



First Term of Scouting, 2013

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome back to Scouting in 2013, and I apologise for the delay in getting this letter out. Some of us are back from the Australian Jamboree held at Maryborough, where we had a great time, and now we look towards the next Jamboree, being held at Cataract Scout Park in January 2016.

This term we will be focussing on camping skills, as well as work towards citizenship badges. However, the Scouts need to remember that much of their work towards their citizenship badges (which they need to get their Pioneer badges - the first major badge in the Scouting award scheme, and necessary for any Scout wishing to attend a Jamboree) needs to be done outside of Scout meetings (often at home).

Our first activity will be the annual Parramatta District Swim carnival and Founder's day ceremony, being held this Saturday, 16 February. This is an evening/night activity being held at Parramatta Pools Swimming Centre, running from 6:00pm to 10:00pm. A sausage sizzle is being run by the 1st North Rocks Venturers (and sausage sandwiches should be available at a reasonable price), and other snacks and drinks should be available from a Kiosk/vending machines. Please see the attached documents (**including information for parents, scouts and leaders**) for further information, a permission note (please note that you are to keep the first page, and the Patrol Leader is to hand the second page in to the event organisers on the evening), and a registration form (to be completed by the Patrol leaders only and handed to the event organisers by hand, mail or e-mail no later than 15th February if the patrols wish to earn the 5 bonus points).

Parents and friends are very welcome – we need someone to cheer the Scouts along, and parent helpers are **extremely welcome**.

This Thursday, as part of our preparation for the Swim Carnival, we are going to Parramatta Pools (14 February) to practice/train for the Swim carnival. Please note that we will be meeting **at Parramatta Pools at 6:00pm**, not the usual 7:00pm time slot, and the Scouts will be picked up **from Parramatta Pools at 8:00pm**. Parking is available just outside the pools, and is free. I will have my mobile phone with me (0458 044 922) on the evening. You can also call me on 90290861 (h) or 93930257 (w) if you need any further information.

I have attached a permission note for this week's visit to Parramatta Pools, which needs to be brought, **completed**, to the pools on Thursday evening (again, you are to keep the first page, and give me the second page). Spectator entry is \$3, and there is a kiosk inside the venue.

If your youth member requires transport to the pools, please let me know, and we will organise something.

A number of activities will follow the Swim Carnival. Summarising the events in chronological order, these are:

Thursday 14 February: Swimming at Parramatta Pools. Permission note attached. See further comments above. I will also bring a limited number of hard copies of the permission note on the night.

Sunday 17 February: Troop Council at the Count's place, 5:00 pm (Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders only).

Saturday 16 February: Parramatta District Swim Carnival and Founder's Day Service. Permission note attached. See further comments above. Scouts **must** bring the completed permission note and their money on the evening, or they will not be allowed to swim. Additional information (particularly for the attention of patrol leaders and assistant Patrol Leaders) is also attached.

Saturday 2 March: Bushcare work with the Pemberton Street Bushcare group. This provides an opportunity for scouts to meet part of their Citizenship Badge requirements. Scouts can also work towards the Landcare badge. I strongly urge all scouts, but especially those intending to go to Jamboree to attend. This activity is free. Nonetheless, a permission note is required to be brought on the day, and this is will be forwarded soon.

Thursday 21 March: Ice-Blocking with 1st North Rocks Scouts, as part of our Troop meeting. Although our troop has never done this, from all accounts this is a very fun activity involving sliding down hills on large blocks of ice! A permission note will issue shortly.

Sometime in March: Jamboree reunion camp. This is still in planning, but will give the Jamboree Scouts an opportunity to catch up with the Scouts they went to Jamboree with. This having been said, the camp is open to all Scouts from 1st Parramatta, 1st North Rocks and 1st Murray Farm, and will not only be a great camping opportunity, but should also be lots of fun. The plan so far is to hold the camp at the Upper Colo river camping ground, with swimming/wading in the adjacent (shallow and clear-water) river. Further information to follow in the near future.

Late March/ Early April: Possible overnight hike from Springwood to Faulconbridge. This is an inexpensive activity (about \$6-10 plus own food expenses), and a nice easy entry level hike for beginners. We walk in from Springwood train station to Perch Ponds on Glenbrook creek and camp along the creek, with swimming opportunities, and hike out to Faulconbridge the following day, catching the train home from there. Further details and a permission note will be sent out soon, and we will be discussing packing requirements with the scouts before then.

Sometime in April (after Easter): Two night camp. Location and exact date still to be decided by Troop Council. Further information to follow in the near future. There is the chance that this camp might be held in March and the Jamboree reunion camp in April.

Saturday 6 April: Bushcare work with the Pemberton Street Bushcare group. Although this is in the middle of Easter festivities, Saturday is actually not a part of Easter. Bushcare will therefore be happening!

Sunday 7 April: Troop Council at the Count's place, 5:00 pm (Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders only).

Wednesday night 24 April to Thursday morning 25 April: Anzac day dawn service. This is an activity which the Scouts and Cubs sections combine for each year. Youth members will stay in

the hall overnight, and then leave the hall before sun-up to be at the Parramatta Cenotaph for the dawn service, followed by Breakfast at Parramatta RSL for those wanting to come along. A permission note, including information as to times and gear to bring, will be provided closer to the date.

MEMBERSHIP: Many of you may not be aware of this, but we are charged Scouts Australia membership fees based on our census as this stands at March. This occurs quarterly, and therefore the charges will be based on our census early each term. Because quite often we do not receive formal advice from parents/guardians if their youth members will not be continuing in Scouts, we could potentially end up paying significant funds for youth members no longer participating (which is a huge waste of money for a not-for-profit organisation).

In view of this, any youth member for whom fees are not up to date within two weeks of the deadline for resigning them (before the next membership fees payment) will be resigned. If that youth member does intend to continue in Scouting, they can be reinstated later on payment of the usual quarterly fees and our Group quarterly subscription fees (the application fee only becomes payable again if the youth member remains unregistered for 6 or more months).

Yours in scouting



The Count (David Myers)