



The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

May 2003

editor – Nigel Duffin

Skipper's Scrawl

Those of you at the AGM will have heard that Maggie and Debs are standing down from Beavers and I am sure you will all want to join me in thanking them for the time and effort they have put into the section. I am pleased to say that Margaret Mongan and Amanda Bungey have agreed to take over but we will also need at least one more person willing to act as a leader. Steve and Keith also need help with the Cubs so please let them or myself know if you feel you could help.

On the Scout side it's good to be back on the water at last and Tuesday nights are at present being taken up with practice for the regatta which will be taking place on Sunday the 6th July. Groups are coming from as far afield as the Midlands and Torbay. It is always an enjoyable day, so please come down to help if you can. Debbie Pratt has again agreed to take on the organisation of the refreshments on the tow-path so please let her know if you can help on the day, as the more there are, the shorter the shifts! If you are a Beaver or Cub parent come down and to see what is happening (and join in) as it won't be long before your sons or daughters will be taking part.

I am pleased to say the Group's financial position is now looking a little better. We have been fortunate to have received quite a few donations towards the gig repair, so should be shortly in a position to pay off the loan.

We have also been looking at the group tents and have decided it was time to purchase a new mess tent (20' by 15'). As those who went to the family camp last year will appreciate, the marquees were getting a little old and the adverse weather in Holland at Summer Camp last year didn't help! The new tent will be with us in time for the Regatta and, of course, for this year's summer camp.

Finally well done to all those who attended the St George's Day parade, where Leander were judged the best for turnout and marching.

Keith

M W W/P C

I think (and I hope I'm not divulging any secrets here) that this refers to the Guild Mid Week Working Party Club. The Guild Newsletter tells me that these stalwarts of Leander have been working steadily on the boats and Headquarters and, amongst other jobs, have made a storage rack for the mats, resited and refurbished the main mast, and are fabricating a wall-mounted mast holder for the Main Deck (to keep the GSL happy) which promises to be a work of art, made of the strongest, lightest and toughest of metals. Look for yourself!

Quartermaster wanted

Not only do we have boats and tackle, we also have a lot of camp equipment, and one of the problems now is that we do not have a quartermaster to look after the equipment. Karen and I have sorted out kit and looked after the stores for some time now, but we do not have enough time and we really need someone who can make an inventory of what we have got and exercise a degree of responsibility over the equipment.

Obviously we will still be involved, but an extra pair of hands would make all the difference – and would only be needed a few times a year. Any one out there fancy a go?

Coxswain

Dates for your Diary

June 8 – HQ Working Party:

*Manson, McDonagh,
McGuinness, Mellett,
Merridan

June 22 – HQ Working Party:

*Mitchell, Osborne, Ozdilli,
Paintin, Pearn

June 23 – Executive Meeting, 8pm

July 6 – National Scout Regatta

July 13 – HQ Working Party: *Peto,
Pratt, Smith, Steele, Taylor

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

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Explorers on the water at last

Since the last entry into the Water Rat, the Explorers have been busy and not very quiet.

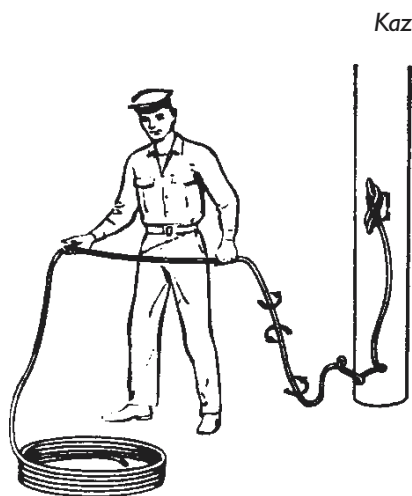
Yes, at last we are on the water and we are still very busy on land as well. Over the past weeks the Explorers have welcomed Ella Pearn in to the Unit officially by renewing her Law & Promise in front of a packed Church on St Gorge's Day. I would also like to thank the rest of the Unit and Michael for attending, as Leander for the first time in over ten years won the best turnout and marching award.

Since that, I am very glad to see most of the Explorers have been turning up on Tuesdays to help and instruct the younger Scouts on the running of the boat deck and to improve their rowing skills.

Finally I am able to say that the Unit members are starting to learn new skills such as using tools (old & new), and hopefully over the next few weeks the fibreglassing on the Coypups will be finished and the painting can begin. Whilst they have been learning new tricks they have also started their training for the Regatta in July. But in the meantime they have many other things

to do, such as: Ice Skating, Dragon Boat Challenge, Five-a-Side Football, Ham Fair, Wardening at Polyapes (Weekend Camp), K&M Explorers Open Evening, the National Regatta and – last but not least – Summer Camp, and all of the above take place over the next six weeks (tired is not the word).

Finally, as of September, I will not be around on a Tuesday night, and will be concentrating a lot more on the Explorer unit.



Don't do this ... unless ...

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. A new rota starts in September.

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

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

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

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

Leander and Sealion Explorers in Dragon Boat Challenge

The Dragon Boat Challenge, organised by the Rotary Club, had thirty-two boats with teams of 10-12. There

were three sets of heats, with those going through determined by timing. The joint Leander and Sealion Explorer

crew got into the semi final, completing the 250 metre course in a time of one minute five seconds.



Coxswain's Corner

As usual, we seem to be very busy, now that the better weather and lighter evenings are here. The Troop numbers have gone up again, with new people joining, we seem to be rather popular at the moment. Tuesday meetings are somewhat hectic, as we try and get everyone out on the water – sailing, canoeing, pulling and sculling. Ian has now started taking a few people out sailing – excellent news, as we have not been able to provide that very easily in the last few years. The Explorers have been down to assist with instruction and supervision, much appreciated and very valuable, as we would not be able to provide water activities for the now much younger Scout section without their assistance.

We are also bringing back the special regular link we had with the Cubs a few years ago, whereby sixers and seconders come along to a meeting and can get a taste of water activities. For a lot of Cubs, Scouts can appear to be a little daunting and this experience should provide a valuable taster for the older Cubs just before they are due to come up.

Our big event now is the National Regatta in early July, with lots of practice for the chosen crews. The District six-a-side football tournament will be held in couple of weeks, slightly different this year, as instead of junior and senior trophies there will be a Scout tournament and an Explorer tournament.

Summer Camp at Broadstone Warren has a good number going – still spaces if anyone wants to come.

Coxswain

... you want this to happen ...

Cubs up to full complement

Cubs have started a new term having said goodbye to Ben Brook, Nic Patterson, and Andrew Chappell. We welcome Hannah Pratt, Beatrix Sibley, Ella Howe and Thomas Hearn to replace them, bringing Cubs up to its full complement of twenty four.

We have a varied programme this term, incorporating an Olympics, hike to Teddington Lock and a Fire Station visit. These will count towards the Athlete and Adventure badges. We have also initiated a liaison with Scouts, where the sixers and seconders join in a Scout meeting. More on that next time.

Swimming has been coming on leaps and bounds, with three Cubs – Dominic Mellett, William Pearn and Huw Walters – all having completed their Stage 4 Badge, and half way to their stage 5. This involves 40 lengths of the pool without stopping – not for the faint hearted!

May I make another plea for helpers, and for parents to honour their commitments to being helpers. We have had a couple of near misses, where we have been very close to cancelling the meetings. We would ideally want another 2-3 parents to be warranted leaders, and I am happy to take people through what that entails. Please remember that Keith and Steve are volunteers and need as much help as possible.



Beavers work on new Challenges

Beavers have a busy programme this year under their new leaders. They are starting on the Discovery and Friendship Challenges, part of the Beaver programme.



Discovery activities are about finding out how things work, showing that they know how to keep healthy, and showing their creativity.



The Friendship Challenge involves finding out about life in a different country, finding out about the job of a person in their local community, and showing that they are helping others.

As well as these, there are also plenty of outdoor activities planned – a mini Olympics, walk and litter pick in Richmond Park – as well as the usual regular swimming trip.

Parental help is needed for a couple of these weeks, so please contact Margaret or Amanda.

Points of Sailing

