

The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

June 1998

Skipper's Scrawl

Many thanks to all the parents who have worked so hard tidying the back garden and really making it a space we can use for Scouting activities. We have decided to turf this area to make it quickly available and June 6th is the day you can pop down to help with this. My special thanks to Katie Grant, who has really got everyone organised on this and so many of the other new activities this year.

The "Admiralty Inspection" (as we know it) is on Tuesday June 23rd this year. Really it's the annual inspection of Royal Navy Recognised Sea Scout Groups. There are no more than a hundred Sea Scout Groups in the whole country which are recognised by the Navy as being the best, and Leander has been proud to be one of this hundred for many years. Each year, the whole Group is inspected to see whether it is still up to standard and this year the Inspecting Officer is Lt Cmdr J H Millington. Parents are welcome to attend. You will need to arrive before 1830, when the Inspecting Officer is due, and there will be no parking in front of the Headquarters on Lower Ham Road. The Inspection will end about 1930, but Beavers and Cubs will be finished before this and you are, of course, welcome to leave before the end.

Three new fibreglass gigs have been ordered at a cost of about £21000, partly to replace and partly to

expand our fleet of boats to accommodate increased numbers. We already have at least £16000 towards this, including grants of £2000 from Kingston Council, £9500 from Kingston Rotary Club, and a donation of £1600 from Keith Quinon of the Leander Guild from his fund-raising events. (Thanks to the parents who helped out with the last evening.)

Subs are coming in much more speedily now, thanks to Jan and Nick Wileman, but we will need a special fund-raising push over the next year to raise the rest of this money and to buy extra equipment for Beavers and Cubs. You will see in this *Water Rat* that there a lot of new ideas, most of which will be good fun.

One of these is the National Seas Scout Regatta, this year on Sunday 5th July, which we host and at which we sell refreshments in aid of Group funds. Please come along to support your sons and daughters and offer your help with the catering.

The flagpole and bench to go on the 'bridge', which we are buying in memory of Mick Chinnock, are on order and when you visit the Headquarters for an event this Summer or Autumn, you should be able to see and enjoy these.

Keith

"Garden Party" – June 6th

Now that the back garden is more or less levelled, we are planning to have a Garden *Working* Party and turf it on Saturday 6th June. Plenty of work for all comers. Morning and afternoon – arrive any time after 1000 and stay for an hour. That's all that's needed!

Ham Fayre – June 13th

More volunteers and offers of cakes, etc. would still be welcome. Also, anyone with a tow-bar who could take the trailer from Headquarters to Ham Common in the morning.

Sarah Barnard (546 7371)

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

Headquarters: 92 Lower Ham Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey

Telephone: 0181 549 6286



Beavers

“Charge” is the current favourite game with Beavers (If you don't know – don't ask!!). On St George's Day, each of the four teams (Port, Starboard, Fore and Aft) made a dragon. They've been busy on recent Monday evenings doing badge making, building art-straw towers (the tallest was over 2m high!) and a pancake race with tennis rackets, not frying pans, but REAL pancakes.

Events to come include a nature ramble, tracking, still-life drawing and a “longest-day” day (sounds more like a nightmare!).

Lots of swimming sessions mean that five Beavers, Jonathan Manson, Jake Mellett, Matthew Patterson, Ben Sollis and Owen Walters, have almost passed their First Swimmer Badge. Probably, by the time you read this they will be fully qualified. Philip Bray and James Marsden gained their Beaver Scout Badge before going up to Cubs in April and Owen Walters and Charles Kimber have recently passed this.

Buffy

Venture Report

The Venture Scouts have now fitted new doors to their Den and the heating ducting has been connected. The pool table has been finished.

Ventures helped with the Scout Spring Holiday Camp at Broadstone Warren and Alex was quartermaster. He and Alexis are now 'official' Instructors with the Scouts.

The rebuilding of the “Ebbage” is in progress. The cabin top, centre bench, wiring and cabling have been removed and are to be replaced. Garry is also hoping that the Ventures will help him complete the installation of the showers in time for the Summer Season, when Leanders traditionally fall into the River rather a lot.

The Unit will be attending Aquameet, at Longridge on 27th June, are planning to enter a STAR crew in the Regatta and WIN the gig race, will be camping and helping with the Scouts at Hawkthirst in the Summer, welcoming two new members from the Troop, making a strength of nine. As if that weren't

enough, there are even rumours that three members *may* be presented with their Venture Awards at the Admiralty Inspection.

Unfortunately the Car Boot Sales, which used to take place at the North Kingston Centre, have been stopped by the Council. Selling refreshments from these was a good source of income for the Venture Scouts and much of the money raised there was ploughed back into the local community.

Ness

Subs

First of all, we would like to thank those of you who have paid your subs promptly since we took over the collection. There have been one or two hiccups, but hopefully they will be ironed out in the near future.

At the moment, we have collected two thirds of this term's subs and are eagerly awaiting the remaining much-needed funds. Please remember to send in your child's subs as soon as possible each term or give them to us personally when we are at Headquarters. Do not pay the leaders, but pay us direct.

If you are unsure of what you owe, we are only a phone call away on 0181 942 9236. Thanks in anticipation.

Nick and Jan Wileman (Cub/Scout parents)

Parents' Help

There was a very good response to the recent form asking for parents to indicate how they could help Leander work more effectively. Many thanks to all those who have revealed their hidden talents. We have already taken advantage of many offers, as the events listed in this *Water Rat* will show.

Apologies to some Beaver parents who did not receive the mailing and yet were nagged for a response (computer glitch? human error?). If you find one of the forms enclosed with this *Water Rat* and have not already responded, please return it to Katie Grant, 60 Kelvedon Close, KT2 5LF.

Coxswain's Corner

As the better weather approaches, we expect to get out on the water for most meetings. There is always an air of keen expectancy as everybody has had enough instruction sessions inside. Once again considerable boat maintenance has been carried out. One of the coypus has had a major refurbishment, with renailed gunwale and crutch housings, thwarts and centre-board rescrewed, fibreglass repaired, new bottom boards made and varnished all over. This has been completed by Jonathan Burr and Michael King as part of their Chief Scout Award. Of the two county gigs, "Hercules" has been varnished and "Hermes" is currently still under repair. These two boats are nearly 50 years old but, with regular maintenance, they carry on giving excellent service

A substantial amount of badge work has been accomplished, in particular ten fire safety badges have been gained, requiring regular attendance at Kingston Fire Station for six weeks. Congratulations – William Livesey, Oliver Seeley, Peter Osbourne, Richard Caraffi, Alex Whichold, Richard Weatherburn, James Ford, Jack Young, Alex Kearns, Jack Butcher.

Apart from essential instruction in seamanship and badge work, in March we held a cycle orienteering meeting in Richmond Park – successfully completed in pairs, with the usual interesting variations in map reading technique.

St George's Day Parade had a good turnout from the Troop with everyone looking very smart. We came second in the Marshall Trophy competition (awarded for badges gained and activities entered) but our predominantly young troop and large numbers count against us (we gained the most points).

By popular request, a Spring Camp was held after Easter at a site new to Leander – Buckmore Park near Chatham. Apart from the totally waterlogged and extremely muddy ground, we had a very good attend-

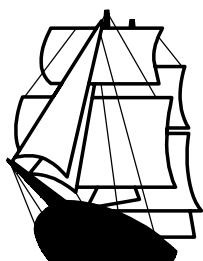
ance, 18 Scouts and Ventures. The sun shone, we climbed, abseiled, did archery and target shooting, used the heated swimming pool, went caving, held wide games and had a camp fire each night. For Alex Kearns, Thomas Geal, Patrick Hazard and Ben Woods, this was their first camp with the Troop – they survived very well! The only problem after a camp like this is that it took two weeks to wash down and clean all the tentage and equipment used.

Another regular swimming session at Teddington Pool produced four swimmer badges and three advanced swimmer badges, which means we keep up a high standard of swimming ability. (NB: District Swimming Gala in Autumn). Well done Joanna Hunt, Tom Pemberton, Ben Woods and Patrick Hazard (Swimmer), Patrick Hazard, James Mitchell and Danny Wileman (Advanced).

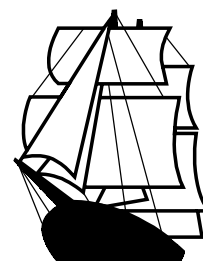
Preparations are well in hand for Summer Camp at Hawkhurst Adventure Centre, Kielder Water, Northumberland. We will be joined by 1st Malden and Surbiton Sea Lions, so there will be a party of 45 Scouts, Ventures and Leaders going. With Nawaka in Holland last year and the National Sea Scout Camp this year, the quartermaster's stores are in full use, as once more we will be taking most of our camping equipment. With over 400 Sea Scouts attending and a wide variety of activities planned, this should be a good camp.

With the Royal Naval Inspection and National Regatta coming up, we will be practising and refining all our water activity skills, as we have a high standard to keep up in both these events. Finally, we are pleased to welcome Harry Blackhurst, Tom Richards and Robert Mitchell from Cub Scouts – that brings our numbers up to 34 in the troop. Getting all the boats out at meetings can be a bit hectic, but now we have a regular rota of parents to assist and watch out for traffic, that makes a considerable difference.

Coxswain



Set sail for the Summer Ball...



Leander Family Camp '99

The last Leander Family Camp a few years ago was reckoned a great success by the hundred or so people who attended. The weekend of 21/23 May 1999 has been booked at Chalfont Heights Scout Camp, in Buckinghamshire, where activities such as swimming, archery, shooting, assault course, etc. are available.

The Group can supply all equipment, but we do need a couple of parents to help with the admin.

Family Day/Disco – July 12

“End-of-term” fun day from 2pm to 6 pm.

Starting with boating and activities on the River for all the family. From 4pm, Disco indoors, and barbecue outside – on the NEW LAWN!

Tickets £2 per head, including disco, food and drink extra. £6 family ticket (2 adults & 2 children). Maximum three children per adult, please! Tickets in advance available from your parent coordinator or Katie Grant (546 0625)

Summer Ball – Sept 19th

This year’s BIG Leander event to round off the Summer and raise funds.

- Buck’s Fizz
- Live Band
- Full five-course Summer dinner
- £20 a head

Why not make up a table. Wine will be available by the bottle. Complete the ‘tear-off’ slip below and return to Katie Grant.

Sunday Teas

A number of people have offered to serve teas again on Sunday afternoons at the Headquarters for passers-by. This can be a very pleasant way to spend a Summer Sunday afternoon and used to raise a regular amount of money as well as being a good advertisement for Leander. We hope this will be supported.

Great River Race

If the Leander Mums’ team could do the race last year, how about a Dads’ team in 1998? The race is on Saturday September 5th, from Ham House to Greenwich. A gig is available, so if you are interested, get in touch and get your friends and work colleagues to sponsor you. Tuition and practise sessions provided.

Coxswain

Second-hand Uniforms

Uniform outgrown? Kid in a new section? Jill Woods (546 4604) has agreed to coordinate selling second-hand uniforms. Donate surplus or redundant items to her and they can be sold for Leander funds. She is planning to be at the Headquarters on a Tuesday in September (probably 15th), otherwise give her a ring.

Dates for your diary

June 6	Back garden working party
June 13	Ham Fayre
June 23	“Admiralty” Inspection
July 5	National Sea Scout Regatta
July 12	Leander Family Day & Disco
Sept 19	Leander Summer Ball

 Leander Summer Ball – Saturday 19th September 1998

Please reserve places for the Summer Ball

A cheque for is enclosed (£20 per person, payable to Leander Sea Scouts)

Full names of those attending

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To: Katie Grant, 60, Kelvedon Close, KINGSTON UPON THAMES, KT2 5LF