

C O N T E N T S -

GOLDEN JUBILEE - APRIL 1959.

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MESSAGES.

The following messages have been received on the occasion of the Group's Jubilee.

FROM THE CHIEF SCOUT

"If all I hear is true the Leander Group must be the sprightliest 50 year olds in the country.

Many have contributed to your continued success, Scouts and Scouters through the years and all those people who don't have warrants but are proud to serve you. It's a long time. But I believe Scouting is really just beginning, it's more needed than ever before in this troubled world, for it is the only thing that can and does break down ALL the barriers which divide mankind.

God bless and prosper your work in the next 50 years as He has done in the past.

ROWALLAN, Chief Scout."

FROM THE COUNTY COMMISSIONER

"I am very glad to be given the chance to send my congratulations to Leander Sea Scouts on the occasion of their Jubilee celebrations. You have a long history of progress of which you have every right to be proud. But the present and future generations of Leanders will not want to rest on the achievements of those who went before them. It is up to them to be worthy of the Group's history by adding fresh laurels.

In sending you my warmest congratulations on your Jubilee, therefore, I am looking forward to even greater things from you in the future.

Good Luck and good Sea Scouting to you all.

E.G.NEATE, County Commissioner."

THE SKIPPER'S SCRAWL

This special issue of the "Water Rat" provides a record of great achievement with which I feel very privileged to have been associated. None of this would have been possible without the great service rendered to the Group by the Scouters of whom there is a list on page 15 (I trust it is complete.Ed.) However pleasant it may be to rest on our oars for a while contemplating the "wake" we have made, we must not allow ourselves to drift with the tide but must get "under weigh" again towards our goal - of carrying out the Scout Law and Promise. This goal is like the horizon, we never reach it but have great times in striving towards it. I hope to be allowed to plot the course for some time yet, but it is up to others to set the stroke, and to all of you to pull your full weight, so that "Leander" continues to forge ahead.

The history of these 50 years shows how much the progress of the Group is dependent upon suitable equipment and Headquarters. At present we possess a fleet of boats which can provide training for the boys of all ages. The Headquarters, however, whilst they are ideal in many ways, are completely inadequate in others. The opportunity has now arisen for us to remedy this, and it is for this purpose that our JUBILEE APPEAL has been issued.

The Group owns the freehold of the central part of the Headquarters, comprising the Boat Deck and Main Deck, but for many years has rented the boathouses on either side. Kingston Corporation has now agreed to sell us the boathouse and a small portion of land on the south side, and to grant us a permanent right of way from Albany Park Road. We shall thus be enabled to provide proper lavatories connected to main drainage, and to reconstruct the boathouse to provide better storage and workshop facilities. It is proposed to incorporate a flat roof which will provide space for instruction which at present has to be done on the public path outside the Headquarters, and to build a shelter for cycles.

The cost of the boathouse and the work projected is approximately £950. Up to date about £460 has been donated towards this sum. I appeal to all those others who have not so far contributed, to use the orange form enclosed, and thus enable us to make an early start on this work.

THE LEANDER GROUP. 1909 - 1959.PRE SEA SCOUTING ERA.

Although it is known that the Group was in existence before, the first recorded date in the Group history is 3rd April 1909, when it was registered at Scout Headquarters as the 2nd Kingston Troop. The first S/M was Erik Robinson, who received his Warrant on 13th December 1909. Facts about the Troop are scarce until we reach the year 1911 by which time the following names appear in the Troop Roll, Ebbage, Ervine and Goodall - names which today are still connected with the Group. At that time Troop meetings were held in a paint shop belonging to Mr. Baker, a wheelwright, at 5 Fairfield Road. The trek cart was an old truck lent by Mr. Baker, and the only other properties the Troop possessed were three wooden forms. 1911 was an eventful year in many ways. On 22nd June the Coronation Day of King George V, the Troop assisted at the Children's Party in Bushy Park, and later on July 5th, was present at the Royal Review at Windsor Park, when the King personally inspected the Scouts. In that year too, the first Troop Summer Camp was held at Box Hill. The concluding happening of the year was the absorption by the Troop of the original 3rd Kingston Troop, the Scoutmaster of which had resigned. Exhibitions of Scoutcraft were a feature of those early days, and were held in Kingston in 1911 and 1912. In 1912 came the first of a long line of trek-cart camps held over Easter weekends; on that occasion the Troop camped on successive nights at Virginia Water, Wisley Hut, and Box Hill. At Whitsun the first Denbies Camp for Surrey Scouts was held, the fore-runner of the present periodical County Camps at Ranmore.

Summer Camp that year was held at Fort Cumberland, at Southsea, and then on 18th November 1912, the Troop commenced its Sea Scout activities. Just why the change to Sea Scouting was made is not very clear. One legend records the Troop at that time including a Scout whose father kept a fish shop, and the Troop gradually absorbed the salty atmosphere this Scout gave meetings he attended! By this time the Headquarters were at the back of "The Cricketers" Public House. Indeed, as will be seen below, publicans appear to have been the only persons willing to rent premises to Scout Troops in the early days.

PRE WAR SEA SCOUTING.

In 1913 the Troop acquired its first boats. A 32ft.12-oar cutter was presented by Mr. F. Grove, the great-grandson of Capt. Francis Grove who commanded the H.M.S. "Leander" which fought at the battle of Trafalgar. (This is recorded on the plaque hanging above the door to the present Main Deck, and it was in this way the Group acquired the name "Leander"). The second boat was a 28ft. collapsible lifeboat with canvas sides, presented by the P. & O. Shipping Company at the instance of Mr. Warrington Baden-Powell, the Chief Scout's brother.

During that year this boat was twice taken up-river as far as Sunbury - quite a feat. Another Exhibition was held this year, which was visited by Lord Baden Powell himself, and at the same time he received the Honorary Freedom of the Royal Borough of Kingston. On this occasion "Leanders" and the Dittons Troop formed the Guard of Honour. At the Imperial Scout Exhibition held in July 1913 at Birmingham, Scout E.L. Ebbage exhibited a working model of a coastguard flagstaff, complete with International Code Flags. Lord Charles Beresford personally awarded him his own Sextant in recognition of the high standard of the exhibit.

As befitted the Troop's new status, the summer camp in 1913 took the form of a cruise along the south coast in the ketch "Mirror" which had recently been presented to the Scout Association for sea training purposes.

There were several changes in Headquarters, from "The Cricketers" to the "Three Compasses", then to "The Ram", and lastly to the first riverside Headquarters in High Street, on the site now occupied by Boats & Cars. With the outbreak of war, these headquarters had to be given up, and during most of the war period the Troop was located at its last public house "The Druid's Head", where it had access to the river. One of the few public entertainments the Troop has given was held on 22nd April, 1914, in the form of a concert at St. John's Parish Hall.

THE 1914-1918 WAR.

The Chief Scout had offered the services of the Scout Movement to the Government in the event of war, and in accordance with this arrangement a number of "Leander" Scouts proceeded to Dungeness for coast-watching duties upon the outbreak of hostilities. The remainder of the Troop, along with other Kingston Troops were detailed to patrol the

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main railway line through Surbiton against possible sabotage. This watch was maintained, day and night, for twelve days during which period the British Expeditionary Force was safely conveyed to France.

Due to war conditions, the constitution of the Troop altered considerably. S/M.Erik Robinson joined the Grenadier Guards, and most of the Scouts, as they reached eighteen years of age, joined up - (a list of those killed on Active Service appears elsewhere). Nevertheless, the Troop carried on, and during the course of the war, absorbed two other local Troops which were without Scouters, the old 1st Surbiton Park, and the original 4th Kingston. As a result of the latter, Mr.J.H.Ide first became associated with "Leanders" and for a time acted as Scoutmaster - he remained "Leander" Group Treasurer until he died at the age of 90. The Group records of the early war years show for the first time the name of Biden, another name which is still associated with the Group to the present day. We also read that P/L. E.L.Ebbage was fined 6d for bursting the Clubroom lock! During the course of the War, the Troop collected waste paper to the value of £75 (a large sum for those days) for the Prince of Wales' National Relief Fund.

About 1915 the cutter presented by Mr.Grove was scrapped, and in the next year the Troop acquired a 16ft.4-oared centre-board gig, previously owned by the Teddington Sea Scouts. The Troop also acquired a 14ft sailing dinghy for £4. This boat was sold later, and in the 1930's was still in use by a riverside vendor of bananas.

During the war years a gradual change in uniform was taking place. Since the formation of the Troop blue shirts and green scarves had been worn, firstly with the Scout hat, and subsequently with a Sea Scout cap. The Scouts on coast-watching duties had been issued with blue jerseys and black silk scarves, and this uniform was later adopted by all members of the Troop. At a later date special permission was obtained from the County Scout Authorities to wear the County Emblem (red "Surrey" Lion) on the point of the scarf instead of the usual way on a yellow background on the arm.

An important happening at this time was the formation of the Cub Pack in 1918, with Miss Brady (later Mrs.Arthur Millest) as first Cubmaster. Mrs.Millest now lives

at Beverley, Yorkshire, and is still interested in the Group. It was also in June 1918 that E.L.Ebbage joined the Navy, and there is a gap in the Group's records until his return early in 1919.

#### POST WAR YEARS - ACQUISITION OF GROUP HEADQUARTERS.

After demobilisation, Erik Robinson returned to the Troop and continued as S/M until 1921. Then at the early age of 21, E.L.Ebbage was appointed S/M, and still holds that position today.

It was evident from pre-war experiences that to function efficiently the Group needed riverside Headquarters of its own. As a step in this direction a boathouse in Lower Ham Road (on the site of the Boat Deck in the present Headquarters) was rented, in 1920, and subsequently purchased in 1922. These restricted premises were the Group Headquarters for nine years, until the adjoining Boathouse (now the Main Deck) was purchased in 1929. In the early days the Headquarters was lit only by lanterns, and it must have been somewhat eerie on a dark winter's night!

The boats which the Group had used during war time had become unseaworthy, and in 1921 a whaler and a gig were purchased and used until about 1930. In 1921 the Skipper went to a Wood Badge Course at Gilwell, and in consequence, Patrol cooking was first introduced at the Troop Camp that year. (Incidentally, the writer recalls that the Skipper was still consulting his Wood Badge Course notes at Summer Camp in 1945, to ensure camping was being done to Gilwell standard!)

Writing in "The Scout" in 1923, the Chief Scout recalled that although his house "Paxtu" at Bentley, in Hampshire, was quite near the River Wey, no Sea Scouts had yet visited him. The Troop Summer Camp that year was held at Shalford, near Guildford, and taking up the implied challenge in the Chief's remarks, the Skipper with two Scouts, Reg Balcomb and Len Buckingham, set off by canoe up the Wey. After a strenuous journey which in the latter stages involved more canoe-carrying than paddling, they eventually reached Bentley, and called at the Chief's house. He was unfortunately away at the time, but they left a note recording their visit. In the 1920's began the summer camps in Suffolk, which have been a regular feature ever since. Southwold was the venue for four years during that decade, the journey on one occasion being made by steamer from Old Swan Pier,

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London. In 1928 and 1929 summer camps were at West Wittering, near Chichester, and held during the Schnieder Trophy Races. The Troop had a grand-stand view of aircraft flying at the then phenomenal speed of over 100 m.p.h.!!!

### THE 1930's.

During 1930-31, the Group Headquarters were re-roofed and began to take the shape they are today. The boathouse which forms the Rover Den and Workshop, was rented as at a later date was the boathouse on the other side, now used as a Canoe Store (and incidently the main object of the JUBILEE APPEAL). A good deal of reconstruction work was done on the premises, and as a result, the "Leander" Scouts of the 1930's became expert "bashers of concrete"! Most of the succeeding generations have also done their share of concrete laying, or breaking!

In 1930 the Group purchased two light yacht's gigs; at that time these boats were about 25 years old, and they were used continuously by the Group until they were sold in 1947. These boats were most suitable for Sea Scout training in up-river conditions. A Patrol of Scouts, with the F/L as cox, could and did frequently take a gig away for a day or week-end cruise. In 1932 the 16ft sailing boat "Hero" was purchased, and this began a period in the Group's history in which was built up a standard of seamanship and small boat work equalled by few Sea Scout Groups. During the sailing season "Hero" was kept in the Thames estuary, and regularly used at weekends and for longer periods in the summer holidays by the older Scouts and Rovers. As a consequence, she became well-known to many yachtsmen in the Thames estuary, and along the East Coast. It is not surprising that during this period a very strong Rover Crew existed, under the leadership of W. Ervine and F. K. Biden.

In 1931 the Troop camped at Studland, near Poole Harbour, and met Mr. Bailey, the boatman who ferried the Chief Scout to the first Scout camp on Brownsea Island. Summer Camps in 1935 and 1936 were held at Waldringfield, in Suffolk, a place to which we have returned several times since. 1938 and 1939 saw the first camps at Harty Ferry, in the Isle of Sheppy, another site to which successive generations of "Leanders" have returned. It is noteworthy that on one of these occasions the whole Troop went by boat from Kingston to Sheppy. Two "Leander" Scouts attended the World Jamboree in Holland in 1937.



1939-1945 WAR PERIOD.

In spite of evacuation and bombing, the Group functioned throughout the War period, although at one time the Troop was reduced to seven Scouts. As in the previous War, Scouts were engaged on War service - this time several "Leanders" were in the River Emergency Service in the Thames estuary, and again waste paper (some 50 tons) was collected. During the course of War Service in the Navy, members of the Group gained two D.S.C's (R.H.Marrion and V.G.Paremain), one D.S.M. (J.R.Funkin) and Bruce Enzer was twice mentioned in despatches.

The front of the Headquarters (as we know it today) was finally completed in 1940, by the construction of the Chart Room. 1940 also saw the commencement of the Admiralty Recognition Scheme for Sea Scout Groups. Recognition of a Group is accorded on the basis of a satisfactory annual inspection by an Admiralty representative, and entitles the Scout Association to a small per capita training grant, while members of a recognised Group have certain advantages, and the right to wear a special badge. The "Leander" Group has been Recognised since the inception of the scheme, and on three occasions has been inspected by the Admiral Commanding Reserves in person.

Camping was not entirely abandoned during the war, and in 1943 the Troop helped at a farm while camping at Fulbrough. In 1944 we camped with the 3rd Osterley Sea Scout Group at Goring - the Troop went up-river by gigs, a distance of some 70 miles from Kingston.

A National Sea Scout Exhibition was held at the London Scottish Drill Hall in 1944 and the Group staged a display in which, during the course of the Exhibition a 7ft. sailing boat was built and later sailed on the Thames. The present Queen (then Princess Elizabeth, and a Sea Ranger) opened the Exhibition, and was photographed with the "Leander" Scouts who were doing the boat-building. (The Skipper and Mrs.Ebbage were among the party of about 30 who had tea with her later).

In 1944 and again in 1945 the Group combined with the "Victor" Sea Ranger Crew to put on a musical revue "NAUTICAL MOMENTS" at Tiffin School. Both shows were a great success, but so far the Group has not again ventured into the entertainment field on this scale.

The late 1930's and the War period saw the gradual development of a new Section in the Group for Senior Scouts, covering the age range 15-18. Owing to the success of the "Leander" experiment in this direction, the Skipper was invited to sit on the Scout Headquarters Committee to investigate the formation of a Senior Scout Section of the Movement, which officially came into being shortly after the War.

#### 1945 ONWARD.

The end of the War found the Group numerically strong, but lacking equipment. The two gigs purchased in 1930 were still in use, as was "Hero", but the only small boats were two very unseaworthy 'flatties'. To provide a boat suitable for younger Scouts, the Skipper designed a 12ft.dinghy, which could be used both for pulling and sailing. The design was adopted by the Thames Joint Sea Scout Committee, and over forty of these boats were built at Martham, on the Norfolk Broads. The boats were purchased by various Sea Scout and Sea Ranger Groups, mainly in the Thames area, and most of them are still in use today. The Group bought four of them, at a cost, including sails, of £60 each; delivery of two was taken at summer camp in 1946 which, that year, was held at Martham. These boats have proved ideal for the training of younger Scouts in pulling and sailing. As after some thirteen years continuous use they are beginning to show signs of wear and tear, they are being covered with fibre-glass, to lengthen their life. The Skipper then turned his attention to a larger pulling boat, and designed a 20ft gig, especially for Sea Scouts, and subsequently the Group purchased two of these gigs to replace those which had been in use since 1930. The Group was now well equipped with pulling boats, but to provide better facilities for sailing, "Hermes" a 19ft sailing gig was purchased at a cost of £275, in 1952. This boat has been regularly sailed by the Seniors in the Thames estuary and around the East Coast. In 1955 the Group embarked on its most ambitious boat purchase, when it acquired the 6 ton sloop "Sandling", which cost £1,200, and was primarily intended for the use of the Rover Crew. It is noteworthy that over £400 of the purchase price was financed by interest-free loans from members and friends of the Group; the balance was obtained through a Bank overdraft, which has now been paid off. For its enterprise in this direction, the Group won the Bayer-Winthrop Trophy in 1955, awarded by the Kingston Youth Council to the Youth Organisation showing the greatest progress in the year.

With the purchase of "Hermes" and "Sandling", there was little use for "Hero", and she

was finally sold, in March 1956 (to a Brighton resident who intended her for sea-fishing, - a fitting tribute to an extremely seaworthy boat). Such then is the present fleet of boats, with the addition of a Yachting World Cadet (built by two Scouters of the Group a few years ago), and a pulling dinghy which can be hired by old Scouts and friends of the Group.

The Headquarters were extensively repaired and redecorated shortly after the War, and in 1946 the Group obtained the lease of a strip of land at the rear of the Headquarters, stretching back to Albany Park Road. This land contained an air-raid shelter, which was fitted up as a store for camping equipment, thereby releasing much needed space in the main Headquarters building, the rear of which was then reconstructed.

Since 1945 the Group has operated through four Sections.- Cub Pack, Scout Troop, Senior Scout Troop, and Rover Crew, usually with an overall numerical strength of about 80 - 90 members. Numbers in the Pack and Scout Troop do not vary much from year to year, but there is a tendency (as in most Groups) for the Senior Troop and Crew numbers to fluctuate considerably from time to time. With the imposition of an upper age limit of 24 years, for Rover Scouts, about two years ago, the older Rovers founded a Branch of the B.P.Guild of Old Scouts. This is constituted separately from the Group, but acts in association with it, and is the means of keeping many former members in touch with the Group activities. In 1945 the Troop camped at Gilwell Park, when it was officially re-opened at Whitsun after being requisitioned during the war years. The summer camp that year - a combined one for the Troop and Senior Troop, was at Arundel, and on that occasion "Hero", a gig, and the 7ft sailing boat were transported by road and used on the Arun and waters around Littlehampton. Since then separate camps or cruises have usually been arranged for the two Troops. Scout camps have tended to alternate between East and South Coast sites, while the Seniors have usually been cruising. There have, however been exceptions; in 1943 the Seniors after camping at Corfe Castle for a week with the Troop, went on to Torquay and with several other Troops, assisted at the Olympic Games Sailing Events held there. The 1954 Camp at Hoo, on the Medway was a joint one; the Seniors sailing down from Kingston to join the Troop for a few days. The geographical features of this site were such that Patrols were forced to operate as independent units. In 1956 the Seniors went abroad for the first time as a Troop.

An 80 ton ketch, belonging to the 3rd Amsterdam Sea Scout Group was chartered and with the Scouters of that Group in charge of the vessel, the Seniors formed the crew for a fortnight's cruise through the north Dutch waterways, and around the IJsselmeer and the Frisian Islands. This was a most enjoyable experience, and the 3rd Amsterdam Scouters visited us in the following year. In that year, 1957, the Jubilee Jamboree of the Scout Movement was held at Sutton Coldfield, near Birmingham. The Scout Troop chartered a British Waterways barge and cruised up the Grand Union Canal, from Brentford to a point a few miles from the Jamboree site, and from there paid several visits to the Jamboree.

Apart from this Jamboree which was attended by two "Leander" Seniors, individual "Leander" Scouts also took part in the Jamboree held in France (1947), and Austria (1952). A Senior Scout of the Group has been selected to represent the Kingston District at the forthcoming Jamboree to be held in the Philippines later this year.

The Group or Sections of it, have taken part in a number of miscellaneous events since 1945. It is impossible to record them all, but the following indicates their variety. Shortly after the war it provided the Sea Scouting sequences of a film on Scouting, "Knights of Freedom", produced by the Scout Association. Individual Scouts have taken part in performances of "Boy Scout" at the Royal Albert Hall, and the Group took a prominent part in the Kingston District Scout Shows "Scoutorama", held in 1956 and 1957. Of late years there has usually been a "Leander" Senior at the Annual Queen's Scout Parade at Windsor. Rover Scouts and members of the B.P. Guild have helped the Spartan Swimming Club, run for Spastics in Kingston.

#### CONCLUSION.

In concluding this brief history of the Group, two remarks of a general character are appropriate. Firstly, during the whole of its existence the Group has been helped by many individuals who have no direct connection with it; the ladies who, year by year, make or give articles for sale at the Bazaars; the parents and friends who serve from time to time on the Group Committee; the members of the Supporters Association who raised funds for the Group. To these and all others who have helped us during these fifty years, we say a sincere "thank you" for without their help in the background, it would be impossible to carry on the Group. Secondly, the foregoing pages summarise some of the main events in the history of the Group, but to put them in perspective it is well

to record the routine activities which have gone on without a break during the past fifty years - the weekly Pack, Troop and Crew meetings; the week-end camps; the maintenance of boats and equipment; the Annual Bazaars and Jumble Sales - all of them with the object of providing facilities for "SCOUTING IN A SEAMANLIKE MANNER" that being the guiding principle of the Group's activities.

There can be few Groups which, in fifty years existence, have had only two G/S/Ms, one of whom has held office for over thirty years. The title of G/S/M was not, however, introduced until after Eric Robinson's retirement. It is due to the inspiration, enthusiasm and hard work of the Skipper and Mrs. Ebbage over this long period that the Group occupies the strong and influential position it does today. Apart from their work for the Group as a whole, "Leanders" of successive generations are indebted to them for very many individual acts of kindness and hospitality. We take this opportunity of thanking them for all they have done for us, and wishing them health and happiness for many years to come.

#### QUEEN'S SCOUTS.

Unfortunately early records of the holders of the King's Scout Badge are not complete, but a number of "Leanders" did gain it prior to 1939-45. In 1946 the tests were revised. Members of the Group who have gained the Queen's Scout Badge since then are.-

G. Eiden	R. Garnish	R. Spencer	G. Fennell	I. Bates	B. Carr
W. Shennan	G. Hopkins	G. Braye	B. Garnish	R. Shackleton	I. Dow
C. Ford	M. Fletcher	D. Milner	K. Sutherland	I. Hunt	

#### IN MEMORIAM.

In our Jubilee Year we remember, with thankfulness, the service of the following Scouts and Scouters of the Group who have been Called to Higher Service.-

1911: W. Kemp    1914-18: C. Clifton, A. Fatcher, H. Hall, J. G. Nicholas, W. E. Terry,  
1925: Erik Robinson, 1937: H. Martin, 1938-45: A. J. Cole, G. Cox, Bruce Enzer, C. Freeman,  
 L. Gibbons, Norman Lingley, V. H. Saunders.    1953: D. E. Stone.

### THE WATER RAT.

Although the "Water Rat" cannot yet claim to have attained its GOLDEN JUBILEE, it is known that even in the earliest days a Group Magazine, called "The Link" was issued from time to time. The Water Rat itself first appeared in 1922, although it cannot claim to have been published regularly since then, there having been gaps, some rather long, and usually due to lack of an Editor.

Few, if any of the early issues exist, but in the 1930's it appeared at monthly intervals for several years. It was then a quarto-sized paper, containing 16 - 18 pages, and with so much space available it contained not only news of Group activities but also instructional articles on Scouting and Seamanship. From time to time a short story was also included, and in those days with a good staff artist, many of the features were illustrated with line drawings. Publication lapsed with the outbreak of the 1939-45 war, and during that period only occasional News Letters were issued, mainly for the benefit of members of the Group serving in the Forces. Rising costs, and the desire to limit the price to 3d. per copy made it impossible to re-introduce the periodical on its pre-war scale. It was felt that a Group Magazine was desirable, and the Water Rat in its present form first appeared in 1947. With the restricted space and fewer issues, its contents are usually confined to Group affairs, and in this sense it is perhaps a more intimate magazine than were the pre-war ones. Nowadays too, practically the whole of the contents are contributed by members of the Group.

Looking back over the old issues one sees features which have remained constant over a number of years. There is the picture of the Sea Scout on the front cover, taken from "Scouting for Boys". Skipper has been writing his Scrawl since the first issue; incidentally some of his remarks have a familiar ring, as the Scrawl has always been considered the most respectable place to discuss the finances of the Group - and its rather permanent overdraft. Some of our advertisers on the back cover, have been with us since the earliest days, and details of the Group on the inner front and back covers have only varied in name changes. One feature which has been crowded out of late years is Auntie Muriel's page. This lady had an eagle eye, and her often caustic remarks about Group incidents or the idiosyncrasy of the individuals caught many a "Leander" unaware when he saw his thinly veiled name in her column. Although Auntie Muriel is not featured at present, it is pleasing to record that her "brother",

Uncle Claud, has lately commenced writing in a similar strain in the monthly News Sheet of the "Leander" B.P. Scout Guild.

It is perhaps not generally known how wide is the circulation of the Water Rat. About 300 copies of each issue are printed, and outside the Group, are sent to the press and Local Government Officials in Kingston, as well as to Imperial Headquarters, and Surrey County Officials of the Boy Scouts Association. Copies are sent regularly abroad to old "Leanders" or friends of the Group in Canada, the U.S.A., Australia, New Zealand, India, Iraq, and the Netherlands.

Recently, in response to a request in the Scouter, copies have been sent to the 1st Pelican Point Sea Scout Group in Western Australia. This Group, like ours, is old-established, and will be celebrating its Golden Jubilee in two years time. It is considering issuing a Group Magazine, and wished to see specimens of similar publications in the U.K.

SCOUTERS OF THE GROUP 1909-59.

Angles, Miss S.	Day Miss Maureen	Hollis, Miss Pam	Robinson, Erik
Archer, Harry	Dodge, Bob	Ide, J. H.	Stone, D.E. ('Doc')
Baker, Owen	Duffin, Paul	Keene, Miss A.S.	Sowerbutts, Miss Dreda
Bass, Ron	Deluce Miss B.	Malcolm, John	Taylor, Ray.
Biden, A.K. (Bert)	Ebbage, Eric L.	Marchant, Roy	Terry, Will.
Bishop Miss D.	Edwards, Leslie	Marrison Miss Mary	Westington, R.H.
Bishop, Charlie	Elms, D.G.	Marrison, Robert	White, Roy.
Blundell, David	Ervine, William	Martin, Ken.	Wilson, Jack.
Boddy, E. (Ted)	Felix, Miss Pam	Mills, Miss F.	Woodgate, Frank
Brady Miss	Garnish, Richard	Myers, Mrs. E.	Woods, Miss Alma.
Buer, Morrie	Gemes, Phillip	Myers, C.T.	
Burton, Peter	Goodall, George (Snr)	Nicholas, George	
Clipsham, Ted	Goodall, George (Jnr)	Paremain, Miss Doris	
Cole, Arthur	Goodzer, Fred G.	Pescud, Miss	
Cole, Bernard	Grusselle, Miss Norma		
Cole, John			

SUMMER CAMPS AND CRUISES.

Whenever Scouts meet, talk will eventually come round to Camps, Summer and otherwise, and reminiscences will begin, for no two camps are alike, even if held at the same place. Some incident (or more likely the weather) will give each a character of its own in the minds of those attending. While we cannot recall the characteristics of each "Leander" camp, we hope that the following list will awaken happy memories.

1911	Box Hill	1945	Arundel, Sussex.
1912	Fort Cumberland (Southsea)	1946	Martham, Norfolk
1913	Cruise in "Mirror"	1947	Foole, Dorset (Troop)
1919	Littleworth Common		"Celox" (Seniors)
1920	Blackheath (Surrey)	1948	Corfe Castle, Dorset.
1921	Southwold, Suffolk.	1949	Horne Bay
1922	ditto.	1950	Foole, Dorset.
1923	Shalford, Surrey.	1951	Waldringfield (Troop)
1924	Brightstone, I. of Wight		Norfolk Broads (Seniors)
1925	Pagham, Sussex.	1952	Chidham, Sussex. (Troop)
1926	Southwold, Suffolk.		Sheppy (Seniors)
1927	ditto	1953	Waldringfield (Troop)
1928	West Wittering, Sussex.		Sheppy (Seniors)
1929	ditto	1954	Hoo, Kent.
1930	Charmouth, Dorset	1955	Waldringfield (Troop)
1931	Studland, Dorset		Up-river to Lechlade (Seniors)
1932	Lee-on-Solent, Hants.	1956	Chidham (Troop)
1935	Waldringfield, Suffolk.		Dutch Cruise (Seniors)
1936	ditto	1957	Jamboree Cruise (Troop)
1937	"Implacable", Portsmouth.		East Coast " (Seniors)
1938	Sheppy	1958	Waldringfield (Troop)
1939	ditto		East Coast Cruise (Seniors)
1941	Broadstone Warren, Sussex.		
1943	Fulborough		
1944	Goring-on-Thames		



IN THE BEGINNING.....

I joined the Troop in 1911, but it was not known as the "Leanders" then, and Sea Scouts had not been formed. It was the "2nd Kingston-on-Thames B.P. Scout Troop". The "B.P." was important, as at this period things were a bit disorganised, and all sorts of people became linked up with the Movement, resulting in bickering, and certain sections broke away and formed a short-lived organisation called the "British Boy Scouts". However, to get back to us, it is impossible to tell you of our beginnings without introducing you to the Baker family. Mr. Baker was a coach-builder, living in Fairfield Road; at the rear of his house was his workshop, over which was a varnishing room, and this room he let us use for our weekly meetings. It was very useful, but had two drawbacks. When Mr. Baker had to varnish one of his carts, it was important that there should be no dust, and so we were not allowed to use the room; and another drawback was a fried fish shop close by. The subscriptions were 2d per week, collected by Owen Baker, and when he asked for them, he was frequently told "2d. owen," but unfortunately it was spelt owing; the money having been "blued" on chips! This workshop was the birthplace of our trek cart. It was built by Mr. Baker, and presented to the Troop on 12th June, 1912, by Mrs. Baker, who when presenting it said "I hope the Troop will outlive this trek cart". Well, the race is still on - both the cart and the Troop are still going strong! )

Our Scoutmaster was Mr. Erik Robinson, affectionately known to us boys as "Robby". He was the son of Mr. Robinson of that great engineering firm of Willans & Robinson of Rugby, who was the inventor of the Robinson Boat Release Gear, still used throughout the Royal Navy.

Now in those days we tried to do everything the right way - conscientiously saluting anyone we met wearing a Scout badge, and marching in formation wherever we went in uniform. On Saturday afternoons we paraded in Fairfield West, and carrying poles we marched two abreast to Richmond Park for signalling and flag-raiding games, copied from "Scouting for Boys". Robby was the proud possessor of a walking stick made from a cabbage stalk from the Channel Islands, and he proudly marched by our side, belt upright, with his beloved walking stick. I have yet to meet a man who understood boys as he did. To be a Scout in those days was not easy, and ridicule was encountered from the "Yobs", who called after us "Yah, Boy Scaarts campin art - look at his knees". The majority of

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the members of the Troop came from the Spring Grove area of Kingston, and as I have already mentioned, things were not properly organised at the commencement of the Movement, and many Troops were formed only to fizzle out again. When this happened, the really keen fellows looked around for another Troop, and many of them came to us.

There were three Patrols, the Kangaroos, with George Goodall (father of our present George) as Patrol Leader. The Wolves, with Harry Coleman as P/L, and the Owls with, I think, Dick Haynes as P/L. Amongst the other names I remember were Jim Maidwell, (whose father became our first Boating Instructor); Jack Sleven, Charlie Clifton, Bert Biden, Jack Harper, Bert and Dick Burrell, George Nicholas, Wally Godfrey, "Nigger" Negus, Bert Downs, and "Kipper" Brown, (his father kept a fish shop).

The year 1911 was an historical one, and my first function with the Troop was June 22nd, the Coronation of King George V, and we were detailed to assist with the children at the Celebrations in Bushy Park. This was followed by the Royal Review at Windsor. The Kingston Association went to Windsor by boat, and the London & South Western Railway ran a 'special' train for the parents, for 2/- return!

At Easter we loaded the trek cart, and with kit bags and hired tents, piled up on it, we started off on Saturday morning on a trek camp, the first stop being Virginia Water. I wonder what would happen if we asked the boys these days to pull a loaded trek cart from Kingston to Virginia Water? Yes, we were tough in those days! The second day we carried on to Box Hill, and the third day to Wisley Hut, and so home.

Our first Summer Camp was held that year in the grounds of Sir Trevor Lawrence at the foot of Box Hill, and so the year closed with us still 'Land' Scouts, but the following year two important things happened. One, Sir Robert Baden Powell's brother, Warrington Baden Powell (who was a member of the Royal Canoe Club) persuaded Robby to turn the Troop into Sea Scouts, and thus "Leander" was born. The other important event (the impact of which is still being felt) was the arrival of a new recruit named Eric Ebbage. So this was the beginning...as I knew it, and I leave it to others to complete the full history.

W. ERVINE.

THE JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS.

The following report of the Jubilee Celebrations appeared in the "Surrey Comet" of 25th April, 1959, under the headlines "Leander looks 50 years ahead - Jubilee Dinner recorded for Scouts of 2009":-

Films and tape recordings were made at the Leander Sea Scout Group's Jubilee Dinner and Dance at Surbiton Assembly Rooms on Friday last week. They are to be put into a container which will be sealed and bricked up in a wall at the Group's Thames-side Headquarters, with instructions that it is not to be opened until 2009, on the occasion of the Group's centenary. Mr. Eric Ebbage, Group Scoutmaster for over 30 years, presided at the Dinner which was organised by the Leander Branch of the B.P. Guild of Old Scouts. Mrs. Ebbage, the Group Hon. Secretary was also present, and the principal guests were the Mayoress (Mrs. C.M. Judge) and Mr. R.G. Busbridge (District Commissioner) with Mrs. Busbridge. The Mayor (Alderman C.M. Judge) arrived later. Congratulatory messages were read by Mr. Busbridge from the Chief Scout (Lord Rowallan) and Mr. E. G. Neate (County Commissioner). In proposing the toast of the Group, Mr. Busbridge underlined the Chief Scout's assertion that today, more than ever, Scouting was needed.

Replying, Mr. Ebbage recalled his introduction to Scouting at the age of 11. Of the Leander Group, he said that it was not a School of seamanship, but rather an organisation where the Scouters tried to capture a boy's love of adventure and of "messing about in boats", harnessing it to useful ends, primarily to inculcate qualities which would prove most valuable to him and the community, whether or not he made the sea his career.

Without spoon-feeding, the Group had to provide facilities and opportunities for the boys to do things for themselves in a seamanlike manner. To that end, Headquarters were provided. The growth of the Group made an extension to the premises necessary, and a £950 scheme had been started. Already £130 had been raised towards the cost. Guests were welcomed by Mr. W. Ervine, one of the original members of the Group, who acknowledged the help and support given by mothers, wives and girl friends. The Mayoress replied. The Toastmaster was Mr. Donald Balls, and the M.C. for dancing, Mr. Nigel Fentiman. The dinner and dance, to which Old Scouts came from as far away as Dover and Chichester, marked the end of Jubilee Celebrations which had begun a week

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earlier, with a family party at Rivermead School. A company of about 200 included Cubs, Scouts and Revers, parents and former members, among whom were Messrs. George Goodall, senior, and William Irvine, original members. The programme arranged by Messrs. D. Blundell and R. Rainsley, included games and an exhibition of lantern slides which included photographs taken at the first camp in 1911. After refreshments, served by Mr. and Mrs. B. Cole and helpers, films taken at the 1954 and 1955 camps were shown.

Among the guests were the parents of two American boys, Jefferson Fisher and Fred Hawley, members of the Group, whose fathers are serving with the U.S. Air Force at Bushy Park. The party was followed the next day, Sunday, by a Thanksgiving Service at St. Peter's Church, Norbiton. The Vicar and Rural Dean of Kingston (the Rev. G. H. Donne Davis) conducted the service and gave the address. Lessons were read by Mr. E. L. Ebbage and the Mayor. Fellow Scouts in the 1st and 2nd Norbiton Groups, which are attached to the Church, attended the Service with their Scoutmasters who are both former members of "Leanders". About 100 parents and Old Scouts were also present. After the Service, the Group, headed by the Kingston Boy Scouts Association Band, marched past the Mayor. "Open" nights for parents were held at the Headquarters on the following Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The above is a formal description of the Jubilee events, and it remains to add a few details. Perhaps the happiest feature of all was that the functions were attended by representatives of most generations of "Leander" Scouts. One Scout of a recent generation now in the Merchant Navy, had things timed so well for him that he arrived back from a round-the-world trip on the day of the Jubilee Party, and quite unexpectedly he was able to attend all the Jubilee week events. The Toastmaster at the dinner, must have tapped the table a record number of times with his gavel, as he announced the various categories of "Leanders" the Skipper and his lady would like to take wine with. Indeed, we wondered how he found time to eat his dinner.

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COME TO THE "GOLDEN JUBILEE" GARDEN FETE - SATURDAY 27th JUNE, 1959.