

C O N T E N T S

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A C T I O N .

The weather could not make up its mind whether to be sunny or foggy on the Saturday afternoon I went down to H.Q. to collect material for this edition of the WATER RAT. At the mast-head and yardarm the Scout pennant, and the Red Ensign drooped lazily but there was no laziness in the vicinity of the Clubroom. On the water and on the bank was a fleet of spanking new dinghies which were being manoeuvred far better than any Admiral could manoeuvre the Grand Fleet, but I spotted our tame photographer, Mr. Eric Turvey, and I knew the reason of it all. A quota of dinghies had arrived from the builders for distribution to the various Sea Scout Groups and Sea Rangers, and the Skipper was busy checking the gear for each boat, and allotting them to their various owners. Mr. Turvey was talking scientifically about "light", "focus" and "apertures", which Mr. Peter Burton translated into more homely phrases like "swing her round this way", "Shove her over there", "Getartofit".

On the water Mr. Bob Marrison was examining Lawrence Mustoe (Basil to his pals), Ken Armstrong, Eddie Colman and Derck Hopkins for their Oarsman's Badge, and we congratulate Basil, Ken and Eddie in successfully passing the test. At the moment of my arrival on the scene, Derek Hopkins, the Troop heavyweight, was struggling with an oar, endeavouring to scull over the stern, but it is rather a handicap when the stern is down to the gunwale, and the bow is waving about in the air. In another dinghy was young Michael Smart, and it was evident that he was getting the same fun and enjoyment out of it as his father had, a generation ago. In the dimness of the main deck, a lone member of the duty patrol was laying the table for tea, and as I left, two more members of this patrol arrived, with tins of baked beans, and I am sure that after their afternoon's activity, the gang gave these tins of baked beans a right royal welcome.

S K I P P E R ' S S C R A W L .

In the Spring the whole world undergoes a transformation and the "Leander" Group is no exception to the rule. Since Easter, all four Patrol Leaders of the Scout Troop, G.Dove, D.Brown, E.Southey and N. Fentiman, together with K.Armstrong have graduated to the Senior Troop. Here, having relinquished the cares of office, they will be able to devote more of their energies to developing their personal prowess and efficiency. The Senior Troop now consists of two Patrols, viz:- Scott, (P/L. W.Manning) and Watkins (P/L.F.Riches). The new Patrol Leaders of the Scout Troop are D.Hopkins (Beaver), E.Colman (Sea Gull), R. Quartermain (Seal) and L.Mustoe (Heron).

This re-organisation has left a few vacancies and has enabled us to welcome Colin Ford into the Scout Troop, also Colin Finch from the "Leander" Pack, and Peter Davies from the 5th Kingston Pack. Apart from the above changes in our membership we have also made further additions to our boats, as the remaining two 12ft. dinghies have now arrived. When the repairs to the small gig and "Hero" are completed, we shall have a "fleet" unequalled by any other Sea Scout Group.

We are to have a very early opportunity of showing what we can do with these increased facilities, as notice has just been received that this year's Admiralty Inspection will take place on Saturday MAY 1st! This means a very busy fortnight for us all in getting everything ship-shape in readiness.

I would remind everyone that WHITE CAPS will be worn from May 1st onwards, and as supplies are still restricted, it will be a good thing for those who have them, to look out last year's white caps and for others to obtain them before they are out of stock.

I have been asked to call attention to the Entertainment, by members of the Magic Circle at Kingston Empire on the afternoon of Sunday April 25th. The proceeds are in aid of the Royal Naval Old Comrades Association, which, as Sea Scouts, I am quite sure we shall wish to assist by all the means in our power.

HEARD IN THE FO'C'SLE.

When Dick Garnish applied to join the Troop, the Skipper told him that he could not join until he could swim. Nothing daunted, Dick learned to swim during his summer holidays, and once again applied for admission to the Troop, and was accepted. How right the Skipper's ruling had been, he very soon proved by falling overboard when going alongside the island.

Now that Mick Pratley has been demobbed, he has returned to the Troop and become a Rover.

Congratulations to Wally Godfrey, an old Leander, who was appointed Hon. Massour to the A.B.A. team versus Scotland at Wembley in January, and who also acted in a similar capacity to the Danish team in November last.

Congratulations to Chris. Nielson, (grandson of the President of the Kingston & District Asscn,) and for many years a member of 3rd Kn. Group, on his fine swimming record. In 1936 at the age of 7, he was chosen to swim against Mrs. Spanton Cooper, aged 70, during the Kingston Civic Week. Since when he has gone on winning laurels. In 1937 1st in School Team Race, and winning Surrey County Championships in 1943 and 1944. In 1945 won Surrey Cadets Championship 100 yards free style and Diving. 1947 he came first in the Catterick Camp $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, and won the Northern Command Championship Free Style $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, also was second in the British Army Championship $\frac{1}{4}$ mile. Good going, Chris!

We are very glad to hear that Mrs. Bert Biden has recovered from her fall. A broken arm is no joke!

We were honoured by a visit to the Clubroom of S/M. Jean Jacques Miramont from Le Havre. Jean is an old friend of Leanders, having met our lads at the Jamboree, and he and Maurice Buer were soon busy with their "do you remembers?".

Arthur Hall has now completed his 5 week preliminary training at Kingston Barracks, and has done well, gaining 68 out of possible 70 marks for physical training. He is now stationed at Aldershot.

I JOIN MY FIRST SHIP, by Derek Edwards.

Having completed my training, I had the good fortune to find a ship, and it is a marvellous thrill to know that at last you are going to be part of, and spend many months of a year in, a ship! When I left Paddington for Avonmouth, all I knew about her was the name "S.S.Sanoch", but I soon found plenty of other fellows on their way to join her. There were chefs, stewards, pantry boys and a deck boy, myself. I soon made friends, and when we started yarning I got quite a lot of hints about my job and the ship. She was an American Liberty Ship, built in 1944, and was a very easy one to work. I found that my duties as a deck boy would be to look after the Petty Officers' and Seamen's Mess, and that one does not start on deck work and steering, until later on. I also learned that we were to be a stand by crew, as the ship was not due to sail for a month, and I had so hoped to be off in a few days. Well, we arrived at the docks and after much searching and asking, we found her and went aboard. I almost fell down a ladder into a small dark hole which I found was to be my cabin, and had to be shared with three more fellows. I was rather "browned off" over this, and felt that my home and family were a long way away, but after telling myself that Drake and all the other big wigs in Naval history started in the same way, I proceeded to make the best of it. I was told my duties which seemed to be numerous and varied (between butler, waiter, parlour maid and scullery maid). In short, that of a general servant.

Having stowed my personal gear, I collected knife, fork, spoon, sheets, pillow cases and towels, also a glossary of sea terms and a dictionary. Later we went ashore to see the sights of the town, and having walked around and paid a visit to the Seamen's Mission we decided to go to a show, but found that all the seats were sold, so we took a box. I think it must have been the re-action from the shock of our cabin. Later we sailed for Vancouver, to load grain, then off to Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand.

Of my adventures and experiences on this, my first voyage, the Editor has asked me to tell you in a later edition of the WATER RAT.

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A TRIP TO DISCOVERY.

On Saturday morning 6th March, a boat's crew of 10 Senior Scouts and Rovers left the Clubroom in the charge of Maurice Buer, bound for Discovery. Good time was made as far as Putney, and then from Feltham, thick fog was encountered, and visibility was practically nil. However, by hugging the bank all the way, Discovery was reached about 4.30 p.m. After a general clean-up, tracks were made for Woolworths in the Strand, for a "snack", and then on to a News Theatre, returning to spend the night on Discovery.

After breakfast on Sunday morning, cast off about 8.30 for the return trip, and after some tricky navigation past University boats' crews, and eights, stopped at Putney to visit the Milk Bar. At the Petersham & Ham's Group Hqrs, a hardy Sea Scout was swimming in the river. "Tough Guy!". Headquarters was reached about 3 p.m. and everyone voted it a happy weekend.

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BOXING: February saw the preliminary fights for the SURREY SCOUT BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS. These being held at Dr. Barnardo's Home, at Kingston. Leander entered five competitors, David Farley, Ian Finch, Michael Roberts, Jeff Dove and John Sharp, David, Jeff and John qualifying for the finals. David Farley, on 6th March, was successful at Richmond in winning the Championship for his weight, and the following weekend, Jeff Dove and John Sharp also won the matches for their respective weights. Three winners out of five entries. Good going! Congratulations to the Champs, DAVID FARLEY, JEFF DOVE AND JOHN SHARP.

MOTOR TANKER "SAN VENANCIO".
by Dick Garnish and Tony Bond.

On February 14th, three of us received an invitation to visit the big modern motor tank ship "San Venancio" laying at Purfleet.

On arrival we were greeted by Capt.G.Waite, O.B.E., who was in command of the ship. He proved to be a big, jolly red faced man, who not only gave his permission for us to go all over his ship, but detailed his second officer to show and explain everything to us. Captain Waite added an invitation for us to have lunch on board, which we joyfully accepted.

The Second Officer, Mr.Newton, started our tour by taking us up to the wheelhouse and chartroom, where we were soon in the midst of all the wonderful modern instruments and aids to navigation with which the ship is fitted. The echo-sounder, direction finder, magnetic compass, gyro-compass, engine room telegraph, steering gear, mercury barometer, and the chronometer, all came in for explanation and examination. Then it was the turn of the International Code and the flags of all the foreign countries to which the ship goes, the electric log which is used in navigating by dead reckoning when the sun and stars cannot be seen, and the mysteries of Admiralty Pilot and charts.

A quick run around the "Monkey Island", and then down to the "Centre Castle", with its collection of ropes, paints and the multitude of equipment which a ship needs. Then a grand lunch.

In the afternoon, aft to the engine room which unfortunately was under repair so that we could hardly get a fair idea of what it normally looks like, but we did meet the Chief Engineer who was as big and jolly as the Captain.

(contd.overleaf)

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A peep at the galley, and then back to "amidships" where the Chief Steward showed us the thousand and one things for which he is responsible. All the food, beds and bedding, crockery, brooms and brushes. A box of raisins, suffered three separate attacks of finger blight. A cup of tea and some cake, and it was time for us to start our journey back.

A grand day out, and our thanks to Captain Waite and all his Officers who were so good to us.

Good luck, "San Venancio" and to all who sail in her!

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IN STRANGE WATERS

by F. Riches

On a Friday evening, Ron Pidduck and I left the Clubroom to deliver one of the new dinghies to the Walthamstow Sea Rangers.

At Teddington Lock we ran into a spot of trouble, a piece of wood being stuck in the gates. As we were mooring up for the night, near Richmond Bridge, the owner of the pleasure boat "Ballerina" invited us to stay the night on board, and so, instead of the hard bottomboards of the boat for our bed, we had lovely soft mattresses.

Up with the lark, we left at 4 a.m., but instead of us being early birds, getting the worm, we 'got the bird', for a thick fog came up, and after going about 400 yds, it became so thick we were forced to make fast to some boats.

After about an hour, it cleared, and we were able to get under weigh again. Just past Blackfriars Bridge we were fortunate enough to get a tow from a tug, but on reaching the entrance to Limehouse

Cut, we had to wait for two hours until there was enough water for us to go through.

At 11.45, we entered the first lock, just past Limehouse Cut, but at the next Lock, where the Canal joins the River Lea, we had to wait until a large tug came through.

Having passed through the lock, we went up the River Lea to Springfield Park, where we delivered the dinghy safe and sound, and returned home by train.

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SURBITON PARK - LEANDER, Summer Camp Re-union.

by L. ('Basil') Mustoe.

Over the week-end 9th -11th January, there was a re-union of those members who attended the joint Surbiton Park and Leander Summer Camp last year.

The re-union took the form of a week-end aboard "Discovery". Both Troops joined forces at Waterloo Station on the Friday evening, and some 40 Scouts proceeded to the ship. Nothing spectacular happened until 'lights out', when some of those who had chosen to sleep in hammocks found themselves, none too gently, deposited upon the deck. In the hold, the sleep (?) of the Seniors was rudely disturbed by a bucket of water descending mysteriously from above, followed by a kipper! The latter was promptly returned with compliments to the Master.

After some further episodes, comparative peace reigned aboard the ship.

Saturday morning was spent visiting London. Some Scouts

went to the Schoolboys Exhibition.

In the afternoon came the main event of the week-end, when we went to Maskelyne's Christmas Magic Show at Westminster Theatre. The various acts, including conjuring and ventriloquism, were enjoyed by all. A request for some boys to help on the stage was well answered by a number of the younger Scouts, while the older ones showed considerable interest in the conjurer's lady assistants.

After the show we went back to 'Discovery' for a "bust up", and a free evening. Saturday night resulted in the Seniors attacking the After Mess Deck, the stronghold of the Juniors. This soon ended, and we had a comparatively quiet night.

Unfortunately it rained most of Sunday, and this curtailed activities. A Scouts' Own was held in the morning, and later we were supposed to peel the vegetables and fruit for dinner. As a result of this, the apples for "afters" were in short supply!. A few of the hardier ones went for a pull in the "Discovery" boats, but soon returned, and so an enjoyable week-end came to a close.

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J A M J A R S W A N T E D !

The Ministry of Food have notified Scout Headquarters that Jam Jars are urgently required, if full advantage is to be taken of this year's fruit crops. All Scout Troops are asked to collect as many jars as they can. As the jars will be paid for at the rate of 1d. per jar, this gives an opportunity for us to build up our Group funds whilst helping in a National need. Will all members of the Group ask their parents, neighbours and friends, to save all jam jars, and then bring them along to Headquarters as soon as possible.

W H I S P E R S F R O M T H E J U N G L E !

Dear Cubs,

Once again we have our "Whispers from the Jungle". I was sorry not to see a full Pack Meeting after Easter, but perhaps some of you were away on holiday. I wish the best of luck to our new Sixers and Seconds, and may the best Six win! I don't know what has happened to Reds lately, but they seem to be right at the bottom and can't seem to climb back again! Come on REDS, see what you can do about it.

We shall try and have a few games of cricket this season, so get out your pads, and start getting into practice.

Don't forget those drawings and models I told you about, I want a big collection, so its up to each Sixer to see what his Six can do.

I would like to congratulate the Pack on remembering that subs are now 2d.per week.

Please get your uniform pressed and cleaned up ready for the St.George's Day Church Parade on Sunday next April 18th. All Cubs should look really 'spick and span' (like this chappie!), and those who HAVE caps, please wear them.

Good Hunting,

AKELA.



LISTEN - IN TO AUNTIE MURIEL

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Harry Few on the arrival of Miss Diane Few (a sister for four-year old Ian).

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In answer to "Bright Lad", No! the Jam Jars asked for on page 10 are to be EMPTY ones!

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Sales of the "Daily Mirror" went up by leaps and bounds after the publication of the photo of some "Leanders" helping to push the Master of "Discovery" in 'the drink'.

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One of my correspondents is most anxious to know whether "Snowy" uses Persil or Rinso for his canary-colour pullover!.

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"DISCOVERY" IS IN DANGER!

It may not be generally known that, owing to her age and the lack of repairs during the war, this very famous ship is in need of an extensive refit. In fact some parts of the ship and her gear are in such a dangerous condition that it has been found necessary to close the ship and she is no longer available for use by Sea Scouts. This is a serious blow to Sea Scouting on the Thames. Apart from the pleasure which the boys get from their visits to the ship, it is essential to have some "port of call" where boats and their crews can await the right conditions of tide on their trips up and down river, and with "Discovery" out of use such trips must be greatly curtailed.

Unless the funds for her maintenance can be considerably augmented it may not be possible to keep "Discovery" on the Thames. What can be done about this?