



THE SCOUTER'S BOOKS – No. 6

SPECIAL PACK MEETINGS

BY
QUOPUS

*“You are the people who start little boys on the trail
of happiness in service to others”*

**Lord Rowallan, on opening the Second
International Cub Conference, July 31st, 1950**

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Editor's Note:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or express sentiments which were current at the time, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21st century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

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WHY "SPECIAL" PACK MEETINGS?

Old Wolves will be well aware of those difficult occasions when plans for Pack Meetings do not come up to expectation, the Cubs are bored, and even the games they normally play fail to excite their enthusiasm. This is the time when a complete change is desirable. B.-P. was aware of the fact that too much of one type of thing bored Cubs and so he invented the "Special" Pack Meeting, a Meeting the basis of which has nothing whatever to do with the Jungle. These are introduced into the life of the Pack occasionally as a special "treat" to revive interest or to celebrate some particular event.

The Special Pack Meeting must be very different from the ordinary weekly Meeting if it is to be enjoyed and become one of the highlights of the Pack programme. If it is to serve its purpose it must be a highlight and therefore it is vitally important that much care and thought is given to the planning. It is hoped that in the following chapters you will find guidance and help in this important Cub activity.

It is recommended that no more than one Special Pack Meeting is held each quarter, otherwise the essential Cub Training based on the Jungle will be destroyed.

It will be realised that a Meeting of this kind has no set basis and every detail must be created from the imagination; it is therefore vital that all the Pack Scouters meet together to discuss the plans. This will ensure that the meeting contains the variety, the imagination, the romance, and the play-acting opportunities which these occasions demand. Of course it is possible for Akela to plan the whole meeting alone but, apart from any other consideration, it would be bad leadership.

Because the Jungle Background does not occur, it is obvious that games, activities, and stunts, must appear in different guises and they will often have to be adapted to suit the changed situation in which the Pack finds itself.

Enough has been said for you to realise the grand fun that these Special Pack Meetings can be. The Cub's desire for make-believe, his imagination and enthusiasm are all satisfied and, in

addition, Old Wolves can use the opportunity to put in some practical Cub training in an attractive way.

It cannot be over-emphasised that Special Pack Meetings are to be special attractions, and to use them more frequently than suggested would defeat their whole object: it must be remembered that the Jungle Background is the basis of Cubbing and should be present in all but “special” occasions.

THEMES FOR SPECIAL PACK MEETINGS

As the Jungle has no place in the Special Pack Meeting you are faced with the initial task of choosing a suitable background. There are many possibilities and, as with many things, some are more suitable than others for any particular Pack. Consequently you will need to consider the various themes in the light of your knowledge of your own Cubs and choose a background which will appeal to them.

It is possible to divide these meetings into a great variety of types but the main categories are: – Topical, Historical, Legendary, Literary, Make-Believe Visits, Futuristic, and Purely Imaginary. These headings cover most of the themes although some will fit equally as well under two or more different titles.

Perhaps the easiest Special Pack Meeting to plan is that with a *Topical* theme as the detail is already there and merely has to be adapted to suit your purpose. Such events as “The Olympic Games” and “The Lord Mayor’s Show” lend themselves immediately to adaptation, and local events of current interest will appeal to the Cubs. What boy would not enjoy a “potted” version of the Sailing Regatta or Highland Games?

When considering topical themes ask yourself the following questions: –

Is there a topic of conversation amongst the Cubs which might form a good background for a Meeting?

Have you told any yarns recently which might be used?

Historical themes are numerous but care must be taken to present history in a different way from that experienced at school! This is, of course, fairly easy, since the Pack will usually only be concerned with a single incident and not a whole decade. Everyone has heard of Sir Walter Raleigh and Cubs will undoubtedly know of the episode concerning the Great Queen and the cloak; this, therefore, could form the basis of a programme built round an historical theme. A wealth of ideas exists in our national history, but do not overlook local events of the past. A memorable Special Pack Meeting could be held beneath the castle walls or on the village green where the stocks still stand. What a wonderful time we could have in re-enacting the Presentation of the Royal Charter to our Ancient Borough, and could the mound of earth in the nearby park really be a Roman Earthwork?

Legends are rather apt to be confused with history, but for our purpose it does not in the least matter. By all means hold your Meeting in the shade of the old oak in which a highwayman is reputed to have hidden and, mythical though his adventures may be, if they form the basis of an exciting programme the Cubs will not mind in the least whether they are fact or fiction.

The plots of various fictional and non-fictional books make interesting and unusual bases for Special Pack Meetings although in the field of *Literature* it may be necessary to read the story to the Pack at a previous meeting.

A *Make-Believe Visit* to the circus or a voyage in a ship would make an excellent background. Here, again, the list is endless and obviously includes such things as voyages of discovery and the ever-popular pirate theme.

When we come to Special Pack Meetings based on the *Future* it may be that you, the Old Wolves, will have to bow to the superior knowledge of your Sixers, and the least you will have to do is to make yourself fully conversant with the current adventures of “The Men from Mars”, the vicissitudes likely to befall the crew of the Space Ship which reaches the moon, and suchlike highly technical matters. You will find the television programmes for children a great help as indeed are boys’ magazines. To this type can be added the *Purely Imaginary* themes which can also be used with success. Programmes in this category include ideas for which there is no basis in fact and which must be built up solely from the imagination; for example, “Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea”. Having considered the various backgrounds for Special Pack Meetings and come to a decision with regard to your own choice of theme, you must now plan the programme in detail.

PROGRAMME PLANNING

The arrangements you make in order to hold a Special Pack Meeting need to be even more carefully planned than those for ordinary Meetings, if that is possible, and the more time you can spend planning details the more successful will the meeting be.

Theme:

First you must decide the background you want to use. You will probably be able to use at some stage all the suggestions in the previous chapter, but when choosing keep the following points in mind: –

Have the Cubs asked for any particular theme?

Will the Cubs understand it?

Will it offer plenty of good fun or will it be too serious?

Site:

Next you must decide where the Meeting is to be held. Try to go outdoors if possible, for the different surroundings will add greatly to the appeal of the meeting.

Programmes:

Having decided the theme and the site the real work can begin – the task of filling in the details. *Timing* will be important: the meeting should be of the same duration as ordinary Pack Meetings. If you are using an outdoor site remember that changes in activities need not be so frequent as when indoors. *The Opening Item* should set the pace and tone so make it a snappy one with plenty of activity and fun. It is so easy to make a slow, dull start by trying to create too detailed a background. Take care also not to overcrowd the whole programme with detail; having set the stage allow activities to follow on naturally. With factual backgrounds chronology is desirable but do not be afraid to abandon it if by so doing you improve the programme. There will need to be *Continuity* throughout and one of the Old Wolves should be prepared to lead the Pack from one item to another, perhaps in a “train”, an “aeroplane”, or “up a staircase”, making any necessary explanations whilst doing so. There must be the same kind of *Balance* between games, activities, and practices as in ordinary Meetings. Although the Special Pack Meeting ignores completely the Jungle, the other activities of Cubbing have an important part to play. *Games* will normally be the usual Cub games presented imaginatively so as to blend into the story. Similarly, the *Activities* of the meeting should be derived from normal Cub practices, particularly the *Star Tests*. These will be suitably disguised so as to appear as part

of the plot. Old Wolves should always remember that whatever the type of Meeting, be it Special or otherwise, the opportunity of helping Cubs to progress must be used. The Star Tests, therefore, and many other Cub activities have a very real place in the programme.

From the above it may be thought that Star Tests and ordinary Cub games must be introduced into these programmes “come what may”. This is not the intention. Wherever the story of the programme lends itself to an activity try to make that activity approximate to a Cub Test. For instance, if the story necessitates the crossing of a bridge then plank-walking is an obvious test to bring in. So it is with games: if the action of the plot is on board ship then a “deck scrubbing” relay race would be more appropriate than a straightforward game.

This conversion of incidents into worthwhile Cub-like activities forms the major part of the work of planning the programme; it needs much imagination on the part of the Old Wolves, but you will find that if it is done well the Cubs themselves will accept the activities in their new guise as if they had never seen them before. The Cubs will be completely engrossed in “make believe” so do not destroy the atmosphere by suddenly announcing, “We’re going to play a relay game now and as we are supposed to be on a ship let’s play at scrubbing the deck . . .” No! you must shout, “Come on you landlubbers ! Get ‘fell in’ before I lash you with this cat o’ nine tails; you’re going to scrub this filthy deck right now!”. *Atmosphere* is everything so be at pains to achieve it.

Stage Properties:

Realism can often be added, to a “background” by the production of simple properties not usually found in the Den, such as chariots, stage coaches, and the like made by decorating a wheel barrow or old perambulator. Similarly, if a ship is needed, an outline of the deck can be chalked on the floor or pegged out with sisal to the ground, adding a mast made from Scout staves or tent pole, and a flag can be flown. Avoid over-elaborate props which take longer to construct and are no more effective.

Dressing Up:

Next to properties comes the question of making the Cubs look different. They will love dressing up and if ample warning is given they can always bring small items of apparel to use as a disguise during the meeting. Have the Dressing Up Box available unless you prefer to let the Cubs use whatever is available in the Den and they themselves have with them. Do not allow the Cubs to mutilate their uniforms or other clothes and make sure they avoid over-dressing which will make movement difficult and the playing of games impossible. Put a time-limit on the dressing up period!

Quite a useful idea is to limit the disguises to headdresses, for which simple materials such as crepe paper are very useful and the borrowing of valuable articles of clothing is unnecessary.

A little advice will sometimes be necessary to guide the Cubs’ ideas as to apparel, especially when enacting historical scenes. Encourage them to seek the help of their parents on these occasions, which will serve the dual purpose of helping to build an air of expectancy in the Cubs during the previous week and attracting parental interest. Once again, do not over-elaborate. You certainly do not need a complete theatrical costumiers to dress the Pack for a Special Pack Meeting. Disguised in an old pair of pyjamas it is possible to become a wide variety of characters. It is always worthwhile holding a parade sometime during the Meeting to let all the Cubs look at each other’s costumes and a small prize might be offered for the most effective. If the parade can come as part of the programme so much the better.

Old Wolves:

To be effective, all Old Wolves must assume characters on these occasions and should dress accordingly. You will need to “live” these parts, but remember that you must always remain in control of the Pack and be in a position to lead them. To assume characters which are “shot” half-way through the programme or who are “lashed to the mainmast by the Crew” would be asking for trouble. Leading characters can be given to Sixers and they can be told a little of the programme in advance so as to enlist their help if necessary.

Briefing the Pack:

As the Meeting is to provide “a bit of spice” in the Pack’s normal life, the Cubs must be prepared for the event. We have mentioned the possibility of asking them to come with dressing up materials but, besides this, we must obviously tell them something about the plans at the previous meeting. Do not tell them too much and stop at the point where everyone wants to know what happens!

As already mentioned, it is effective to relate the background story of the programme as a yarn during the previous Meeting.

Closing the Programme:

If your plans have been well laid the excitement will have been intense and the Cubs will be full of energy throughout most of the evening. Nevertheless we must, as always, remember to create the right atmosphere for prayers at the end of the Meeting and the later part of the programme should quieten down, ending perhaps with a yarn told by one of the Old Wolf “characters” of his experience. Maybe at the very end and before prayers it is desirable to change from the land of make-believe into Wolf Cubs again, and one of the best ways to do this is to discard all additional disguises, put on correct uniform, and do the Grand Howl.

However successful a Special Pack Meeting has been you will be wise not to repeat it, at any rate until most Cubs have forgotten it. A repeat performance, good as it may be, is rarely so successful as the original.

SPECIMEN PROGRAMMES

By way of examples and to show what can be done with an imaginatively planned meeting the following programmes are included. All have been proved successful in practice, but it should be pointed out that all were planned in relation to known Packs. To use any of these programmes without considering whether slight adaptations might be advisable may bring you disappointment. It is always wise to study the detail of any ready made programme in case it is not entirely suited to your own Pack.

1. *A Visit to a Fair.*

Type: Make believe visit.

Site: Outdoors: Trees available as well as open ground.

Properties: Buckets, bean bags, tennis balls, skittles, small hand bell, quoits, tent pegs.

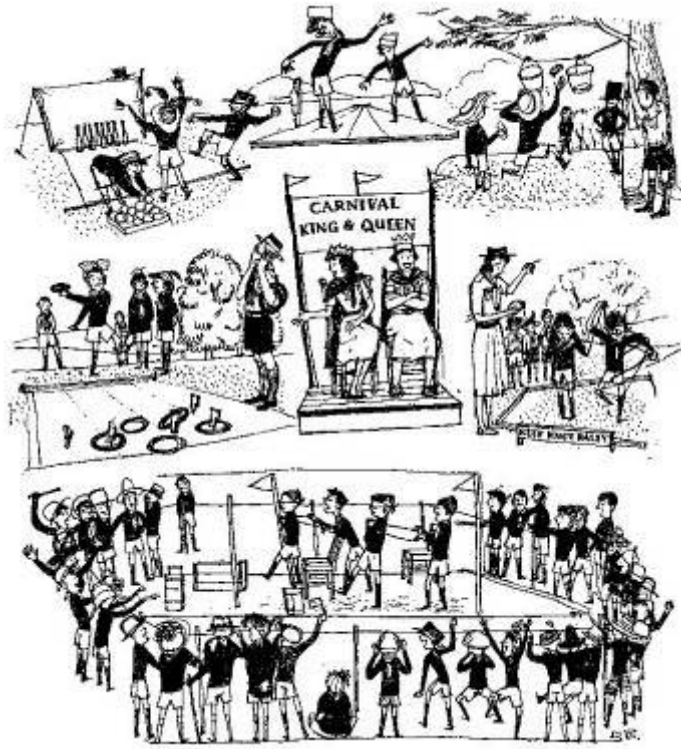
Old Wolves and other Helpers: Act as showmen and run side shows. Akela acts as Carnival King with female Old Wolf as Queen.

Sixers and Sixes: Families visiting.

Details: Pack meets at Park or other venue and immediately puts on fancy hats and garments. Old Wolves have already “erected” stalls.

Special Pack Meetings

Sixers issued with supply of beans to be used by Six for money at stalls and sideshows. (Time 10 mins.).



Families fall in behind Carnival King and Queen for Grand Tour of Fair, during which showmen appeal for support for their stalls. (They describe what has to be done and give demonstrations as the parade passes.). (Time 5 mins.).

Families now wander at will and try their luck at the sideshows. (Time 15 mins.).

The sideshows could be as many of these as time and circumstances permit.

“The Aunt Sally” – six shies a penny. “Beat the Showman” – three throws a penny. (Bean bag thrown into bucket which is kept moving by showman who hauls on rope passed over the bough of a tree.)

“Buried Treasure” – one penny each try. (Area marked out: contestants start from given point and measure distances in given directions and make a cross where they think the treasure is hidden.)

N.B. – As this is a test of ability with compass directions and measurements it should be kept fairly simple.

“The Coconut Shy” – six shies a penny. (Tennis balls thrown at skittles.)

“Weight Carrying Contest” – three tries a penny. (2 lb. balancing block carried on head for given distance.)

“Quoits” – three quoits a penny. (Three quoits thrown over tent pegs: All on one peg wins prize.)

“Reef Knot Rally” – penny a try. (Tie three Reef Knots in rope provided; timed. If under one minute wins prize.)

Prizes consist of returning double the number of beans paid to compete.

Families come together in the arena for the Carnival Queen’s Competition. The Queen is very keen on horsemanship and wishes to find a team of horsemen to send to Spain for Horsemanship Trials. She holds races: –

Special Pack Meetings

1. Riders Fitness Test. (Leap-frog Relay – “backs” referred to as horses.)
2. Bucking Broncho Race. (Race on hands and feet in relay race position, “bucking” or kicking their feet in the air as they do so.)
3. Horsemanship Test. (Cubs in pairs. Leading Cub, acting as horse, is blindfolded and clasps hands across chest. Knotting rope is attached to his elbows and rear Cub uses this as reins, guiding his horse round obstacles and back to the team to set off the second pair.)

Carnival Queen distributes prizes (Beans). (Time 10 mins.).

Carnival Queen calls on the King to demonstrate how Nomads send messages to each other. King tells yarn introducing simple code whereby messages can be conveyed over great distances by use of single semaphore letters. (This code must be prepared in advance.) Carnival King states that he proposes to try out the ability of the families and issues each with a copy of the code. He asks the Queen to withdraw with the families to the other end of the arena so that he can send the messages to them. (This distance should be as great as possible). Messages conveyed by the use of individual letters might be: “All raise the left hand”. “All hop on right leg”. “All face to the East”. (Time 15 minutes).

After this, families decide to join the other merrymakers on the “Bump-em Cars” arena. This consists of an ordinary game of “Tig”. (Time 5 minutes).

The Carnival King announces that he proposes to offer a prize to the family which has earned the most money during the Fair and he will allow ten minutes for all to return to the sideshows to earn more money before he holds “A Day of Reckoning”. (Time 10 mins.).

All the staff help families to count their money and the winner is announced. The King offers a small prize, e.g., sweets, and calls for congratulatory cheers from all those present. (Introduce a new yell).

Finally, the Carnival King announces with regret that the fair must close and all join hands to sing “Auld Lang Syne”.

2. Spit and Polish Naval Review.

Type: Topical.

Site: In and around Pack Den or can be entirely out of doors.

Properties: Supply of sisal, six tent poles, six staves, tent pegs, newspapers.

Old Wolves and other Helpers: Act as Senior Officers.

Akela acts as King Neptune. Sixers and Sixes: Captain and Ships’ Companies.

Details:

Part 1. Preparation for the Review.

Sixers become Captains and Seconds become Mates. Rest of Sixes dress as Ships’ Companies. Commodore orders “Weigh Anchor” and Ships’ Companies carry out a “Pulley Tug of War” – an ordinary tug of war between pairs of Ships’ Companies but rope is passed through a pulley block attached to a tree or other fixed object so that teams are alongside each other. (Time 10 mins.).

Ships are ordered to steam to the anchorage and find their berths. They make “ships” from 2 Scout staves and two blankets. Marker buoys are already in position to indicate where ships are to anchor. It is convenient to have small blocks of wood painted with the various ships’ colours either tacked to the floor or pegged to the ground. When ships are in position at their buoys the Commodore orders the fleet to settle down and prepare for the Review. Compass directions and distances are given to the Captains to enable them to make the outline of a ship, starting from the buoy. If this activity is undertaken out of doors sisal and tent pegs must be provided but indoors chalk can be used. (Time 20 mins.).

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When ships are ready the order is given to “Dress over-all”. Main masts are rigged and jack staffs erected. (Tent poles and Scout staves.) Sisal is used for the rigging and all hitches are clove hitches. If out of doors tent pegs will form deck stanchions but indoors masts will have to be fastened to the backs of chairs or other supports. Masts should have halliards attached. When everything is in position the Ships’ Companies parade on deck. (Time 10 mins.).

Crews ordered to clean ship and deck-scrubbing contest held between ships. (Deck Scrubbing Relay). (Time 5 mins.).

Commodore gives the order to prepare for the Review and Captains and Mates make cocked hats whilst the rest of the Crews make sailor collars. (Newspapers). (Time 10 mins.).

Part 2. The Review.

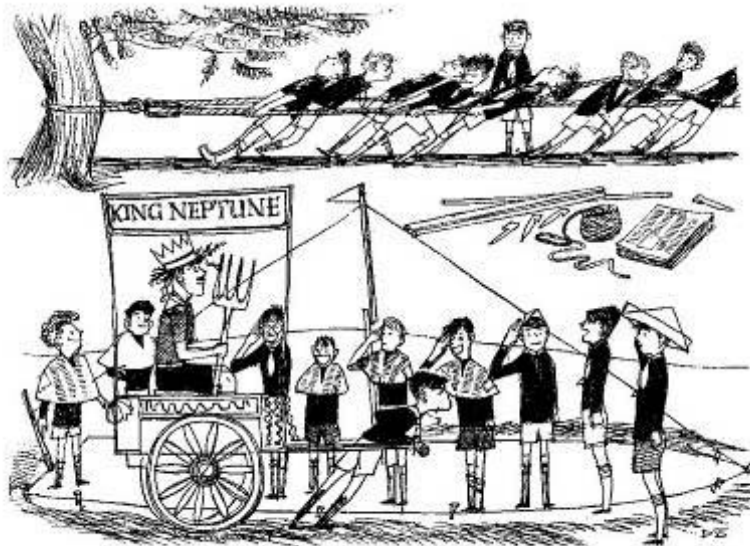
Ships’ Companies muster on foredeck and are inspected by their Captains. Inspection over, colours are hoisted at the jackstaffs, (Pieces of coloured material).

Neptune, riding in his own ship (converted trek cart suitably decorated) sails into the Review Area and passes between the ships. During the Review all Ships’ Companies, led by the Commodore, sing Neptune’s Anthem (a popular sea shanty). Neptune’s ship returns to the Flag Ship whilst a salute of Twenty-one Guns takes ‘place (a ball-throwing competition between pairs of Ships’ Companies, both trying to make twenty-one passes between the ships without dropping the ball). (Time 10 mins.).

Part 3. The Celebrations after the Review.

King Neptune gives the order “Splice the Main-brace” and Ships’ Companies proceed to the Flag Ship. Each ship puts out a boat and a boat race takes place (Teams with backs to direction of travel squatting on haunches, the leader facing his team steers the ship with nautical orders. Leader must also remain in squatting position). (Time 5 mins.).

When the Crews are all aboard the flag ship King Neptune spins a yarn about his sea-faring days. Commodore then orders crews to make their ships ready to leave the anchorage and the boats are taken back to the anchorage. Ships are dismantled and the Review ends with the Ship’s Companies parading and giving a final naval salute.



3. *Treasure Island.*

Type: Literary.

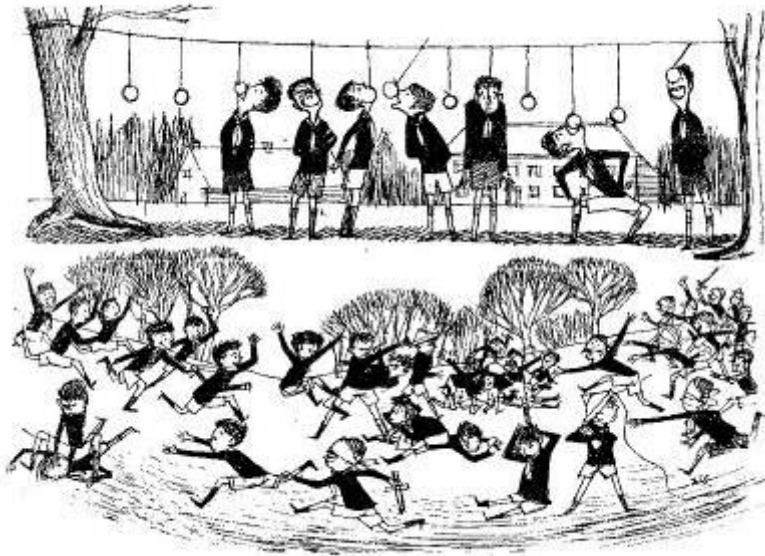
Site: Park land with open space available.

Properties: Deck of large ship marked out in sisal, apple barrel with apples already strung on strings; tin of boiled sweets for treasure; prepared maps; six sets of articles in sea chests.

Old Wolves and other Helpers: Captain Smollett; Pew – later takes the character of Dr. Livesey; John Trelawney the Squire, Long John Silver, and Leading Hands on Ship.

Sixers and Sixes: Ships' Company, divided eventually into buccaneers and loyal Crew. The Senior or Duty Sixer could conveniently be Jim Hawkins.

Details: The relevant parts of the story should have been read or told to the Pack at the previous meeting.



Part 1. *At the "Admiral Benbow".*

Billy Bones is dead and Pew is anxious to find the map of Treasure Island, Everyone is in a violent hurry to examine the contents of the sea chests. (Relay game in which the players collect one article from a box and display it in front of their team). The game over and disappointment having been displayed at not finding the map, Pew reminds everyone that a good buccaneer never forgets what he has seen and the Ships' Company are asked to make a list of the articles as in Kim's Game. (Time 10 mins.).

Part 2. *Bristol.*

Crew go aboard the ship, walking up a plank, and are put into Watches (Sixes). They are inspected by the Captain and the Squire who expect all to be "As smart as paint". (Time 5 mins.).

After inspection Trelawney wishes to be introduced personally to each member of the crew and Captain Smollett leads this introduction. (Game of "How do you do, Mr. Cub?"). (Time 5 mins.).

All the crew, with Jim Hawkins, explore the “His-paniola”. A model of a schooner should be shown to them or failing a model, a picture should be shown so that all know where everything is. All Crew draw a picture of the ship. (Time 10 mins.).

With everyone aware of his job and knowing the layout of the ship the crew weigh anchor and for this the Captain calls “All Hands to the capstan”. The Crew march round in a circle, working the capstan and singing: –

“Fifteen men on a dead man’s chest,
Yo ho ho, and a bottle of rum.
Drink and the Devil had done for the rest,
Yo ho ho, and a bottle of rum”. (Time 3 mins.).

During the voyage various members of the Crew fall overboard in the rough seas and it is necessary to “man the lifeboats” and, of course, as the ship changes tack the booms swing across the deck. (Play “Boom Swing”). (Time 5 mins.).

Having weathered the storms and in peaceful waters again Long John Silver comes on deck with the barrel of apples. The strings with apples attached are hung across the deck and the game is played as a relay. Players may take the apple off the string as soon as they have secured a bite. (Time 5 mins.).

Crew “stand easy” to eat apples. (Time 5 mins.).

Part 3. *The Island.*

Captain divides the crew into two parties and they prepare for going ashore. The buccaneers leave first, led by Long John Silver. They move in file formation with a rowing action, singing “Fifteen Men . . .”, and make towards the part of the park which has already been chosen as the island. Whilst the buccaneers are making for land the Captain describes to the loyal members of his crew the fight which he knows will take place with the buccaneers. Long John Silver describes the buccaneer’s part in the game whilst the loyal crew members are making their way ashore. As soon as both parties are on the island the game can start. (Time 10 mins.).

Part 4. *The Fight and Finding the Treasure.*

Whilst receiving their instructions the two parties are also issued with “wool lives” which are used in the normal way. Care should be taken that arrangements are made for those who lose their “lives” to have them replaced by the leader of their party. Two sets of maps have been drawn on distinctive cards and cut into small pieces, and these pieces are spread about the island. If the maps are prepared carefully, part of the instructions, which should include compass work, can appear on each piece and it will therefore be impossible to find the treasure until the maps are complete. The game consists of a race between the two parties to complete their maps and thus find the treasure. The game finishes when the treasure is found. (Time 20 mins.).

The crew is amalgamated and the Meeting ends with all sitting whilst buns are produced and eaten, Long John Silver meanwhile relating sea-faring yarns suitable for Cubs. (Time 10 mins.).

4. A Visit to the Tower of London.

Type: Historical and Make-Believe Visit.

Site: Outdoors.

Properties: Packets of “Spangles” or Fruit Drops, equipment for games, blocks of wood for balancing.

Old Wolves and other Helpers: Constable, Officers of the Tower and Beefeaters. Sixers and Sixes : Sight-seers and visitors.



Details:

Pack assembles at pre-arranged venue and Sixes become families. All dress for the outing. N.B. – Most Old Wolves do not appear until the Pack reaches the Tower. (Time 10 mins.).

Travel by bus to Tower Bridge. Visitors form crocodile and double round the area making suitable bus noises and stopping occasionally at bus stops, traffic lights, etc. (Time 5 mins.).

Enter the Tower by crossing the drawbridge (plank walk) and visitors are met by the Constable and his officers. Constable is obviously perturbed as he has just lost most of the Crown Jewels. He shows the visitors what they are like and asks everyone to hunt for them. He announces that he is prepared to give a reward to the family who brings him the most jewels. (Jewels consist of Spangles or other wrapped sweets and are used as rewards.) (Time 10 mins.).

The jewels having been safely restored the Constable posts sentries to guard them. Here the visitors become guardsmen and march up and down carrying blocks of wood on their heads as bearskins. (The guardsman's spell of duty is until he has completed the¹ test and this is best done as a relay game.) (Time 5 mins.).

This task completed the visitors go to Tower Hill to take part in some of the old London Street Games, singing as they go "London's Burning". According to the time available some of the following London Street Games should be played, bearing in mind that the total time taken should not exceed 20 mins.

Hop Scotch: either variety (introducing hopping).

Tip-cat: Two 18" circles are chalked on the ground about 36" apart. In one of them is placed the "cat", which is a 5" length of dowelling tapered at each end. The striker is armed with a stick the shape and size of a mallet handle and "tips" the cat into the air by striking one end. Whilst it is still spinning he strikes it again, trying to hit it as far as he can. The fielders

recover the cat as quickly as possible and return it to its original circle. Meanwhile the striker scores “runs” by striking the circles with his stick alternately. The striker is “out” when the cat is caught by a fielder or if he fails to hit it after three tries. Players become strikers in rotation.

Kick Can Copper: A circle is chalked on the ground in which is placed an old treacle tin with the lid on. The first player “He” faces the umpire who starts the game by kicking the tin as far as he can. “He” turns about and recovers the tin as fast as he can and runs *backwards* to the circle. Meanwhile all others scatter and hide. “He” then tries to spot anyone in hiding and on doing so calls out his name and shouts “Kick Can Copper One Two Three”, tapping the can with his foot as he does so. If he is right the player spotted becomes “He” and the game recommences with the first player kicking the tin in the same direction as before. Any player can at any time, if he sees the opportunity, rush out of hiding and kick the tin so long as it goes in the same direction, whereupon “He” must recover it as before and the game continues.

Widdey: This game is still played under different names in various parts of the country. Area of play is defined (usually the whole street). One player commences by chasing another until he touches him. The player touched then joins hands with the first and together they chase a third. When caught he too joins hands and the three of them continue chasing. Players who are “caught” attach themselves to the player who caught them, who may be at either end of the line. The object of the game is to catch everybody and when all are caught the game automatically stops. Should the line “break” at any time all players scatter and must be re-caught, the original first player starting all over again.

After the games the visitors are invited to join the Constable at tea in the Tower, (Buns and tea or lemonade is provided). During tea the Constable relates the stories of some of the famous people in history who have been imprisoned in the Tower – Sir Walter Raleigh, Guy Fawkes, Lady Jane Grey, etc., ending by describing the Ceremony of the Keys. (Time 15 minutes including collecting tea).

Each family is now given five minutes to prepare to re-enact the Ceremony of the Keys, after which they demonstrate in turn to the Constable who judges the best, giving extra points for costumes. (Total time 15 mins.).

The visitors have come to the end of their stay and after taking leave of the Constable by shaking him by the hand (left handshake – “the bravest of the brave shake with the left hand”) they recross the drawbridge and catch a bus to take them home. (Time 5 mins.).

SOME FURTHER PROGRAMME SUGGESTIONS

A great deal of the enjoyment of a Special Pack Meeting from the Old Wolves point of view is the planning of the details and so below are given a few suggestions with some ideas for practical activities which could be incorporated. Ask the other Old Wolves to join you round the fire at home one evening and you will derive great pleasure from planning the programme.

Topical Themes.

Olympic Games: Potted Sports; Balancing Relays; Discus Throwing (sheets of paper); Tossing the Caber (match sticks); Furlong Race (length of competitors hair); 200 metres (flipping tiddly-winks 200 times); Skipping; National Songs accompanying presentation of medals.

All Hallows’ Eve: Turnip Masks; Treasure Hunt (for paper cut-outs of witches hats); Apple Bobbing¹; Stories of Saints; Broom Stick Race (Highway Code).

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Harvest Time: Potato Models; Flower Show (Cubs' own plants); Gleaning Race (Transferring peas with drinking straw); Hay Tossing (Ball Throwing); Threshing (Skipping-); Treasure Hunt (Clues: leaves of trees).

Historical Themes.

Fall of the Bastille (14th July): Guillotine Yell; Knitting Race (Tent pegs and sisal); Yarn about Escape from "Man in Iron Mask"; Man Hunt for Scarlet Pimpernel.

The 45 Rebellion: Celebrations when fugitive Prince arrives at local Manor: Competitions run by Lord of Manor (Star Tests): Hide from Roundheads (Climbing or game of "I See You"); Message Carrying; Periwigs (Balancing); Songs – "Over the Sea to Skye", "Will Ye No Come Back Again".

Establishment of the Hudson Bay Company: Sail to Canada (Ships in a Fog), (Compass Directions); Establishment of Trading Post; Meet Indians; (Beads for Bartering); Trek into Interior (Sled Race); Indian Chief teaches making of Head Dresses; Crossing Crevasses (Plank Walking); Messages to Post for more Supplies (Signalling); Camp Fire; Yarn by Indian Chief.

Legendary Themes.

Knights of the Round Table: Excalibur in Stone (Tug of War); Tournaments and Displays of Prowess (Star Tests); Chivalry (Good Turns, also Games involving Rescues); Round Table (Games with Compass Card) ; King Arthur describes Investiture of a Knight (Serious Yarn).

Robin Hood: Building Hides; Archery (Paper Darts); Horsemanship (Horses and Riders Race); Robin Hood's Call (Yell); Fight with Little John (Plank Walking and Rolled Newspaper Fight); Secret Messages (Codes and Signalling); Gold Stealing (Sleeping Pirate); Receives Pardon; Robin Hood relates adventures; Feasting (Buns and Lemonade).

A Pantomime – Jack and the Beanstalk: Drives Cows to Market (Cubs' Wheel Barrow Race); Planting Race (Beans in Circle); Giant Strides (Stepping Stones) ; Chase by Giant (Tig); Finding Way Home (Compass and Highway Code); Transferring Gold to Mother (Ball Throwing); Bean Stalk Competition (Longest Length of Convolvulus.)

Literary Themes.

Robinson Crusoe: Ship Wreck; Make Shelters; Hunting Man Friday (Trail with paper foot prints); Making Boats; Trip to Wreck (Compass); Hauling Flotsam ashore (Knotting); Edible Fruits (Tree Recognition).

Just So Stories – "How the Alphabet was Made": (The story is best related, as the programme proceeds, by two Old Wolves disguised as Daddy and Taffy). Activities in regard to making the letters can include drawing, acting, signalling, and Cubs forming letters.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin: The luring of the rats (Grandmother's footsteps or "Queenie"). This latter game is played by leader standing with back to Pack; he throws tennis ball over shoulder, counts three and then turns round and tries to spot who caught the ball. If the guess is correct the rat is caught. Piper claims reward from Mayor. Piper then lures children away (Follow my leader); (Plank walking, balancing things on head, crossing river by stepping stones); rescues drowning children (Knotting); Entices them by throwing oranges (balls) to them; Tells yarns; Signal message of encouragement; Mayor brings money to pay the piper; Everyone joins in singsong.

Make-Believe Visits:

A Visit to the Circus: Each Six responsible for an act and dress accordingly; Performing sealions (ball catching); Acrobats (somersault and leap-frog); Liberty Horses (balancing); Clowns

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(any or all Tests!); Displays of Horsemanship (Horses and Riders); Tight-rope (plank-walking); Parade of performers and animals.

Wrecked on a Desert Island: Make shelters (Lairs); Identify edible foods (Tree and bird recognition); Hunt for eggs of strange bird (Trail of suitable signs); Collection of fuel for fire (Old Wolves make tea); Collecting coconuts (Ball catching relay); Sight ship (Signalling).

A Day in Camp: This requires some previous preparation of equipment. A tent for each Six is provided. Sixes erect a flagpole each (Spare tent pole); Inspection; Flag-up (Sixes can make own flag and emblem); Hunt for lost Cub (Trail); Preparing lunch (Cook potatoes in jackets in fire prepared by helpers); Camp Games (Rounders, Camp Cricket); Games Field reached by crossing stream (Plank); Camp Fire (Singsong and yarn).

Futuristic Themes:

A Trip to Mars: Pack in two parts: Part 1. by Space Ship to Mars; Make "Space Suits" (Head-dress adequate); Make Space Ship. Part 2. are Martians, radio controlled and all wear antenna; Build a control tower; Earthmen arrive and meet Martians (How do you do?) Demonstration of prowess by Earthmen (Fast relay race); Demonstration of blind flying by Martians (Blindfold relay game); Competitions (Star Tests, Athletics, etc.); Art Exhibition (Both parties make articles portraying art in own land – match stick figures, etc.).

Research Scientists: All wear Space Suits; Messages sent to Moon (A rope with a few large articles attached hauled slowly into upstairs window or tree and scientists remember the message (Kim's Game); Projectile Research (Make balsa wood gliders and compete for greatest flying distance); Trajectory Research (Ball throwing); Erect wireless installations (Aerials made from joining knotting ropes); Preparation to visit another planet; Build Space Ships; Practice explanations to planets' inhabitants (Acting games); Finale and space ships depart.

The Flying Saucer: Make "saucer" (mark out, etc.); Load Stores (Six boxes with appropriate gear); Go aboard (Walk plank); Observes (Drawing game using rising sun, full moon, clouds, Saturn's ring, etc. as the objects); Message sending by radar (Mirror at end of room reflects signals); Put out trailing aerials (Knotting ropes – longest and straightest).

Purely Imaginary Themes:

World Tour on a Magic Carpet: Wizards or Magicians; Invent and practice "dance" which sets carpet in motion; Visits to India (Play Polo); America (Baseball); Switzerland (Climbing – knotting ropes); France (Dancing – "Hoki-koki"); Australia (Prospecting and "Waltzing Matilda"); Japan (Make models).

Nonsense Land: Utter nonsense, stuff and nonsense, or plain nonsense, choose which you will! Dried pea hunt blindfold (Blindfolds worn round mouth and sweets used instead of peas!); Go fishing (Knot ropes into lines and attach things to be caught – speed and originality test); Sending telegrams (Signalling "opposites" – useful code); "Shaggy Dog" type of yarn; Shopping (Set up stalls and shopkeepers bargain with purchasers for higher prices and pay the purchasers when goods are sold).

Earth, Fire, and Water: Den becomes factory where the natural phenomena of the world are produced. Boreas the Wind trains Weather Cocks (Compass directions); Thor, God of Thunder, teaches lightning to strike (Tig); God of Rain starts storm (Relay race carrying mugs of water); Sol, the Sun God teaches time-telling; God of Fire teaches Fire Dance round imitation fire made with electric torches; The Changing Seasons (Dressing up Relay Race); Yarn by Father Neptune.

CONCLUSION

It will be realised that in a book of this size only a few of the endless possibilities for Special Pack Meeting themes can be mentioned. There are many more waiting to be planned and if, as may well be the case, thoughts are already running through your head which conjure up the vision of your Cubs enjoying the excitement and romance of a Meeting based on a hitherto unknown theme, thoughts based upon a book you have been reading, a game you have played with the Cubs, or a film you have seen, write them down NOW, think over your ideas during the coming weeks, discuss the matter with your Old Wolves, develop the scheme and adapt it until it emerges as a complete programme. In this way you will find absolute success with Special Pack Meetings. Ideas copied from books, good as they may be, are rarely so successful as those you have invented yourself and, after all, you know your Cubs' interests and capabilities far better than can any author.

Many Old Wolves who have introduced Special Pack Meetings to their programmes have been surprised and pleased with the effect they have had on their Packs and in consequence they have been tempted to introduce these events more often. Beware of falling into this error; Cub training depends for its success upon having its basis in Kipling's Jungle and to remove this or even to reduce its use to any extent to turn the Pack into a small boys' make-believe club with little purpose deeper than enjoyment, thus betraying Cubbing.

In spite of this warning, there are one or two occasions when the introduction of an extra special Pack Meeting is justified and they are well worth considering. One of these occasions is when you invite the Pack "down the street" to visit you for an evening. The additional numbers and the augmented staff frequently make a special Meeting a double success. Besides this, it will be good for you and all your Old Wolves to get together with those from next door to plan something for your mutual benefit. Again, as a variation during a Parents' Evening, you might consider letting the Pack put on a pageant or similar performance instead of the usual display of a normal Pack programme. Some introduction for the parents' benefit will be necessary and perhaps it is excusable to break the rules and repeat a particularly successful theme.

The Special Pack Meeting idea has been tried on a District basis but never with much success. The organisation needed to handle a hundred Cubs under Special Pack Meeting conditions and to ensure that everyone has an active part to play all the time is not worth the work involved. You can be assured that the enjoyment each individual Cub will receive will not be so great as when his own Pack holds such a Meeting.

Before you close this book and perhaps dismiss Special Pack Meetings from your mind for the time being just think of your own Cubs. How many are there? Twenty? Thirty? Just a nice number for the crew of a ship or Robin Hood's Merry Men! Make up your mind that once every three or four months in future you are going¹ to transport them into the world of make-believe, beyond the plain wooden walls of the Den, beyond the trees and hedgerows which surround the part, into the land you and the Old Wolves will create for them and where excitement will run high, enjoyment will be intense, and the training they have received as a Pack will stand them in good stead.

You are going to hold Special Pack Meetings!