



The Water Rat



Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

December 2002

editor – Nigel Duffin

Skipper's Scrawl

Firstly a warm welcome to Michael King, who has agreed to take on the job of Assistant Explorer Leader. We have had a long meeting with Rob Moore, the District Commissioner for Explorer Scouts, and have now been able to agree a way forward which will hopefully be beneficial to the Group, District and, most importantly, to the Leander Explorers themselves. We can therefore now look forward to the new programme beginning to get under way at last.

When our meeting had finished, Mike was the first to leave HQ and the rest of us were astounded at him hurling a rock at the Ward Room window. When Karen opened the door onto the balcony, it was to learn that he had just seen a man fall off the landing stage. I must commend him and John on getting the man out of the river and then, with Robin's assistance, getting his heart beating and him breathing again. It was a fair while before the ambulance arrived so, without their prompt action, the man would have drifted off down the river and drowned. Regrettably, we do not know the outcome after the ambulance had taken him off, but hopefully he survived.

Those of you who have been on the boat deck recently will have noticed that the wooden gig 'Active' is now back and looking resplendent after her extensive repairs at the boat builders and the varnishing carried out by

the Guild. We can now look forward to many more years of use by the Group. However, I will soon be asking for your help to raise the funds for the repairs that were done!

Yet again, we have wet tents drying on boat deck. However it was in a good cause, since the Troop came second to Sealion in the joint District night hikes. Could it have been the wet conditions that helped Sea Scout groups get 1st and 2nd places?

Finally, let's finish with wishing Ruth an enjoyable Christmas as she sets off shortly for the World Jamboree in Thailand and we look forward to her account when she returns in January.

Keith

Dates for your Diary

- Jan 7 – First Troop meeting 2003
- Jan 12 – HQ Working Party:
*Osborne, Ozdilli, Paintin, Pearn, Peto
- Jan 15 – First Pack meeting 2003
- Jan 20 – Executive Meeting
- Jan 26 – HQ Working Party: * Pratt, Smith, Steele, Walters
- Feb 9 – HQ Working Party:
*Whitfield, Wingrove, Woods, Young
- Feb 23 – HQ Working Party:
*Aviram, Barley, Biddulph, Bowers-Clark, Bradbury
- Mar 9 – HQ Working Party: *Brook, Cantello, Chapman, Cockle, Edwards
- Mar 15 – Copy date for *Water Rat*
- Mar 17 – Executive Meeting
- April 14 – HQ Working Party:
*Ford, Foster, Freeman, Geraghty

Cubs gain stage two Swimmer badges

Cubs now have three girls in the Pack (with another joining in January).

They have started the new programme and are working towards the 'Global Challenge' badge. This involves recycling, energy conservation, international charities and finding out about cultures and traditions other than their own.



As well as these badges, there are also activity badges, some of which are staged over the Beaver, Cub and Scout sections. Congratulations to our Cubs, who have now all gained stage two Swimmer badges.

The first meeting of next term is Wednesday 15th January.

Akela

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

Headquarters: 92 Lower Ham Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey
Telephone: 020 8549 6286 — www.leanderss.free-online.co.uk



Coxwain's Corner

Winter activities are now keeping the Troop fully occupied. This year, the programmes is somewhat different, as we are integrating our traditional seamanship elements with the requirements of the new Scout programme.

The programme is divided into zones – Scoutcraft and Adventure, Global, Community, Fit for Life, Creative Expression, Exploring Beliefs and Attitudes. In addition, there are a number of challenges and 70 activity badges to gain. There are good resources available to back all these up, however we are proceeding at our own pace as the new zones and requirements are quite different to much of the old programme.

The main difference now is that awards and achievements are given for participation rather than for reaching certain standards or levels of ability. As Sea Scouting involves ability and safety based activities, we will ensure that the necessary standards will continue to be met.

The main event has been the Surbiton and Kingston & Malden Joint District Night Hike, held at Boiderhurst at the end of November. Two Leander teams were entered, with the B team coming 2nd overall. Luckily, the heavy rain of the previous weeks held off that night, although the Box Hill area was like one giant sponge, oozing water everywhere. Some parts of the 10km route were quite difficult to navigate in daylight; at night it became a real challenge, so everyone did very well indeed.

Early in December, the joint District Chess competition took place at 1st Hook in Tolworth, with a surprise outcome – Leander A team won the trophy. Aply led by Jonathan Smith, two lots of practice matches in the weeks before must have made a difference – they only lost one game. Well done to all those who took part, an excellent result.

I hope that you are having a very relaxed Christmas break and, don't forget, the first meeting after the holidays is Tuesday 7th January.

Coxswain

Sunday Morning Working Parties

Don't forget – we rely on you to keep the HQ 'ship-shape'!

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 rota started in September. A new rota starts at the end of February

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

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

Jan 26 – *Pratt, Smith, Steele, Walters

Feb 9 – *Whitfield, Wingrove, Woods, Young

Feb 23 – *Aviram, Barley, Biddulph, Bowers-Clark, Bradbury

Mar 9 – *Brook, Cantello, Chapman, Cockle, Edwards

April 13 – *Ford, Foster, Freeman, Geraghty

April 27 – *Goodall, Harrison, Hazard, Kersey

May 11 – *King, Lafon, Lear, Lightfoot, Maguire,

June 8 – *Manson, McDonagh, McGuinness, Mellett, Merridan,

June 22 – *Mitchell, Osborne, Ozdilli, Paintin, Pearn,

July 13 – *Peto, Pratt, Smith, Steele, Taylor,

September – *Walters, Whitfield, Wingrove, Woods, Young

A great opportunity

As reported by Keith, Michael King has agreed to take a warrant as Assistant Explorer Leader.

Having been with Leander for nearly nine years, you never get the feeling that you've 'been there done that' with this Group – there's always new things to try or progress your knowledge further. I started off in the Scouts at age 11 and seemed to naturally progress through to what was the Venture Scout Unit. Unfortunately, this collapsed due to unavoidable commitments the members had. Ever since, I've been trying to get down on a Tuesday night to help out Coxwain and Karen.

When I was told that there was a new unit in the early developing stages for scouts 14–18 and asked if I was interested in becoming an assistant leader, it seemed such a great opportunity. When the Venture Unit collapsed I was still interested in completing some attainment badges I have always had my eye on, I have always been interested in gaining a formal qualification for operating power boats and my ambition at the moment is to complete my Queen's Scout Award. With my new position, not only have a chance to complete these badges but also stay with the Scouts and carrying on doing what I enjoy!!

Michael King

