

EDITORIAL

Well, the time has come round for another issue of the "Water Rat"; we are hoping to be able to have four issues per year, but do please remember that we cannot have any "Water Rat's" at all without articles from YOU, and we mean everyone who reads this, not only those closely connected with the Group. On this subject we would like to say we are most grateful to those who do contribute in one form or another, especially to Mr. Hunter, who has been kind enough to draw the frontispiece once again.

In this edition we have included a two-page literary supplement, and we would like to continue to do so in one form or another; this time we have written the stories ourselves, but naturally, in the future, we would prefer a number of people to write for us. Surely some of you can write amusing stories, or articles of general interest?

The last three months have been quite eventful, the Troop did very well by winning the Cross-Country Race; the Group has had a successful Admiralty Inspection; and we think, at last, that the "Sandling" situation is improving; the Rovers, with help from the Seniors, are now working on her every weekend.

Two of the Seniors are keeping up the tradition of having a canoe in the Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race, which is run every Easter. The two are Keith Maund and Peter Hunter, and we wish them the best of luck, it's a long, long way, and I believe they capsized during a practice run from Newbury last weekend.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

April 12th:	Easter (And a pink Easter to you, too)
" 28th:	St. George's Day Church Parade. (St. Andrew's Day, November 30th)
May 4th:	County Sea Scout Meet - Petersham and Ham.
June 1st/2nd/3rd:	Whitsun Camp
June 8th:	Group Swimming Gala
" 22nd:	Garden Fete. (For the intellectuals amongst us, I must apologise for the lack of a circumflex)
July 6th/7th:	Operation "Touchdown". (Visit of the Chief Scout to Surrey).
" 20th/21st:	Group Camp - Buckmore Park. (So they tell me, anyway.)
August 10th/24th:	Troop Summer Camp - Holbrock.
November 16th:	Group Bazaar - St. Peter's Hall, London Road, Kingston.

THE SKIPPER'S SCRAWL.

This issue of the "Water Rat" is being published immediately after the end of the Scout Year on 31st March, and this is therefore a good opportunity to "take stock" of our present position. The most important category is that of membership, and here the position is reasonably satisfactory. During the year only one boy left the Cub Pack except in "Going Up" into the Scout Troop. Seven boys have left the Scout Troop out of a total of 33 at the beginning of the year. This is the highest percentage of loss for many years, but is still on the small side compared with most other Youth Organisations. A further six 15 year old Scouts have transferred to the Senior Troop which now has a strength of 11. This is better than for several years past, and is reflected in the greater range and interest of the activities which this increase renders possible.

As one who looks at the activities of the various Sections of the Group from the "back room" I can assure the boys and their parents of the great debt which they owe to the Scouters. "Leanders" are better staffed than the majority of Scout Groups but we are still in a state in which too few are called upon to do too much. This is especially true of the Scout Troop, where Mr. Burton frequently finds himself having to run things single-handed. I feel few people realise the vast amount of work which falls to him, and which he continues to undertake so cheerfully and with such good results.

Where equipment is concerned the position is extremely satisfactory all the Group's gear having been well maintained. The replacement of the four old wooden dinghies which had served us well for 14 years by four fibre-glass dinghies make the Group's fleet the envy of all other Sea Scout Groups. Another major item has been the purchase of our own 16mm. sound/silent film projector to replace the one which we had on loan from the Admiralty for many years and which has now become unserviceable.

Financially we have been very fortunate having received substantial help towards the cost of the new dinghies from Scout H.Q., the Surrey Education Committee, and the Kingston Rotary Club. We are very grateful to these three bodies and to all those who have supported our money-raising ventures during the year. The generous assistance of so many people has enabled us to reduce our Bank Overdraft by no less than £200.

ADMIRALTY INSPECTION.

The Inspection took place at the Group's Headquarters, Lower Ham Road, Kingston, at 1930 on Friday, 1st March, 1963.

On arrival, I met Commissioners and Scouters, after which I inspected the ranks. Standard of dress, bearing and drill were very good, though later in the evening I observed one or two pairs of dirty gym shoes.

After the inspection I was taken out to the river, where, to my surprise, I found all boats in the water being manned by the Seniors and Juniors. Four dinghies fitted with full navigation lights carried out practice in Rule of the Road, including sound signals. Two gigs were pulled by in excellent style and two gigs were sailed in very light airs. Conduct in boats, handling and orders were excellent.

The Unit then dispersed to instruction and badgework. Most instruction was given by Patrol Leaders whose knowledge appeared to be above average.

During the evening I inspected the boats and H.Q. The boats are in first class order and are well maintained by the troop. The H.Q. is admirably constructed and well suited to its purpose, though I learned that there is the threat of a compulsory purchase order being applied at some time in the not too distant future.

Since the last inspection the Unit has gained 9 Second Class, 3 First Class, 2 Seaman's, 2 Queen's Scout Badges, and 4 Scout Cords.

The inspection was kindly attended by G.F. Davidson, Esq., Assistant County Commissioner; F. Maund, Esq., and R.S. Leyshon, Esq., Assistant District Commissioners.

Leander are an alert, enthusiastic and well-organised Unit. Their Inspection programme was a pleasure to watch and ran smoothly. Continuance of Admiralty Qualification is heartily recommended.

P. CANE Lt. Comdr.

Inspection Officer for Admiral Commanding Reserves.

THE TROOP ACTIVITIES.

As I was called upon to write this at rather short notice, I may miss out a few minor items in the ensuing text, my apologies if I do. There have been two major items in the activities of the Troop since December, these were the District Cross-Country Race, and the Admiralty Inspection.

As far as the former goes, "Leander" were obviously back in form, for we won the Trophy, and J.Lomas Clarke came home in first place, and Alan Martin was third. It is quite a considerable time since we got our name on this particular Trophy, so now we are back in the running, we must do our best to stay there. We were all most grateful to the I.K.H.catering staff, who provided us with tea after the race, rounding off an enjoyable and successful day.

The Admiralty Inspection was, however, the most important event since the last issue of the "Water Rat" in December. As usual a lot of hard work went into the Inspection in the form of thoroughly cleaning Headquarters, as well as the more obvious instructions and rehearsals before its final appearance under the scrutinisation of Lt.Commdr. Cane, who was the Inspecting Officer. The Troop demonstrated Splicing, Life-Saving, Physical Training and Gig rowing in emergency situations.

There has, of course, been the usual influx of "Wide Games" during the dark evening spell, with Scouts running around the streets of Kingston at night, beating each other on the head, alas, this must finish now until our next exciting Arctic winter. Test-passing, a thing which must never be forgotten, has improved in that almost everyone has begun to pass tests at a fairly consistent sort of rate, the older members of the Troop have taken part in various Badge Courses, including Boatswain's Mate, Firefighter, and First Aider, with considerable success.

Now to the future. At Easter those boys who have their Second Class are going to camp at Buckmore Park, Bruno, Muff and Mac are also going to keep us out of mischief, while at Whitsun, the whole Troop will be going to camp as usual. In the Summer we have decided to go to Holbrook which is on the River Stour; the Troop has camped there before.

From what I can see, looking at my calendar, the Troop has been asleep during the last three months compared with the number of activities we are going to get through before Summer Camp.

H.RICKARD.

Annual Report to Shareholders.BOB-A-JOB INC.

Once again the Company has had a successful year trading, with a startling increase in profits during the week April to . We have been concentrating increasingly on employing young executives and salesmen, also we have become more mobile and now operate the country's largest fleet of trek carts, bicycles and roller skates. The regulations governing equipment to be carried by salesmen have been revised, and the new regulations are set out below:-

100ft. $\frac{1}{2}$ inch rope (pulling down trees; leading dogs, tying up plants, parcels, people)

Hose pipe and bucket. (Emptying sinks, ponds, rivers; extinguishing fires)

Newspaper, 1 dozen sticks 12 inches long. (Lighting fires).

Saw. (Shortening tables, carving meat, cutting logs).

First Aid Kit.

"Job Done" stickers, which won't possibly stick

Face Mask fitted with permanent smile.

Whistle (To use with smile when in difficulties).

Blow Lamp. (Paint removing, hair singes, arson).

Fire Extinguisher.

Trek Cart (To carry above).

Special Mention:

Phred J. Nurke of our Kingston Branch wins this year's medal for the most impressive results obtained.

Nurke began weeding in a riverside house near Kingston, unfortunately with an extra powerful thrust of his trowel he severed a root of a tree rendering it dangerous. In tracing the root to the tree he uprooted two fences and a flower bed, which he then replaced. In making his first incision in the tree he under-estimated his strength and allowed it to fall in the wrong direction, demolishing a ten storey block of flats, the property of a Mr. Wimpey, which luckily were unoccupied. They, however, demolished a gas main, water main, and electricity supply cable, and the penthouse fell on a string of barges, separating them from the tug. Luckily some of the top floors were able to be salvaged from the river bed as the barges had been carried downstream and damaged the weir, so letting the water out. The population of London is shortly to be allowed to return to the flooded city.

It is interesting, however, to note that when the river level fell, a comprehensive collection of gas stoves and pianos was seen on the river bed about 200 yards below Steven's Ayot.

Her Majesty's Government have not been slow to recognise Nurke's actions and our Medal of Honour was presented to him at Wormwood Scrubs.

In conclusion, we would like to assert that the company will go neither forward nor back, that we will consolidate our position, and that though the winds of change are blowing, our judgment will be correct, our policies sincere, and we hope to rake in lots more loot for our shareholders. (contributed anonymously by Mac.)

SCOUTING IN NEW ZEALAND.

Scouts in New Zealand lead a more outdoor life than their British brothers, this is partly because of the warmer, more cheerful climate, and partly because the call of the great outdoors is stronger. The native bush (unfortunately it is rapidly receding from the bushman's axes and very little remains now) offers exceptional opportunities for adventurous Scouts. The wild life aspect is excellent as far as insects and native birds are concerned, but animals are not so varied and interesting, there being no native animals but only imported ones, rabbits, opossums, deer and pigs. In spite of the lack of variety, these animals afford excellent stalking, photography and hunting.

Although New Zealand's coastline is not greatly indented, the Sea Scouts flourish where facilities permit, Air Scouts, however, are very scarce, I myself have never heard of any Groups.

Sport plays a most important part in New Zealand Scouting and inter-regional and inter-Group cups and trophies are strongly contested for, Scouts versus Boys Brigade tournaments are also popular. The main trophies are for Rugby in the winter and, of course, Swimming in the summer; a little cricket as well as some baseball is played too, but neither have really found their roots yet.

National Jamborees are held every so often, and also many Scouts are sent overseas to International Jamborees so that New Zealand, although distant from the rest of the world, is not forgotten.

CHRIS. MERCER

SENIOR TROOP ACTIVITIES.

Since the last edition of the "Water Rat" we have been doing everything from roasting pigs to rowing to Lambeth, as well as many different activities which have managed to exist in spite of the Siberian winter. Bob has now handed over control of the Senior Troop to Nye, who is being assisted by Act. Asst. Sen. Scout Leader Shrimp. (Seriously though, Shrimp and Nye and doing a grand job).

At the end of November, we had arranged to roast a pig at the Admiralty Inspection but when this was postponed to March 1st, we decided to have a barbecue. Noggin made a "spit" out of a broken chair, but after spearing the pig with it we found that when the spit was turned, the pig did not, so Nye drilled holes in the spit (showering the inside of the pig with bits of steel) and tied it on with wire. Although the pig burst into flames occasionally, everybody tried a piece of charred pork stuck in a dry bread roll, and they all survived the experience.

At Christmas, as well as the usual party (spelt ORGY), various members of the Senior Troop spent an afternoon and evening sticking decorations all over Kingston Hospital in a temperature of about 75 degrees. (This meant there was a 60 degree drop when we went outside). A few of us also braved both the weather and the women drivers of the W.V.S. and helped them deliver their "meals on wheels" through the snow.

In February we welcomed Chris Mercer as a new member of the Scott Patrol, and he was promptly installed as a "galley-slave" when one of the fibre-glass gigs was rowed down to Lambeth. The gig followed Keith and I, who were, and still are, practising for an attempt on the Devizes-Westminster Canoe Race. The canoe was practically sunk under one of the bridges when waves started coming over the top of it. We all slept or tried to sleep in unimaginable squalor on a converted coal-barge. The barge has been converted (vaguely) to act as a boat-store for the 35th Westminster Sea Scout Group.

Most of the Senior Troop have now got Ambulance Badges, and the Troop also has fully-qualified Firemen, Hikers, Athletes, Explorers, Canoeists, Swimmers and almost an Astronomer! We also have three Duke of Edinburgh Silver Awards, with more on the way.

The Admiralty Inspection found us doing a demonstration of sailing without wind, and one gig was drifting gently past the Half-mile tree before a wooden gig towed it back. We also did some pioneering, and a St. John Ambulance Officer gave a demonstration of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, using "resussy-Annie", an inflatable model that breathes out of the back of her neck.

PARENTS' CORNER.

We take this opportunity of thanking Mr. Allum, Mr. and Mrs. Coates, and Mr. and Mrs. Sanders for their services to our Committee, and we welcome Mr. and Mrs. Westlake, and Mr. and Mrs. Williamson. It is natural that there will be changes from year to year, and we are most pleased to have new members who may bring new thoughts and ideas into our money-raising activities.

You may have thought that your help was not required; this is not so - for instance at the last two Summer Fetes we could not fully operate all Stalls at the time of the official opening. Bad organisation, you may think, having too many Stalls and not enough helpers - the real answer was that about a dozen persons who had promised to help, just did not turn up.

For the Fete on 22nd June, we require a minimum of 50 people to man the Stalls - will YOU offer your services? Surely this is not too big a number to expect from "Leander" parents. You'll get a lot of fun from helping, and a lot of satisfaction from the knowledge that your son will benefit from your activities.

A number of the parents have been raising money for the Association Jamboree Fund by Coffee Evenings. These evenings have been most successful, both financially and socially. If you were unable to attend either Mrs. Hunter's or Mrs. Maund's "evenings" you have still the opportunity to enjoy a good "natter" amongst friends, at Mrs. Newmarch's, 33 Norbiton Hall, Kingston, from 8 p.m. onwards on 26th April. In conjunction with these "evenings" there is a "Bring and Buy" Sale - you bring an article for sale, and you yourself purchase an article brought by others. Of course you know that Keith Maund, a Patrol Leader in the Senior Troop, is one of the two Scouts selected to represent Kingston at the Jamboree in Greece, hence the reason for raising money for the Association who have promised to find £100 towards the costs to be borne by the two representatives.

We hope to see all of you at the 1st Kingston Hill ground on 22nd June!

SENIOR TROOP ACTIVITIES (contd. from page 8)

THE PARENTS COMMITTEE.

At Easter the Troop are going down-river in the gigs, leaving Keith and I canoeing merrily (or otherwise) up the Kennet and Avon canal and down the Thames. In August we are all going for a week on "Duet", a ketch belonging to the Ocean Youth Club, to which we all belong. Keith is going to Greece, to represent Kingston at the World Jamboree, at Marathon.

PETER.

HARD AS CUSTARD AND TWICE AS YELLOW.

The gig slid slowly away from the muddy hard, under the foresail only, Joe was at the helm, while Pete and Goof were sitting on the gunwale dangling their feet over the side to wash off the last traces of land from them. The crew was completed by Aus and Chris who were taking the sail-cover off the mainsail and putting the battens in it. Joe was dreaming rather in the warm sun, but this was not the time for such things he regretfully remembered.

"Come on Pete, you're not here to have a bath, get that mainsail up, and Aus, how about making some coffee."

The mainsail was soon up and the gig heeled over, the little waves making pleasant clucking noises against the hull. As they rounded the headland the full force of the fresh breeze caught them and Goof and Pete had to sit her out quickly and even then a little water came over the gunwale. Joe turned the boat towards the creek a few miles across the estuary, they were running on the port tack with reasonably heavy following seas now and Joe had to brace his feet against the opposite siling thwart to be able to hold the tiller.

"Coffee's ready" said Aus, "here take it will you before you drop the lot". Just as Chris was taking two of the mugs from him the tiller broke, and the gig swept round into the wind, taking water badly, then the sails started flapping and cracking madly.

"Joe, Chris has got a mugful of coffee down his neck". "Shut up Aus, give me a stretcher quickly, Pete you get bailing, and I don't give a damn if you can't find a bucket, use your hat or the poods!" Goof helped Joe knock out the broken-off piece of the tiller, and hammered a stretcher into the rudder in it's place.

"I hope these oilskins are as good at keeping out the spray as they are at keeping in coffee, I'm going sticky all over", Chris muttered.

Soon chaos was banished and the gig pressed on towards Havengore Creek, the main yachting attraction of the South-East region, still running and now about three hours out from the hard; Aus and Chris were sitting up in the bows eatong corn-flakes from mugs.

"Here Aus, my corn-flakes keep blowing away, how do you stop it?" "Well, Chris, if I were you, I'd stand behind the mainsail with my back to it, but don't let me force you".

Chris did as advised and as the next wave overtook the gig he promptly and quite neatly fell in, still holding his mug in one hand and his spoon in the other. He disappeared under the waves leaving only a little circle of corn-flakes on the water until his head broke the surface, and he began swearing at Aus.

"Of, blast" said Goof, "well we'd better take her round I suppose Joe". "Um, we

can't leave him there really, take the tiller will you Goof, O.K. take it slowly while I get the sheet in, and for goodness sake stop laughing Pete, put the plate down too, still, I suppose it is funny, and it'll wash the coffee away". The gig turned back and tacked towards the spluttering Chris, unfortunately the plate hit the bottom and a squall came upon them at the same time. With only four of the crew left, they couldn't hold her up and the gig turned over.

"Oh how silly, this can't really happen to us, and Chris, I don't quite see the joke, hey, this water's cold". "I think it's killingly funny, Pete, and anyway..." "Will you two shut up and go after those oars, and Goof don't bother to swim, the water's only about four feet deep. Luckily for the gig and its crew, the tide was going out, and soon the five of them were standing dripping on the mud looking around at the bits of gear scattered about. "Well, I suppose as I vaguely caused this, I'd better start clearing up" said Aus. "Oh, it doesn't really matter mate, we're with you, anyway we'll still make Burnham in the morning and it's all good experience, I don't know what for, but perhaps one day I'll find out. W.

AT THE HELM.

Spike Marline, Captain of Britain's latest atomic fishing vessel, the MacCod, is not at all dismayed by the suggestion that the use of radio-active lures in fish-farming may eventually kill off the whole human race. "What does that matter, if we get higher fish production?" he asked me. "Crank's, that's what these people are". Well wrapped in protective clothing, we stood on the bridge of the MacCod gazing aft at the purple coloured wake. "There have always been a lot of people who tried to stop progress. But you can't put the clock back no-how". Almost absent-mindedly, he raised the latest Mk.VII atomic harpoon and let loose a blast of strontium - enough to kill the whole population of England five times over - at a suspicious piece of floating vegetation alongside in the sterile water. Captain Marline is proud of the scars he bears from his pioneer work as a scientific fisherman. All his hair fell out some time ago, he has lost his sense of taste and smell, and last year his left foot came off, but as a compensation for this, he told me, he is now growing a third ear on the top of his head.

S. & W.

"LEANDER" B.P. GUILD

When the age limit of twenty-four was placed on Rover Scouts, the then Rover Crew decided, in common with many other Crews, to form a Branch of the B.P. Guild. "Leander" Branch has now been in operation for five years, and can look back on five successful ones. The aim of the Guild is to carry on the spirit of Scouting with the emphasis on helping their own Groups in any way possible; for our part we put in appearances at the Bazaar, Jumble Sale, and Garden Fete; added to this, the Guild run the Group's Swimming Gala each year.

Our Branch has an elected Committee consisting of a Chairman (yes, we do pay subs, - well, some of us), Secretary, Editor (for our monthly News Letter), and a Social Secretary. This gallant body is duly elected into office at the Annual General Meeting held on the first Friday of April. The monthly meetings of the Guild are held on the first Friday of the month at H.Q. Occasionally we branch out, and hold meetings at other spots, usually these are Ladies Nights when Guildsmen and their ladies meet in pleasant surroundings, usually over a glass of beer. Several members of our Guild can be very proud of the fact that they are founder-members of the Spartan Swimming Club. This Club does a great job in helping Spastics to learn how to swim; the work being carried out at Kingston baths on Thursday evenings. Besides this valuable work we also have some sub-aqua types who spend most weekends during the summer, messing about on the sea bed digging up all sorts of things - brass shell cases seem to be very popular and profitable. Last summer several very pleasant weekends were spent camping at a very pleasant spot on the Surrey-Sussex border. So you can see that we have very varied interests. This year we have been asked to give a hand during operation "Touchdown": our main task is to be around whilst the Chief Scout visits Kingston. The Guild wishes to extend an invitation to any old "Leanders" who would like to join, we would also welcome anyone who wishes to join, as there is no need to be an ex-"Leander" or even have been connected with Scouting, just a willingness to help Scouting, especially "Leander".

Guildsman Anon.

HEARD IN THE FO'C'SLE

A LITTLE bird told me that on April 27th, Lt. Barry Carr, R.N., and Jordanka Pancevic are being married at St. Andrews Church, Ham Common.

I HAVE ALSO HEARD that Brian Peters (Jim), R.N., and Susan Fowkes were married on 6th April. - Our congratulations to them all.

CUB NOTES

With Spring in the air and our thoughts turning to Easter and "Bob-a-Job", we are thankfully banishing the chills and ills of winter from our minds. The snow and cold weather, however, did not prevent us from having well-attended and enjoyable Pack Meetings. Pack Swimming, too, continued throughout the bitter weather. On one particular Saturday morning, when it was especially cold, there were only twelve people in the Swimming Bath and nine of these were "Leander" Wolf Cubs! (the other three were girls, two of whom were Brownie sisters of Cubs!) Keep it up, Pack!

At Christmas, the proceeds from our Carol Singing "Good Turn" went to the Oxford Famine Relief Fund. Our own Pack Christmas Party was a great success, and we were fully represented at the District Sixers and Seconds Party where "Leander" sang their version of "Three Witches" - I understand that ear plugs will in future be supplied!

It was good to see so many Cub Parents at the "Meet Leander" Group Show, where the Cubs enjoyed their opportunity of seeing what the other Sections of the Group have in store for them in the not too distant future. There is, incidentally, no truth in the rumour that the Fire Brigade was alerted during the Cub item!

Two new Chums have joined the Pack since Christmas: Christopher Bulleid and Geoffrey Cutter. They are now working hard for their First Star.

Towards the end of March our four Sixers - all Leaping Wolves - went up into the Scout Troop: Brian Evans, Crispin Hodges, Brian Leyshon and Nicholas Roberts. As they had been preparing for their Tenderfoot Tests whilst still in the Pack - due to co-operation with the Troop Scouters and Patrol Leaders, who had been down to Pack Meetings for several weeks before the Going Up Ceremony for this purpose - it should not be long before they are sporting their white lanyards. We are now preparing for the very busy year ahead. On 6th July, we shall be joining the rest of Surrey Wolf Cubs in giving a ten-thousand-strong massed "Grand Howl" greeting to the Chief Scout as he arrives by helicopter on Epsom Downs to spend part of the day with us. The Group Weekend Camp (for Scouts and the older Cubs) will be from 19th to 21st July at Buckmore Park Scout Camp in Kent.



LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

Dear Messrs. Editors,

Your two names appearing in the last issue of the "Water Rat" gives us the opportunity of writing to you in the plural. We visualise you sitting in your editorial chairs (or even upon the editorial settee) having cosy conferences on policy or more likely dashing round trying to find enough words to fill up the next issue. We only hope this small literary gem will lighten your search.

Nevertheless, it is heartening to see the "Water Rat" rising like a Phoenix amid its contemporaries the "Lash-up" and the B.P.Guild News Sheet - a nice classical allusion that is, you must admit! And what a hive of journalism the Group harbours these days! A pleasing contrast to past years when most "Leander" layabouts seemed quite unable to write two words coherently on paper about their activities. It is to be hoped that (unlike one of your contemporaries) you will not receive articles written on sticky sweet bags and other repulsive pieces of paper.

With the wealth of intellect which you bring to your editorial chairs from those eminent seats of learning in Kingston and the Thames Valley, we shall look forward eagerly to your further issues. Indeed we shall expect your editorials to contain authoritative and dignified comment on the contemporary "Leander" scene.

And on that high sounding note we regret we must take leave of you and hope for the best.

Yours, etc. and etc.

Clarence Clutterbuck.

Dear Sirs,

I wonder if you could answer the following query? When a boy goes to Summer Camp, why does he suddenly find himself unable to either use a pen or a pencil? In other words, why doesn't he write? When charged with his neglect when he comes home, the reply usually is: "But you'd have known soon enough if something awful had happened". There is logic in this but it doesn't help as one hopefully watches the post for a letter.

If a letter does arrive, questions you have asked are rarely answered, no clue at all is given to what the campsite looks like, except perhaps to remark "it is a bit muddy". Mum is going to find that out for herself when his kitbag and contents come home at the end of two weeks.

After a few years experience of this, when, in exasperation he is given postcards

already stamped and addressed, even they do not find their way home. Can it be that the Post Office, for some reason of its own, collects mail from all Scout Camps and disposes of it. I look forward with great interest to your next issue, when I hope my query will be answered.

(Signed) A Parent.

Anonymous, for obvious reasons.

Dear Sir,

May I ask your readers to stand for a moment in silence for the passing of that pillar of Scouting, the Trek-Cart. In the hey-day of Boy Scouts, between the wars, the trek-cart was an essential part of any Troop's equipment, and almost every week-end during the summer months a patrol of stalwart Scouts, led by their Patrol Leader could be seen trekking along the road, cart loaded high with tents, rucksacs, etc., en-route to camp. Now all is changed, "Dad, will you take us to camp in the car. I can't manage by train to take all the food I shall eat", even if it is all pre-cooked and frozen. "Don't stop in the car-park Dad, we're right up the other end of the site, and be sure to come in time on Sunday to help us clear up". Face the present-day Boy Scouts with a really tough weekend trek-camp, and let them do it all by themselves, and they would just curl up and die.

Yours Disgustedly, OLD TIMER.

THE SCRAN BAG - by NEPTUNE.

Is it true that as a result of Bruno purchasing a new limousine, there is a move to call in the auditors?

Has the fact that Shrimp is smuggling lead blocks into the hold anything to do with the present hysteria over atomic fall-out shelters?

Oxford dictionary definition: Muff - a stupid fellow. (Reproduced by kind permission of Mr. P. R. Duffin, S. E. G. B. Rtd.)

Press on Regardless part 1, rule 21. Take heed ye wayward ones.

Send a 4/6d P.O. for your "Leander" Almanac of Sound Signals at Sea" now.

Fiesta Yellow eh Nye. I'd have thought urrhg!!!

ROVERS and SANDLING.

There have been no regular Rover meetings since December, mainly because of the very small number of Rovers who are not at University or are Scoutmasters, two in fact and we are the Editors of the "Water Rat".

Late in December a party of us went down to Sandling with Dai Evans, and took down Sandling's mast and then beached her on the foreshore for the winter. Sandling is, of course, the focal point of the crew at the moment, and we are hoping to 'launch' her on the 27th April. Since the middle of March, Rovers and Seniors have been working on Sandling every weekend as the annual refit this year is to be particularly thorough, the main jobs being to completely repaint the bilges below decks, and externally to revarnish the foredeck and paint the hull itself. The fibreglass part of the decking also needs renewal, but this cannot be done until the weather becomes warmer, perhaps I should have said, unless, and only then by our chief fibreglassers Muff and Mac.

I thought that it might be a good idea to try to describe Sandling to you here, as probably a good many of you simply recognise the name, idly wonder to what it belongs, and then pass over it, slightly mystified. Sandling is an auxiliary cutter owned by the Group, and kept on moorings at the Hardway Sailing Club in Gosport. She is 4 59/100 tons displacement, 6 tons Thames Measurement, and has four berths, a two cylinder 8 BHP Stuart Turner two-stroke engine, and all the other necessary accessories required to be completely independent from the shore, such as a small galley, and a toilet. The sail area of Sandling is 386 sq ft and being a cutter she has a mainsail and two foresails. Sandling was built in 1951 at Leigh-on-Sea, and is what is termed an East Coast boat, that is she has a centre-plate which can be raised in shallow water, and is so designed to be able to sit on mud without harming herself, or heeling over at a fantastic angle. This last fact is most useful, especially to Mr. Fiesta Yellow himself. The frontispiece of this "Water Rat" is actually a drawing of Sandling, so this will give those of you who are unfamiliar with her, some idea of her appearance.

Last of all, the van. We hope that very shortly we will join the screaming hordes on the road. Mr. Grigg thinks that he has found one that would be suitable, so maybe in the next issue, I will be describing it to you, instead of Sandling.