



# The Water Rat

The Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

May 2011

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## Ready for the Big Adventure

As you will all agree the weather has been very kind to us all, and it is good to see and hear that all of our sections are getting out of the Headquarters to get dirty or wet.

This will especially be the case if your son or daughter has signed up for the BIG Adventure Camp (June 17th–19th). I am very pleased to hear that there may be a good number of Cubs in attendance. The reason I say this is because this will be the first time since 1996/97 that Leander's Cubs will be attending camp just as Leander.

So if your Beaver, Cub, Scout, Explorer – or even you – have

not signed up for the Big Adventure yet, please contact me for further information as the closing date for all forms to be handed in is Friday 10th June.

On a sunny May afternoon in Tolworth, 29 members from Leander attended this year's St George's Day parade. Leander thanks all that were able to attend, as well as the parents that walked alongside the small but proud gathering.

I would like to say a big thank you to Nick Yelland (Leander ACSL) at this time for covering the position of Cub Scout Leaders for approximately three years. Facing many challenges

over the period, but managing to keep the busy and fun ethos within the Cub Pack.



Lastly, congratulations to all members that have and are continually achieving and receiving activity badges and awards to gain the Bronze, Silver and Gold Chief Scout Award and maybe even the big one – The Queen's Scout Award.

*Karen Loizou  
Leander GSL*



## AGM

The Group Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 13th June, at 8.00pm in the Headquarters.

The meeting is expected to last about an hour, and refreshments will be served.

**Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group**

Headquarters: 92 Lower Ham Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 5BB

[www.leanderseascouts.co.uk](http://www.leanderseascouts.co.uk)



## Explorers



Explorers have had a busy few weeks getting ready to get back on the water and more recently getting onto the water on some very sunny Thursday evenings.

Everyone has been involved in getting the Explorer gig spruced up, water-ready and then launched ... fortunately there

was very little leakage! In addition a couple of members have celebrated their 18th birthdays and we have four Scouts moving up to join us.

We are now into the exam period for the older Explorers, with Thursday nights hopefully providing some much needed

light relief from revision. Regatta practice remains the focus for the coming weeks, as well as teaching some of our newer members new skills such as sculling over the stern.

Lucy

## Coxswain's Corner

A straightforward report this time, as all our activities are concentrated on getting out on the water. Luckily we have been able to structure our instruction better this term, with Andrew and Jon regularly taking kayaking and now working people towards their Paddlesport qualifications. Having fun is part of water activities but gaining qualifications make it all more worthwhile. We have just acquired four open canoes, which will provide a different experience and extend the range of activities we offer.

Russell has been teaching the fine art of sailing a Coypu, although a broken main mast recently was a bit of a handicap (It must have been 50 years old though!). Sailing is somewhat of a lottery as there is often very little wind in the evening, but the Picos are very popular and we have an increasing number of competent sailors. One of the reasons for having selected Saturday meetings is that Scouts can have more time in daylight and experience different weather conditions

As always happens at this time of the year, the National Sea Scout Canoeing and Sailing Regatta fast approaches, so we are busy selecting teams for the events. It will be tough, as the standard is getting higher; many participating groups now have some really good crews. It's a great weekend though and makes all the practice worthwhile.

We have had a lot of trouble with our three Home Counties gigs all developing leaks at the same time. After ten years, it would seem that the sealant used in their construction has dried out, requiring a massive amount of remedial work – so far 400 metres of fibreglass tape and 7 litres of resin have been used. Does seem to be working, so we can get them out on the moorings very soon.

Heigh ho, never a dull moment at Leander!

Coxswain

## Time and Tide

*"Time and tide wait for no man"*

What is does it mean?  
No-one is so powerful that they can stop the march of time.

The origin of the phrase is uncertain, although it is clear that the phrase is ancient and that it predates modern English. The earliest known record is from St. Marher, in 1225 – "And te tide and te time þat tu iboren were, schal beon iblescet."

A version in more modern English – "the tide abides for, tarrieth for no man, stays no man, tide nor time tarrieth no man" – evolved into the present day version.

Here 'tide' does not refer to the contemporary meaning of the word, i.e. the rising and falling of the sea, but to a period of time. When this phrase was coined, tide meant a season, or a time, or a while. The word is still with us in that sense in 'good tidings', which refers to a good event or occasion and in 'whitsuntide', 'noontide', etc.

([www.phrases.org.uk](http://www.phrases.org.uk))

# Pack Pack Pack!!!



Yelland, Felix Waller, James Allan, Max Biddulph and James Hayes marched in perfect formation aided by our Scub – Iona Biddulph. – The cup will be ours next year!

The Summer term started with an introduction to the new Cubs and a talk about the badges we will be working towards. Navigator, Hikes Away and The Outdoor Challenge are on the cards, together with efforts at improving individual Swimming badges. Swimming started at Teddington Pool on May 18th.

Joe O'Shea from the St John Ambulance service brought an ambulance to HQ and spent the evening chatting to the Cubs

A huge Wolf Howl welcome to our new Cubs for this Summer. Still dripping wet from swimming up from Beavers, we have Ollie Morris, Jamie Hancock and Harry Britton and are excited to welcome another Cub new to the organisation in Freddie Plunkett. They have joined at the start of an exciting term for the Cubs.

I would like to say a huge Well Done to the nine Leander Cubs who attended the Science Badge Day at 1st Hook last term. Hard work, good fun and a science badge at the end of the day.

The St George's Day march took place in glorious sunshine. Considering the awkward timing of the event, we had decent representation with eight Cubs and a Scub. Georgia Strickland was our proud flag bearer – quite an achievement, considering the wind that blew that day. Max and Ben Au-Yeung, Georgie



about the role of first aiders and the service they can provide to communities. All the Cubs had a chance to look around the ambulance and had a reminder of the principles of first aid that we learnt last term.

Still to come are two evenings at Thames Young Mariners building rafts and kayaking, a Jambo at Walton Firs, making fires at HQ (outside hopefully) tracking and map reading in the park and finally CAMP in June.



## Russell's 'Then and Now'

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Russell Constable and I am currently an Instructor with the Scout Troop and my son Ollie is in the Beavers. I've been asked to do a retrospective piece on Leander 'Then and now', so here goes!

I joined Leander Scout Troop in 1978 and things were a little different then ...

The Scout Leader was Gordon Biden, the Group Scout Leader was Bruno (Peter Burton) and the Assistant Scout Leader was Mitt or, as you know him, Nigel Duffin. We were still in the original building then, which was a

lot more spread out and had many separate areas, which meant finding someone who was hiding could take forever! We also had the entire plot that encompasses Albany Mews and The Albany sailing club up to Albany Park Road to run wild in. This meant that we had all the grass and woodland area we needed to carry out any scouting activity possible, plus a few that probably weren't sanctioned by the Scout Association!

The Troop was a bit more regimented in those days, with more attention to uniform etc. which had to be adhered to, because we had a PLs' (Patrol Leaders') inspection at the start of each meeting. Many press-ups and runs to the half-mile tree were done due to uniform transgressions. We were all required to carry a penknife as well! The emphasis was still the same as today, though, with fun and adventure as the core principles.

We met on Tuesday evenings as we do now but we also met on Saturday afternoons, which was just for boating. Summer or Winter, rain or shine, we'd be out on the water doing what Sea Scouts should do (plus a few things they probably shouldn't). We'd also go out on the water on Sunday afternoons in the Summer whilst the Leander

mums were selling tea and cakes to passers by.

The PLs basically ran the meetings and activities with the framework and guidance coming from the leaders. Scouts went up to 16 which meant, at the age of 15 and 16, the PLs and APLs were the instructors, which sadly now doesn't happen as the Scouts go up to Explorers at 14.



Spring camp was a Scouts only affair without any leaders. Yes, you heard it right, Friday to Sunday camp, cooking on fires, organised and ran by the PLs and the oldest person in attendance was 16! Obviously, you couldn't do that now, which, as a parent myself, I think is probably a good thing. I've still got some of the scars to remind me of those camps!

Being out on the water was much the same apart from the game of pirates that we played which was principally a game of catch the flag except on water. You had a Coypu each and you had to take all the boat equipment from the other boats and capsize them. If only wetsuits had been widely available in those days! It probably (says Karen) wouldn't be allowed now, plus you'd likely get clobbered by a pleasure boat or skiff.

Sadly in 1981 half of the building was destroyed by fire. We continued meeting there for a few years but it was plain to see it was no longer fit for purpose. Developers were planning to build Albany Mews and Albany sailing club and approached Leander with an offer of funding to build a new Headquarters. An old burnt-out building probably wouldn't have looked too good on their sales literature.

During the transition we held meetings out of an old shipping container situated approximately where the tree has been

cut up at the front gates now, until at long last we were able to use the new building.



OK on to the 'Now' (at last, I hear you cry). The opportunities and ethos of the Group are still pretty much the same. Each member of the group has the same opportunities as they did years ago. They are all eligible to join the other organisations from within Leander such as The District Scout Band (which a lot of us did), air rifle club, archery and other youth boating organisations, etc. A lot of my and former generations of Leander Scouts, went on to do Tall Ships races and offshore sailing with other organisations as a direct result of being a Leander Sea Scout.

The rules and regulations have changed over the years but generally for the good. You can't be 'too safe' when you're out on the water, be it inland or offshore but it's about the balance you strike between the safety and the enjoyment of the activity. The fun and enjoyment that the Scouts get out of their time at the meetings that I now attend, would strike a chord of recognition with any former Leander Sea Scout. That, I believe, is the main reason the Scouts come to Leander now and in the past. To have fun!

There is a sign that used to hang in the Main Deck of the old building and now hangs in the Wardroom of the new building that illustrates the transition of the Scout troop over the years 'Time and tide wait for no man'.

Russ