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18 October 2022

Final Frontiers



Dear Leaders and Supporters,

Have you ever pushed yourself to the limits of endurance, striving to achieve a goal? Well, that's exactly what two Scouts Ambassadors will do later this month when after months of training they set off to attempt '*Antarctica 2023*'.

Doctors Gareth Andrews & Richard Stephenson from the teams of The Last Great First Pty Ltd will soon commence their attempt at the longest ever unsupported ski crossing of this pristine place. They plan to ski 2,023km over 75 days, pulling 160kg sleds with all their supplies, across the last uncharted continent.

I have had the honour of meeting this dynamic duo, and their Expedition Chairman, Mark, multiple times now and am inspired by their determination, as well as their willingness to share their knowledge and motivation with members of our community. Invested as members of Scouts Australia earlier this year, Dr Stephenson, Dr Andrews and Mark Richardson demonstrate core Scouts values and attributes such as courage, resilience, empowerment, responsibility, and self-confidence - fuelled by teamwork, passion, and commitment.

In late August I visited the Snowy Mountains, where the intrepid team undertook their final training in preparation for their Antarctic challenge. At a community event in Jindabyne, they shared insights into the physical and mental strength required to complete their mission – if you missed it, the recording is [here](#).

They also invited Scouts from the local region and beyond to gain practical snowcraft skills, simulating what it takes to be a polar explorer. Scouts of various ages learnt how to erect a tent at speed to avoid frostbite, how to develop alpine mountaineering skills, and very importantly, how to cook a gourmet freeze dried meal over a portable stove in the snow!

Scouts have been part of the history of Antarctic exploration for over a hundred years. In 1921, two Scouts sailed from England with Sir Ernest Shackleton to Antarctica having been selected from around 1,700 other Scouts to represent Scouting and their country on that expedition.

Today, our Scouts can draw inspiration from the latest attempt to cross Antarctica, by undertaking their own local challenges, whilst also learning about the environment through the pair's data collection for climate science during the expedition.

I urge you to look at these [resources](#) developed by Scouts Australia for all ages to undertake activities and challenges inspired by the expedition.

You can also follow their incredible journey [here](#).



Yours in Scouting,

Neville Tomkins OAM JP
Chief Commissioner
Scouts Australia (NSW Branch)

Youth Safety in Scouting

Scouts Australia NSW is committed to operating as a youth safe organisation and implementing youth safe policies and practices in accordance with the elements of a child safe institution outlined by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse report entitled Creating Child Safe Institutions.

Remember

All suspicions, concerns or allegations about criminal matters or child protection matters should be reported directly to the Chief Commissioner, CEO, State Commissioner (Youth Protection & Issues Management) or the Manager of Safeguarding Youth, Issues Management and Research at the NSW State Service Centre. To make a report you may use the [online youth protection form](#), call 9735 9000 or email YouthProtectionTeam@nsw.scouts.com.au.

Imminent Danger

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