

## Scouting around in Claremont for 100 years,

*"On my honour I promise that I will do my best  
To do my duty to God, and my Country;  
To help other people at all times;  
To obey the Scout Law." Scout Promise*



Scouts have made this promise and kept it for a 100 years now. Scouting started on 1 August 1907 with a camp run by Robert Baden-Powell on Brownsea Island. On the 3 March 1908, the 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont Scout group was born. The first Scoutmaster was George French, a headmaster of Claremont Primary ( a French School). He was the man behind the birth of the oldest Scout group in the country, 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont Scouts. This is only months

after the original scouting group began in Brownsea Island, which makes 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont Scouts not only one of the oldest in Africa, but one of the oldest Scout groups in the world. The biggest news is that next year 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont Scout group celebrates its centenary and wish to gather all previous 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont Scouts for a big celebration together on Saturday 1 March 2008.

Ian Webb who spoke to Southern Chronicle has held the fort since he himself was a Scout 17 years ago. Ian's father Jonathan Webb was also a Scout. Mr. Webb was also 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont Scout's first editor of their magazine called Smoke Signals. The first edition was printed in 1958, which was 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and 50 years later Mr. Webb's son Ian is editor of Smoke Signals announcing the Centenary of Scouting. Last week, Ian's son who is hardly a few weeks old; paid his first visit to the group. Though he might not remember it or didn't even know he was there, he will see his picture one day and see his little Scouting scarf he was given by the 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont Scout group. His father has no doubt that he will follow in his footsteps.

Ian told the Southern Chronicle that a third of Scouts are from single parent homes. Single mothers have often found it very useful for themselves and their boys as scouting is largely focused on leadership training, outdoor adventures and community service. As Southern Chronicle was speaking to Ian several boys were setting off on a sailing course. Scouts receive badges for each course successfully completed.

Every four years there is an international Jamboree for all scouts across the globe where they swap and collect badges. About 40 000 Scouts attend the Jamboree. Ian said that he would recommend parents to bring their children to join scouts as they teach them a lot of necessary survival skills such as first aid, training in them in team work, and all this while they are having lots of fun. Scout groups are no longer just limited to boys, doors have been open to girls for 10 years now. There are two groups for Scouts to cater for different age groups: 8 years to 11 years (Cubs) and 12 years to 18 years (Scouts). "We unfortunately do not have a Cubs group in 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont, we need a leader." Webb continued, "Girls are welcome, although we don't have any girls in our group at this stage. We have had girls before." Ian appealed to all previous 1<sup>st</sup> Claremont Scouts to please contact their office as 100 year celebrations only happens once in a lifetime. Southern Chronicle wishes them all the best for their exciting plans and preparations for their centenary celebrations.

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