



The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

October 2005

editor – Nigel Duffin – webmaster@leanderseascouts.co.uk

Skipper's Scrawl

We can't say the last two months have been quiet for the Group. The first meeting of September for all sections was the RN Inspection. The gig crew pulled the Inspecting Officer from Kingston Bridge to the HQ, where he was piped ashore before going to the Main Deck where the whole Group was assembled for colours. This was followed by demonstrations of games by the Beavers, pitching a tent by the Cubs and then seeing the Scouts and Explorers in action on the water. The Inspecting Officer talked to members of all sections and, after the final inspection and colour ceremony, he then commented on the evening's activities before presenting us with our certificate for continued recognition and a top rate pass score.

Well done to all concerned, but, before we all get complacent, he did make comment on the standard of some uniforms. This is something that needs to be addressed.

Doubtless you all noticed the new windows that have now been installed on the river end of the building – at long last we can now see the river from indoors. Perhaps there is a volunteer to keep them cleaned each month? Work has also started on other areas of building maintenance and hopefully this can be completed over the Winter months.

Whereas the HQ was spotless for the inspection, in just six weeks the

standard of cleanliness has dropped back. We should be proud of the facilities we have, and it is everyone's responsibility to help keep the place clean.

I understand that there was a noticeable lack of parents turning up for the last two cleaning parties. It would also be helpful if perhaps parents collecting their children after meetings could offer to just sweep the Main Deck so it is clean for the next section meeting. The last thing a leader wants to do after having run a meeting is then worry about having to clear up. Similarly, if you notice the bin liner in the galley is full, don't try and squeeze more in – replace the plastic sack and take the full one home. We don't have a dustman call.

With that moan over, it's now back to the congratulations.

The Great River Race from Richmond to Greenwich saw eleven crews leav-



ing HQ to take part and it was good to see a crew from London United buses rowing in 'Chief'. For those fairly new to the Group, you probably won't know that Chief is the gig named after Mick Chinnock, who used to be Scout Leader before Robin and that the purchase of this gig was helped by a large donation from the Bus Company following Mick's death. Ever since, they have continued to provide us with a bus to get the crews back from the end of the race and it was fitting this year that they were able to take part and row in that boat. It was also a marvellous achievement for the under-14 crew who not only came first in their class for the third

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group
Headquarters: 92 Lower Ham Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey
Telephone: 020 8549 6286 – www.leanderseascouts.co.uk



year running, but also won the under 16 age class.

The soccer sixes competition at Portsmouth was also enjoyed by all that took part. Regrettably, we did not come back with a cup this year but, nevertheless, it was a great experience.

I was pleased to be able to get down to both Beaver and Cub meetings to carry out investitures. It is always a pleasure to welcome new members, and also good to see Amy getting to grips with her new role as Beaver Leader. Thanks also to the parents who have helped Amy at the meetings. However, I must stress that we do need a second in command for Beavers so if you feel you could help on a regular basis please let either Amy or myself know.

Keith



From the Explorers: please BELT UP!

This year the Unit went to Summer Camp with the Troop, but camped on another site on the other side of the campsite. This was to see if they could cope with a centralised camp, as it will be next year at Nawaka. There were a few teething problems, but, once the girls had set out a rota for cooking and washing up, things started to work. Also, once we got over the aftermath of the Falklands tent collapsing within the first 24 hours and the non-stop rain, all the Unit enjoyed themselves.

We started the new term around the middle of August, so both the Troop and Unit crews for the Great River Race got some good training in. Thankfully, on the day of the event both did not get pulled out at Tower Bridge and the Explorers completed the race in 3 hours and 40 minutes, but only 5 minutes in front of me and the Troop crew.

I was very happy to participate with the Explorers in our very first RN Recognition (as a Unit) with the rest of the Group, and I would like to thank all of the Explorers for turning out spotless. But things would not be the same if the Explorers were not in the vicinity of an accident waiting to happen. Yes, Zoë had to stop the Commander from falling in to the water as the Gig crew collected him from TS Steadfast.

We changed our night for one week so we could attend a talk by the head investigating officer for road accidents in the South West London area of the Metropolitan Police. During the talk we found out how they find out what speed you are doing once impact has happened and the different types of skid marks. Finally, if you are wearing a seat belt during a head on collision, you should be able to get out of your car alive. So from ALL of the Explorers, please BELT UP!

During September and October we have been trying to find our creative side with designing T-shirts, trying to find out do we really want them next to us, last chance to go for a row before the Winter sets in, a little bit of circuit training and, to end off October, a nice long walk over the North Downs.

Johnny B looked after the five Unit members at Portsmouth this year during the RN Football six-a-side tournament, but sadly the HMS Gloucester Cup did not come home with us for a 4th time. I am glad to see the five still have their charms and are able to obtain help from other Explorers from Allerton (Liverpool) and Barry (Wales).

Good Luck on your Bronze DofE/ Platinum Award Expedition.

Kaz~Bar



Explorer Unit gig crew in the Great River Race

The Mutineers



With continuing mild weather, the Mutineers are still enjoying getting out on the water. We had a good River Race but can still improve our times. Work and family requirements do restrict availability but we push on, even if we end up taking a Coypu out instead of a gig.

We should mention our admiration for the 'Copper Coypu' crew in 'Redhead's Revenge'. Starting with Ian Chappell's

joking idea last winter – "why not do the River Race in a Coypu?", they got a crew together, practised, and their results were excellent. Completing 24 miles on the tideway in that type of boat, in a very good time, is a real feat of endurance.

We are actively recruiting – new crew welcome, just get in touch with any of the mutineers or call 8949 6970 (Robin Burr).

Dates for your Diary

- Saturday November 12 – District Scout/Explorer Swimming Gala
- Sunday November 13 – HQ working party: *Aviram, Walters, Howe, Kersey, Davies
- Sunday November 20 – District Chess Competition, Berrylands
- Monday November 21 – Leander Executive Meeting, 8pm at HQ
- Sunday November 27 – HQ working party: *Hazard, Rhodes, Exworthy, McDonagh, Goodwin
- Sunday November 27 – District Air Rifle Competition
- Sunday November 27 – County Orienteering Competition, Banstead
- December 3/4 – District Scout Night Hike
- 2006!!** – May 20/21 – Group Camp at Longridge

Parents

Keith has written this month about how important regular cleaning, tidying and maintenance by parents is to the smart running of meetings for your children. The current rota is getting out-of-date, with mistakes and omissions, so I am hoping, before December, to mail out a new version, with contact details for each 'team leader'.

Photos

I often have high resolution versions of the photos that are in *The Water Rat*. If you want to ask one in digital form, please email me at webmaster@leanderseascouts.co.uk.

Cubs hit the spot

We welcomed eight new members to the Pack this term – could this be this some sort of record?

The Cubs enjoyed putting up a tent at the RN Inspection, especially wielding the mallets!!



Nine members of the Pack took part in the District Badge Day on October 2nd, at which each of them gained at least two badges, and some of them managed four. Luckily, the sun shone for most of the day; however, a shower when some were out on a navigation walk and pond dipping, did not seem to dampen spirits. A good day was had by all.

The other District event that we have participated in was the Swimming Gala.

Caro

Keep up with the Kids!

In the Spring, we're planning an activity afternoon where you the parents can try your hand at some of the activities the Scouts get up to and get some experience yourself of the fantastic equipment and facilities that Leander offers. You'll be able to learn some practical nautical and Scouting activities you wouldn't think you could master. Look out for details.

Beavers



Beavers impressed by the RN Inspection

Leander Group Camp 2006

This Family Camp will be over the weekend of 20/21 May 2006 at Longridge Scout Boating Centre, Marlow, Bucks.

Everyone is invited – Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, parents, leaders, helpers.

Activities will include rowing, kayaking, Bellboating, air rifle shooting, climbing, an assault course, camp fire, and much more.

More details will follow later. The price is to be confirmed, but you should get your 2006 diary and put this date in now.

If you want any more details at present or want to help out organising, please contact Karen via email : lkazza@aol.com.



Coxswain's Corner

As usual, Autumn brings a number of changes to the Troop. Ben Cockle has now moved to Explorers, and we welcome Liane Aviram and Joe Ward who have come up from Cubs.

This is the busiest part of the Scouting year, with lots of District and County activities to take part in before Christmas (see the list below) plus, of course, the Great River Race and our Royal Navy inspection taking place just as the school term started. The inspection went very well; we were pleased to see such a good turnout for all sections, in particular with every Scout, bar one, on parade.

The Great River Race a few days later was again a great success, with the under-14 crew winning their class for the third time. Scout and Explorer teams enjoyed the annual Royal Navy six-a-side football competition at HMS Excellent, with a very busy weekend, staying on HMS Bristol as part of the experience.

The District recently held a presentation for the next World Jamboree, at which over 75 Scouts and Explorers heard all about previous jamborees. 40,000 Scouts from around the world will gather at Hylands Park, Essex, in July 2007. Leander Scouts have put in applications for places, with interviews taking place in the next few weeks.

One Tuesday, we decided to take the Coypu dinghies out at night, with the whole Troop rowing down to Teddington Lock, a novel experience which they are all keen to do again, it will

certainly help to retain pulling skills during the Winter.

There are a number of exciting events coming up between now and Christmas. Any Scout can take part – the costs are nominal, the events are there to be enjoyed. Parents, let's see if we can get a few more young people taking part, as there is more to Scouts than just the weekly Troop meeting.

Please note the following Scout events:

District Scout and Explorer Scout Swimming Gala on 12th November

Remembrance Sunday on 13th November

County Orienteering Competition in Banstead Woods on 27th November

District Air Rifle Competition at 1st Malden HQ on 27th November

District Chess Competition at Berrylands on 20th November

District Night Hike on 3rd/4th December

The **Christmas Special** on 20th December

Coxswain

