

Tace Morgan won the Travel Scholarship in 2013. She is currently studying Mechanical Engineering at Newcastle University. Tace was a London Ambassador helping people in Trafalgar Square during the 2012 Olympics.

The generous award of the Quondam Travel Scholarship enabled me to have the most exciting and varied summer of my life. My travels were divided into two different but related events. The first was International Rover Week at the International Scout Centre at Kandersteg in Switzerland and then I attended the 14th World Scout Moot a little north of Ottawa in Canada.

I arrived at Kandersteg on the 14th July, the previous week had been hectic preparing for the trip and also attending my DofE Gold Award Presentation at St James's Palace.

At the presentation I spoke with Prince Edward. During the first day at Kandersteg over 30 participants from 21 different countries arrived and we spent the day preparing camp and getting to know each other. With so many participants from all around the world and with varying abilities to speak English it was interesting to learn how best to communicate and how to explain games, especially to participants who could not speak any English.

For the 10 days we were together we did activities such as hiking, swimming, river tubing and climbing. The highlight of the time for me was a 2 day hike over the L6tschen Pass, where we hiked up the Gasterntal valley and then stayed in a mountain hut. The second day we then climbed over the Glacier and down in to the L6tschental Valley. The pass is over 3000m high and has spectacular views of the Balmhorn and Hockenhorn Mountains. This trip as well as challenging us physically also gave us time to get to know each other really well and to admire the impressive scenery. Also traversing the glacier with ice axes and crampons was an exciting experience.

As well as adventurous activities the Roverweek programme also allowed time for more intellectual and thoughtful activities, such as sharing cultures. We had an International evening where we could share traditions from our different cultures not only with the other participants but also with the guests at the Scout centre. We also spent time learning about the Messengers of Peace, which is a World Scout Committee initiative designed to promote and recognize service projects that contribute to world peace. These projects may only be local community projects but by sharing them through social media the initiative lets Scouts from around the world share their experiences and inspire fellow Scouts to undertake similar projects in their own communities. The hope is that by working together it will hopefully lead to a more peaceful world. We had time to share our messengers of peace projects and also plan further projects together.

1st August

After a few days away from the Centre I returned for the 1st August. This is Swiss National Day and the Centre wanted to have a special celebration as it was their 90th Anniversary. For this event I was working as a member of the Centre Staff for the day. We gathered at 5am and had to be at the gondola lift to Oechinensee by 6am. Once at this lake high above Kandersteg we prepared and served breakfast for the 1500 Scouts who walked up to the lake. At around 8am as the sun rose over the mountain we had a Scouting Sunrise Ceremony and renewed our Scouting Promises. We then went back to the village to organise a day of activities close to the village centre. At 5pm all the Scouts formed up and paraded with flags and bands through the village and back to the Centre. The Staff then had to prepare a barbeque for all the 2,000 Scouts. I was acting as the greeter, organising when each contingent could come to get their food. We eventually finished at about 11 pm so it was a long but really enjoyable day.

The 14th World Scout Moot in Canada

This was a gathering of 2000 Scouts and Guides aged between 18 and 25. The participants were from over 80 countries and from all different cultures. The UK had a contingent of over 200 participants which was the second largest contingent after Mexico. When we arrived in Canada we spent a few days as a Contingent in Ottawa, where we went climbing and visited the Museum of Civilisations, Omega Wildlife Park and also the First Nations Island where we learnt traditional Indian songs and dances. On the 5th August we met with the other participants from around world at the Houses of Parliament in Ottawa for the Moot Opening Ceremony The Moot was opened by the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada and was followed by a parade through the city centre after which we divided into our International Patrols. My patrol had 6 participants, Daniel (Sweden), Lysanne (Canada), Daniel (Mexico), Sander (Netherlands), Paul (Australia) and me. We were to spend the next 10 days living together and undertaking all the activities together.

The Moot then started with a journey to the Awacamenj mino Base Camp. This was in a heavily wooded area but with a superb lake for boating and swimming. During the Moot we undertook activities such as Climbing, Archery and Canoeing at the campsite. The Adventure Path was organised by Shelterbox and it was interesting to see how these boxes worked in practice. We also visited Toronto. It was a fascinating City and what made it more memorable was that it was organised to coincide with A Level results day, this was because there were no reliable communications at base camp. With a time difference of 5 hours from the UK a group of us were up until 3am waiting for texts and phonecalls. After a few anxious moments the good news was that Newcastle confirmed my place for the MSc Mechanical Engineering.

The moot was in a way a giant version of Rover Week just more people and more nationalities. We had to learn to get on and to overcome the language issues and most of all to enjoy life and each other company. Although the site and amenities for the Moot were good they did underestimate how much active 18 to 25 year old can eat. We decided that we had really been sent on fat camp and most people lost weight. At the end of the Moot we moved on to Outaouais for two days of white water rafting. Arriving at the venue we were delighted to find real food and have the most delicious barbeque ever. The rafting was really exciting and it was a great way to end the trip. All that was left was the long journey home.

The memories I have from this summer are the adventures that I had and the wonderful places I saw but I believe the lasting reminder will be the many new friends from around the world with whom I had the privilege to share these events and I would like to thank the Quondam Committee for giving me this opportunity.