

The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

May 2001

Skippers Scrawl

Following the Parents' Evening and AGM, I am pleased to welcome Paula Hazard and Chris Ford to the Group Executive Committee. It will be good to have some new members and hopefully give a better representation of parents' views on the committee. If anyone who could not attend the AGM feels they would also like to make an input into the running of Leander please let me know as we could do with about three more parents to give a balanced view of things.

Apart from the imminent section uniform and programme changes, one of the important matters discussed was our financial situation and the need for more fund-raising if we are to keep our boats, equipment and building up to scratch. Increased capitation, insurance and other costs coupled with the loss of fund-raising events which Keith Quinnen used to organise, means that we are facing a shortfall in our budget this year of some £2000. It was generally felt that we do not want to have to raise subscriptions and therefore a fund raising committee has been set up led by Phil Chapman assisted by Annette Osborne, Marion Harrison, Alison Paintin and Paula Hazard. I would like to thank them all for volunteering and I am sure you will be hearing from them in the near future. Please give them your support so that we can get our finances back on an even keel.

Finally, on the Beaver swimming side, I understand that the first session at Teddington pool

went quite well and despite reception not having been told we were coming, a club changing room was made available and the learner pool proved slightly better, being a little deeper. Hopefully this will prove a good venue for the future, as swimming is such an important part of our programme.

Keith Maund

National Sea Scout Regatta



Following a year's break, we will again be hosting the National Sea Scout Regatta on Saturday 30th June & Sunday 1st July (racing will probably be only on the Sunday).

This is a joint regatta with the Sea Ranger Association.

We are expecting about 200-300 competitors, so we will need a lot of help from parents to set up and clear away and also to take care of refreshments on the towpath, etc.

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

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Guild remembers Bruce Enzer

At their March meeting, the Guild had a talk from Vernon Coles, D.S.M. about his service with midget submarines during the 1939-45 war, giving an insight into the courage and determination of all who served in this unique branch of the submarine service. A former Leander, Bruce Enzer, was killed during an incident in a midget submarine in Hervey Bay, Australia.

Bruno remembers that Bruce came into the Troop when his family moved to Lower Ham Road and soon gained a reputation as a daredevil. In the Winter of 1939-40, the Thames froze over right across at Kingston and, when it started to get warmer, the inlet on the island was still thick. Bruce got himself and 'Skipper' (his dog, not the Group Scout Master) to the island and paddled down to the HQ, stepping ashore as though it was the most normal thing in the world. All that Bruno and the others could get out of him about his service life was that he was learning to dive. They thought it was in a diving suit, but now they know better.

Join the Mutineers

If you fancy rowing in a gig crew, and also don't mind visiting the occasional hostelry along the river, the 'Leander Mutineers' are looking for new recruits. The Mutineers, a mix of leaders and parents, row every week, with the ultimate purpose of putting in a well practised crew for the Great River Race in September. It is also very good exercise, and the River at night is quite beautiful.

If you would like to give it a try call Ian Chappell (8541 3952) or Robin Burr (8949 8228).



Coxwain's Corner

At last we're all out on the river. The extraordinary amount of water that has been flowing past Leander has now abated and conditions are ideal for boating. It's quite a sight when the whole troop is out – last week the traffic was amazing, we had four coypus, and two gigs out, plus eight or so canoeists. They then had to thread their way through all the other traffic – eights, fours and sculls from Kingston and the University rowing clubs and a large number of K1, K2 and outrigger canoeists from the Royal canoe club belting round a figure of eight course just outside the HQ. We also had SRS Frobisher from Putney, a Sea Ranger Unit ranger, using our boats as well, so it was rather like the M25 on a busy day.

A joint Leander and Surbiton Sealion crew will be entering the Dragon Boat races to be held in early June – a unique opportunity to take part in what should be a great event. Please come along and support the crew – it's on Sunday 3rd June, from Kingston Bridge to the *Boaters*, so it could not be nearer.

The National Sea Scout Regatta is coming up in July so we will start selecting crews for the various events – the Regatta didn't take place last year, this year will it will be held jointly with the Sea Rangers, which makes it much more fun.

Unfortunately our planned Summer camp, the Welsh Jamboree, Creosu 2001, in Brecon, was cancelled because of foot and mouth restrictions, but we are currently sorting out an alternative.

Finally, thanks to all those who turned out on St George's Day, the Troop looked very smart and we were extremely lucky with the weather. If the Regatta had been held in 2000 we would have had enough points to win the Marshall Trophy – there's always next year.

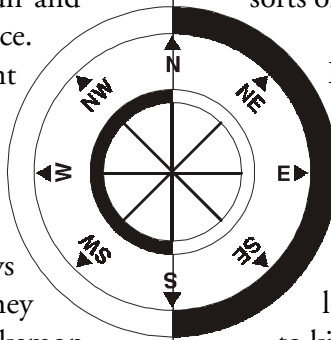
Coxswain

Cubs read maps and navigate

May I start this section with an apology for no entry in the last edition of the *Water Rat*. This entry, I hope, will now bring you all up to speed with what is happening in the Cubs. Last term we completed two badges: the Map Reader and the Artist.

Ian was in charge of the Map Reader badge and had all the boys learning to use a compass (when you go on your Summer holidays, test them if you dare!). They all had a great time learning the compass points and, after some fun and games, how to get from place to place. We will test again, as this is important for the years ahead.

Steve and Mandy had fun with the paints, and the patterns on the screen were as a result of the boys cutting potatoes and printing. They also had fun with drawing the Pokemon



(Hope I have spelt this correctly, or they will never let me forget!) As it was Easter, Mandy had them all painting eggs to complete the badge.

Also during the term, we had fun with the events that help make the meetings. In the week of Shrove Tuesday we had the pancake games. They had fun trying to toss them, and the floor had a good clean from the dropped ones. They were popular, and the help from the kitchen seemed to keep producing pancakes on demand with all sorts of toppings.

Due to 'Foot and Mouth' we were unable to go to the Park, however, we did go out to the river, and the Sixers and Seconders had a good time laying a track in the dark and the rest followed them well. When it came time to kidnap a Cub – well, what can I say? – the Sixers and Seconders were as quiet as a herd of elephants when trying to sneak up on the others! I found out the grass was very wet and fell a couple of times. Just ask Steve what the path was like!

We say goodbye to Owen Walters, who will go up to Scouts. We welcome from the Beavers Sam Aldred and Huw Walters.

This term we hope to be out and about a lot more, and get the fresh air we all need at this time of year. We are going to work towards two more activity badges – the Navigator and Home Safety.

We will also be playing sports outside and getting ready for the District five-a-side competition. As current holders of this trophy, we want to win again – so, Cubs, get the forms back to me as soon as possible.

We are looking to having a sleep-over at HQ on Friday 20th July for the Sixers and Seconders. Details to follow.

Tim (Akela)

Finding North by day

Most English churches are aligned East and West.

When it is sunny, you can find the points of the compass from the Sun's position:

- 6:00am – East
- 9:00am – South East
- 12 noon – South
- 3:00pm – South West
- 6:00pm – West

Your watch is also a compass. Lay the watch on the palm of your hand, with the hour hand pointing to the sun. The point exactly between the figure XII and the hour hand will be due South.

These two methods depend on using GMT (Greenwich Mean Time). BST (British Summer Time) is one hour ahead, so 12 noon GMT is 1:00pm BST.

Beavers swimming again

Summer's here and the Beavers will soon be out and about by the river and in the park, practising their tracking and sporting skills!



After a term without swimming, we will be using the Teddington Pool once a month this term – training hard to catch up on swimming badges. Other activities planned include our own polling day and arts and crafts.

This term we say goodbye to Huw Walters and Sam Aldred who have moved up to Cubs and we welcome Charlie Pilcher to the Colony.

As ever, we are keen to recruit new helpers to our team and, now that we have girls in the colony, we will need another female leader when Ros leaves at the end of this term. If you can help or know anyone else who might be able to, please let one of us know.

Tony, Keith and Ros

Family Camp 2002

We plan to hold a family camp at Downe Scout Camp Site, Kent, over Spring Bank Holiday weekend 2002. At the last family camp we had over 120 Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, brothers, sisters and parents, all under canvas. It is a great event so make a note in your diary now.

Sunday Working Parties

Parents' working parties on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month are very successful in keeping up with regular cleaning and maintenance of the HQ. This relieves our Section Leaders of these chores. 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. The remains of the current rota is below; a new one will follow in the July *Water Rat*.

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

June 10 – *Paintin, Patterson, Pearn,
Pratt, Seeley, Snow

June 24 – *Sollis, Steele, Thomas,
Wallace, Walters, Whitaker

July 8 – *Whitfield, Wingrove, Woods,
Yagnick, Young

Dates for your Diary

June 3 – Dragon Boat Race

June 10 – HQ Working Party: *Paintin,
Patterson, Pearn, Pratt, Seeley,
Snow

June 18 – Executive Committee, 8p.m.

June 24 – HQ Working Party: *Sollis,
Steele, Thomas, Wallace, Walters,
Whitaker

June 30/July 1 – National Sea Scout
Regatta

July 8 – HQ Working Party: *Whitfield,
Wingrove, Woods, Yagnick,
Young

July 15 – *Water Rat* copy date

July 20 – Cub Sixer & Seconders sleep-
over at HQ

September 11 – R.N. Inspection

September 15 – Great River Race