



The Water Rat

The Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

December 2012

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Pack Pack Pack!

And so here we are. As we close down the Pack for the Christmas and New Year Hols, we can reflect on an Autumn term of.... Well not much.....

We got busy welcoming eight – yes 8 – new Cubs, learning about planets and constellations, making planets out of balloons, learning what a ‘Skit’ is, rehearsing Skits, getting up on stage and performing Skits IN FRONT OF PEOPLE and MAKING THEM LAUGH OUT LOUD; we went swimming and found some of it was easier than expected (and some harder).

We listened to our leaders go on-and-on-and-on-and-on about fire safety and camp layouts but then actually seemed to understand some of it and drew up some pretty cool camp layouts of our own. We could not light fires of course ‘cos it was far, far too wet, so instead we went out on a clear night to Richmond Park and looked at the Moon and stars and learned a bit more about Astrology and discovered how to find the North Star and then we hiked through some woods and then the following week WE LIT FIRES ... lots of fires. BIG Fires. And we cooked s’mores and bread and pancakes and eggs in potatoes and eggs in oranges and trout in newspaper and, of course, marshmallows.

Some of us then went home and did the Chefs Badge, Martial Arts Badge and Musicians Badges. We then made puppets and re-wrote a story and acted it and performed it and had judges judge it and the *Jack In The Beanstalk* performers won it; then our Sixers led a meeting of their own together with their Seconders and they did it so well the leaders drank tea in the galley all evening; finally, we had a bit of a party and mostly played games but also gave out Entertainer and Astrology Badges and we said goodbye to our friends who are leaving.

That’s all.

Fond Farewells

The Press Gang have nabbed five Cubs this term.

- ‘All Seeing’ – Alice Paterson
- ‘Do A Turn’ – Ollie Bennett
- ‘Loyal and Questioning’ – Georgie Yelland
- ‘Solid As A Rock’ – Hannah Rean
- ‘If You Are Going To Commit – Commit Fully’ – Max Biddulph

New Year Welcomes

Next term we welcome two Beavers into the Pack – Conor Strickland and Joel Esser.

Simon Biddulph, CSL

Explorers



It seems that the Explorers can only be photographed eating! Not content with looking forward to Christmas, they found an excuse to celebrate Diwali, in mid November, with a meal.



RBK Grant

Courtesy of a generous grant from Kingston Council, we have just received some brand new kayaking, canoeing and safety equipment. We look forward to using it on the river when the weather gets a bit better.



Fifty years ago – 1962 (from the Water Rat)

Editorial

Since the last edition, the Group has added four new* Coypu sailing dinghies and an additional fibre-glass gig to its Boat Deck. The four venerable old twelve foot dinghies have been retired after many years of steadfast service. [**the old Coypus*]

Troop Summer Camp

Summer Camp was held this year at Hook Park, at Warsash, Hampshire. This year we were lucky enough to have the use of Sandling, and each Patrol had a day out in her.



A few of the younger members of the Troop couldn't get used to the constant heeling and were glad to get back on dry land again. Apart from a few days when a gale was blowing, the weather was ideal for sailing.

The Patrols went on day trips to Southampton, and its surrounding districts, and it was on one such outing that Clive terminated his Summer Camp after only a few days, by breaking his arm. Some Patrols rowed up the River Hamble to Bursledon.

Senior Troop Activities

[*Senior Troop was aged 15-18*]
This year the Senior Summer Camp was held in the same location as that of the Scout Troop, near to the River Hamble.

During the two weeks it was intended to obtain as much

experience in the gig as possible and also to take advantage of the use of Sandling. The gig was well used, and we co-opted Troop PLs into our crew. Cruises were most eventful because of the good wind, no doubt. When coming out of Wootton Creek once the gig almost capsized, but by reefing the mainsail down to the gaff we were able to get back without further mishap. We intended to go to Yarmouth, but our centre-plate unfortunately broke, off Calshot Spit. The mainsail was quickly dropped and we were able to return under the foresail.

Coming home from Cowes on one trip took only 40 minutes, sailing all the way on a broad reach at an average speed that was estimated to be 10 knots, much to our surprise. Sandling was accompanied by the gig to Gosport and then back to the Hamble, the gig going a little further by rounding the Chichester Bar buoy.

Noggin, Brian and Keith rowed up to Longridge (Marlow) in the Sea Rangers' skiff taking only 13 hours for the journey; this was because some of the Troop had said that we were 'past it'.

Beavers



Beavers with their better friend pledges and anti-bullying avatars

After saying goodbye to many familiar faces in July, the Autumn term saw a major change to the Colony with eight new Beavers starting. The term has been focussed around the air activities badge and global challenge badge.

The global challenge badge gave us the opportunity to visit Holly Lodge in Richmond Park. Here the Beavers were able to learn about the countryside code, range of wildlife living in the park and closing the gate. We have also learnt Beaver Scout promises and greetings in different languages.

Air Activities is always popular as the Beavers learn about different types of aircraft and we held a paper dart olympics.

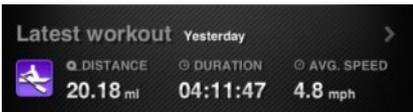
Other topics covered this term include a special feature on bravery and why people are awarded medals just after Remembrance Day. We also spent a couple sessions working through material as part of Anti-bullying week in November.

We held two swimming sessions at Teddington pool. Both sessions were very well attended and many Beavers have been able to successfully complete their stage 1 and stage 2 swimming activity badges.

If you would like to help delivering the Beaver programme in any capacity please feel free to discuss this with me any time.

Richard – Beaver Scout Leader

A Competitive Season



It's been a competitive season this term down at the Scouts, starting off with the Great River Race on the 15th of September.



Luckily the weather held up for six of the Scouts to complete the marathon from Greenwich to Ham. Most, if not all, hadn't taken part in the race before, and I think it's safe to say that everyone found it harder than they expected. However, the Scouts stayed resilient, with everyone still wanting to row until the end of the race, even once the tide had turned and bodies were aching. They did a fantastic job, and I hope they enjoyed the great experience.

We also had an impressive turnout at the District night in December! Almost half the Troop

entered, divided between three teams for the annual hike, this time based in Birchmere – snuggled in a (not so quiet) corner between the M25 and A3. Everyone had a great time, with Leander grabbing 2nd (Leander Mutineers) 4th (Leander Privateers) and – ahem – un-ranked, after the Buccaneers got ahead of themselves and headed back to base camp before getting to the 5th check point.

The night didn't end there; whilst the other Scout Troops went home to their warm, cosy houses, Leander braved the cold to test out the new tents and stayed the night. A good idea



everyone agrees, leaving time to run around in the woods the next day.

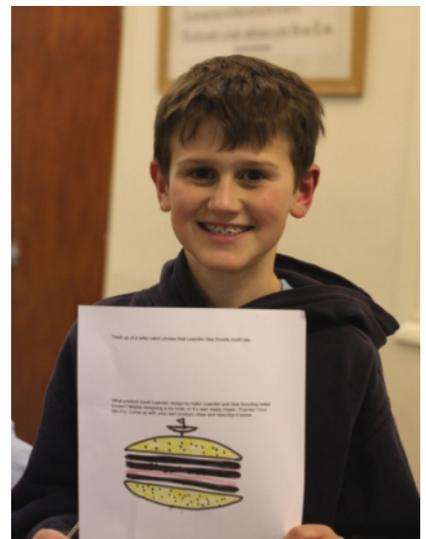


The competition has been inter-Patrol as well, with a pioneering challenge to make a catapult launcher and a good old fitness challenge. Leander's new craze – paracord, has also featured in the program, as well as an old classic Scout craze – FIRE! – when they had to light a fire and learned how to light a Tilley for their fireworks night. And all of that was topped off with a Christmas bowling trip to Charrington Bowl. We'll have to wait and see who was the top tenpin tippler at the brilliant bowling bonanza. We hope you have all enjoyed a fantastic Christmas and will see you all again in the New Year!

Aidan



The Night Hike teams



Design for a 'Leander-burger'