



The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

May 2008

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Fun for All at Family Camp

Since my last report in March, Leander took part in the District St George's Day Parade. Sadly, I have to report this year was the worst turn out by the Troop with only 9 out of 23 turning up and marching with the Beavers and Cubs. But I do have to say to all that did turn up, a BIG thank you and how smart and well behaved you all were.

Next year Leander will be leading the parade, so I ask all sections now to please make sure you turn up and to make Leander big and proud !!!

Many thanks to Dick Riches, on the big clean up going on the back garden. I will be asking for parental help after the Summer break to clear up the garden further, so we will be ready for our next RN Inspection in November.

About fifty Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, Parents and Leaders took part in this year's Family Camp held at Bentley Copse. Fun was had by all, and not a single bit of wet canvas came

home (which has to be a first in a long time).

During camp, we were visited by Bob Bushell (Royal Kingston District Commissioner) to award Nick Yelland (Assistant Cub Scout Leader) his full appointment, and Karen Rean (Beaver Scout Leader) her Wood Badge. The Wood Badge is awarded to all leaders to confirm that they have completed all of their training within Scouting.

Just an up date on how the Home Counties Gigs are going. 'Chief' is now awaiting the paint to be applied and then will be ready to be re-launched. 'Hero' needs two coats of oil onto the woodwork and then paint to be applied and then she will be ready to go. 'Gordon Talbot' is awaiting the Mutineers. I am pleased to say this year we have purchased covers to place over the boats while they are on the moorings, so from now I hope there will be a lot less bailing and a lot more pulling going on.



Coxswain's Corner

I suppose we should regard the weather as a challenge, but so far this year we have been able to get everyone out on the water at Tuesday meetings. As always this is the time for those who have joined recently to acquire the various skills that will enable them to handle boats safely on the water. Learning how to pull a coypu or paddle a kayak can take a little time and it's nice to see the progress being made.

The National Sea Scout Regatta is only a few weeks away and it will be interesting to see the difference this year, as it looks like being a two day event and will be run on a course further upstream near Hampton Court.

We have always done well but there is a lot more competition this time so our intrepid crews will need to be on the ball - that does mean we will be training - that always gets results.

Summer Camp will take us to Braggers Wood Scout Camp Site, Christchurch, on the edge of the New Forest, with opportunities for off-road cycling, hiking Canadian canoeing and acquiring some of those vital camping skills.

Let's hope for some dry days and a bit of sun.

Coxswain

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Family Camp at Bentley Copse

Report by Daniel Edwards – a Novice in these Affairs

Bravely we set forth from Kingston, armed only with a couple of pages of directions, two very hyped Beavers and enough camping gear for a round the world trip. As the road narrowed and the thought of reversing with a trailer became a distinct possibility we saw a sign and squeezed our way up the not altogether promising entrance to Bentley Copse campsite. We had arrived.

What followed was a fantastic couple of days. When we were able to prise the children away from the fire we embarked on the first of our planned activities, Go- Karting. Pedalling a large go-kart around a twisty, hilly course for an hour should have tired out the children, but no, it was only the adults foolish enough to push the go-karts up the hill who needed a sit down. The children were eager to move on to the next activity, map reading. With a lot of forceful discussions as to the exact meaning of the symbols on the posts it was left to Amy Blackburn to have the final say (never argue with a teacher, especially a Geography one!).



Lunch was followed by a very competitive hour on the assault course with everyone giving their all to get round in a fast time. A few people would have been nursing some spectacular bruises (you know who you are!), but well done to all the children who



managed to climb the VERY high rope ladder without falling off once. If that wasn't enough we then re-grouped at the hut and practised our circus skills. Uni-cycling in a forest, wearing walking boots and being watched by some very sceptical children should not be attempted after a long day of activities! All the children tried hard to master juggling, Diabolo and stilts, although Toby Edwards-Rean's shins looked as though he had had a fight with the stilts and lost, badly.



We were then offered the following choices; campfire cooking, tie-dyeing or a practical session with Tilley lamps. Any bruises were quickly forgotten with Nick Yelland's campfire cooking! Any opportunity to poke a fire was seized immediately, this time with the added bonus of either chocolate bananas or chocolate oranges (no, I'm not entirely sure about the oranges but I have heard that they were quite nice, really!). Robin Burr showed us

how to light Tilley lamps, something all good Scouts should know, and Karen Rean had a very successful time tie-dyeing white shirts blue or red, on purpose!



I nearly forgot to mention that we had a flying visit from Bob Bushell who managed to find time in his extremely busy schedule to perform two important tasks. Back at the camp fire circle Karen Rean was awarded her Wood Badge and Nick Yelland his Warrant, well done to both of you. For those of you who don't know what a Wood Badge is, ask Karen when you next see her!

A hearty meal prepared by Karen Loizou with the assistance of Vicky Washington meant that we were all ready for the evening activity, Campfire songs, lead by Karen Loizou and ably helped by Dominic Washington. Much amusement was had as everyone joined in (eventually) and made themselves look very silly. I hope we were heard by all the rest of the people camped at Bentley Copse and if not, we had better try harder next time. A nice mug of hot chocolate and into bed ready for the final day, thoroughly exhausted (well I was and I think most of the children were judging by how quickly they stopped talking).

Early Sunday morning and we soon had a fire going, just to keep the children happy! A quick breakfast then off to our first activity, Rifle Shooting.



This was a new experience for many of the children, and some adults, but our resident crackshot (Karen Rean to those of you who don't know) was on hand to show us how. Lots of discussion along the lines of "well, next time I'm sure I can do better" and "can I have one more go, please" as we finished and headed off to the Archery range. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed archery - a lot harder than it looks - Joseph Edwards Rean and Eleanor Washington showed us how to do it having had a little practice on a recent school trip but this was something that everyone definitely wanted to do again.

And that was that. All of a sudden we were back on the road heading towards Kingston, wondering where the last two days had gone, whether we will ever manage to get the wood smoke out of the children's clothes and thanking our lucky stars that it didn't rain (I know, rain doesn't matter but that only applies when it hasn't rained!). Thanks to everyone involved in the huge amount of organisation that went into the event, a really great time was had by all - looking forward to the next one, honestly!



Explorers

We are still busy giving the boats a full makeover; most of the dirty work is done and its down to the sticky black paint and dodgy smelling varnish jobs!

Soon they will be ready for the river to be used again in Summer.

We have also been taking advantage of the good weather, taking the Coy-pus out on the water whilst taking shifts on the boat deck. Johnny Burr even braved a K1, and managing at least 10 minutes without capsizing.

Three Explorers attended a day visit to Family Camp, and were very impressed with sleeping pod facilities

We look forward to a busy Summer with lots of time on the water, especially with our newly expanded group of Explorers.

Sadly this term we lose Zoe as a Unit member, as she is now 18, but she will still be attending as a helper within the Group.

Mattie

Up & Coming Events

Sat/Sun 14/15 June - District Cub Giant Sleepover, Southwood, Tolworth (for more info see Nick)

Sat/Sun 5/6 July - National Sea Scout Regatta, Kingston Grammar Sport Fields, Thames Ditton

26 July-2 August - Troop Summer Camp at Braggers Wood, Poole, Dorset (for more info see Liz (Troop) & Karen L (Explorers))

Wileman News

I just thought I'd let those at Leander who remember us know the latest news of the Wileman family. Daniel has just become the father of twins born on April 7th. Dylan and Charlie were a few weeks early but they are now at home with Mum and Dad. Mark has joined the army and started his basic training on April 14th.

One hell of a month for us.

Regards - Nick and Jan Wileman

Ladies' Team



Are you interested in being part of a Leander Ladies' Team for the Great River Race, this year or next?

If so, please contact Karen Rean asap -kr8886@yahoo.co.uk

This year the event takes place on Saturday 13th September 2008, from Richmond to Greenwich.

Lots of hard work needed beforehand to get a winning team together!

Busy Beavers

The term started with the Colony growing to 24 members in an attempt to reduce the size of the waiting list. We had to say goodbye to the five oldest Beavers: Arjun Bhushan, Charlie Hallala, Clare Jackson, George Waller and Kirsty Frame have moved on to Cubs, but not before they had the opportunity of taking part in the District Beavers' Bowling Competition and the St George's Day Parade, both in Tolworth. At our first meeting back we welcomed eight new Beavers, who are; Ben Longhurst, Benjamin Tahsin, Hannah Edwards-Rean, Matthew Cramp, Max Biddulph, Thomas Dugdale, Tom Roadnight and Toby Britton. They are due to be Invested at an outdoor meeting (weather permitting) which will really be in the spirit of Scouting, the way Lord Baden-Powell intended.

Another newcomer is Gonul Tahsin (Benjamin's Mum) who is officially our Colony Assistant and whose special interests are arts and crafts. The Parent Rota system continues to run smoothly thanks to all of the enthusiastic parents who come along to help at our meetings.

We completed our work towards the Faiths Badge with a most interesting visit to the Kingston Mosque. Mary Hurl and Hannah E-R were thrilled to be able to wear a headscarf provided, James Harrison recited the Beaver Promise for those present and afterwards Harry Vincent was able to inform his parents that The Noble Qur'an is read from right to left. We were given a warm welcome and were lucky enough to meet the

children having their Arabic lessons, ask lots of questions and listen to the call for prayer as well a reading in both English and Arabic. The hour flew by and the Imam urged us to come back in August for their Open Day. Please look at their website for future events: www.kingstonmosque.org.uk/

Next term we will be entering the District Beavers' Sports Morning at Polyapes and hope to have a winning team ready for the event! This should fit in nicely with our aim of getting the Fitness Challenge Award by Monday 14th July which is our last meeting before the Summer break. Our regular swimming sessions have been very popular and each week more Beavers complete the Swimming Stage 1 Badge under the watchful eye of Dick Garnish.

Thanks to everyone who helps to make our Colony such a thriving bunch of busy Beavers!

*Karen Rean
Beaver Scout Leader*



100 + 1 Challenge

Congratulations to all those who took part in this Royal Kingston District Beaver Scout Challenge.

Together we collected a brilliant **£423.31** – Well Done Everyone!

We have spent it on:
two toilets for Africa,
clean water for two families in Bangladesh,
the gift of sight for three Indian children,
saving an Indian tiger,
taking an Indian child off the streets,
a Chicken Bank for an Indian family,
training for two teachers,
an Oxfam emergency shelter,
a wild flower meadow in Britain

Isn't it amazing what we can achieve when we all work together? Thank you to everyone who took part.

Discover the Chef in you!!

You are invited to a Pampered Chef Party on Friday 27th June at 7.30pm, finishing at about 10.30pm, at Leander Headquarters.

This is a fund-raising event where you can learn to spend less time in the kitchen, try out great products and taste mouth-watering recipes, whilst also having fun!

Anyone who brings three guests or more will receive a free gift from our host, Beverley.

So, come and chill over a glass of wine and help me to raise money for Leander.

Liz

