



# The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

March 2002

editor – Nigel Duffin

## Skipper's Scrawl

Leaders have now had a chance to see the new programme which is being implemented later this year with new badges and a progressive theme through the various sections. A special District camp was held at Polyapes for those of Explorer age and there was a chance to discuss the various aspects, which were generally very favourably received. Apart from badge changes, at explorer age (14-18) there will be much greater co-ordination between the various units in the District with Explorer Scouts being able to participate in activities with other units outside Leander. At the moment it has not been decided where the various units will be located in the district as they can be either self-supporting or linked to a group e.g. for 'specialist activities' such as ours. Hopefully the full programme will start to be implemented in September with completion by 2003.

St George's Day parade will be on the 28th April this year and Leander will be leading the parade with the St. George's flag and also doing the readings at the service. I would therefore ask all parents to note the date in the diary as we want to make sure as many members as possible take part.

I am sure everyone will have noticed the big 'clean up' operation that has been started in the boat deck and the back garden. Thanks are due to the Leander Guild for their work on this.

They have also started to work on one of the wooden gigs, but the discovery of several soft planks has meant that this has come to an abrupt halt whilst we enlist the advice of a specialist boat builder. Unfortunately, it is expected that the only remedy will be six new bottom planks and a hefty bill for the work involved, since it is not a job which we can do ourselves (unless any of our readers have or know someone with the specialist skills necessary).

Finally, a word on subscriptions. I understand from Ros that there are several people with dues outstanding. Can you please ensure that all subs are paid by the 5th April so that we can take maximum advantage of reclaiming gift aid from the Inland Revenue, especially as it looks like we are faced with considerable extra costs this coming year.

Keith



Are YOU ready for  
» St George's Day Parade?  
» Leander AGM?  
» Family Camp?  
» Ham Fair?  
» National Regatta?  
» Your HQ Working Party?

## Dates for your Diary



April 14 – HQ Working Party:

\*Freeman, Cockle, Farrell, Foster

April 28 – HQ Working Party:

\*Hazard, Gerachty, Goodall, Harrison, Healy

April 28 – St George's Day Parade:  
2.20pm at 3rd Kingston HQ, service at All Saints'

May 12 – HQ Working Party:

\*Kearns, Kersey, King, Lafon, Lightfoot

May 12 – *Water Rat* copy date

May 16 – Leander A.G.M. 8p.m.

May 19 – HQ Working Party:

\*Maguire, Manson, McGuinness, Mellett, Mitchell

May 25/26 – Leander Family Camp, Downe

June 8 – Ham Fair

June 9 – HQ Working Party:

\*Osborne, Paintin, Pearn, Pilcher, Plumb

June 17 – Executive Meeting

July (6/7) – National Scout Regatta

July 14 – *Water Rat* copy date

July 22 – Troop Summer Camp, Nawaka, Holland

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

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



## Beavers enjoy a busy Winter!



The Beaver Colony has been having fun with a very varied programme within the warm confines of the hut.

Games have remained a firm favourite with the boys and girls, with *Qik Cricket* rapidly becoming the most requested activity. We also held our annual Pancake Race, which was keenly contested by all, including our new-comers.

We welcomed three new Beavers to the colony: William Plumb in Port and Oliver Kersey in Aft, who were both invested on 11th February by the Skipper. After another place became available, we also gained Luke Gerachty into Fore, although Luke has yet to be invested.

One of the big highlights was a Harry Potter night, where the riddles of a quiz based on the film had to be solved. Also several of the colony magically transformed themselves into Hogwarts students, and engaged in some broom-flying!



All of the Beavers prepared lovely bouquets for their favourite ladies on 4th March, as well as cards. An Easter Egg hunt and party ended the programme this term.

We'd like to repeat our request for volunteers to take-up the role of Assistant Leader. It's a lot of fun, particularly with the lighter, warmer evenings on the way. Please talk to any of us, or contact the Skipper, Keith Maund, direct on e:mail: [keith.maund@btinternet.com](mailto:keith.maund@btinternet.com).

Maggie, Keith, Tracie and Tony.

## Headquarters Graffiti

You may have noticed that the HQ, and many properties in the area, have recently been intensively targeted by graffiti sprayers. There have been a series of sustained attacks, often immediately after the last amount has been removed, with different paints being used, some of which are extremely difficult to get off the brick-work.

The good news is that the police eventually staked out the area and arrested a number of children (and adults!) who are being charged accordingly.

The building is currently free of graffiti, so, if you are passing and see any fresh scribbling, please let someone know, it's much easier to remove spray paint when it is fresh.



## Cubs

This term we have all completed the Personal Safety badge in three meetings. We had games and a quiz with group discussions about safety at home and when out and about. Some Cubs have also completed badges at home. There is some delay in getting hold of badges – this is due to the change in the programme that is currently underway. When we have more details we will tell all.

We are keeping the swimming up to twice a term. This we hope will get all the Cubs through badges 1-3 before they join the Troop. We are asking for help with the swimming. So, if you can give up two evenings a term, (four hours in total) to take swimming, this would be most welcome. This will free the others to run the meetings at the HQ. Problems have occurred due to work commitments this term. If you can help, please let me know as soon as possible and we can get everything sorted before the new term. We hope to make up the missed swim for Yellow and Red sixes this term.

Family camp is looking popular in the Cub section and I will be passing on all the details to Coxswain in the near future. If you haven't sent me your forms please do so as soon as possible and we can get them all in. My e-mail address if you need to e-mail it to me is: [Tim.pearce1@btinternet.com](mailto:Tim.pearce1@btinternet.com).

Next term we are going to be out and about a lot more as we hope the weather will be with us. So can I ask in advance for the Cubs to arrive in uniform with a change of clothes if required. The uniform include black or brown school shoes – no trainers. They have time to change before we start activities and also at the end of the evening.

We are hoping to complete the Athletics badge this term, as this can be done as a form of sports evening. All Cubs can gain one of the three badges on offer and have fun at the same time.

As I said earlier, we have a change of programme in the section and we await confirmation of what is happening and when we know we can resume more badge work.

This term we are hoping to have a sleep over at the HQ. This was done a couple of years ago and was a great success. We will meet up on Friday evening and have an evening activity and a full day on the Saturday. Last time we managed to have an afternoon on the river with the Scouts. The day came to an end at about 5pm so the Cubs had 24 hours away. We would have to limit the numbers so we will confirm details with you soon.

If you have any skills that you feel would help the section please come forward and let us know. We always accept offers of help. If you want to help take on the swimming, please let me know and we will sort out the details – this would be a great help.

*Tim (Akela)*

## Sunday Working Parties

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 started in March and this one goes up to the Summer.

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

April 14 – \*Freeman, Cockle, Farrell, Foster,  
April 28 – \*Gerachty, Goodall, Harrison, Hazard, Healy,  
May 12 – \*Kearns, Kersey, King, Lafon, Lightfoot,  
May 19 (transferred from May 26) –  
\*Maguire, Manson, McGuinness, Mellett, Mitchell,  
June 9 – \*Osborne, Paintin, Pearn, Pilcher, Plumb,  
June 23 – \*Pratt, Steele, Thomas, Walters, Whitfield,  
July 14 – \*Wingrove, Woods, Yagnick, Young



## New Guild Chairman

At their AGM, the Leander Guild elected Dick Riches as Chair for the coming year. The Group Executive was pleased to welcome him to their meeting on 18th March and the Committee thanked the Guild for their donation of £720 to Group funds this year.

The January Guild Newsletter has an account from Graham Fennell of the Senior Scouts' 1956 Summer trip. They sailed in three open boats, two 12-foot dinghies and an 18-foot gig down the Thames and up the Medway to Hoo, near Rochester. Here they visited the younger Scouts who were in camp there.

The journey took two days, with an overnight camp in the grounds of T.S. Worcester.

## Coxwain's Corner

Once again the long nights of Winter are receding and the Troop is looking forward to getting the boats out on the water. What a change this Winter has been – although Lower Ham Road has been under water a few times, we have not had the continuous high water and flooding that last year brought.

In the last few months our numbers have grown again, we are now up to 36 Scouts, with a seemingly endless supply of cubs coming up. They are a really good bunch and all very keen – Akela has trained them well. Welcome to James Young, Jake Mellet and Charles Kimber. Attendance has been very high at troop meetings, averaging over 85% – a very good achievement. We have not been involved in quite so many activities this time, which is perhaps not such a bad thing, considering the current demands of homework and school activities.

We were not at the RN Swimming Gala at HMS Excellent, always heavily oversubscribed, and we couldn't get our usual much reduced tickets to the Boat Show. However, meetings are full of variety and challenges – Karen has been running a big push on badge

work, as this year will be the last for the Marshall Trophy in its present format. We have had navigation nights, another inter patrol cooking competition, learnt a lot of first aid, got to grips with knots and lashings, and tried out lots of new games.

In early March, an Explorer weekend was held at Polyapes camp site, open to all Scouts who will be in the new Explorer section by next Autumn. With a mix of scouts from Kingston & Malden District, plus a large contingent of leaders, a very good event took place. After a series of outdoor events and very strenuous wide games, the new Explorer section programme and awards were shown and discussed. The Scouts now have a good idea of what is new and what they can do, and the Leaders got the Scouts' views on what they wanted to do and how the Explorers should be run. (Recently, the special video, Scout programme and awards were introduced to the Troop, so everyone now has a reasonable idea of the new programme.)

(Note: There will be a special presentation of the new programme and awards, for all parents in the very near

future – the changes affect Beavers and Cubs as well).

On a recent weekend the Greater London South West Scout County Night Event took place at Birchmere, Wisley. With over 45 teams entered this was a very well attended event and Leander teams were placed 9th and 26th. Each team has to navigate, by map references, to a series of check points, through woods and heathland around Wisley. Not easy, even in daylight. The whole event is extremely well organised with radio links, mobile patrols and computerised results. The weather was appalling, but held off for the event; we all camped overnight in hike tents; the ground was ankle deep in mud and conditions were pretty rough. Did anybody complain? Not one word – every one of the Scouts laughed and joked and had a good time, in the best spirit of Scouting.

The only problem was the state of the tents, so we took them all back to Leander and spent over two hours pressure washing the mud out of the fabric. One of the rewards of the job – doing other people's washing!

Coxswain

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## Leander Family Camp 2002

For those of you who may not yet have sent your form in, here is the information again:

Leander will be holding a family camp over the weekend of 26th/27th May 2002, at Downe Scout Camp Site and Activity Centre, Biggin Hill, Kent. Over 120 Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, brothers, sisters and parents attended the last family camp at Chalfont Heights in 1999, and as the Group is now larger we should have even more families attending. These are always excellent events, with everyone under canvas, lots of activities, competitions and a grand campfire. Downe is a very

attractive rolling wooded site offering heated swimming pool, archery, rifle range, climbing wall, orienteering, games field and backwoods area.

The cost will be £20 per adult and £10 per child, inclusive of all accommodation, food, activities and insurance. We need to get an idea of numbers, so we can provide the right amount of tentage.

If you have not yet sent in your form (it was printed in the last *Water Rat*), please contact your child's Section Leader as soon as possible.

## Ham Fair – 8th June

This is an excellent fund raising opportunity for Leander. Karen hopes to provide refreshments, including a barbecue, and run a tombola.

If you could spare a **couple of hours** on Saturday 8th June that would marvellous. **Transport** to Ham Common required, also **tombola prizes** needed (eg: bottles of wine, soaps, chocolates, etc).

Please contact Karen at Scouts on Tuesdays or phone 8543 7277.