



Victoria Scout Group

News sheet

Nº: 195

[July - September 2016] October 2016



SCOUTS
Nibnu Dinja Afjar

100
SENA

SCOUTING
F'GHAWDEX
1916-2016



THE SCOUT ASSOCIATION
OF MALTA

Victoria Scout Group

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From the Group Scout Leader **Lorrie Saliba**

By the time you receive this issue, summer will be over and we will have gone back to the winter routine. Children are back at school while at the Scouts we have started the weekly meetings. Although the section meetings stopped after summer camp, several leaders continued to meet at headquarters carrying our certain jobs which needed to be done.

I am sure that you parents take great interest in your children's development and wish them to benefit from what the Scout Movement offers. Today I would like to ask you a question. "Do you know what your children are learning when they attend the Scout meetings and when they attend other activities especially the outdoor ones?" I have my doubts. There may be more than one

reason for this. But I am sure that one of them is the lack of contact between parents and leaders. So I invite you to participate in any activity that is organized for you so that you see personally what is being done. I assure everyone that the leaders do their utmost for the benefit of your children. I think that we all agree that a greater cooperation between the parents and the leaders will yield better results. I wish that you do your utmost to encourage your children to regularly attend the meetings and the other activities. Remember that your word means a lot and makes all the difference. The more we work together, the better for your children to continue developing mentally, physically and spiritually. I would like to point out that those members who do not attend regularly can't stay in our Group. There are many children



Group photo of the leaders in front of Verdala Palace

Views expressed in this publication are personal and not necessarily those of the Victoria Scout Group as a whole, or of the Scout Association of Malta.

Published by the: **VICTORIA SCOUT GROUP**
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Layout & Printing: **A&M Printing Ltd.** – Għala – Tel: 2155 3217

From the Scout Group Leader

cont....from front page

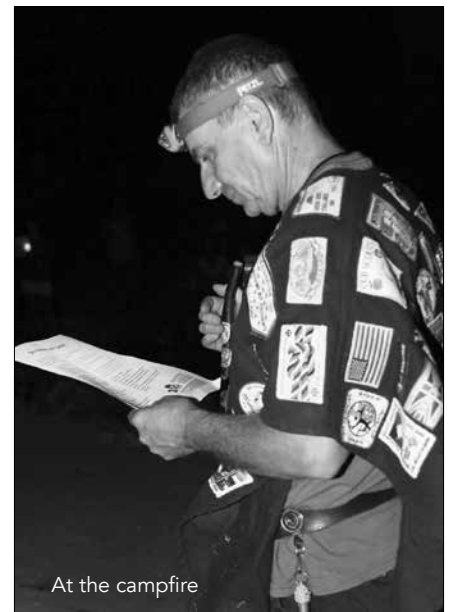
who wish to join the Group but there is no space for them. So they are in the waiting list hoping that one day they may also be part of our Group. Since the last issue of the News Sheet several activities were held. Without any doubt the Summer Camp was the major event for us. Camps are always the right time for our members to put into practice all the Scouting skills learned during the weekly meetings. For this camp the turnout was very good and those few members who didn't attend did so for valid reasons. This also encourages the leaders to continue with our work. A word of praise must go to all those leaders

who left no stone unturned for the success of this camp. During Summer Camp we also organise the barbeque which is the main fundraising activity the group holds during the year. Once again, this was a success and I think that all those who attended enjoyed every minute of it. On behalf of the Group Council members. I would like to thank all those who participated. Other thanks go to all those parents who gave a helping hand before, during and after the barbeque. Your help is very much appreciated. To cater for more than 500 guests is not a joke.

As we have done for the last 25 years, during this camp we organised a barbeque for Gozitan people with

special needs. These people eagerly await this activity especially the campfire at the end of the barbeque. My thanks go to the Scouts who do their utmost to make the activity as enjoyable as possible. Other thanks go to the

Campfire opening



At the campfire



management of Dwejra Bar who, year after year, offer drinks free of charge to all these guests before the barbeque.

As you all know this year, the Scouts in Gozo are celebrating their 100th Anniversary. Up to now several activities were held between the two Groups on the Island. In October **a Scout Rally** is being held where the Gozo Scout Groups are inviting all Scouts from Malta to take part. This parade is going to be held in **Victoria on Sunday 30th October** in the morning. **I therefore invite you to join us for this parade and give your support to Scouting in Gozo.**

Guard of Honour at the Agrarian Show held on Santa Marija's Feast

On Monday 15th August, the Group provided a guard of honour at the annual agrarian show held at Villa Rundle Gardens. This guard of honour provided to H.E the President of Malta and the Minister for Gozo is a tradition which dates back to the sixties and the group has always kept its appointment and honoured its commitment.



Group members salute the Minister for Gozo, Dr Anton Refalo on his arrival at Villa Rundle.



The Cubs at one of the stands at the show

A point to Ponder with the Editor - Anita Muscat

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FROM HM THE QUEEN!

ON HER 90TH BIRTHDAY, QUEEN ELIZABETH II, WISHES THE CUBS A HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY.

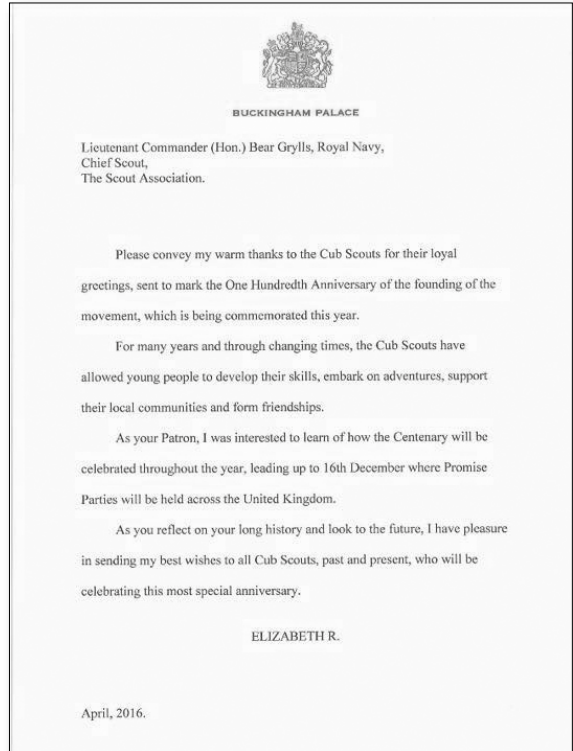
In March 2016, Bear Grylls, Chief Scout of the UK sent a letter to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II (the patron of the Scout Association in the UK) where he informed her about the year-long programme of activities planned to mark the 100th anniversary of Cub Scouting. He also wrote about the origin and history of Cub Scouting, the Cubs' contribution during the First and Second World Wars and the changes which occurred throughout the years. He pointed out that in spite of changes to uniforms, badges and members, the basic formula – that of offering young people the opportunities, the confidence and the skills they need to succeed – has remained the same.

In her reply in April, the Queen thanked Bear Grylls and the Cub Scouts for their loyal greetings. She commented that *"For many years and through changing times, Cub Scouts have allowed young people to develop their skills, embark on adventures, support their local communities and form friendships."* As the Scouts' Patron, she *"was interested to learn how the Centenary will be celebrated throughout the year, leading up to the 16th of December."*

She ended her letter thus: *"As you reflect on your long history and look to the future, I have the pleasure in sending my best wishes to all Cub Scouts, past and present, who will be celebrating this most special anniversary."*

The full story can

be seen on: <http://www.cubs100.org/Pages/Category/cubs100-stories>



The Queen's letter

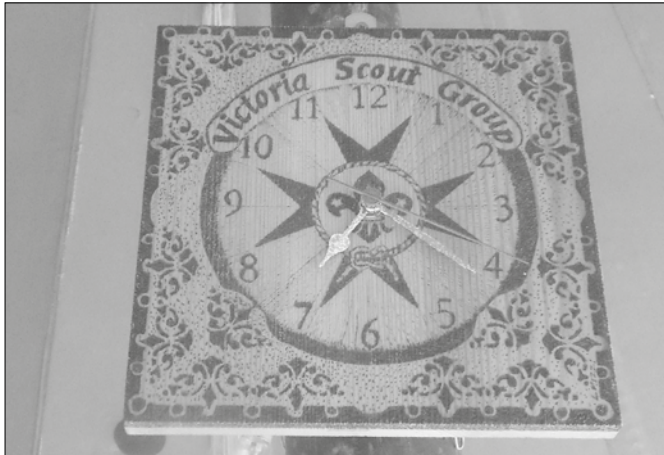
VISIT BY

**DR THERESE COMODINI CACHIA,
MEMBER OF
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

MEP Dr Therese Comodini Cachia, paid a visit to headquarters towards the end of July, when preparations for the summer camp were in full swing. The Group Scout Leader, Lorrie Saliba and Group Council Chairman, Michael Grech showed her around the premises. She met various leaders and council members. She was presented with the book narrating the history of the group.



SUMMER CAMP



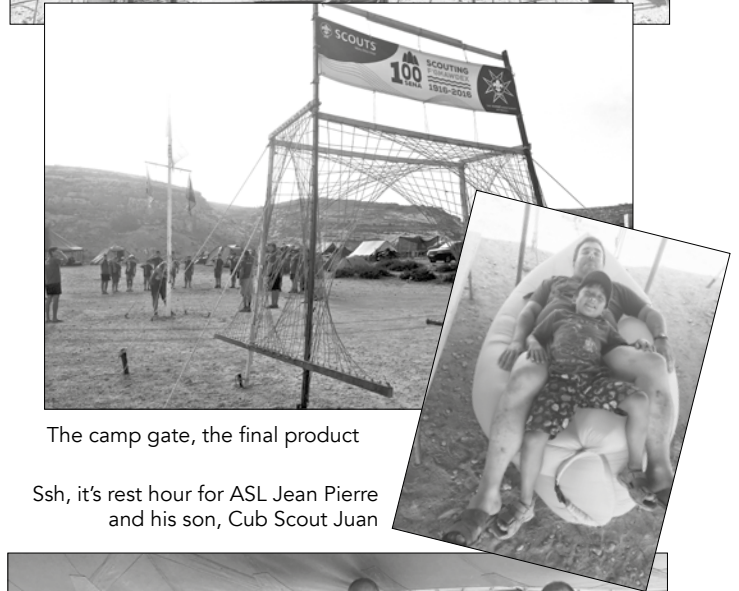
Our new camp kitchen clock, done in pyrography by Scouter Emmanuel Mizzi



The camp gate - part 2



The camp gate - part 1



The camp gate, the final product

Ssh, it's rest hour for ASL Jean Pierre and his son, Cub Scout Juan



The camp gate is put in place.



Chief Scout's visit From the left: Scouter Emmanuel Mizzi, ASL Mario Galea, GSL Lorrie Saliba, the Chief Scout George Cassar and his wife, and AGSL Ġorġ Said



BBQ and campfire for persons with special needs

SUMMER CAMP BBQ AND CAMPFIRE⁵



Preparing for the BBQ



Former Chief Scouts James Rizzo and Vincent Cassar and former Chief Commissioner and Group Patron, Joseph G Grech



Campfire's burning



Let there be light. The campfire is lit.



The final song of this year's campfire



The meat is sizzling on the fire.
Thank you to our helpers.



A view of the campsite during the BBQ

LEADERS GO CAMPING AT THE VERDALA PALACE GROUNDS

by ACSL Edith Camilleri

Camping in the serene woods which wrap around the imposing Palace of Verdala was indeed an event we leaders were all looking forward to. We arrived at the palace gate on Friday 9th September and were shown in by the guards on duty. A good spot to set up the tents was selected, nestled in a grove of trees and we could not wait to get a closer look at the palace and as the night was fast approaching, we headed towards the building which was now lit up and looking magnificent. For our evening meal we ventured towards Mdina and enjoyed a lovely evening before heading back to camp.

On Saturday morning, after a hearty English breakfast washed down with several cups of freshly brewed coffee, we made our way up to the palace to meet Mr Twanny Mifsud, the grounds keeper and the palace custodian for a show around of the palace. This was the highlight of our visit and as we approached the door we were pleasantly surprised to observe a family of reindeer which lived in the moat. Mr Mifsud did a magnificent job as our guide - showing us the grand halls and explaining the contents of their frescoes and all the nooks and crannies including secret stairs and hidden rooms, while narrating the history of the building. What struck me the most was the main staircase which was built with such superb workmanship by the well-known Maltese architect Glormu Cassar way back in the 1500s. Up on the top roof we could take in the surrounding views.

I, for one, could have stayed on all day but it was time to venture on to our next activity which was a hike to the Għar il- Kbir cave complex. We did manage to get to them eventually after some rerouting and an encounter of the unpleasant kind with a very territorial dog which Anita and I had to face or rather turn away from, in one of them fast forward walks with a set of teeth yapping at our feet. Having explored the caves in the complex and the numerous curt ruts in the area - known as Clapham Junction- we headed to Għar Lapsi for a refreshing swim and lunch.

The GSL had a wish to visit the St Paul the Hermit chapel in Wied il-Għasel, Mosta so it was decided that this would be our next destination. The ambience in this valley which is surrounded by the imposing rock faced cliffs takes you back in time and one can almost imagine how, as the legend goes, St Paul living in the cave where now there is this little chapel. Along the way we munched on carob pods and sweet almonds as well as hawthorn berries found growing on the sides of this lovely valley.

Back to base camp for showers (aka a house pipe hooked to a tap) and a short rest. A great dinner wrapped up this day which was full of new discoveries and lasting memories.

Waking up early on Sunday we enjoyed a jog/walk through the woods in the palace grounds, had a close encounter with a colony of bats in one of the wartime shelters in the gardens, had breakfast and headed to the palace chapel dedicated to St Anthony the Abbott for



Inside one of the magnificent palace halls



The amazing staircase inside the palace



One of the artwork installations in the palace gardens is the work of an ex-Scout of the group, Andrew Portelli.

Sunday mass. Afterwards we met up again with Twanny and his wife Jane as well as Joey, Twanny's brother and his wife who also live on the grounds. They made our stay all the more pleasant with their lovely hospitality and we would like to thank them heartily. Before leaving the grounds, we did our good turn by carrying out a clean-up of the area outside the palace gates.

After a visit to the old city of Mdina, it was time to strike camp and pack up and as we prepared to leave this oasis behind, I'm sure our thoughts were all the same we shall return



At Wied il-Ghasel, Mosta



At Għar il-Kbir cave complex



This is the life!!

The Group would like to thank:



- Mr Charlie Attard – parent
- Mr Vincent Attard – Smugglers' Cave Restaurant
- Mr Ryan Azzopardi – Group auxiliary
- Ms Lina Buttigieg (Dwejra Bar)
- Mr Luke (Inner Dives – Dwejra)
- Mr Charles Calleja (Charvin Press)
- Ms Janet Grech (Temprina Stationery)
- Mr Joe Grech (Arkadia Ltd)
- Mr Joe Grima - Xagħra
- Mr Ġorġ Meylaq (Meylaq Jewellers)
- Mr Abram Said (Abraham Supplies)
- Mr Mario Scicluna (Jubilee Bar)
- Mr Steve Tabone (Baron Ltd)
- Mr Alvin Vassallo (Vassallo Jewellers) for their support during the group's summer camp.
- Other thanks go to those council members, Scouters, parents, supporters and campers who gave a helping hand during the group's barbeque. The help given during the preparation of the food, both at headquarters and the campsite and the cleaning of headquarters on Wednesday 3rd August 2016 as well as that given during the cleaning up (of the never-ending number of dishes and utensils) on Thursday 4th August at the campsite was greatly needed and very much appreciated. Organizing a barbeque for around 500 persons is quite an undertaking and the success of this activity depended largely on the help offered by these volunteers.



After the barbeque – some washing p needs to be done.

SOLVE DRAINAGE PROBLEMS

**Cleaning of blocked pipes for vanity/
 tub/kitchen with high pressure jetting**

Contact: Michael Refalo (Tlittu)

on

2155 4189 or 9982 2768

Forthcoming events:

- Camp for leaders at Verdala Palace on the invitation of H.E. the President of Malta - 9 -11th September
- Fund-raising lunch under the marquee at Dwejra - Sunday 9th October
- **Anniversary parade in Gozo - Sunday 30th October**
- Christmas dinner - Saturday 17th December

Further details will be sent in due time.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY PACK REPORT

by CSL Anita Muscat

Another investiture ceremony was held in July. This time it was the turn of 5 boys to be invested. The Packs welcome Thiago Jo Said, Juan Scerri, Benjamin Spiteri, Sean Spiteri and Tyrell Xuereb Milligan as new Cub Scouts within our Scouting family.

The highlight for this 3 month period was summer camp. The theme for the Cubs' camp was "*The Jungle Adventure continues....*" The 3 days spent at camp were full of activities such as The Big Hunt, The Invasion of King Louie's hideout, The Warrior Trial and The Warrior Quest. Most of these were a mixture of obstacle courses, water/mud games, inter-Six competitions and other games. The swimming sessions started off with the safety rules for swimming and during the next 3 days, several Cubs gained the Swimmer Badge. Well done! All the Cubs joined in wholeheartedly in the Group activity on Tuesday afternoon. This consisted of a variety of water games, where members of all 3 sections within the group were put into teams which competed against each other in one wet game after another. Naturally it was great fun for all. The wetter and dirtier boys get, the more fun it is! The Cubs also presented an item during the Group's campfire on Wednesday night.

Another special activity was weaving a giant hammock. Parents Abi McLeod and Emma Morgan (Thank you for offering to carry out this activity at camp!) provided all the materials needed for this unusual activity. Although the giant hammock was not completed during the session, the boys got a good idea of what such a craft entails and enjoyed themselves tremendously in the process.

The older boys joined the Troop for several activities. In this way they became familiar with their new section, since after the short summer break from meetings, they will leave the Pack to join the Troop section. Some of them also remained at camp



Group photo of the Packs at the entrance gate to camp



Parent Abi McLeod Clark, the Cubs and the giant loom



The day's activities have drained the batteries for Sean, Mikiel and Marcus! They fell asleep in the dining shelter.



Bon appétit!



The muddy Cubs get a shower from Akela.



More water games means more fun.

when the other Cubs left and became part of the Troop to all intents and purposes for the remaining 2 days. After camp, the meetings stopped for a few weeks. These resumed at the end of September with an intake of new members. We welcome and wish them an adventurous life within our Scout Group.

Venture Unit REPORT

by VSL Darren Mercieca

Summer months are the hardest when trying to organise events for the Venture Unit. The Ventures are all busy with part time jobs. However we do our best to organise interesting activities even though attendance might be on the low side. We kicked off the month of July with a swimming activity at the remote bay of "Taz-Zriezaq" in Qala. For most of us it was the first time we visited this bay. Yes, we still find new and interesting places in Gozo to visit! We also managed to climb on top of the "Ġebbla tal-Halfa." Climbing on top of the pointed rocks proved to be quite a challenge.

The rest of the month of July was taken up by preparations for the annual summer camp. Multiple meetings were held at HQ, where assistance was given to the Scout Leaders who took the initiative to clean and change the organisation structure of the yard and the store.



These Ventures seem to be enjoying their lunch.



Preparing the seating for the barbeque



The Ventures help organize some games for the Packs.



The Ventures prepare Sunday lunch at camp –BBQ'ed chicken.

Summer camp is the highlight of the year, bringing together 9 days of full activities and the largest fundraising activity of the year. It is very difficult for Venture Scouts who work during the summer to attend the full camp. Therefore we organised the attendance in such a way that all duties were split equally between the members. During the camp we gave our share for all the major activities and also helped throughout the camp and the summer BBQ. Together we ensured that the summer camp turned out to be a great success.

In August we took a very short break from activities and came back with a diving activity at Xwejni Bay. This diving experience was the first for most Ventures.

The Venture Executive is now working hard to organise activities for the next 6 months in order to make the most of those months where the Ventures do not have part time work and so can attend most of the activities.

Europe Direct Information Centre activity

In September, various officials from the Europe Direct Information Centre, Victoria, Gozo visited our headquarters during an activity organized by the centre. The seminar, which was open for the public, discussed "Organic Food". Representatives of the Malta Organic Agriculture Movement (MOAM) explained what organic food means and the principles behind organic farming. The benefits of the Mediterranean diet and organically grown fruits and vegetables were also highlighted.



We will do our best

Although the summer months mean holidays and relaxation for most of us, some of our members were not so idle but in fact they were quite busy helping others. The hard work and dedication of these members (and their local non-governmental development organisations) towards those in need deserve our praise.

Well done to:

- Assistant Cub Scout Leader Joseph Saliba who was a member of a group of medical students who spent 3 weeks doing voluntary work with the MSSP (Missionary Society of St Paul) Mission in Bataan and Manila in the Philippines. The group was hosted by missionary priests Fr Joseph Cremona and Fr Mark Demanuele at the Jose Depiro Foundation Centre and the St Catherine of Alexandria parish in Bataan. One of the initiatives of the MSSP was the setting up of a music school and an orchestra to help children and youths who otherwise would be idle on the streets. In this way, they are given a chance to develop their talents.
- Venture Scout Jeremy Muscat who is part of the group *Volontarjat f'Barì*. Every summer, a group of Maltese and Gozitan youths spend 2 weeks helping out at a convent run by the Sisters of Mother Teresa in Bari. Children from difficult social backgrounds benefitted from this voluntary work experience.



Venture Scout Jeremy Muscat and the other volunteers in Bari



ACSL Joseph Saliba and the other volunteers in the Philippines



Gone Home

• Paul Xerri, uncle of ASL Jean Pierre Scerri and brother of former Council member John Scerri. Paul was a faithful supporter of the group for many years. His last presence at a group activity was during the Group's BBQ and campfire last August.

We extend our condolences to his family. We urge our readers to remember him in their prayers. May he rest in peace.

Visitors to headquarters

- European Member of Parliament Dr Therese Comodini Cachia
- Paola Girl Guides
- Leslie Bonnici – Chief Commissioner
- Loraine Borg – GSL Xaghra Scout Group
- N.S.E. - 25th Peterborough Group, UK
- Cedric Salafia – Hamrun Scout Group
- St Venera Scout Group
- Officials from the Europe Direct Information Centre, Gozo
- Representatives of the Malta Organic Agriculture Movement (MOAM)
- George Cassar – Ex-Scout, Adelaide, Australia

TROOP NEWS



The Scouts put up the patrol tents.



Happy birthday, Malcolm



The Scouts present a stunt during the campfire.



A crucifix and a niche for the campsite



The Scouts help to serve the food during the BBQ.

Congratulations ASL Jean Paul Abela!

Congratulations to Assistant Scout Leader Jean Paul Abela and his fiancée Michelle on the occasion of their wedding in September 2016. The Group provided a guard of honour to the bride and groom on their entry and exit from the Gozo Cathedral.

We wish the newly-weds all the best for their future.



Congratulations Rover Beppe Galea

The Group would like to congratulate Rover Scout Beppe Galea on his election as a member of the National Youth Scout Council during the recent National Scout Youth Forum. We wish him and all to the other new Youth Council members a fruitful 2-year term in office.

there and back again

(With apologies to Bilbo Baggins and J.R.R. Tolkien)

Congratulations go to **Venture Scout Leader Darren Mercieca** for completing a tough 11km swim from Gozo to Malta and back in slightly over 4 hours. Although Darren had competed in and completed similar events twice before, this time the going was much harder. Adverse weather conditions – strong winds and currents and high swells made the crossing the toughest swim undertaken in his career. His swim stroke was incessantly disrupted. He struggled to breathe and suffered occasional spells of sea sickness. Both his physical strength and mental stamina were constantly under attack. Although he considered giving up the attempt several times, he managed to struggle on and completed the endeavour. **Well done!**



All the best!

The Group and the Packs would like to wish all the best to Assistant Cub Scout Leader Raksha, Francis Borg who will be doing a 5 month stint in Italy where he will be furthering his studies at law. We will miss you Raksha but we hope to get you back when you return to Gozo. *Arriverderci e buona fortuna!!*



Anniversary parade in Gozo

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Scouting in Gozo, the Victoria and the Xaghra Scout Groups are organizing an anniversary parade in Gozo. This will take place on Sunday 30th October 2016. All Maltese Groups have been invited to join in. Government and civil society representatives will also be present. The parade will start from St Augustine Square at 1100hrs. The Scout groups will march through the streets of Victoria. At Independence Square they

will salute H.E. the President of Malta and the Chief Scout. The parade will end at the square in front of the Gozo Cathedral for a group photo in the location where the first Scout group in Gozo had its headquarters.

We invite all parents, supporters, ex- Scouts and friends of the Gozitan groups to join us for this parade.



Awards and Badges for July to September 2016

Packs:

- Attard Christian – Bronze Arrow
- Azzopardi Ludvic - Swimmer 1
- Azzopardi Nathan - Bagheera, Bronze Arrow,
- Bonello Nathan – Bagheera, Bronze Arrow
- Caruana John Paul - Swimmer 1
- Casha Neil – Shere Khan, Gold Arrow
- Cini Sven - Swimmer 1
- Debattista Jean - Bronze Arrow, Scientist
- Farrugia Mark Saviour - Bronze Arrow
- Formosa Guzeppi- Swimmer 1
- Grech Nicholas - Bronze Arrow
- Magrin Michael - Bagheera, Bronze Arrow
- Refalo Michael - Bronze Arrow
- Said Lucas - Kaa
- Said Thiago Jo – Membership
- Scerri Juan – Membership
- Spiteri Benjamin- Membership
- Spiteri Sean - Membership, Swimmer 1
- Tabone Carlos - Swimmer 1
- Vella Gabriel - Bronze Arrow
- Marcus Vella - Swimmer 1
- Xuereb Milligan Tyrell – Membership, Swimmer 1

Well done to all!