39th Paisley Brownies

Report on Year September 2024 to June 2025

We welcomed the girls back from their summer break, and were joined by three Rainbows moving up to join us. We lost our Unit Helper Lucy, and our two Young Leaders, Beth and Paige, but we were joined by Donna Skalley, former Rainbow Leader, steadily getting back on her road to recovery following being so poorly. .

We started off a Cookie Challenge Badge, alongside our Skills Builders, and introducing the Baking Interest Badge.



We planned lots of games and activities based on a Cookies theme. I created a Cookie Cook Book for the girls, and we've had great fun receiving photos in from home where the girls, their mums and grans, have spent time making cookies of all sorts.

For those who don't have that home support, we prepared cookie doughs and using the large oven in our kitchen, we made shortbread, custard creams, stamped cookies and afternoon tea biscuits.

The week after, we decorated shaped biscuits on different themes with icings, fondants, jams and sprinkles, and the girls took away their masterpieces (some even making it home before being consumed).

We learned about Girl Scout Cookie in America, their history and how the cookies are sold to raise funds for good causes. So we brought in cookies and biscuits to be shared with the Foodbank.

We made Cookie Monsters for Halloween, with cookie eyes and poppy cookies for Remembrance Day.



At the end of our endeavours, the girls were all awarded with the Cookie Challenge Badge and the Baking Interest Badge.

Our new Brownies started on their Pre-Promise activities, with their Brownie Promise being made towards the end of October.

Faith, Emilia and Peaches also made their Brownie Promise, and we were joined by Myra Mckellar, Karin Grant our Visiting Elders, and Sonia Blakesley, our Minister, who helped to present the badges.

The Brownies and their families were invited to the Rededication Service on 6th October at St Mark's Oldhall.



Some Leaders and Brownies took part in Paisley Halloween, where we were particular impressed with this Brown Owl!



Our next Challenge leading up to Christmas was aptly named “A Gonk is not Just for Christmas”. Every week we were joined by a number of Gonks, which multiplied as we got nearer to Christmas.

Firstly, we learned that Gonks originate from Scandinavia, so we had to find out where that was. Then we learned of the habits of Gonks, which can be kind to famililes over the winter months if they are welcomed in – or can play tricks on the family if not.





Our Gonk crafts inlcuding cookies (what else!), bag charms, gonk macrame and tree decorations.

We also made some decorations for the Treemendous Christmas tree entry at St Mark’s Church.



We had a good attendance at the PACE pantomime, where Gianna ended on stage helping re-tell the plot, and most joined in with the final scene (and I caught a sweetie). We also enjoyed our visit to Moana 2 at the ODEON.

At the end of the year we said congratulations and goodbye to Connie, who received her Gold Award, having achieved all six themes, and wished her well as she moved on to Guides.

On our return in January, we undertook the Past, Present and Future Challenge.

This was a brilliant badge in the lead up to Thinking Day, as we were able to incorporate Brownie activities from the 1970s.





Snowy Owl (Liz Forrest) from Sherwood Greenlaw came to visit us. We looked at uniforms from the past, and Liz told us about being a Brownie in the 1970s, inspection, and things we had in our pockets. We linked that in with a UMA about our Pocket Inspection, and what we might have used some of the items for. That inspired discussion about what we should carry with us, and what that might look like in the future.

We planted tete a tete daffodils as a Random Act of Kindness, and these were dispersed to folks in the community, or left on doorsteps with instructions for care.



We had a crazy night of 1970s style dancercise, where the girls dressed up a la “Flashdance”, complete with leotards, ankle warmers and head bands, where our Snowy Owl (Claire) took us through our steps for various anthems of the 1970s, including the Birdie Dance, a Conga, the Slosh and Electric Slide.



Part of our challenge was also to look at uniforms, so we compared what we used to wear in the 1970s, what we have today, and what we think the unfiorm of 2050 will look like. Always up for a challenge, Liz Morgan kindly knitted us Brownie dolls in uniform.

We had a fabulous debate as part of the Paliament Badge, about whether GirlGuiding should still be a girls only organisation, or whether we should be like Scouting and admit both boys and girls. Interesting thoughts were shared, and we also used this to kick off the Speaking Out Interest Badge. We had brilliant presentations from the girls to present their views by way of acrostic poems, songs, sketches and even a "Question Time" panel.

Three of the Brownies accompanied Leaders to the Renfrewshire County Thinking Day Event at Greenock Town Hall, where we undertook activties and crafts from countries representing the five World Centres (Pax Lodge, Our Chalet, Our Cabana, Sangam and Kusafiri).



Not only did the girls see that they were part of a uniformed organisation in Renfrewshire, but that they were part of a World Organisation.

They came home laden with the crafts that they had undertaken, including sand art from India, a Swiss hat, peace doves, paper weaving and Mexican face masks.



The girls also entertained everyone on the train to an importu concert on the way home, making up their own verses to "This Little Guiding Light of Mine".

During the day we also paid a visit to Greenock Fire Brigade Museum, which had opened especially for the event. We were treated to an amazing exhibition of fire appliances and gear, and heard the story of Wallace the Fire Dog.

A few of the girls also joined in theThinking Day Service at St Mark's.

The girls worked really hard over the weeks, and as well as the Parliament Badge, and the Past, Present and Future Challenge, they all completed the Speaking Out Interest Badge, Influence Skills Builder, and the Brownies Take Action Theme Badge.

We had craft nights dedicated to Mothers Day and Easter, always a good occasion to tackle some activities. (Also an opportunity to invite our Visiting Elders along to help.)



For “Mothers Day” we based our activities around “Care Bears”, creating cute bear shaped cards, colouring pictures and doing wordsearches. We also created three dimensional hearts.



Our Easter activties were based on the Easter Bunny, and Irene Boyd our Visiting Elder, came along to help the girls create jumping bunnies. We also created our own collages of rabbits sitting by a fence, adorned with spring flowers. And in honour of the Easter Bunny, we created rabbit shaped boxes filled with chocolate eggs.

Returing after the Easter Holiday, we started on the Aviation Badge, in conjunction with the current GirlGuiding Scotland Outdoor Challenge Badge, which also has an aviation theme ~”Up in the Air”. VE80 also came along, so we weaved all these themes together so that when the Rainbows came to visit us on 6 May, we played parachute games, created Spitfire bookmarks, and the Brownies were taken back to WWII and did some code breaking.

We followed up by an evening of kite making and paper airplane construction, and we flew our kites on the lawn at St Marks, making the best of the wonderful weather we have had.

We then made parachutes to safely convey our precious cargo of a Crème Egg down from the balcony at St Marks, and all landed safely.

Two of our Brownies, Ava and Kirsty, ran a Harry Potter themed evening as part of their Gold Award. The Sorting Hat sorted girls into their houses, and the girls organised activties and games based on Hogwarts. The Brownies really enjoyed their evening, and Ava and Kirsty really excelled themselves with their preparation and carrying this out. Well done girls (leaders of the future!).

We had a weekend Pack Holiday at South Newton, where most of the girls either came and stayed over or joined us during the day. Jen Morgan, our other Visiting Elder, came along on Saturday to join us for lunch. Jen also took the girls down into the field to play rounders, and to help supervise on the play equipment which is now available on the site.

This was our first Pack Holiday in two years, so only two girls had stayed away with us before, and for most of the girls this was their first time away. And they did brilliantly.

With a theme of Taylor Swift, we had lots of scope for the weekend. On Friday evening we had campfires, toasted marshmallows and had singing in the newly created Fairy Garden. Saturday morning saw the girls baking in the kitchen with me, creating lots of

goodies for our party on Saturday night, while Claire, Donna and Cheryl supervised the creation of bracelets and a host of other crafts.

Saturday afternoon we made doughnut shaped soap, to be put into a box we made on Sunday. Also on Sunday we created frames and bookmarks with positive words, all things Taylor Swift is known for embracing.



The highlight of the weekend was the party on Saturday night, where the girls decorated their own cowboy hats, learned line dancing routines from Claire, and besplended themselves with face jewels, glittered up their nails, and slipped into their party attire.

We were also treated to a programme of entertainment, dance routines, singing, jokes and general mayhem. We have a very talented group of Brownies, and they were a joy to take away. I suspect most of them (like the leaders) got home and immediately went to sleep!

A few Brownies accompanied leader to Greenock on 24 May for a Festival of Friendship Taylor Swift party organised by GirlGuiding Greenock Division. Like Thinking Day, we travelled by train from Paisley to Greenock and back, giving the girls experience of handing over their own tickets to the conductors.

As we came to the end of the session, we had an Awards Ceremony, where Sonia Blackesly presented the girls with their Aviation Badge, and the Up In the Air Challenge Badge. We presented 5 Bronze Awards, 5 Silver Awards and 5 Gold Awards. We say goodbye to Ava and Kirsty, but look forward to being joined by 5 Rainbows moving up to join us.

All in all a busy but successful year, and we now have a well earned rest until we start again in September.

Sheena Tonner, Brownie Leader