

Autumn 2012

Namaste Junior Friends, I am pleased to tell you that a ribbon version of your new badge will shortly be available from Gill Shepherd, 73, Springfield Road, Southwell, NG25 OBS. Email gill@shepherdathome.com for prices and posting details.



This is an exciting season here in the United Kingdom with Halloween and Guy Faulkes celebrations. In India they



have many Festivals associated with their Gods, in August there is ***Nagapanchami*** the snake festival . Snake worship is more common in pen-

insular India than in the north and in Maharashtra snake charmers go from house to house with dormant cobras in cane baskets asking for money and clothes. Women offer milk and cooked rice to the snakes and gather around to watch them spread their hoods and sway to the tune of the snake charmer's pipe—a ***pungi***, a peculiar droning wind instrument, played by professional snake catchers.

Battis Shirala a village in south Maharashtra is where this festival is celebrated. A week before the festival, young men venture out into forests to persuade snakes and cobras to come out of their snakehills. They capture them and keep them in their homes till Nagapanchami. Men from families who are trained over generations to control snakes,

perform before visitors, creating hypnotic sounds with earthen pots. The cobras stand erect and sway to these sounds. A feast of local sweets is eaten, and as the sun sets decorated bullock carts take the hooded snakes in procession to the nearby lakeside Shiva Temple where a fair with games and stalls selling toys and novelties goes on into the night.

The next day, the men take the snakes back to the forest to release them into their holes. This festival heralds the arrival of *Ganesha* the elephant God almost a month later. In our Spring edition we will be looking at Ganesh and elephants in particular.

Why not have a **"SNAKE NIGHT"** meeting and play **Giant Floor Snakes and Ladders**. This game was first published in Britain in 1892 and is based on the Hindu game of Moksha Patamu (the aim being to reach Nirvana by going up ladders of virtue and avoiding snakes of vice).

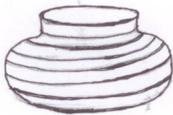
You can challenge the girls to make their own game with an A4 sheet of paper for each step. Choose a theme with a message like "Water Aid" for example, at the top of a snake a dripping tap, at the bottom of a ladder sinking wells in drought stricken areas.

The Country Code, Guide Laws, friend to animals could also be suggested to the Guides as themes.

Make a snake pencil topper by winding a pipe cleaner around the pencil to coil it. Fold over one end to form a head and glue or sew on two beads or goggle eyes and sew on a mouth. Snakes can be made more colourful by wrapping brightly coloured wool or embroidery cottons around the pipe cleaner first.



Make a snake basket or clay pot by coiling air drying clay or 'DAS'. Play dough 'worms' can also be coiled into a shape like a snake basket. Don't forget to make a lid to stop your snake from escaping!



Play 'Jumping the Snake' with a skipping rope.



2 people shake the rope and you jump over trying not to be eaten, caught or tripped up by the snake.

Make a snake ridden mud swamp dessert

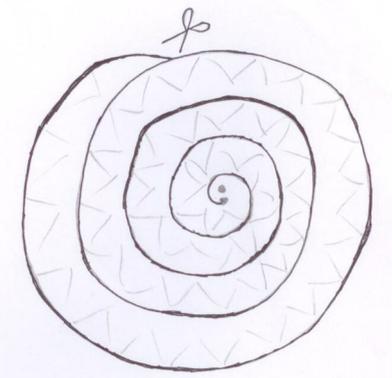
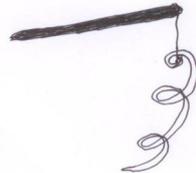
For the swamp you will need chocolate instant whip or Angel Delight, the required quantity of milk according to the packet, a large bowl and a whisk. A packet of Jelly snakes to 'hide' in the swamp when you have made it.

Or if you prefer how about snakes in the grass.

Mashing with a fork, trays of previously made and set green jellies, then hiding jelly snakes in this.

Make a bouncing snake

Take a pencil for a 'walk' and starting in the centre by the eye draw round and round until you have a coiled snake like the one below.



Colour in a pattern and then cut around from the end of his tail to his eye. Thread a length of shirring elastic through the eye and tie the end to a lollypop stick. Wave the stick to make him dance.