



The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

March 2005

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Skipper's Scrawl

As the time approaches for the Scouts to get back on the water again, I'm pleased to see the Mutineers have started work on the final fibreglass gig to get the woodwork prepared for re-varnishing. With luck, the two done last year will just need re-sealing. Our thanks are also due to the Guild for again undertaking the re-varnishing of the wooden gigs. Hopefully, after Easter all the boats will be ready for the season and we can look forward to getting back afloat.

During the Winter months we always use the entrance from Albany Mews, so those of you who have not been round to the river end of the building may not have seen that the Council have replaced and widened both the landing stages. This should make launching much easier and the added width will improve both access and safety.

The New Year seems to have already been crammed full of land-based activities from night hikes to cooking competitions and, of course, we again took part in the RN swimming gala at Plymouth, all of which is reported in the section news. So now it's time to get our feet wet again and get back to seamanship training in time for the Regatta and of course the RN Inspection in September.

Now that the warmer weather is here - will it last? - we want to start

concentrating on some updating and refitting in the building. You may have noticed that two new cookers have been installed in the Galley and we must again thank Don Everitt for doing the fitting for us. The Guild has undertaken to repaint the Wardroom and we now need to look at finishing some of the other jobs that have been put on the back burner. I would be pleased to hear from any parents who feel they could do a little bit of DIY, as we need to replace the screens on the Main Deck with something more substantial and get some cupboards built in for brooms, cleaning materials, etc.

I must congratulate the Cub Leaders on organising a fund-raising evening in aid of the Scout Association Tsunami appeal and am pleased to note that the bands featured ex-Leanders. It wasn't until I saw the maze of sound system wires and lighting adorning the building that I appreciated Rob had such hidden talents (but I am sure Nigel will have noted it for when it comes to setting up the sound system on the towpath for the Regatta).

The next major event in the calendar is the District St George's Day Parade which is on Sunday 17th April. Please note the date in your diaries, Final rehearsal and parade details will be given out to sections shortly. As this is the first parade for the new combined Royal Kingston District,

let's make sure we get a full turnout on the day.

Another important date is the Group AGM, which, this year is on Monday 6th June at 8pm at HQ. I do hope that every Leander family can be represented for this brief annual meeting, as it is an important time to review the past year and look forward to our plans for the future. These days, things never stand still!

Finally, I would like to thank Ros Kimber for her work in setting up and maintaining the standing order system for the Group subscriptions. Ros has been controlling this for several years now and wants to hand over to someone else. By keeping the records and logging against gift aid forms, the Group has been able to reclaim several thousands of pounds from the Inland Revenue which has proved invaluable in helping keep the boats and Group equipment maintained. This is a job which is done behind the scenes but increases the Group's income by over two thousand pounds a year. If you feel you might be able to take on the job of maintaining the subs and donation register and filling in the annual claim form please give Nigel or myself a call so we can let you know exactly what is entailed.

Keith

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Coxswain's Corner

As the dark days of Winter leave people feeling a bit down, the Scout section keep their spirits up with lots of activities. Apart from keeping our nautical skills fresh, we have tackled challenging pioneering projects, got to grips with semaphore and signal flags, designed and modelled boats and camp sites and had a highly competitive patrol cooking competition.

We had a joint meeting with 6th Tolworth and everyone learnt about cylinder heads, spark plugs, batteries and changing tyres, as they undertook their Mechanics badge. Liz kindly offered her car to work on – we think the wheels are fairly secure!

There have been a good number of District events to participate in. Chris, Rachel and Hannah did extremely well in the County Cooking Competition, gaining a judges' distinction and coming joint second out of over 40 teams. The menu theme was the Americas and the standard of cook-

ing and presentation was very high. Very well done.

At that same weekend a Scout and Explorer team took part in the Royal Navy Recognised Units Swimming Gala at HMS Raleigh, Plymouth, a very busy weekend and great experience staying on a naval base.

The District Night Hike traversed the difficult territory around Holmbury St Mary and Holmbury Hill, quite a challenge for young teams. Although getting rather lost they all enjoyed themselves and stayed the night at Leander HQ.

The County Night Exercise followed just a week ago. After some serious navigational instruction, we decided that the teams would benefit from a leader going out with them, i.e. non-competitive, to ensure that map and compass technique was being applied properly. With 45 teams taking part, if they had been in competition they

would have finished in the first 10 teams.

We all camped at Bentley Copse campsite, in South Holmwood, waking in the morning to ice on and in the tents – it was about -2°C . Well done Hannah, Rachel, Vivianna, Becky, Andrew, Alistair and Ben.

With an early Easter we now have a long Summer period to look forward to – meetings start again on 5th April.

Colours and Uniform

We have our RN inspection on 6th September, a very important occasion where our behaviour and turnout must be spot on. Scout uniform is now looking more consistent and we are working on the colours ceremony, so that it is smooth and meets the proper requirements. Skipper has already been through the process with the Troop; we will need to practise a lot more – it's worth getting it right.

Coxswain

Cubs in Police cells!

The Pack paid a visit to the Police Station and were able to go into the cells. It seems that even they were not able to contain our boisterous Cubs! This was followed by a visit to the nearby Territorial Army HQ, where the Police Cadets had organised a quiz for them.

They have also been practising their First Aid – I expect we shall soon see some 'Emergency Aid' badges on arms.



Cubs have also made their mark on the local community by contributing to the mosaic which is being installed in the Kingston Station underpass.

This is a project organised by the **Save the World Club**, a Kingston charity which aims at 'Art not Graffiti' for Kingston.



It works with adults and children in the community and has been very successful in tackling graffiti and urban decay. The art produced at the workshops has been installed at Elm Road playground and Kingston Station underpass. These beautiful mosaics, made entirely from recycled materials are among the largest and most eye-catching works of art in the Borough.

Mandy

Rock for the Scouts' Tsunami Appeal

On Saturday, 12 March the Cub Leaders held an evening of musical entertainment in aid of the Scout Association Tsunami Appeal and raised over £380.

The Scout Association has set up this appeal as a way of making a direct contribution to those in the Asia Pacific Region in this time of great need. It's about Scouts helping Scouts. The money from the appeal will go directly to fund regeneration work in the affected regions. It will be used to re-start and re-equip Scout Groups, and to support Scout projects to help rebuild communities. Some of the funds raised may be for emergencies, but most will be for longer-term recovery and development projects.

It is part of a global Scout effort. The Association in the UK is working closely with the Asia-Pacific Regional Office, which has encouraged each national Scout organisation to open routes for the appeal.

The evening featured three bands all with Leander connections, either past or present. The Fallacy, with Ed Barnard on bass, were the first to kick off with lively funky, punk rock. They were followed by Pretty Polly an indie rock band, with Tom Richards on keyboard. Finally, the Canburys, a country Irish folk band, with Patrick Geraghty on fiddle and Simon Richards on guitar, ended the evening on a quieter note.

All in all it was a successful evening, though we could have done with a bit more adult support from parents. Our thanks go to everyone who helped, the bands who made the whole thing possible and, of course, all who bought tickets.

Rob & Sarah Barnard



No hard feelings – it's the taking part that counts

In the weeks since January, the Explorers have been both helping and participating in various events. The term hasn't been too busy, but we've had plenty to be getting on with.

In January, Aidan, Nick and Mike went along to the District night hike, to help out and make sure the teams didn't get too lost. At one point they were sent out to find both of the missing Leander teams, but failed to do so and instead, heroically retrieved the two teams from 2nd Tolworth.

In February, both the Scouts and Explorers went off to Plymouth, to take

part in this year's RN Swimming Gala. After a long and eventful journey, and a very long Saturday morning we didn't manage to get through to any of the finals. Also Karen did not tell us and we realised we had to do more than one length ... but no hard feelings at Leander – after all, it's the taking part that counts ... Really!

On the afternoon of the Saturday all Explorer Units went to the naval harbour, where we could learn to control a powerboat and also experience the almighty ribs! It was great fun and we are hoping to go to Portsmouth soon to complete a power boating course

alongside other Units, including a newly befriended Warspite (Cuddington). Well done to all the squad for trying their hardest, and well done to Sam for getting himself and the Explorer relay squad disqualified.

At the moment, we are doing a lot of planning for our up-and-coming Four-Hills expedition, courtesy of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the Platinum Scout Award. All Explorers will soon be completing the award by walking this lovely long route (approximately 37km). We are preparing ourselves for our practice expedition – a flat walk from the Leander HQ to Polyapes, in Oxshott, so luck would be appreciated from now until then!

We are all looking forward to getting back out on the water within the next few weeks for an eventful Summer term, leading up to the Regatta and the Great River Race (and Karen's new training sessions).

Mattie B

Your Group needs you!

Parents – 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.

Leander couldn't run effectively without parents' helping this way – it's one of the ways you can support the voluntary work of the leaders.

April 10 – *Harrison, MacAllister, Williams, Webb

April 24 – *Aviram, Walters, Howe, Kersey, Davies

May 8 – *Hazard, Rhodes, Exworthy, McDonagh, Goodwin

May 22 – *Cockle, D'Souza, Geraghty, Lear, Gaffney-Harrison

Jun 12 – *King, McGuinness, Sibley, Pope, Breen

Jun 26 – *Barley, Gardener, Ward, Sankey, Frame, Rean

July 10 – *Freeman, Beedham, Hearn, Bate, Jackson

t.b.a – *Steele, Corlett, Peto, Mongan, Blackburn

t.b.a – *Pearn, Biddulph, Goodall, Hayes, Waller

t.b.a – *Whitfield, Smith, Bowers-Clarke, Lawley-Gibbs, Newsome

t.b.a – *Harrison, MacAllister, Williams, Webb, Talman

t.b.a – *Aviram, Walters, Howe, Kersey, Davies

We try to group families so that there is a spread from all sections of Leander, so that there should always be a couple of 'long-standing' parents who will 'know the ropes'.

A NEW ROTA starts in May. If you are unable to make your date, please arrange a swap with someone. We normally work from **10am to 12**. Would the *first named on the list arrange to collect a key from Mike Freeman (020 8549 8634).

Dates for your Diary

April 10 – HQ working party:

*Harrison, MacAllister, Williams, Webb

April 17 – St George's Day Parade

April 24 – HQ working party:

*Aviram, Walters, Howe, Kersey, Davies

May 8 – HQ working party: *Hazard, Rhodes, Exworthy, McDonagh, Goodwin

May 22 – HQ working party:

*Cockle, D'Souza, Geraghty, Lear, Gaffney-Harrison

June 6 – Leander AGM, 8pm @ HQ

July 2/3 – Sea Scout Regatta

September 6 – RN Inspection

The Water Rat is sponsored by
Pick of the Bunch,
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also
Upper Ham Road, Ham Common.
www.pick-of-the-bunch.com