

CELEBRATION



Celebrations Stirling 4th/6th Cub Scouts who marked their movement's centenary

Howl we loved 100th birthday

Cub movement has changed with the times

John Rowbotham

Cubs in Stirling joined packs across the world to mark their movement's centenary celebrations last month.

Members of the 4th/6th Stirling Cub Scouts held a celebratory 'howl' and Cub Scout promise exactly 100 years to the day when the first Wolf Cub pack met.

It was formed after Robert Baden Powell - founder of the Scout movement in 1907 - came under pressure

to establish a similar organisation for younger boys.

The Wolf Cubs came into being in December, 1916, and the movement took as its theme the Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling. Drawing names from the popular tome, the leaders of each pack were christened Akela, Baloo and Bagheera while young cubs joining were akin to the book's boyhero, Mowgli.

Wolf Cubs changed to Cub Scouts in 1966 and from 2007 all UK Scout groups were opened to girls who wished to join.

Stirling's 4th/6th Cub Scouts meet each Friday evening in St Columba Church Hall, Park Terrace. About 30 boys and girls took part in the howl which is traditionally used to start and finish their meetings.

For the uninitiated, the howl commences with the Cubs forming a circle surrounding their leader, Akela.

When Akela lowers

his or her arms, the pack squats down like wolves and "promise to do their best".

The ceremony has changed slightly over the years and no longer contains the line 'dyb, dyb, dyb' which became synonymous with Scouting.

Cub leader Niven Duncan, who is 4th/6th Stirling Cub Scouts' Akela, led the centenary celebrations.

And the Cubs and their leaders were joined at the ceremony by parents of the Cubs, district commissioner for the Stirling and Inverclyde Scout District, David Wilson, and members of his team, 4th/6th Scout leaders and Beaver leaders and previous members of Cub Scouts.

Tom Wilson is training advisor for the 4th/6th Scout Group which comprises 30 cubs, 20 Beavers and between 35 and 40 Scouts.

The 78 year-old, who was in the Cubs during

the 1940s in Edinburgh, said: "The movement has changed vastly since those days when the cub leader was more like an old school teacher and the discipline was not what you would put up with these days.

"A lot of the leaders were men who had just come back from the war and they had us marching up and down. Now it's much friendlier but there are more safety aspects you have to follow when going to camp."

The Cubs go under canvas at Callander where they meet their counterparts from across Stirling area to learn skills, play games such as 'capture the flag', take part in birdwatching and identification of flowers and tackle some of their badges.

Tom added: "The games the Cubs play have not changed much. Some, like British Bulldog, have been taken out but others such as 'jumping over the (pretend) river'

is something we had in my day."

And he believes that membership of the Cubs can prove beneficial in many ways, even though the movement is now more than 100 years old.

"They say people who have been in the Scouts or Cubs live five years longer than those who did not join the organisations," said Tom.

"It is also said that guys who have been in the Scouts and perhaps tackled Duke of Edinburgh Award will rise to the top in job interviews.

"We are struggling for leaders but we have children wanting to join all the time. The Scout movement worldwide is bigger than ever with 30 million members and its expanding in the UK where membership is presently 500,000.

"Some 10 million people in the UK can claim to have belonged to the Scout organisation at some time."

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