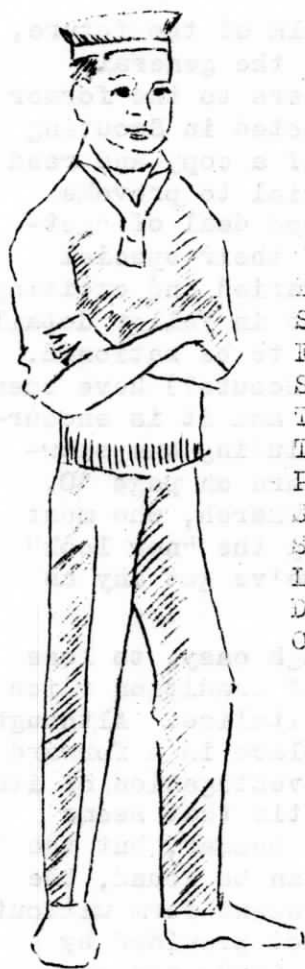


THE WATER RAT

JULY 1966

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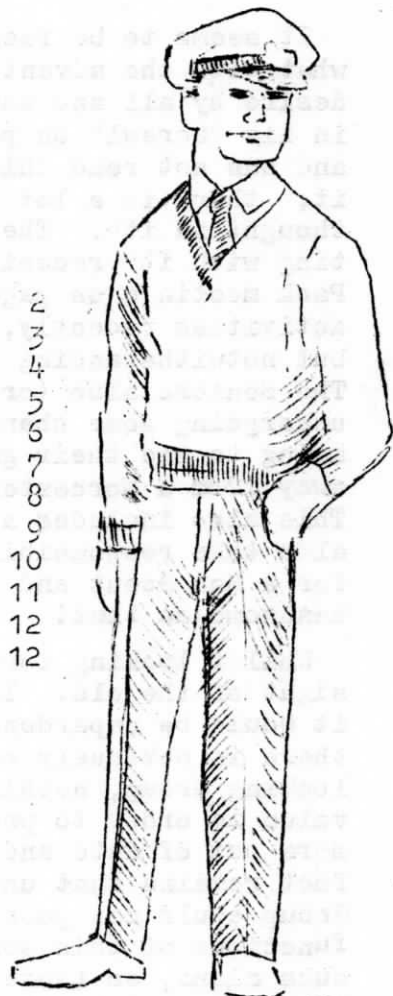
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Frontispiece and illustrations

by Pat Newmarch

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EDITORIAL

It seems to be fashionable at the present time to talk of the future, what with the advent of the "Advance Party Report" and the general desire by all and sundry to be "with it". Skipper refers to the former in his "Scrawl" on page 3, and to anyone who is interested in Scouting and has not read this report, I would say: "Get hold of a copy and read it; there is a lot of interesting new ideas and material to provoke thought in it". The Cubs seem to have been doing a good deal of "getting with it" recently: there is an account of one of their special Pack meetings on page 4. I know this is only one of varied and exciting activities recently, and I wish I could have included it in fuller detail, but notwithstanding the wrath of Cubmasters, space has to be rationed. The Seniors also (or should one now call them Venture Scouts?) have been undergoing some changes in organisation and programme, and it is encouraging to see their greatly increased numbers (even including one stow-away from a Worcester Park Group!). Their report appears on page 10. This also includes a very well drawn cartoon by Pat Newmarch, who must also take responsibility for the frontispiece depicting the "new look" for a Sea Scout and Venture Sea Scout: I don't think we've got any as handsome as that!

Whilst looking forward to the new, it is wrong, though easy, to lose sight of the old. This Group is founded on a wealth of tradition which it would be unpardonable to lose in our efforts to revitalise. Although there is obviously some which is decadent and has no place in a forward looking Group, nothing must be discarded without an investigation of its value in order to prevent future regret. There is little that seems more out of date and redundant than a Garden Fete or a Bazaar, but the fact remains that until some replacement fund raiser can be found, the Group could not possibly exist in anything like its present form without functions of this sort. A turnover of £300 alone is not provided by subs alone, as those who read the accounts in the last issue can see. So it is wholeheartedly that I endorse Mr Crump's comments on page 8, with the prospect of Scouting becoming even more expensive in the future.

In the last issue I referred to the fact that the "Leander" Cub Pack was one of the first to be formed when the Wolf Cub Branch was added to the Scout Movement. On Thursday, 30 June a special Pack Meeting was held in recognition of this and, for such an important occasion, the "guest of the evening" was Mrs. Millest who, at my suggestion, founded the Pack and was its first Cubmaster. I was very pleased to be present as Mrs. Millest now lives in Yorkshire and it is many years since we last met. Also present were Reg Balcomb, Frank Bidon, and Phil Day, who were among the first six boys to join the Pack, together with Miss Mary Marion and "Dilly" Myers, who were both Assistant Cubmasters over thirty years ago. We saw some photographs taken in the very early days of the Pack, and we all agreed that Cubs looked just the same jolly chaps then as now.

The big event of last month was the long awaited publication of the Report of the Chief Scout's "Advance Party". This contains many recommendations for changes in training, organisation, and uniform for all members of the Movement. These are intended to keep us up to date with the great changes going on around us and, when implemented, should enable Scouting to continue to play the important leading role in the world which it has established during the fifty-eight years since its foundation. The Scouters of the "Leander" Group have critically examined all our activities in the light of the report, and find that in our case there are perhaps fewer fundamental changes of programme to be made than with many other Groups. Nevertheless, there are many things which have to be altered, some immediately and some spread over the next three years. The important thing is to see that our various activities do not suffer during the process, and that we take these changes in our stride. Our slogan for the immediate future must be: "BUSINESS AS USUAL DURING ALTERATIONS".

(Normal service will be resumed on page 12.....)

FIFTY YEARS - PAST AND FUTURE

Half-a-Ton-Up, Half-a-Ton-Up,  
 Half-a-Ton-Up boys are we !  
 For it's fifty, yes it's fifty,  
 Fifty years ago, you see,  
 That Cubbing first began  
 In nineteen sixteen,  
 And ever since then  
 Wolf Cubbing has been  
 A wow, and now -  
 It's our Golden Jubilee.



The chorus of the Jubilee song sets the scene for two most important dates the Pack had in June:

June 4th - "Journey through Space"

"Great physical fitness is required, you astronomical lot, so up, two, three, four, and follow my leader through an "assault and battery" course laid and led by two fit types in the grounds next door." Four enormous time-machine cases, together with bamboo, sisal, inner tubes, Selotape, wire, piping, string, pins, and crepe/brown/news-paper are made by the Sixes into something the Daleks can really get their teeth into.

Recharge batteries and store food capsules - tea to you - then having plotted our course and sung some ye olde worlde 1966 camp-fire songs to the natives, we realise we're back in H.Q. to listen to messages from other nations, Lord Baden Powell, and the Chief Scout, Sir Charles Maclean.

June 30th

Skipper must have been very proud and happy to have the privilege of meeting once again Leander's first Cubmaster, Mrs Millest, as indeed we all were. Anecdotes came thick and fast while watching slides of the 1918 Pack: "Do you remember when Fred churned his drink of milk to butter?", or, "Do you remember when we trekked to Polyapes?" - none of this "Shove the gear in the boot, Dad" for them! Several of her original Cubs shared in the reminiscing. "Do you remember Reg knitting a pair of socks? Oh, and us camping in a punt up river and losing Sid?" Honestly, her Cubs looked just like ours, and yet it was nearly fifty years ago.

Thank you very much, Mrs Millest, for giving us this wonderful glimpse of the past which will inspire us to go forward to the future.

RIKKI

#### SEA-DAY

Having left H.Q. at 3 a.m., Nye, three of the Seniors, and I arrived in Portsmouth at about 10 a.m., and boarded our ship for the day, H.M.S. Lowestoft. At 11 a.m. all four ships of the 24<sup>th</sup> convoy group: H.M.S. Rhyl and Lowestoft (anti-submarine frigates), with H.M.S. Dainty and Defender (Daring class destroyers) left harbour in a steady drizzle to join H.M.S. Tiger, as it was the 24<sup>th</sup>'s job to protect the cruiser.

After firing a few parachute flares and spraying the sea with automatic rifle fire, we refuelled at sea off "Tiger". After lunch, Sea Vixens were shot at with the Bofors of all five ships, then they fired rockets at a target towed by "Tiger". Buccaneers dropped their bombs, then the aircraft went through their paces and returned to H.M.S. Hermes.

We met up with the submarine "Opossum" which submerged and showed all its periscopes and radio masts. As it surfaced and left us, two Wessex helicopters showed us their sonar working against "subs". Then the convoy fired their 4.5 mm guns, "Rhyl" and "Lowestoft" finally firing some of their anti-submarine bombs. We then returned to Portsmouth after a good day.

BRIAN LEYSHON

TROOP RAVINGS

The Chatham Sea Scout Meet at Whitsun started off on the Saturday with a load of screaming Boy Scouts leaping about in the back of a lorry, and half a dozen Sea Rangers trying to get over the shock of it all!

When we arrived we unloaded the gear and carried it across the field to set up camp next to the Seniors who had arrived with a gig. After pitching the tents and laying out our campsites we ate lunch. It was an uneventful afternoon as the firefighting display had been cancelled.

On Sunday morning people were up at 7 a.m. cooking the breakfast! The day was started off with a Scouts' (and Sea Rangers') Own round the flagpole. Details were then given out of the activities that could be pursued during the afternoon. These included: swimming, .22 shooting, dockyard trips, and a boat trip.

On Monday morning, the waking up wasn't quite the same: no-one was up until 7.30 a.m., and then only a minority. During the morning we did some more swimming and sailing, and the campsites were slowly dismantled, so that when the lorry came everyone was ready to go.

The Camping Competition this year was judged by an old Kingston Scout, now living in Walsall. Leander entered four Patrols for this competition, and although these didn't achieve Leander's usual high standard, a good standard was achieved. 1st Kingston Hill Patrols came 1st and 2nd, Leander's Beavers and Storks came 3rd and 4th, and the rest of the Troop were unmentionable!

The weekend started off with a bang by everyone getting their tea half an hour to an hour late. The campfire in the evening led by Mr Maund the A.D.C. in which all the Patrols did a stunt was rather amusing.

On Sunday morning the breakfast was on time, and the Scouts' Own was taken while the judges inspected each Patrol's site.

It was very hot all the weekend, and although the results weren't up to standard, a good time was had by all.

ANDY HUNTER.

THE ADMIRALTY INSPECTION

The Inspection took place at Headquarters on Friday 24th June. The Inspecting Officer, Lieutenant Commander Whiffen, arrived at 1930 and was met by the Scoutmaster. He inspected the Group in the Main Deck, talking to a number of the boys and the Scouters. Accompanying him were the A.C.C. (Sea Scouts), the Borough Commissioner, the D.C., and the A.D.C. (Rovers).

From the Chartroom, the Inspecting Officer watched some of the younger members of the Troop practising "circuits and bumps" in the dinghies, and later he remarked how much improvement he had noticed in the short time he had been watching. In the Workshop and the Office the Seniors were overhauling the rigging of one of the fibreglass gigs, and planning a trip to Havengore Creek for the Summer.

Lt. Commander Whiffen then returned to the river where two Patrols were competing in a relay race in two dinghies. The other Patrols were swimming and lifesaving, whilst the Seniors were preparing to sail to dinghies and row a gig.

At this point a group of yobs approached in a skiff, and whilst playing the fool one girl fell in. Senior Scout Richard Andrews sped to the rescue in his dinghy, smartly lowered the mainsail, and his crew dived in and swam back to the boat with the girl. She was efficiently brought ashore, and speedily removed by a St John's ambulance which miraculously appeared with siren screaming and light flashing. The yobs looked remarkably like Keith and Daisy, and the girl could have been mistaken for Keith's fiancée, Hilary.

After the excitement was over, the Inspecting Officer watched the P.L.'s instructing their Patrols, and then he went to see Sandling's engine being lowered in, and out, and in again by the Rover Crew.

He then told the assembled Group that he was very pleased with the evening's entertainment, and that he had no hesitation in recommending our continuance as an Admiralty Qualified Unit. Before meeting the Scouters over coffee, he presented Rover Chris Mercer with the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.

PARENTS' CORNER

Since the last "Water Rat" we have had a number of meetings devoted to two main efforts: a Social evening at the Tudor Hall on 29th April combined with the A.G.M., and the Summer Fete on the 18th June.

After a slow start the Social soon got into a bit of a swing and was enjoyed by all concerned. The A.G.M. section was neatly combined with the refreshment break, and under the influence of the tasty snacks organised by Mrs Bevan there was no delay in clearing formal matters and proceeding with the informal under the able guidance of Jack Andrews. In fact, the official business passed so smoothly that some may have missed the important fact that the Leander over draft had been decently laid to rest, due mainly to a well directed blow from the financial results of the catering side of the National Sea Scout Regatta !

The Fete is still recent history, and it is still too early to assess our errors of commission and omission. The profit of just over £100 is rather less than last year but nevertheless a substantial boost to Group Funds. Although more helpers were, as always, required, what was really needed was a foolproof and inexpensive attraction to draw in the spending public. Any ideas for next year? Two special mentions must be made: One to Scout Kim Williamson, who sold nearly £8 worth of programmes before the event; another to Paul Duffin who turned out at a moment's notice to drive Leander's very reluctant van and so enable us to erect the stalls in good time.

Of past events, one further word of thanks - to Mrs Hunter for a pleasant "al fresco" coffee evening which she carefully arranged to coincide with one of the hottest days of the Summer. (?)

The Parents' Association's future programme includes another Social to be held on Friday 23rd September, the National Sea Scout Regatta on 1st/2nd October, and the Bazaar at the Tudor Hall on 19th November. The success of these events could mean a further £300 or more to Group funds. May we rely on your voluntary support?

JACK CRUMP



S.R.S. VICTOR

Once again I have been commanded by Mitt to write about the comings and goings of the Sea Rangers, trouble is there hasn't been many apart from our Coffee Meetings every Monday Evening.

Some of the girls went on Canoeing and Sailing courses at Ham Base and also helped with their Open Day, they thoroughly enjoyed themselves (nice boys down there).

On the evening of Monday, 18th July a great expedition was made from H.Q. to Teddington Lock for a fry up. The great problem about writing about it is that I didn't go so it will have to be heresay, so please forgive me if my facts are not quite right.

Before starting off Margaret slipped into the River, the first time in her many years of Rangering that such a thing has happened (it's love you know, it does terrible things to a person). On the way down the wind was blowing a mighty gale upstream so they had to fight against the elements and on the way up the stream was against them so they still had to fight against the elements, still Rangers are a game lot.

They very nearly recruited a long haired beauty but then realised it was a youth after their grub.

From all accounts (one to be precise) they had a most enjoyable time, but then they are all such excellent cooks, as the boys all know as they so often call upon there services.

At approximately 2300 hrs. they arrived back at H.Q. where fiancés, lovers, husbands etc. etc. eagerly awaited their arrival.

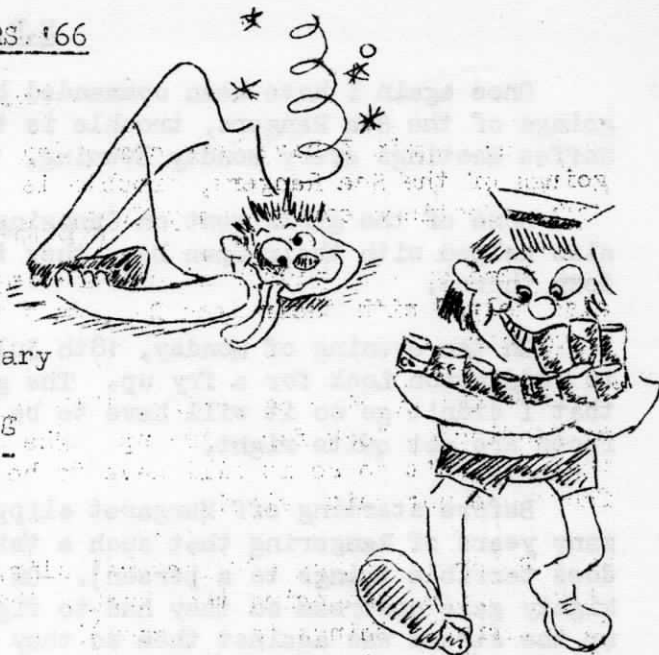
HILARY

SENIORS '66

The most noteworthy thing to occur this year in the Seniors is the unfortunate change of plans regarding Summer Camp. This was to have been held in France, but, owing to lack of certainty of transport, this has been postponed till next year, whilst this Summer Camp is in Buteshire.

Whitsun Camp was somewhat revolutionary inasmuch as there was a combination of Scouts and Rangers. One fibreglass gig was towed down to Chatham with the Seniors on board. It was to have been sailed back, and in fact we set off, only to break the centreboard after about a mile, so we had to turn back. The camp itself was very enjoyable, with guided tours here, there, and everywhere, swimming and sailing, even a dance one night. The weather was immaculate, producing sunburn as well as a really good wind for sailing. Another evening was spent at a folk-singing concert, which was very enjoyable. The presence of a Naafi instead of the usual providore at camp was very much appreciated, especially by the Sea Rangers, who were able to get a free pair of stockings by buying ten cans of Coke.

The membership of the Seniors is increasing: it is now twelve. This means more interesting meetings should lead to more enterprising ventures at Summer Camp. Rock-climbing has been resumed, with training at Harrison's Rocks near Tunbridge Wells. In general, physical fitness is being emphasised as Camp will include activities organised to gain such badges as Mountain Climber, Venturer, Hiker, and Senior Explorer.



In the District Swimming Gala, despite some confusion over the results at the time, the Pack tied for 2nd place with the 3rd's, the Troop gained 2nd place, and the Seniors tied for 1st place with the 3rd's. Well done the four Seniors who were there!

On Sunday, 17th July, the Seniors and Rangers put on a display of ropework and fancy lanyard making at Thames Young Mariners' open day at Ham Base. Quite a lot of interest was shown in this, and, anyway, it's one way to get the gig rigging overhauled!

To those who have been wondering where the 20 ft wooden gigs have been for the past few months, they have been earning us money on loan to a film company. We hope that they will be released before the film.

Talking of boats, we are awaiting delivery of two new 8ft fibreglass dinghies from Dawncraft. These are being bought so that the younger Scouts will have something a bit more their own size to handle. Will this cut down the repair bill?

On Thursday, 28th July, Sandling was lifted from her resting place in the back garden to be put in the river. To get her onto the low-loader, she had to be lifted nearly two feet clear of the ground, lowered onto a trolley, and winched on. This took all the morning. She was lifted in by crane just below Kingston Bridge, and like any self-respecting boat that has been dry for nine months she let in water - gallons of it - like a tap! With the aid of some willing pumpers, she managed to limp back to H.Q., and she will be moved to Ham Base very soon.

It is reported that Bruno has once more been trying to reduce the number in the Troop - despite the Advance Party Report! They were changing targets for a shooting contest at Wembley. Unfortunately, there were no casualties!

Much as we enjoy keeping abreast of current news, please do not send any more newspaper. Entry into No. 1 Boathouse has almost become a rock climbing feat, and I hear that it is to be removed in September.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

August 6th/20th	Troop Summer Camp at Warsash.
August 20th/Sept 3rd	Senior Troop Expedition - Isle of Arran
September 8th	First Pack meeting after the Summer break at 6.30 p.m. Parents meeting at Headquarters - 8.15 p.m.
September 23rd	Social evening at the Tudor Hall. All are welcome at 7.45 p.m.
October 1st/2nd	National Sea Scout Regatta.
November 19th	Group Bazaar at the Tudor Hall. This is an advance warning of one of our main fund raisers. So please can we rely on seeing <u>you</u> there?

OUR BEST WISHES

.....to Stuart and Margaret for their marriage on September 17th,  
 .....to Bob Dodge on his engagement. I'm afraid we don't know the name of  
 his fiancee, but if he washes up as well as he mends boats, she'll be  
 alright!

\* \* \* \* \*

## SKIPPER'S SCRAWL (cont. from page 3)

We can legitimately claim that "Leanders" have always been in the van of progress in Scouting, and I have no fear that we shall continue to do so under the changed conditions. As most of our readers know, plans for greatly improved Headquarters were drawn up some years ago, but any work in this direction is held up pending developments in Albany Park Road by the Local Authority. It had also been decided to replace "Sandling" by a vessel suitable for more extended cruising by those members of the Group who will in future be known as Venture Scouts. Unfortunately, the Credit Squeeze has prevented the sale of "Sandling", and therefore the purchase of a replacement has been postponed.