



The Water Rat

The Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

December 2014

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Beavers flying!

The Beavers have had an interesting term. A large number of new Beavers joined the Colony to focus upon the Global Challenge and Air Activities badges (and to play games and shout a lot).

In November we were visited by the 'Aeroplane Man' who held them all in a magical spell of tongue-out concentration for an hour while they made and decorated polystyrene planes. As an extra bonus, the planes flew really well, and the Beavers played with them happily for nearly half an hour afterwards, showing surprising respect for each other's planes as they ran around the room.

Also in November, Sandi and Alice from *Waitrose* came in to explain Fair Trade. The Beavers were much better behaved than normal. A cynic might suspect that their behaviour was motivated by gift bags of bananas and KitKats, but we know that they were really interested in the prospect of fresh water and education for people in developing countries.

In October we said a sad goodbye to Richard Wallington, who had lead the colony for five years. Richard has done an enormous amount of work for Leander not only in planning activities, but also admin and training. His boots will be hard to fill. I know that a great number of families of current and former Beavers will join me in thanking him for all his

many hours of very hard work. Richard has moved up to help at Leander Scouts.

In response to Armistice Day, we did some work on the Victoria Cross and discussed themes of courage and sacrifice.



Lastly, on 8th December we said goodbye to Beavers Clementine and Fergus who swam up to Cubs. This means more tiny, enthusiastic, noisy new Beavers and more hairs descending gently from my head, never to be replaced.

Thanks to all of the parent helpers, Duke of Edinburgh girls and boys, and to Karen for keeping it all running along. Please be reminded that I have only ever been an Assistant Beaver Scout Leader for a short while and that Leander's Beavers are currently without a section leader: we are in urgent need for someone to step forward and fill the role, to give the Colony direction and continuity. If you like to make happy, noisy children happier and quieter, then you will find the role very rewarding.

Stand in a room full of squirrels. Put a metal bucket on your head and hit it with a stick for 60 minutes. if you enjoy this experience, you will find yourself ideally suited to the role of Beaver Leader.

Ben, ABSL

New at HQ

The Executive Committee has an on-going programme of refurbishment and improvement.



Two folding wall partitions have been installed, using part of a legacy from Bruno (Peter Burton), a former GSL. They were part of the original plan of the building and make a very flexible set of spaces. The Main Deck can be split, with a smaller River-end space, or the Ward Room can be expanded to include this space.



Filters have been installed in the warm-air heating, meaning that we will be able to have the ducting cleaned of fluff and dust. When the bearings in the fan have been replaced, it will be quieter.

Fluorescent light fittings on the Main Deck have been replaced with more robust and efficient ones.

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scout Group

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www.leanderseascouts.co.uk — Registered Charity Number 290029



Pack Pack Pack!



We kicked off this half term with somewhat of a logistical challenge by splitting the Pack in three and mucking around the meeting dates, times and locations. All of this was to allow our Cubs to visit the Kingston Fencing Club for an introduction to fencing. This turned out to be a lively and entertaining evening, and didn't produce nearly as much mayhem as you'd expect from giving swords to a group of Cubs!

Now, camping in November may not strike many as a sensible pastime, but this didn't stop some of our Sixers and Seconders enjoying a joint camp with one of our neighboring Packs at Petersham and Ham Sea Scouts. Indeed, as the afternoon progressed, the rain too progressed to a near torrential downpour.

However, after a hearty dinner of chicken curry (complete with poppadoms!) all cooked and eaten under canvas, the rain

eased enough for our intrepid Cubs to set forth on a night hike. The Cubs navigated fantastically well through the dark to reach their destination and a welcoming cup of cocoa with squirty cream. Luckily day two dawned fine and sunny allowing the Cubs to complete their activities, including cooking some rather fine rock cakes in cardboard box ovens. It was great to see our Cubs working well with another Pack and really enjoying the camp in spite of the challenging weather.

Later in November a team from Leander took part in the District Cub Swimming Gala. Despite being sadly depleted by illness, our team did magnificently and was placed fourth out of the fifteen teams entered. So congratulations to Ed, Felix, Jack, Sam B, James M and Yana for a fantastic performance, and commiserations to Amelie and Daniel P who were unable to make it.



We finished November with a great welcome for the Pack at our local Synagogue where we learnt a lot about the Jewish faith and some of its festivals.



Then the Sixers and Seconders put together an imaginative programme and ran their own meeting. We rounded off the term with an evening of lighting bonfires and toasting marshmallows.



Chris and I would like to thank all the parents who have helped over the term. We hope you have had a merry Christmas and look forward to more exciting Cub action in the New Year.

Tim

Scouts find their way (sometimes!)

The first two meetings after half term saw us splitting the Troop in half to take part in two separate activities, the first of which was climbing at White Spider climbing in Tolworth whilst the other half of the Troop were cooking up a storm at the HQ. The next week we swapped them round so that nearly everyone had a chance to do both activities.

The culinary delights that were created ranged from Italian, Chinese, Thai and Mexican food and were enjoyed by all including the Judges (Leaders and Parents) and, as far as I'm aware, everyone was fit and well the next morning so I shall call it a success all round. We did manage to set off the smoke alarms but that's just par for the course! My thanks goes to the parents who helped out with the cooking and made the whole event run a lot smoother than last year. Many hands make light work, as they say (we'll ignore the 'too many cooks' proverb).

On the third meeting we were all back at the HQ and split the PLs off to organize the meeting they would be running and concentrated on refreshing the

map reading skills for the remainder of the Scouts. For good reason as will now become apparent.

The next meeting was titled 'A Night around Ham House' and any Scout who thought they were on a leisurely history tour was soon to learn this was not the case. I had designed a basic (or so I thought) navigation exercise around the area of Ham House which entailed the Scouts finding various grid references on a map and then answering questions that were to be answered at that grid reference. The point being, if you're not at the right place you can't answer the question! Unfortunately the weather was somewhat inclement but I don't think that did anything to dampen the Scouts' enthusiasm for the task.

Back at the HQ the following week the Scouts had yet another navigation task in the dark to perform, with an orienteering course with basic compass headings and distances to complete a circuit around the North Kingston area. Again most of the groups managed to successfully complete it but I did make a slight error by not telling

the Scouts to take their shoes off before going back up to the Main Deck when they had finished. Consequently we now had rather a large amount of Canbury Gardens in the building!

The penultimate meeting was designed and run entirely by the PLs (Patrol Leaders). The Scouts were split into teams and had to complete several tasks set by the PLs, the completion of which earned that team a piece of useful material to complete the final task.

The end task was to construct something that would enable them to throw an egg off the balcony to the pavement without it breaking. All but one succeeded, which I thought showed a great deal of inventiveness if not a little cheating by the Scouts.

Some of the tasks were a bit messy (flour and water mainly) and several Scouts went home looking like they had seen or were themselves ghosts.

Our final meeting took place at The Rotunda bowling alley and gave the Scouts a good chance to enjoy themselves without them having to listen to us droning on trying to teach them stuff. I hope everyone has had a good Christmas break and is raring to go when we re-convene in the New Year.

Russ

100 years ago at Leander



In 1914, Scouts from 2nd Kingston (which later became Leander) are pictured at Dungeness on war duties.

Fundraising



If you are not already raising funds for another charity through easy-fundraising, please do sign up for

Leander when you spend all that money you were given – or have saved – over Christmas.

Our supporters have raised over £450 in total so far – nearly £40 in the last quarter.