

# **THE 28<sup>TH</sup> CROYDON SCOUT GROUP**

## **By Kevin Moynihan, Group Scout Leader**

The 28<sup>th</sup> Croydon (Our Lady of the Annunciation) is one of two Scout Groups (the other being the 27<sup>th</sup> Croydon St Mildred's) that are located within the ASPRA boundary. We are also one of 40 Scout Groups in Croydon Borough.

The 28<sup>th</sup> Croydon was formed on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1951. Prior to 1951, the 58<sup>th</sup> Croydon (St Chads) met in Addiscombe, as their church hall had suffered bomb damage in the war and so had no meeting place. Their Group Scout Master (GSM) was the well known Mr G S Kibble, (known to everyone as "Kim"), who conducted the choir of many Croydon Scout Shows. In 1951, the 58<sup>th</sup> moved back to South and Upper Norwood Division and ceased to use the church hall which was located next to our church which formerly stood at the corner of Lower Addiscombe Road and Brockenhurst Road, where Sidda House now stands. As many members of the 58<sup>th</sup> were from Addiscombe and in order to keep a catholic Scout Group in the area a new Group was formed with Mr R Collins as Scout Master and Mr D McCarthy as Cub Master, together with 15 wolf Cubs and 15 Scouts



**The Group outside our new Church Hall in Bingham Road in 1958**

Over the past 60 years the Group has grown considerably and is now one of the biggest in our Croydon Borough District with over 200 members. We have 2 Beaver Scout Colonies (Willow and Elder) for children aged 6 to 8 years, 2 Cub Scout Packs (Bede and Becket) for children aged 8 to 10 and a half years, and 3 Scout Troops (Nevis, Scafell and Snowdon) for young people aged 10 and a half to 14 years of age. Meetings are held each week during term time at our own Scout Headquarters in Craven Road where we have been based since July 1967 (now 46 years!). In fact Scouting has been taking place on our site in Craven Road since the early 1950's as the 66<sup>th</sup> Croydon Sea Scouts were resident up until they closed in 1966.

Scouting is more popular today than it has been for many years. As well as offering the traditional scouting type activities such as camping, pioneering, cooking, map reading, hiking, first aid, knotting and games, we also provide Kayaking, Rafting, Archery and Shooting activities with the use of our own qualified Group Instructors. Our Beavers Cubs and Scouts take part in a balanced programme of activities, learning by doing, guided by adults. Each of our Sections have a wide range of Challenge Awards and Activity Badges which they can gain. Ask any of our members what their favourite activity is and they will probably say camping. In recent years our Scouts have held their summer camps on Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour, Dorset, the Wye Valley near Symonds Yat in Monmouthshire and at Colgate near Horsham in West Sussex. Further camps are planned for this year as well as a 30km kayaking expedition on the river Medway from Tonbridge to Allington Lock.

During the summer months we always take advantage of the lighter evenings and better weather by holding many of our meetings out of doors doing different activities at local campsites or playing cricket or rounders at Bingham Road Park. You may well have seen us in there recently,

Our Group has been very successful in recent years by winning the Heart of the Community Award in 2009 and the Croydon Scout District Best Practise Award for all round excellence in Scouting for 3 consecutive years (2010-2012) This year we won the Outstanding Group Award at our Annual District Awards evening held at Whitgift School. We were pleased to be presented with the award by the Mayor of Croydon, Cllr Eddie Arram. We have increased our membership with the recent opening of our Tuesday and Thursday Scout Troops and in addition to that, a number of our Scouts have recently gained

Jack Petchey Young Achiever Awards. Finally one of our members was selected to attend the 22<sup>nd</sup> World Scout Jamboree in Sweden in 2011 which he attended with 40,000 other scouts from all around the world for the experience of a lifetime.

The next World Scout Jamboree is being held in Japan in the summer of 2015 and we hope that some of our members will be selected to attend.

We have recently taken on a major project to restore part of our Church Gardens as part our Faith Partnership Award and this has involved all our members taking part in different ways. You will notice the improvements to the garden outside the front of Our Lady's Church in Bingham Road. Further work is planned for the autumn when we will be planting bulbs. We will also soon be opening up our Headquarters for use as a day care centre for adults with moderate learning disabilities. This will bring great benefits not only to our Group but to our local Community as well.

We are very fortunate to have a strong and active team of parents who form our Group Management Committee and support us with organising fundraising events, maintaining our premises and equipment and recruiting adult volunteers and helping out at major group events.

You may be interested to know that we have 2 white event tents which are available to hire at very reasonable rates. Their sizes are 12m x 6m and 8m x 4m and we will deliver, erect and dismantle for you. Please contact me at [groupscoutleader@28thcroydon.org.uk](mailto:groupscoutleader@28thcroydon.org.uk) for more information.

We are always in need of more adult volunteers to help in the Group either with one of our Beaver, Cub or Scout Sections or as a member of our Group Management Committee. You don't have to have had any previous experience and you don't have to make it a regular commitment. Plus any volunteering role always looks great on a CV. In addition, if you have a national qualification in an outdoor pursuit such as archery, climbing, kayaking, sailing, or if you have a specialist skill that you would be willing to share we would love to hear from you. Please contact me at [groupscoutleader@28thcroydon.org.uk](mailto:groupscoutleader@28thcroydon.org.uk) for more information if you would like to volunteer your time and help,

If any young person wishes to join us please contact me at [groupscoutleader@28thcroydon.org.uk](mailto:groupscoutleader@28thcroydon.org.uk)

You can find out more about our Scout Group by visiting our website at [www.28thcroydon.org.uk](http://www.28thcroydon.org.uk)

You can also visit our Croydon Scout District website at [www.croydonscouting.org.uk](http://www.croydonscouting.org.uk) to find out more about Scouting in Croydon



Members of the Group at our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Group Camp

The Group has come a very long way in its 60 years. it is very different now to what it was back in 1951. The reason why we are still here today is that we have had such a strong team of caring and dedicated Leaders, Helpers and Supporters who have willingly given their time and support so generously for the benefit of our young people in our community over the past 60 years.

Long may it continue.