

# World Scout Jamboree 2019

**By Toby Walsingham**

With the help of your donations I was able to attend the World Scout Jamboree in West Virginia this summer and I would like to say a huge thank you, over the course of the three weeks away I had the once in a lifetime experience in going to New York and exploring the famous sights such as Grand Central Station, the Empire State Building, a speed boat trip to get up close to the Statue of Liberty and of course visiting the well known movie location Times Square. Within the first day I was already moved by the events I had already experienced. Although a staggering 9-hour coach journey was waiting for us between two days the journey from New York to the Jamboree campsite itself was anything but a drag. Our hyped spirits and our continuous campfire songs kept the energy levels at a constant peak.

Although the jamboree itself is only 12 days the journey leading up to it has covered a year and a half of adventures. My peers who were coming along with me have already made an impact on my life, discussions of us going abroad for a reunion have already been discussed. These lifelong friendships just within my unit wouldn't be possible without your donations and thank you for that.

Anyway, back to the jamboree, although as we arrived it was raining but as Brits, we had a laugh and got cracking and set up our tents. The first full day on the jamboree was dedicated to exploring the site and checking out what there was to offer. Me and a group of friends scouted out the surrounding area and wandered into the Discovery Zone. The Discovery Zone had rows and rows of tents lined up filled with interesting new skills and knowledge about different countries around the world. I found the Brazilians' tent most enjoyable as they had music and amazing food to try out.

Over the course of the 12 day jamboree I had the chance in participating in activities that I had never had though I'd be able to try out such as paddle boarding, BMXing, tree top adventure (where you would soar through the trees on a zip line), rock climbing, white river rafting, black powder shooting, bouldering, leap of faith and abseiling, but the jamboree wasn't all about the amazing activities it was also all about meeting new people from across the globe.

On our subcamp our unit was camped in an area filled with different nationalities from Chile to Taiwan to Australia to America to more British to Norway to Germany. On one night we had a huge street party where everyone put out their tables and chairs and cooked food for everyone to try out. During this evening I met some incredible people who I'm glad to say are still in contact and hopefully plan on visits in the near future.

After the jamboree we headed off to the University of Maryland in Washington DC. A day out to Washington DC was thrilling. Me and a group of friends went off and saw the Washington Monument and the Air and Space Museum, stopped off at the Lincoln Memorial and took a picture at the famous White House. During the night all of the participants had a party organised by the staff

so then we could meet our fellow Brits in a good ol fashioned rave. I had the joys of meeting up with a few friends from Hertfordshire whom I met at the street party.

The next day the whole of the UK contingent all went to a game of baseball between the Toronto Blue Jays and Baltimore Orioles. Due to the home stadium being Orioles many of us were fans of the orange birds. With a checkup of the rules on Google me and my friends were having a blast, watching the players hit a ball so quick was astonishing. Luckily our team won!

After Washington we headed off to Quebec in Canada for our Ho-Ho, an organised few days hosted by the Canadian scouts to show us their way of life and any famous attractions in the area. On the first full day we headed to a museum about the natives and their beliefs which was extremely fascinating, we also went to the birthplace of the well-known Canadian meal of Poutine, a mix of chips, gravy and cheese. On the second day we headed to Montreal and took in the beautiful sights of the city by going up an Olympic tower. A breathtaking experience.

Also summed up in a few paragraphs the jamboree experience was life changing for me and I wouldn't have been able to go if it weren't for your generous donation. With new lifelong friends and amazing experiences. Thank you so much for all the support and I give my best wishes.

Many thanks.

Yours in scouting

Toby Walsingham