



# The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

October 2008

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## Coxswain's Corner

As Autumn approaches and the nights draw in, the Troop once again gets used to indoor activities. There is an extra urgency this time as our Admiralty Inspection approaches at the end of November and we need to get the Troop properly shipshape. Apart from ensuring that uniforms are smart and badges are up to date, the inspection is more demanding as we have to plan all our activities to take place in the HQ. There are quite a few nautical skills to learn, so we'll be making sure that we put on a good show on the night. Leander has a long tradition of well run inspections that ensure that our RN recognition continues - there is no room for complacency as we have to convince the Inspecting Officer that we meet the rigorous standards required of Royal Navy Recognised Units.

After a long gap of a few years we hope to be able to put on a Fire Safety Badge course with the local Fire Brigade, this is an important badge that every Scout should gain. We would also like to step up the badgework, as there are many opportunities for Scouts to deploy hobbies and skills that can gain appropriate badges. It would help immensely if parents could provide a little encouragement; every Scout is given a badge book when they are invested. For many of the activities or skills, such as music, art, cycling, etc., certificates or levels gained will automatically qualify for a badge.

We have had an enthusiastic bunch of Cubs come up to the Troop this Autumn, a warm welcome to Charly Ward, Max Talman, Dominic Jackson and Cameron Frame, who should all be invested before RN Inspection.

As our valiant Scout and Explorer six-a-side football teams battled it out at HMS Excellent, Portsmouth, the District Swimming Gala took place at Westcroft Leisure Centre, Carshalton. Despite being a very young team and a little short on numbers, Leander managed a very credible 4th place out of 10 teams.

The District 'MAD' day at Polyapes camp site at the beginning of October was a great success, a multi-activity day in which Scouts could participate in six-a-side football, chess, archery, target shooting, cyclocross and a cooking competition. Adrian Barley, Sam Lear, Joe Bungey, Max Talman and Cameron Frame all did very well in the activities they took part in. Next year should be even better - a whole MAD weekend!

That's all for now folks.

Coxswain



*Simon Biddulph is presented with his warrant as Assistant Beaver Leader by District Commissioner Bob Bushell*

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## Busy Beavers

The Leander Beavers and Beaver Leaders are becoming regular visitors at District Events and are doing our best to let everyone within Royal Kingston know that (as we sing every week) – “We are Leander, Mighty Leander!”

Before the term had even started Simon and I took Thomas Dugdale, Ben Longhurst, Toby Britton, Iona Biddulph and Hannah Edwards Rean to the annual District Beaver Sleepover at Berrylands where, as you can imagine, we all had to survive on very little sleep. The highlights for the Beavers were the art and craft activities, wide games, bingo, evening campfire songs and of course, the chance to make friends with Beavers from other Colonies.

The sun shone this year when Issy Blackburn, Matthew Cramp & Iona Biddulph explored the HQ and grounds at Southwood where they earned the Explorer Badge and a chocolate bar!

Beavers started in October 1982 and each year, to celebrate, there’s a big party at 1st Hook. This year 17 Beavers (a record number for Leander) attended the District Party. We enjoyed the antics of the entertainer who really did make doves and a rabbit appear as if by magic!

Back at Leander we’ve welcomed new Beavers Ellie Harrison, Georgie



Yelland, Noah Allen and James Allan into the Colony. They were all keen to get their uniforms as soon as possible and to take part in all of our activities.

Each term we work towards a Challenge Award and an Activity Badge. We have started to focus on the Promise Challenge Award which emphasises the importance of ‘doing your best’ (DYB DYB) and ‘doing our best’ (DOB DOB) and have started thinking about the Imagination Badge. We’ve actually designed futuristic superheroes and made shadow puppets which are soon to appear in mini-sketches!

Simon and I are looking forward to introducing some new games to the Beavers that we learned when we

attended a Beaver Leader training session. All Leaders were asked to run a game while the others took part. Experiential learning means one has to get involved (any excuse for some fun and games!). Our trip to the Poppy Factory promises to be interesting and the Neighbourhood Police are hoping to visit us again soon.

Swimming continues to be popular for a splash about in the learner pool or badge work in the main pool. Dick Garnish, a former Leander Scout himself, has been assessing the Beavers for many years but our Friday sessions do not always suit him. We have been lucky that Karen Thornby, who is a swimming instructor and was a Brown Owl for over 20 years is happy to help. She has already been called upon to help with Cubs and Beavers.



The parent rota for Beavers and Cubs needs you! We are all volunteers and are CRB cleared through the Scout Association. Please make sure that you are CRB cleared so that you can help out with weekly meetings and the varied and exciting visits planned. If you have not yet completed the paperwork please see your Section Leader or Karen Loizou, Group Scout Leader for the appropriate forms.

*Karen Rean  
Simon Biddulph*

## Six-a-side Football

Going down to Portsmouth on 26th September was a long trip from Surbiton station. We arrived at 8.15 and we were driven to the ship (HMS Bristol) straightaway, and were shown our mess deck. 12 mess deck was two floors below the main deck and down there were eight rows and in the rows were twelve beds that were very small!

We were woken up at 6.00am to get into our uniform after a very bad night (around four hours sleep), due to some other boys from the other end of the mess having pillow fights.

At 6.30 we went onto the flight deck at the stern of the boat to then marched off to breakfast. We had bacon, beans and a sausage. It was very nice!

After breakfast we went back to the ship to get changed into our Leander football kit. The first team we played was the Isle of Wight and we won 6-0. I scored one goal, Chris scored two and Joe scored three. That was a good first result. We did well in the tournament and nearly got into the semi-finals but some other team got one more point than us so we sat around on Sunday drinking lots of water or hot chocolate!

Joe was in the finals of the penalty shoot-out comp. Joe did not have a very good practice session on Saturday with his penalties, due to scoring more conversions and hitting the posts than goals and we did not feel it was a good idea, but on the day he scored his first penalty doing a Johnny Wilkinson! Then Joe missed the second goal! SPOONER !!!

We then went up onto the grass pitches to watch the Explorers win in the final of the Plate comp.

At around 12.30pm we started to make our way home from a very long but fun weekend in sunny Portsmouth.

Harry P

## District Beaver Scout Exploring Afternoon



A rare but welcome sunny Sunday greeting Mathew Cramp, Iona Bidulph and Issy Blackburn when they took part in the District Explorer Afternoon.

Along with Beavers from Colonies around the GLSW area, the Leander

trio managed to identify and complete all the exploring tasks given to them. They also built a dry and cosy woodland house for a toy dog (with built-in chimney, garden and flag) and won the cork hunt!

## District Swimming Gala

We had a team of six boys to represent Leander Scouts at the District Swimming Gala in Carshalton. They were Dominic, Cameron, Gareth, Jack, Sam and me (Charlie).

We were one of the youngest teams there and, despite having such a small team, we still came third overall.

Hopefully next year we will come first in all our races!

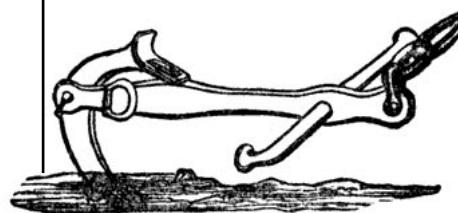
Charlie Ward



## Karen Sykes



We have some very sad news. Karen Sykes, a regular parent helper at Beavers, passed away on Thursday 9th October after a long battle against cancer. Many of you knew her well and will miss her. Our thoughts are with her son Daniel and husband Chris, their family and friends.



# Great River Race

Once again, the Leander River Race flotilla made an impressive sight as the seven gigs prepared for the tow down to Ham House. Each year there are new crews for whom the race will be a real experience and wiser ones hoping to improve on the previous year's times. 'Active' and 'Alert', our treasured clinker built wooden gigs are crewed by the Scouts and the Guild, the latter this year reinforced by some of the mums who have started rowing regularly - didn't they do well! The Explorers, in 'Chief', put in a very good time, but well ahead were the Blue Tits, a fine crew of ex-Scouts from a few years ago, who showed that they hadn't forgotten how to make 'Hero' fly. The Mutineers, in 'Gordon Talbot', looked good but maybe age and inertia is beginning to tell, still, they finished ok. What can you say about the uniformed boys, the Met Police finest? XIX in 'Hercules' was in strong competition with Bechwyn Tew in 'Hermes' who stormed down the course as usual.



Another great race, superb weather and a decent stream meant that all our boats put in a faster time this year and - surprise, surprise - the tide at the Greenwich finish

was nowhere near as fierce as usual. There's always 2009 though to put in that magical fastest time.

# Chris's Race



The Great River Race was really fun but tiring. We were towed down from Leander HQ to near Ham House.

We stopped near the start line to join about 300 boats. The wait until we started was just under two hours, but this gave us a chance to stretch our legs before the race began.

I was really enjoying myself during the race, taking in all of the sights of London from the River, but when we got further in the race my hands started blistering and my back was KILLING me!!

When our boat finished I had great feel of relief and an achievement. We

finished at Greenwich about 3½ to 4 hours from when we began.

The bus ride was a ride to remember, thanks to the Blue Tits (18-25 year old ex-Scouts from Leander).

Chris G