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Epsom scouts on Korean jamboree

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Scouts from across Surrey, including Epsom and Ewell, arrived in South Korea for the 25th World Scout Jamboree being held from August 1st – 12th 2023. The Jamboree is a two-week event holding significant historical value as the first Jamboree dates back to 1920. Scouts from 150 countries across the globe come together once every four years to promote unity, community and togetherness.

This year the event is hosted in Gunsan-si, South Korea and it is the second time in the country as the 17th World Scout Jamboree was held in the country back in 1991. Festivities kicked off from August 1st and will end on the 12th. During this time, young scouts will bask in skill development, learn new skills, experience new cultures, and make international bonds with fellow scouts who may not share the same mother tongue but hold the same values as one another.

Those heading to the Jamboree will also have the amazing opportunity of exploring Seoul for three days and also embark on the popular Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) tour – where they will see the original demarcation line between North Korea and South Korea.

Scouts from Surrey and 5,000 other members across the UK, have joined over 40,000 scouts from almost every country in the world this year. Many Scouts spend years looking forward to this event as only Scouts ages 14- to 17 are eligible to apply for the Jamboree. Participants are selected two years ahead of the event so the Scouts can focus on their fundraising skills to fund their trip. Adults are also entitled to join the Jamboree as scoutmasters or event staff.

The Jamboree is a one in a lifetime opportunity for young scouts. These young people do not only gain practical skills but also make bonds for life, connected by one thing – Scouting.

As has been widely reported in the national media a heat-wave disrupted the Jamboree but still Epsom Scouts feel positive about the experience:

Ben, from **Epsom & Ewell district**, said: “Although the event was cut short I feel incredibly lucky that I got to experience a camp of that scale with that amount of diversity and culture and even though I am gutted the Jamboree experience is over I think the skills, memories and friends we have all gained from this once of a lifetime experience will stay with us forever.”

Chief Scout **Bear Grylls** said: *‘Scouts from all corners of the UK are travelling over 12 hours to South Korea for the 25th World Scouts Jamboree. This year five thousand talented young people from the UK and 40 thousand from over 150 countries across the globe will come together to take on new adventures, make lifelong friendships and experience this once in a life time opportunity. This year is extra special, as it will mark the 100th anniversary of the Korean Scout, a milestone we will all be able to celebrate together at the 2023 World Jamboree.*

‘The theme of the Jamboree this year is to “Draw your Dream”, representing our willingness to accept young people’s ideas and opinions, and create an opportunity for them to make their Jamboree dreams come true.

I’m so proud to be a part of a movement that puts young people first by helping almost half a million people develop skills for life.”

Neil Wibberley

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