in Puerto Rico and Piney Point in Maryland, USA, with a cargo of 30000 tonnes of 3 star petrol.

At 11.00pm on 17th November I was "on watch" on the bridge, navigating furiously through the Bahamas Islands in mountainous seas and hurricane force winds, when I received an All ships call from the U.S. coastguard spot-ter plane. He reported that he had picked up signals from an E.P.I.R.B. (electronic position indicating radio beacon) and had spotted some distress flares. He knew it was from the 38 foot yacht "Imagery", but did not know if there were any survivors, or whether the craft remained afloat. As we were the only ship in the vicinity, I acknowledged the call, plotted courses to the position of the E.P.I.R.B., and gave the pilot of the plane an E.T.A of 0300 the following morning. I then called the captain to the bridge and explained the situation. At midnight a change of watch meant I was relieved by the Second Officer, and I went to bed.

At 0230 I was woken up and along with the Chief Officer, a cadet, the bosun and four sailors went out on the deck, armed with safety harnesses and hard hats, as the deck was awash with large waves breaking over the ship. Out of the darkness came the sound of jet engines and soon we saw the navigation lights of the spotter

plane, which had just returned from refueling in Nassau. The plane located the EPIRB and dropped magnesium flares into the sea. The searchlights on the bridgewings were turned on and started to scan the sea as we steamed on towards the flares. At 0315 a small light was spotted amongst the waves, and soon we could see a small orange liferaft. The raft kept disappearing behind the waves and came close to capsizing as the 30ft waves broke over it. Then we saw three faces appear at the doorway. It took the captain three attempts to get the ship close to the raft as it was being blown along by the wind whilst we wallowed around trying to make headway against the heavy seas. Ropes were thrown to the raft, but the wind whipped them away like pieces of string. As the ship rolled and the seas rose and fell, the raft was nearly swept onto the deck, and then fell 40 feet below as the sea receded.

By this time the terrified survivors in the raft were screaming in horror as the sea threatened to smash them against the ship's side. With some skilful manoeuvring, the captain managed to get the raft on the other side of the ship, hoping to create a lee, but still we couldn't get a line to it. Finally one of the sailors got a rope to the raft, but instead of tying it to their craft, the survivors jumped into the water and swam to the rope. The sea rose and fell, another rope was lowered and the first of the survivors, a young man, was manhandled on board, to be hustled away by the Chief Steward's First Aid team. By this time we had a rope ladder rigged over the side and the second survivor, a woman started to ascend, but she panicked and froze on the ladder. Behind, her husband tried for what seemed ages to encourage her, and eventually she was brought on board. The husband had spent sixteen hours in the raft, and was suffering from a dislocated shoulder was exhausted, and lost hold of the ladder, falling back into the sea, he drifted away. Not having a light on his lifejacket we could not have found

him again if he had drifted out of sight.

Some would call what followed "heroism" - others would call it stupidity- I would say it seemed like the right thing to do at the time.

Hooking my safety line onto the ships rail, I climbed down the ladder and as the man in the water was washed up the ship's side I reached out to try and grab hold of his lifejacket. As the sea dropped away again, I was left holding the ladder with one hand and a 12 stone man with the other, and the breath being squeezed out of me by the safety harness which was holding my weight. The weight was too much for the lifejacket, which tore in two, causing the man to drop some 40 feet into the sea. Now without a lifejacket and close to passing out the man was in great danger. I unclipped my safety line and went down to the bottom of the ladder into the sea. As the sea rose towards the deck I held onto the man and climbed up the ladder. The sailors lowered the rope, and I tied it under the man's shoulders and he was hauled up the last few feet to the deck. During this time I was thrown against the ship's side, hitting my head. The day after, I collapsed, and was confined to bed. Two days later I was landed at Piney Point and rushed to hospital in Leonardstown. I was then flown by helicopter to Washington, where I spent 5 days in intensive care. On 28th of January this year, I was declared fit.

The three survivors were not hurt but did suffer from shock and exposure. Their yacht was washed up on Eluthra Island three weeks later, virtually undamaged. Their pet cat, which was left on board was never found.

Peter Green

The next issue of VENTURE 44 should be out just after Christmas, and will be devoted to the Unit's visit to Norway this summer. Articles for the subsequent issue - Number 60, are also being sought at present.

