

An extract from Fred Reeves' book *A Very Ordinary Troop*.

## WHAT ARE SCOUTERS?

Scouters are men and women who spend at least one evening a week entertaining, encouraging and educating other people's children – and the rest of the week planning it.

They are people who believe children to be honest, loyal, to have a desire to progress and to have a sense of adventure. Sometimes they are disappointed.

They are people whom *children* believe to be slightly odd, full of hare-brained schemes and to have a constant struggle to stop themselves from saying "When I was your age.....". Frequently the children are right.

They are expected to have their own car to run children to swimming galas, sports days, camps and competitions; and themselves to Group meetings, District meetings and sundry other meetings – and to have their own private petrol pump.

They are expected to have a telephone at home supplied free by British Telecom, a mobile phone with a permanently topped-up charge and fee, or a pocket full of coins for public call boxes.

They must also work for a company which understands that fifty per cent of all incoming calls will be about Scouting.

They must be expected to be called away from a cold supper, a warm bed or a hot bath to be asked "Mum wants to know where my scarf is I left at Troop meeting?" or "We've decided to go to camp tomorrow. Can we have the gear *now* please."

They are people who finally realise that the hardest part of running a Scout Group is to get parents to take an interest in their childrens' activities.

They are people who regularly cry "I've had enough. I'm packing it in. Anyone would think I get paid for the job". Then stay on – for the next 15 years.

Fancy joining us. It's fun!