

My Jamboree Experience

In July and August 2019 I went on the 24th World Scout Jamboree which was held in West Virginia. I was there with 45,000 other scouts from around the world and I went as a member of UK Unit 18 (Norfolk & Suffolk), with 35 other Scouts. During the Jamboree I did many activities, academic and physical. I met many different people from many different cultures, age and backgrounds. I got to see so many sights and see so many important people. It is an experience that I will never forget.

In New York I stayed at Hofstra University. Then we went into New York with my unit in an American school bus ! While I was in New York I went sightseeing and saw Grand Central Station. We went up the Empire State Building and after that we went to Times Square. One of the last things I did in New York was go on a boat trip to see the Statue of Liberty. Afterwards we hailed a yellow taxi cab and took a short ride!!

On the campsite in West Virginia, the opening ceremony was an amazing experience I had so much fun singing and dancing all night! There were fireworks and an amazing illuminated drone show! There was also a unity show about all the scouts of all different religions and from all around the world being together at the Jamboree. Then there was some Broadway singers and a wonderful sing along. Then on Sunday I went to Scouts Own. It was like a religious get together for all religions, we even got to break a world record for most people making the hand sign for holding a dove! The closing ceremony of the Jamboree was my personal favourite, there was just so much singing and dancing and the fireworks and the atmosphere of people was indescribable – you had to be there!

On the Jamboree I did many physical activities (besides all the walking). These activities included a water obstacle course, scuba diving, axe throwing, knife throwing, shooting a flintlock rifle, VR rifle and pistol shooting, learning about hunting at the Joe Craftsmen Centre and hiking up Mount Jack which is 1500 feet above sea level. There were also many educational activities like a STEM

tent, a backstage tour of the main stage, a disability tent (education about disabilities), leadership course, Sustainability Treehouse (education about environmental issues), World Point (a cultural display by each of the 152 participating countries) and the global development village.

There were so many people to meet from different cultures. This was encouraged by cultural day when we visited different countries camps and tried their food and games. I went to Japan, Mexico, Taiwan, Italy, America, Switzerland, Denmark and Sweden. I ate Ramen noodles, Swiss chocolate, a Chicago hot dog and Mexican sweets. A particular favourite I tried that I have sought out at home since is Taiwanese bubble tea. I played a Swedish bucket game and an egg-and-spoon race with potatoes and did so much more! To show off the UK we played croquet and gave other Scouts cucumber sandwiches. We also had a Novus, which is a digital wristband that allowed us to record our activities and to keep in contact with people we met in the future, after the Jamboree.

After the Jamboree we went to Washington DC. In Washington we went sightseeing and we went to see Cleopatra's needle, the White House, the Washington monument and the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. Then all of the UK contingent went to a baseball game between the Baltimore Orioles and Toronto Blue Jays, and all of the UK Scouts started supporting an Orioles player called Santander who was fielding near us. At the game there was lots of singing and lots of people not understanding what was going on.

Finally we went to Canada where we stayed in a youth hostel. There we got to go swimming in a pool not a lake!! We also travelled to Montreal and went shopping as well as doing some tourist things. Then we went up the Olympic tower. Later the same day we also visited a native American reservation and made some dream catchers.

The food in Canada was so delicious! There was lots of sweetcorn and it was fresh, it was really nice! We also tried poutine, I didn't like the cheese but did like the chips and gravy.

The Jamboree was such a fun experience that I will never forget. I look forward to sharing my experiences with other Scouts and encouraging them to apply for the next Jamboree. In the future I hope to apply for the International Service Team to help with running the activities at a future Jamboree.

Thank you for your support in helping me fundraise and get there.

