



The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

July 2002

editor – Nigel Duffin

Skipper's Scrawl

First of all a thank you to those who helped Karen at the Ham Fair, which raised £260 for the funds, and also to all who helped at the Regatta. It was certainly a very full day and seemed to be enjoyed by all those taking part. Without the help of all the parents, Guild and supporters we could not have put on such an event. Starting at about 06.30, the course was laid out, tents erected on the towpath, a temporary pontoon positioned, boats collected, refreshments provided throughout the day and I think we finished clearing up at about 20.00. A great day which again helped Group finances with a profit of some £280 from the refreshments. Well done also to all the Scouts who took part and especially our under 12 age group who came 1st overall in their class.



As I write, the Troop are just completing their packing for summer camp in Holland and, judging by the high spirits, they are all looking forward to it.

When sections return in September there will be several changes in our Leadership. Unfortunately, Tim is standing down as Cub Leader due to personal commitments and I am sure you will all join me in thanking him for the hard work he has put in over the last 5 years. Steve D'Souza has agreed to take over and Keith Aldred will be assisting Steve and Mandy.

Ian Chappell will be moving over to the Scout section to assist Robin and Karen, so we can start to develop the new Explorer programme.

Maggie will be running Beavers and I am pleased that Deborah Byrd has agreed to help. We are, however, still short of Leaders and Instructors and I will be pleased to hear from anyone who feels they can assist. We need at least one more Leader in all sections.

The cost of running the Group has risen significantly over the last six months. In particular, the cost of insurance for the building and boats has risen by about 20%, as has the amount we have to pay to the Scout Association for each member to cover personal insurance and membership fees. Additionally, 'Active' – one of the wooden gigs – has just been returned to the original boat builders for re-



placement planks in the hull and I am expecting this to cost at least £2000.

In this *Water Rat* is a piece explaining the new subscription rates and collection arrangements agreed at the AGM and parents will also receive a standing order form for each Group member and a Gift Aid form. Payment by this method will not only reduce the amount of chasing overdue subs and record keeping by Leaders but will also assist us to claim back tax in the form of Gift Aid more easily. Ros Kimber has agreed to administer subs collection for all sections, so please return your forms to her as soon as possible. We want to claim this year's tax rebate as soon as possible.

Finally, have a good holiday break and we look forward to returning in September starting again with The Great River Race on September 7th.

Keith

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

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My Naval Career

Guildsman Paul Clements writes about his wartime experiences.

As a wartime medical student my 'call up' was delayed until I either failed my exams or qualified. Fortunately, and much to my surprise, I passed. So in due course the 'Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty' directed me to report to the RN barracks, Portsmouth 'for course' with the lowly rank of Probationary Temporary Acting Surgeon Lieutenant RNVR. With ten or so others I duly reported, feeling rather embarrassed in my brand new uniform.

The idea of the course was to transform what had been, until quite recently, a group of rebellious students into Officers and Gentlemen. About three weeks were set aside for this remarkable feat which was, apparently, to be achieved by informing us of the response of Nelson to various situations and encouraging us to do likewise. This became tedious to say the least.

Things came to a head when we were shown over Haslar Hospital by an officer of high rank with rings up to his armpits. Haslar was his pride and joy

but we, hot from London Teaching Hospital, were not impressed. When we arrived at the operating theatre to be told that this was the very room where Nelson had his stump dressed, I turned to my neighbour and said "It hasn't changed much has it?!" "Who said that?" said he. "Me, Sir," said I. Next morning at breakfast I found a travel warrant to north east Scotland on the table! The Bureaucratic Machine can occasionally work fast!

Having pulled a lot of strings to avoid being called up for the Air Force, I was initially somewhat disappointed to find myself banished to a Naval Air Station in north east Scotland. As it turned out (the shooting war now being over) a seagoing appointment meant swinging on a mooring with nothing to do, whereas I was fully occupied.

After another course, which included flying in Tiger Moths, I emerged as a so-called 'Specialist in Aviation Medicine'. So, in addition to the normal clinical work, I was involved with instructing pupil pilots in the medical aspects of flying.

One of my duties in this line was to demonstrate the effects of oxygen

lack at high altitudes. For this we had a decompression chamber which was a cylinder about 12ft long and 6ft wide with room for about six trainees and me. By turning off an individual oxygen supply it was possible to demonstrate the deterioration of simple skills like writing and mental arithmetic. This could produce curious results but got boring after a time, so, to add interest to the proceedings, I decided to take a cat up with us. There were plenty of semi-wild cats around so we trapped one and took it into the chamber.

Unfortunately, instead of going quietly unconscious as I expected, the cat went mad and rushed around the chamber, shrieking loudly and demonstrating an impressive array of tooth and claw. Finally it sprayed us liberally with urine, vomit diarrhoea and blood (human!). Pressure was rapidly increased, the door was opened, the cat emerged and was last seen heading for hills at a speed only equalled by my pupils heading for the showers!

Needless to say, by popular request, the experiment was not repeated!

Paul Clements

Leander on the silver screen

Guildsman Morrie Buer has been investigating some 16mm films of 1950s Leander activities. He also has some 9.5mm films (sprocket holes down the centre) which may be of Leander interest, and is trying to locate a projector. Can anyone help?

Last month I received a parcel from Gordon Biden with very battered and rusty reels of film. There was an old Xmas draw ticket from 1958 on the back of one reel of film, and written on this was 'Rovers, Easter 56, Sandling work and Broadstone', but!!! it was in my handwriting. Eventually, a 16mm projector came from the school of a kind headteacher who lives opposite me but my problems were only just beginning!

Three attempts to Superglue the broken take-up drive belt gave no success – it started to break between the glued joints. I hit upon the idea of 2-3 elastic bands. At this stage I found a service label detailing services from 1982-88.

What a revelation as I projected onto the side of my electric oven unit (a wonderful screen). There was the Rover Crew showing off the Barker Cup shield they had won, with even a blackboard showing April 1956. Many youthful faces N-F, K-Q, G-G, J-S, ELE, R-T, and Buster Cole among others. Sandling being worked on, also the mast being erected using the silver birch tree as a crane. Camping at Broadstone Warren with much eating

in progress. Also many small boys smoking some concoction – I know not what. Ray Taylor and Peter Burton being also in evidence. Some shots also of R Pidduck's house with repairs to a sidecar in progress.

The second reel proved to be a real gem, a river boat shuffle in progress, all in – wait for it – 'Glorious Technicolour'. Many familiar faces all jiving to the jazz band. The Dodges. Sharps. Fentimans, Quinners, Fletchers are to be seen amongst the pint glasses, as well as others.

Finally, there are the three reels of 9.5mm films.

Morrie Buer

New arrangements for subscription payment

There are two things parents need to be aware of: new subscription rates, and the method of payment by quarterly standing order from September 2002.

Forms for parents are enclosed with this Water Rat for you to complete and return to Ros Kimber, using the postpaid envelope supplied, by 1st September.

Leander subscription rates have remained unchanged for several years now, and we have moved from a situation of being able to balance the books to one where there was a small excess of expenditure over income in the last financial year.

It was agreed at the AGM that subscription rates would be increased from September, that payments would in future be made by quarterly standing order and that we would need to have more efficient arrangements for the reclaim of tax by Gift Aid.

Last year's subscriptions totalled about £5400, which means that we could reclaim tax of about £1500 as long as we have auditable evidence.

What are the new rates?

Beavers/Cubs:

£17.50 per quarter (£70 p.a.)

Scouts/Explorers:

£40 per quarter (£160 p.a.)

When are subscriptions payable?

1st October, 1st January, 1st April, 1st July.

Why can't I pay as I did before?

The previous method of termly cheques/cash has become far too demanding on leaders' time and has made it very difficult to have an auditable record for reclaim of tax under Gift Aid. Sometimes members have left the Group owing subscriptions.

What is a standing order?

It's an instruction to your bank to make regular payments. It is entirely under your control. Payment is initiated by your bank, not (as with Direct Debit) by Leander.

Why have I got more than one standing order form?

You will have one form for each member of the Group, so I'm afraid that you big Leander families have a bit more form-filling to do! This is to make Ros Kimber's job easier in tracking subs paid.

What happens if my son/daughter leaves?

You can cancel a standing order at any time by telling your bank.

What happens when my son/daughter goes from Cubs to Scouts?

They get a lot more use of Group equipment, of course, but unfortunately subs are higher! Ros will send you a new standing order form which will also cancel the existing one.

What is a Gift Aid Declaration?

It is a statement by a taxpayer that they want a charity to get back from the Inland Revenue the tax paid on their donation (this includes membership subscriptions to Scout Groups). There is no extra cost at all to the person paying.

When did it start?

It was announced in the budget in March 2000 and started on 6th April 2000.

What about subscriptions I have already paid?

Subscriptions from 6th April 2000 can be included retrospectively. Leander will be reclaiming tax on these, provided we have specific evidence of the payment.

Who can sign a Gift Aid Declaration?

The person completing it must be a taxpayer. You must give your full name and date the form.

How long does it last for?

Until it is cancelled. You will not need to sign another one for Leander.

When can I cancel?

It can be cancelled at any time. All you have to do is tell us.

Does it apply to all payments to Leander?

All donations and subscriptions are covered (unless they are paid out of a CAF account, because that has already had tax recovery).

What does it commit me to?

Nothing at all. It says nothing about any payments you are promising to make.

Why is it worth 28p in the pound?

The subscription or donation is treated as the money left after paying standard rate of income tax (22% in the £). For example, a payment of £40 is the net after tax from £51.28 (£51.28 minus 22% is the £40). Leander gets back the £11.28 which is about 28% of the £40 paid by you.

What if I only pay tax at a lower rate?

It does not matter. The law says it is OK provided that the total amount of tax paid (income tax or capital gains tax) is enough to cover what the charity gets back.

What if I pay higher rate tax (40%)?

Leander can only claim tax back at the standard rate (22%). If you are a higher rate tax payer you can get back the extra yourself by completing a tax return.

What if I stop paying tax?

Just let us know and we will cancel the Gift Aid Declaration.

What if I've already signed a Gift Aid Declaration?

Please sign another one so that we can make sure we have all the paperwork in place for September.

What if I've got more questions or a problem with the scheme?

Please telephone either Keith Maund, Group Scout Leader, (020 8399 5846) or Ros Kimber, parent of a Scout and a Cub (020 8546 9053).

*Nigel Duffin
(Chair of Executive Committee)*

Water Rat 'lite'?

Isn't this Water Rat a bit thin on Group activities? What's been going on?

Any storm-tossed editor will tell you that if they don't receive much, then they have to use their own fertile imagination!

The Troop, when you receive this, will be in camp at NaWaKa, at Roermond, in the Netherlands. They've been very busy preparing for this and I'm sure there will be some interesting stories to tell and photos to see when they come back.

Before that, it was all hands to the pumps for the Regatta on 7th July. Leander did well this year, with the under-12s being overall winners of their age range. The under-12 gig crew won their event and are pictured on the front page. The coxed pairs, Owen Walters, Nick Pratt and Mattie Biddulph came 2nd and Charles Kimber was also 2nd in the canoe race.

Under-16s came 2nd overall, with Miles King winning sculling over the stern, Aiden Hazard coming 2nd in dinghy pulling and the under-16 gig also coming 2nd to Ajax.

Venture Scouts also did well, coming 2nd overall. The gig crew came 2nd and Matt King won sculling over the stern, but my limited intelligence hasn't revealed any more details.

Karen asked me to thank all those who helped her with the Ham Fair this year and raised £260. I would like to thank her for not only giving up all the time she does to making our Troop so successful, but also turning her hand so effectively to fundraising as well.

This has been, for many, exam season, and attendance at meetings has not been as high as usual. The domination of young people's lives by homework and testing is, to my mind, an unfortunate feature of modern life. I'm sure that those involved in Scouting realise that the most important things you learn in life are seldom learned in school, certainly not in lessons, and can't be tested by examinations.

Let's look forward to another year of learning the useful and important things in life with Leander, and, if you don't want me to ramble in the next issue, send in the articles!

Nigel Duffin (Editor)

Kingston Theatre

Many people in Kingston are unaware that the building emerging from the relics of the Odeon cinema opposite the Police station in the High Street includes, as well as a full range of unaffordable luxury accommodation, a brand new theatre for Kingston, including three separate performance spaces, café, bar and art gallery. This exciting project promises to be an enormous cultural boost for Kingston, a town long well-known as a philistine shopping Mecca since the demise of the Overground Theatre in Ashdown Road.

Wearing another of my voluntary, unpaid hats, I am Friends' Officer of the Kingston Theatre and have used my editorial licence to include with this Water Rat a leaflet encouraging you to join the Friends and support this bold venture. The Theatre is due to open in Spring 2004, but, before then, there are many Friends' activities, site visits, etc., and in Spring 2003 there is a Community Play in the shell – everyone is encouraged to take part.

This is our upstream neighbour on the river – *be part of it!*

Nigel Duffin

Working Parties

Parents' working parties on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month are for regular cleaning and maintenance of the HQ, allowing our Leaders to get on with planning and running programmes.

All Leander families (except leaders) are divided into groups of four or five and one parent from each family is asked to come along from 10:00 to 12:00, arranging swaps if necessary. This is a new rota starting September.

Please would the **first named* on the list arrange to collect a key from Mike Freeman (020 8549 8634).

Sept 8 – *Ashpitel, Aviram, Barley, Biddulph, Blyth

Sept 22 – *Bowers-Clark, Bradbury, Brennan, Brook, Chapman

Oct 13 – *Cockle, Ford, Foster, Freeman, Geraghty

Oct 27 – *Goodall, Harrison, Hazard, Healy

Nov 10 – *Kearns, Kersey, King, Lafon, Lear

Nov 24 – *Lightfoot, Livesey, Maguire, Manson

Dec 8 – *McDonagh, McGuiness, Mellett, Merridan, Mitchell

Jan 12 – *Osborne, Ozdilli, Paintin, Pearn, Peto

Jan 26 – *Pilcher, Plumb, Pratt, Seeley

Feb 9 – *Steele, Thomas, Walters, Whitfield

Feb 23 – *Wingrove, Woods, Yagnick, Young

Dates for your Diary

July 22 – Troop Summer Camp

Sept 7 – Great River Race

Sept 8 – HQ Working Party:

*Ashpitel, Aviram, Barley, Biddulph, Blyth

Sept 16 – Executive Meeting, 8pm

Sept 22 – HQ Working Party:

*Bowers-Clark, Bradbury, Brennan, Brook, Chapman

Oct 12 – *Water Rat* copy date

Oct 13 – HQ Working Party:

*Cockle, Ford, Foster, Freeman, Geraghty

Oct 27 – HQ Working Party:

*Goodall, Harrison, Hazard, Healy

Nov 10 – HQ Working Party:

*Kearns, Kersey, King, Lafon, Lear

Nov 18 – Executive Meeting, 8pm