



# The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

March 2000

## Skipper's Scrawl

First of all, well done to everyone for their smart turnout and efforts at the RN inspection, when we again passed with flying colours. I was particularly impressed with the speed and orderliness with which the building was evacuated when the Inspecting Officer, Lt. Commander Mark Ellis initiated an impromptu fire drill (especially since the Cubs had never done a drill before) when all the main lights went out. The building was cleared in under a minute, which shows that previous practice drills have been effective.

Highlight of the evening was the presentation of a Queen's Scout award to Alex Newman. I think this is the first in the Group for about 15 years, which makes Alex's achievement even more commendable.

The need for more section leaders has again been highlighted recently, particularly with Beavers and Cubs. Ros and Katie will be finishing with Beavers shortly, and we therefore are in desperate need of a new team. I am pleased that Tony Edwards has agreed to become a Leader but we still need at least two more volunteers. Cubs are also somewhat stretched since Simon had to move with his job



and it is not always possible for Tim and Ian to get down if their shifts conflict with meetings. Please let Ros, Tim or myself know if you can help on a regular basis.

I am sure you will have all seen the new flooring to the main deck. We have been fortunate in that the Group was left a legacy by Fred Goodger, a former member, Leader and Guildsman. This enabled us to undertake more than we had original planned and it is hoped that at long last we will also be able to install the showers in both the male and female toilets.

There are still several other projects, which need to be addressed to bring the H.Q. up to scratch, and these are obviously dependent on funds. Can I remind those of you who are still behind with subs to please get up to date, especially since the Group has already had to pay the annual capitation and insurance for all members to ensure everyone is covered.

Finally, two dates for your diaries – firstly the Group AGM which will be on Monday the 22nd of May at 20.00hrs and secondly a planned social evening for Parents and supporters on Saturday the 8th July with buffet and drinks overlooking the River.

*Keith*

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## Cubs



This term we have had regular swimming for the cubs with, we hope, most boys obtaining at least one of the swimming badges by Easter.

In February, as you all know, we had the admiralty inspection and the boys who attended were very smart and showed they were not scared to talk as the inspecting officer asked lots of questions on a wide range of subjects. The boys showed their skills in knots and mini pioneering by building a small bridge.

The pack as a whole has worked hard and kept up with map reading from Ian (Baloo). The compass game is as popular as ever.

The Award Badge work continues at a pace and boys are working hard at the sections in the Cub Scout Handbook. I would remind you and am always telling them they can complete the Activity Badges at home and, if tested by us, can obtain badges as they wish. We are always happy to see what they have done and test them if required. The badge most boys can do is the computer badge.

The photo shows the boys on the evening of the admiralty inspection.

As you all know Ian and I run the pack and this is done on a voluntary basis. We get help from Ventures as and when they are free. We also run the parent help rota. However we do need two more warranted helpers. This would be of great help as you know we both work shifts and sometime get called to work at short notice. This is rare but can happen. With two more helpers the load would be spread evenly and you would not be needed every week. So please have a good think and let us know.

We want to keep the pack at the current numbers, as we are one of –if not the – largest pack in the district.

A forthcoming event is the district five-a-side (date to be confirmed) so get your boys training at home, as we hold both trophies and want to keep them!!

*Akela (Tim)*

## Royal Naval Inspection



On Tuesday 22nd February, we had a Royal Naval inspection. We are one of 101 Scout groups in the country, which have Royal Navy backing. This is not only important because of the financial side but also from a prestige point of view.

We were all very nervous when the Officer came to see us because we knew that the standard that is expected is very high.

The Officer was rowed from Kingston Bridge to Leander by the Ventures. As they were on their way, we were making sure that we were tidy and ready for inspection. When he finally reached us, he asked us various questions. He asked me what I liked best about Leander and I replied rowing the gigs. We then did boat and rope work and I think the Officer was impressed with our knowledge of seamanship. When he was leaving, he said that his report would be in our favour and we all breathed a sign of relief and hoped that it would be!!

*Al Woods*

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## Beavers

This year we have welcomed three new Beavers to the Colony: Rory Brennan, Max Foster and Jonathan Edwards. In January we raised over 31 for the Blue Peter New Life Appeal with a Bring and Buy Sale. We have investigated coins, held our own mini Gold Rush and have been on a twilight walk along the river. A giant parachute was a great success with the boys and inspired them to make their own miniature versions.

Regular swimming sessions at the Malden Centre continue to be a popular part of the Beaver Programme and congratulations are due to Jonathan Edwards and Max Foster who have gained their first swimming badges this year.

*Ros and Catie*

## Frayed ends

The Scouts have won the six-a-side trophy and our two teams were placed 4th and 6th in the County Night Hike. Leander Scouts were also 7th in the County Cooking Competition – how about some reports and photos for the *Water Rat*, guys?

Alex Newman, who was presented with his *Queen's Scout* badge at the RN Inspection, has now taken out a warrant as a leader in the Group.

The Venture Scouts have not found it easy to arrange weekend activities recently, as most of them have weekend jobs, but they did go for away for a weekend in February to Polyapes. It was described to our undercover correspondent as a 'quiet weekend', but it did apparently include a hike in the Box Hill area, followed by a meal out. Apparently, they were the only campers that weekend, so who will know?

If you have tried phoning the Headquarters recently and had no reply, do not give up! A problem with the telephone that prevented it receiving incoming calls has now been fixed.

Group Treasurer George Goodall needs annual accounts from all sections at the beginning of April.

John Roberts, a former member of Leander, has negotiated a reduction in the rateable value of the building with the Rating Inspector. This should save the Group a good amount of money and we are very grateful to him for all his hard work.

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## Dates for your Diary

April 9th – HQ cleaning party (also maintenance)

April 16th – St George's Day Parade at Kingston Parish Church

April 30th (moved from Easter Sunday) – HQ cleaning party

May 14th – HQ cleaning party (also maintenance)

May 13th – *Water Rat* copy date

May 15th – Executive Committee meeting

May 22nd – Leander AGM

May 28th – HQ cleaning party

July 2nd – Regatta

July 8th – Social Evening (parents and friends of Leander)

July 15th – *Water Rat* copy date