



The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

March 1999

Skipper's Scrawl

I was pleased to see quite a good turnout at the AGM when the Group was presented with the County Commissioner's Standard Award.



Congratulations to our new Warranted cub Leaders, Ian Chappell and Simon Reeves. Also to Asha Leo on the presentation of her experience of the World Jamboree in Chile. I feel the fact that the opportunity for the whole Group to meet together was well worth while although it's a pity a few more parents were not there. Nevermind, I expect you are all waiting for the Group family camp – I understand so far there are 75 places booked for what I'm sure will prove an enjoyable weekend. If you haven't reserved your place yet please contact Nessie as soon as possible.

The first of the parents' working parties took place on the morning of Sunday 14th March, when five dads turned up and went through the HQ from top to bottom. They say many hands make light work – it only took two hours – and I hope everyone noticed

the difference. Work also started on the Bridge (balcony) recently when Costain ground down the concrete to smooth it out ready to accept the surface finish.

We have been fortunate to receive grants from the Council and the Neighbourhood committee and as a result have been able to purchase twelve gym mats – to soften landings for cubs and beavers – and also to replace the small safety boat. Congratulations to Keith Quinnen from the Guild are also due, following his recent success at a fund raising do when he made some £625 for the funds. His next event is organising a Boxing Dinner on the Group's behalf.

We are now fast approaching the water activities season and I am sure all the Scouts can't wait to get out on the River again. For parents – why not start thinking about the great River Race next September? It could make a good opportunity for a sponsored row. How about getting a crew together?

After Easter, Buffy and Stephen are standing down as Beaver Leaders and I would like to record our thanks for all the hard work they have put into the section. We welcome the three volunteers who have offered to take over as leaders – Kate Patterson, Ros Kimber and Tony Ratcliffe. We now just need one more volunteer to bring the Leadership team to full complement. I am sure you will all join me in wishing the new team every success and would ask all the other parents to give them all the help they can when asked for support at meetings.

Keith

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

Headquarters: 92 Lower Ham Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey

Telephone: 0181 549 6286



Annual Surbiton Peak District Expedition

On Friday the 12th of February Ruth and I arrived at Surbiton Headquarters after a short briefing the previous day to depart on our trip to the Peak district. The trip was open to all Surbiton Ventures and Scouts aged 13 and above. Thanks to the invitations by Leander to Surbiton to the past two summer camps, all Leander Scouts and Ventures were invited to attend the Peak District camp with Surbiton. Unfortunately, only two scouts from Leander (Ruth Osborne and Emily Rhoades) were able to attend.

After the last bags were packed into the mini bus where the ventures would be travelling, the people carrier where the scouts would travel, and the MG where Ruth and Tim would travel in style, we began our journey to the Peak District. We arrived at the small, yet comfortable, scout hut at around ten o'clock that night where we unpacked and settled into our accommodation. We then played a game of 'Alcoholics Anonymous' as suggested by Andrew Burns where everyone in the room takes a turn at describing someone else in the room. The game was quite interesting, as deep dark secrets were unburied regarding members of the Surbiton Scout troop.

Early Saturday morning we were awoken and dressed quickly as we awaited the long day of activities ahead of us. The morning started off with a trip to a disused railway bridge around 60 feet above the ground. Only two members of the group seemed even slightly worried by this height as most had abseiled off it before, but for Mark Bridger and myself it was a totally new and disturbing experience. The activities started off with a climb up a caving ladder that was only about 5 inches wide, this proved a problem with the boys who had slightly wider and longer feet as it was more of an effort to get their feet through.

We then ate our lunches which we packed earlier that morning and then travelled to our next adventure of climbing up the steep rock face twenty minutes away from our last climbing exercise. The rock face was split into three different climbing faces, one quite easy, one quite difficult, and one very hard. As we were setting up the apparatus needed for the climbs one very experienced and daring leader, Bruno, began to climb the rock face with no safety or lead ropes. As we all watched in disbelief and horror as Bruno scaled the 60-foot cliff, the first fully equipped scout began to climb. After all had their share of climbing

we sat and watched the brotherly competition between Andrew and Richard Beddingfield. Andrew was determined to regain his title of the fastest and most skilful climber of the family from the previous year, until he was beaten by over 10 seconds by Richard on the most difficult of the three climbs.

After the climbing, cold and tired, we went to visit the local caf where Andrew Burns kindly bought us all hot chocolate and chips. We then travelled back to our hut where we ate dinner and played yet another game. 'Taboo' proved to show how more skilful the Moshino print trousers were than the Dapadons as they thrashed us. It must be said that we had a slight disadvantage as half our team left for the pub during the last few minutes of the game.

The next morning we were again woken early. We ate breakfast and prepared our day sacks for both our hiking and caving expeditions. The hiking was planned the previous night using compass bearings and a map. The hike proved difficult as it meant climbing up two very difficult steep hills. We then drove onto our caving destination. The caving was amazing. It was funny to see those who found their height an extreme advantage in climbing to struggling in caving, as those who found their short height and extreme disadvantage during climbing found the caving easy. Everyone completed all the tasks set in the caving although a few found it difficult. Our caving route took us through three 'ponds' which to our luck and due to the lack of percolation during the past few months came no further than knee high. Some people although had to wade and crawl through the water in hiking boots, as they didn't bring their wellies. Exhausted, we all exited the caves pleased to see sunlight. Our evening then ended in another game. This time of 'Outburst' when the Dapadons and Moshino Print Trousers battled it out yet again – this time the winner was again the Moshino print trousers. We then went to bed after the brief celebration of Ruth's birthday. On Monday morning some of us were treated to a lie-in as Richard Beddingfield and Daniel Jackson kindly made breakfast for the whole troop. Some of us were awoken very early a number of times by Ruth's confiscated mobile whose alarm had a snooze button which went off at around 6:30 four times before someone kindly took out the battery. As part of Ruth's birthday celebration a prank was planned the night before to hide all of

Ruth's clothing and personal belongings. This went terribly wrong when we found that she packed all her kit in plastic bags, which made quite a noise early in the morning. This noise woke up Andrew, and as it was Daniel Jackson and I in the girls' room, Andrew summoned Daniel into his room. The girls' room being right next door to the leaders provided a perfect way to listen to the conversation. Andrew questioned Dan on why he was in the girls' room, Dan replied pathetically, "I was just getting some clothes for Richard to wear, you know just some jeans and stuff." Both Andrew and myself found this highly amusing as we could just see an 18 year old boy wearing a 14 year old girl's pair of jeans.

Not much later that morning we went on another hike through the hills of the Peak District. The scenery was beautiful, it was the hiking that was cold and in a way quite miserable. The hike gave those who didn't know how to use a compass a chance to learn and those who did a chance to test their skills, although they didn't prove very good as we found ourselves lost on more than one occasion. After the hike we went back to our hut to pack up and clean our accommodation. We then set off for the ride back home. Overall the camp was very enjoyable. Ruth and I would like to take this chance to express our gratitude to all the Leaders, Scouts, and Ventures of Surbiton Sea Lions who took part in organizing and those who attended the Peak District weekend. Also for helping make it possible for Ruth and myself to have such a wonderful weekend and to experience activities that we would not be normally be able to do. Thank you!

Emily Rhoades

Leander Family Camp '99

This year's family camp is at Chalfont Heights Scout Camp and Activity Centre, Bucks on 21st-23rd May and parents will have received details and a form with the notice for the A.G.M. About 70 are already planning to go and we are hoping to make this 100. Please return any outstanding form through the Section Leader or to Ness.

For this camp we are in need of a qualified lifeguard with a RLSS certificate, so that families can go swimming in the pool there. The regulations have been very tight following a recent incident in the pool there.

Coxswain's Corner

It does seem to have been a long winter this year, so we are all looking forward to getting out on the water again. Apart from keeping up with seamanship and badgework there have been a number of activities we have been involved in.

A visit to the Boat Show in January is a regular event, a good opportunity to see the latest designs, play with the satellite navigation systems and acquire wet suits and sailing gear at very good prices.

We were fortunate to gain an entry to the Royal Navy Recognised Sea Scout Group National Swimming Championship, which we have not been able to get into for the last few years. A group of nine scouts and two leaders travelled to Torpoint; Plymouth in February, for a very intensive weekend of activities at HMS Raleigh. Apart from swimming, there was a fiercosomely competitive six-a-side football competition, seamanship, pioneering, quizzes and physical skills activities. Considering that many of the teams entered seemed to consist of very good swimmers who train all year round for this event, we didn't do too badly, coming 14th out of 30 troops. A special mention for Oliver Seeley who, because we had one too many in the team(!), volunteered to swim for a group from Tyneside.

Emily Rhoades and Ruth Osbourne decided to try the rigours of winter in the wilds, joining a party of Scouts and Ventures from Surbiton Sealions who went to Fenney Bentley Scout Centre in the Derbyshire Peak District for a long weekend abseiling and hill walking.

We had a very successful inter patrol cooking competition, for which every patrol worked out a menu to provide a three course meal. It was quite a sight to see five patrols preparing and cooking a meal on the main deck, just using the camping stoves and patrol boxes. The tasting panel, Ventures and Leaders, were impressed by the high standard and I am sure the event will be repeated by popular request. Consequently we were able to enter a team in March into the County Cooking Championships - Ruth Osbourne, George Mitchell, Jack Young and Alex Kearns came 6th equal, a very creditable result for our first attempt.

This weekend of 20/21 March saw two teams from Leander, the only entries from the Kingston & Malden District, taking part in the GLSW County Night Incident Hike, held around Bentley Copse. As Surrey Scout County were also holding their night hike at the same time, Winterfold Wood and Hurtwood were filled with teams of Scouts navigating their way from control to control.

An Easter Hike camp is planned, travelling light and using some of the local District Sites, dates to be finalised, but most likely 8–10th April.

Summer Camp will be at Downe Scout Camp Site, near Biggin Hill in Kent from 23rd–31st July. (The venue has changed as this is a better site than Thriftwood in Essex).

Coxswain

Ventures

Ventures enjoyed a weekend of excellent weather for a camp at Polyapes in March. We have been scuba diving at Teddington Pool and also helped with the County Scout Night Hike on 20th March.

Many have exams coming up and some will soon be off to University, but nevertheless, it's rumoured that there will soon be some Venture awards gained and possibly even a Queen's Scout. This would be the first for many years in Leander, I think.

Alex has finished his R.Y.A. course at Thames Young Mariners and he is a qualified instructor for power boats, open canoe, sailing, windsurfing. Congratulations! He is hoping to work there later this year.

David has been accepted on Operation Raleigh for ten weeks in Summer 2000.

Ness

Cub Report

This term has been as full an usual with the boys continuing the Award Badge work as well as completing Activity badges as groups and individuals. Parents, please keep up the good work and tell your boys they can do the Activity badges at home and any leader will test them and look at work.

In February at the AGM both Ian and Simon became warranted Leaders. We also welcomed Thomas Irons and Owen Walters from the Beaver section.

I am looking forward to the Family camp in May and am currently working on a programme for all ages including parents. If any of you have a skill or hobby that will be of use please let me know and we can maybe work it into the programme.

On the 27th April at 1st Kingston Hill the District 5-a-side was held. Leander was able to enter two teams, the Leander Astros and the Leander Broncos

Astros – Mark Sollis, Chris Pearce, Nick Pratt, Alex Snow, Jed Wingrove, Niall Origo, William Mitchell.



Broncos – David Chappell, Jamie Pemberton, Alon Aviron, Jack Hudson, Mathew Bolster, William Akbar.

The day was sunny and hot and we had a good turn out from parents and siblings. The Competition started off with a league and this is the final table for both teams:

Leander Astros: Played 6, Won 3, Drawn 2, Lost 1, For 5, Against 1. Total = 8 points

Leander Broncos: Played 6, Won 1, Drawn 3, Lost 2, For 3, Against 4. Total = 5 points.

This meant that the Broncos were in the semi-final of the Wooden spoon trophy. This was against 1st Kingston Hill C. It was a hard fought match with the winner being scored by Jamie Pemberton. The Wooden spoon Final was then contested between Leander Broncos and 1st Old Malden. Once again this was very close and the Broncos came off the winners after a brilliant penalty shoot out. David Chappell stood his ground and saved the day with three fine saves.

The Astros were in the semi-final of the Tournament against 2nd Malden. The boys played a cracking game and, thanks to a penalty from Jed Wingrove, they held out to win and be in the Final. The final was against 1st Malden and beforehand all the boys kept checking each other for nerves. The Final went right to the wire and ended up as 0-0. Once again Leander were in a final penalty shoot-out. The crowd gathered round the pitch, the coin, was tossed and I chose to go second. The first penalty was saved superbly by William Mitchell. Nick Pratt stood up to take his turn and slotted it past the keeper. The next two penalties from Malden were scored as did Chris Pearce and Niall Origo score for us. The fourth penalty was saved once again by William Mitchell and that was enough. Leander walked away winner.

This meant that both teams won trophies – two teams, two trophies – not bad for one afternoon's work. I think a pat on the back for all the boys for the way they played and the sportsmanship showed. The trophies will be on display in the Ward Room for all to see for the coming year. Let's try again next year.



Chris Pearce is awarded his Animal Lovers Badge

Look out for the photos of our winning teams in the next issue.

Hope you all have or had a good break at Easter and we meet again on the 14th April at 18.45hrs. See you there.

Akela

Sunday Working Parties

As you will know from information sent out with the A.G.M. papers, in order to reduce the workload on leaders, the Executive Committee has agreed that we must ask one parent from each family in Leander to attend a working party about once a year. These are on the second Sunday of each month from 10:00 to 12:00 and there will be a member of the Executive Committee or a Leader who is aware of the jobs required. The jobs will include Hoovering, cleaning the kitchen and toilets, mowing the lawn, tidying camping and boat gear, taking inventories, occasional painting and woodwork, etc., so that there is work for everyone to do.

The lists for the next two working parties are below – apologies for the impersonal use of surnames! If you are unable to have someone attend on that day, you are asked to *arrange a swap* with another family.

April 11th – Childs, Cunliffe, Ford, Foster, Freeman, Geal, Gejowniczek.

May 9th – Grant, Hazard, Healy, Hudson, Hunt, Irons, Kearns, Kimber, King.

Dates for your Diary

April 11 – Sunday Working Party, 10 a.m.

April 19 – Executive Committee meeting, 8 p.m.

May 9 – Sunday Working Party, 10 a.m.

May 15 – Copy for May *Water Rat*

May 17 – Leaders' Meeting, 8 p.m.

June 21 – Executive Committee meeting, 8 p.m.

July 3/4 – National Sea Scout/Sea Ranger Regatta

July 10 – Copy for July *Water Rat*

September 5 – Great River Race

September 13 – Leander A.G.M.

The cooking competition



We all got up early and made our way to the cooking hall. When we got there, there were several tables lined up in three rows. We were in the middle row at the very back!

When we had got all our utensils and food in, we were told to "Begin." We put on our aprons and began to cook our Main course. Our meal consisted of an exotic starter with grapefruit, avocado and crème fraiche source. Our main course was steak, mixed vegetables and boiled garlic potatoes. Finally our dessert was a base of crème fraiche; in a cross across the crème fraiche were raspberries, sprinkled over the top was Demerara sugar.

As we slowly cooked our meal we would tend to peek over to the other tables and see how their food was going. We noticed a team in the full chef kit with the hat and everything. But overall it was a fun day cooking (not getting up early!) and it was a well organised day out.

Alex Kearns

Operation Raleigh

I shall be going to Ghana for ten weeks in the Summer of 2000 as part of Operation Raleigh. There are three projects – a community project, helping to build a hospital; a conservation project, helping wardens in a national park; an adventure project, trekking through the country.

Some of my brother's friends had taken part in Operation Raleigh and they said it was the best thing they had ever done. The assessment weekend involved forty hours of teamwork activity and hiking with no sleep, but even this was great fun!

I have to raise £3000 sponsorship and am doing a sponsored bungee jump and writing to local companies. My A level exams are this year and then I am having a year out working before going to University, so raising the money should keep me busy. Ask me if you want to know more (or want to sponsor me!).

David King

Beavers

Over the last couple of years I have had a wonderful time and learned such a lot running the Beavers and I must thank Claire and Stephen especially, along with all the other parents who have made Beavers so successful and enjoyable. As you know, I am handing over to some new leaders after Easter and am planning to have a meeting with them as soon as possible. The term came to a rousing end with an end-of-term party at the last meeting in March.

Since Christmas, Beavers have been swimming several times, had pancake races, made Mother's Day cards and played lots of games. Their favourite game is still 'Charge!!!'. With the warmer weather and the clocks going forward, we are looking forward to being outside more, playing football on Canbury Gardens and going on a nature trail.

Beavers start Monday meetings on 19th April, and I shall be putting on my Beaver Leader hat once more for the Group Camp on 21st May. I am sure the new leaders will have as much fun as I have and I wish them 'Good Luck'.

Buffy