



1st Baydon Brownies

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REPORT TO PARISH ASSEMBLY 2009

Brownies continue to thrive with 7 enrolments during the year, replacing those who on reaching the age of 10 have gone on to Guides. In October 3 of our former Brownies (accompanied by their parents) were amongst a group from Aldbourn Guides who visited Malborough Massachusetts, USA, where they were hosted by families of American Guides.

We've undertaken some interesting and fun activities, usually theme based, such as the Gardener's Badge, which we embarked on last Spring and completed in September. The Brownies grew potatoes, radishes, spring onions, tomatoes and marigolds, and over the months kept their own diaries. In September we set out on the Seasons Badge. For Autumn, we had to cook something using an autumnal fruit, we chose apples and made crumbles, which were very successful; for Winter we looked at winter festivals of other cultures and religions, discussed the importance of dressing appropriately to be seen on dark mornings and evenings and made reflective strips to go on clothing or school bags. More recently, we made pancakes (tossed them too and no, you won't find any remains on the BYPA ceiling!), and made bird boxes. We tackled the Fire Safety Badge. Each Six made a model of the BYPA Hall indicating the fire exits and fire equipment, and each Brownie drew up an escape plan for their own homes. We visited Swindon Fire Station where the Brownies were put through their paces by a Fire Officer, who, I am delighted to say, was most impressed with the Brownies answers to his questions, and their questions to him. We were taken on a tour of the station, and some of the Brownies got to try on the protective clothing. They (and we adults) were then allowed to clambour onto the fire tenders during which someone managed to "accidentally" set off the siren causing some pandemonium - imagine being in an enclosed space with the siren screaming, blue lights flashing, little girls (and big girls) yelling – you will get a pretty good picture! I'm told the Fire Officer has made a complete recovery following counselling!

In addition to these activities, we found time to celebrate the Olympics, cooking and eating (with chop sticks) Chinese food, and made streamers.

On Bonfire Night we shared a refreshment stall with the Pre-School providing hot-dogs, goulash soup and mulled wine. This all went down a treat with those brave enough to venture out on such a stormy night, with lashing rain and gale force winds.

We've undertaken various craft activities, making Christmas stockings, decorated boxes for Mothering Sunday and Easter bunny face-cloths.

In January we enjoyed a campfire evening hosted by Aldbourn Brownies and we are planning to return their hospitality by holding a rounders evening with BBQ in July. We have hosted an evening for Aldbourn Rainbows. The Brownies were responsible for looking after the younger girls, assisting them in making bookmarks and participating in games new to the Rainbows.

I am delighted to report that Wendy Apello who joined as Unit Helper a year ago is soon to become a fully warranted guider. Well done Wendy!

Finally, in January each year we are required to take part in a census. Last year's census revealed that 250,000 girls of all ages across the country are on waiting lists, proving that the Movement is alive and kicking and very much part of today's society. Next year Girlguiding UK will be celebrating its 100th anniversary for which various exciting events and activities are being planned both nationally and locally.

**Pat Barnes
Brown Owl**