



Cheltenham District Woodcraft Folk - Annual Report 2000

As well as being the Millennium year, 2000 was also the 75th year of the Woodcraft Folk, and Cheltenham District celebrated this event in February with a mega party for members and friends at the Whaddon Centre. The local press were invited as well, which resulted in pictures of our young members appearing in the local papers.

As part of the 75th birthday year, a number of fund raising events were organised nationally to raise funds for the Folk. Cheltenham supported this initiative with a number of events throughout the year, including:-

- A Table Top sale in the garden of the Exmouth Arms pub, adjacent to the main shopping street in Leckhampton;
- An afternoon of "Sponsored Events" in Naunton Park, where our young members exerted themselves in an assortment of ways, in return for cash from their family and friends;
- A cake sale.

In order to further raise local awareness of the Woodcraft Folk, the district organised an information stand in the streets of Cheltenham in September, offering leaflets about us and telling passers-by about what we can offer to young people.

The Annual Delegate Conference took place in April, at the usual venue in Loughborough, and as in previous years, representatives attended from Cheltenham District. This year, however, the adult representatives were joined by four members of the Psychedelic Mix Venturer group.

Many of our Pioneer group have moved up to join friends from Gloucester, Stroud and the Forest of Dean in the Venturer group. This group has enjoyed a varied programme, including: drama; debate; cycle rides; wide games and weekend activities such as a trip to Swindon Ice Rink. The highlight of the Venturer calendar was a weekend visit to Wales, when most participants walked in excess of twenty miles!!

As usual, the year was punctuated by many special events, some of which are detailed below:

Spring Camp

Cheltenham Woodcraft Folk invited Stroud, Gloucester and Forest of Dean Woodcraft Folk to it's Spring camp at Upcote Farm, in Withington. We included many favourite activities from past camps and the weather was kind to us!

Levellers Day

Again this year we joined in the parade at Burford, in May, to remember the Levellers shot by Cromwell. Afterwards we met up with many other Woodcraft Folk groups in the park to enjoy games, singing and "street entertainers".

Summer Camp

In August we joined with our Woodcraft Folk friends from across the Oxford, Swindon and Gloucester area network for a camp in the Peak District. In addition to varied activities on site for the different age groups, we had some enjoyable days out. Our Treasurer, Louise, was able to join us on the mass cycle ride, thanks to a special bike able to carry a wheelchair user as a "side car" passenger. Windsurfing was another popular activity, although Louise let this one pass!

Saharawi Refugees

Oxford Woodcraft Folk invited Cheltenham to join them at the Cotswold Wildlife Park to meet up with the refugee youngsters who were staying with them for a few weeks. It was a glorious, sunny day, spent looking at the animals, playing parachute games and singing Woodcraft Folk songs!

Ride the Net

A group from Cheltenham district supported the Sustrans "Ride the net" cycling event, riding to mass bike rally in Birmingham city centre.

Add to all this the regular weekly meetings for Elfins, Pioneers and Venturers, plus the odd weekend spent cycling beside the Sharpness canal or enjoying the fun of a bunkhouse in the Forest of Dean and, once again, Cheltenham District Woodcraft Folk can look back upon a very full year!!

Here's to the next one!