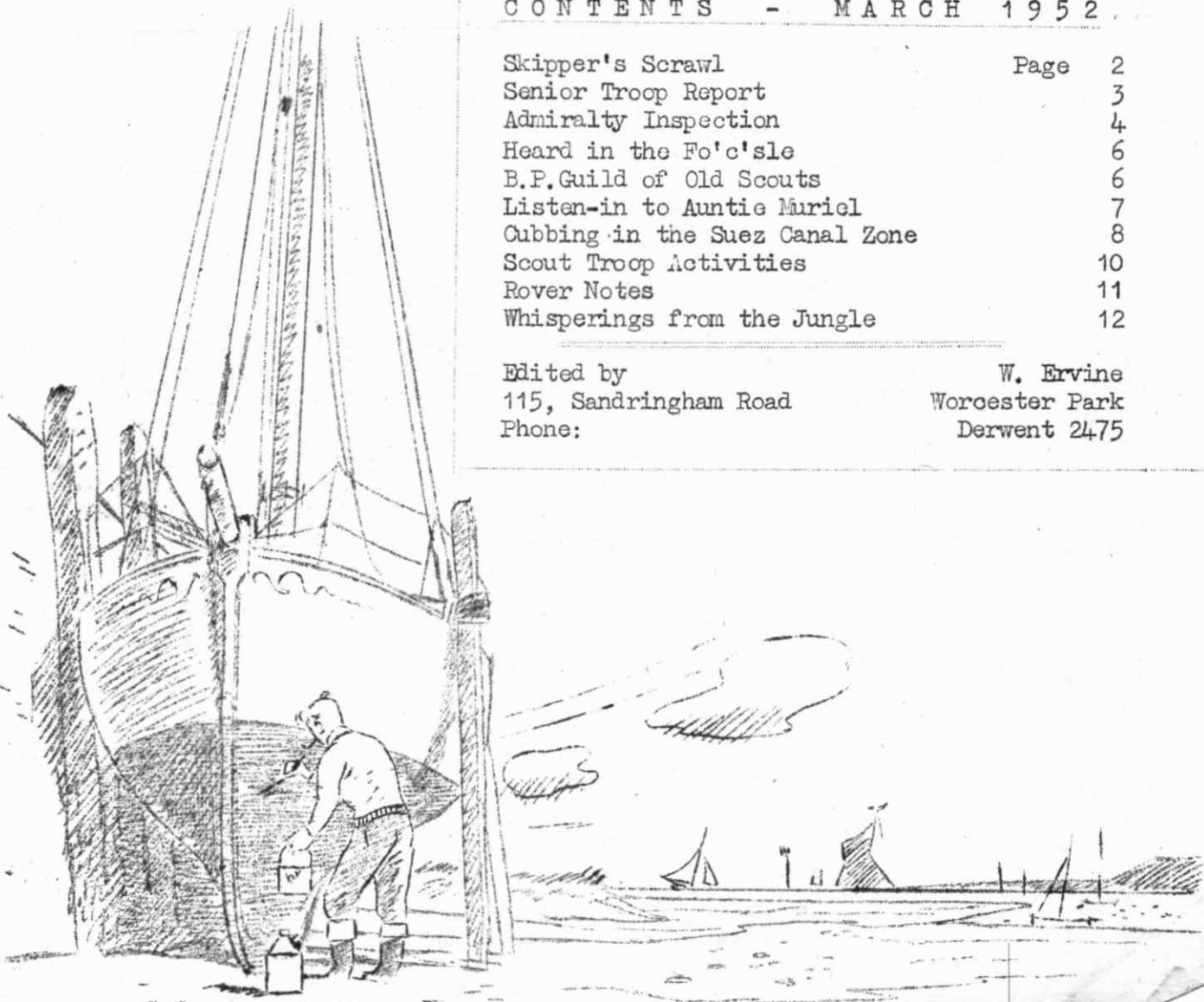


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H.M. KING GEORGE VI.

To the memory of our late King, Patron of the Scout Movement, we pay our humble tribute. To the Royal Family we offer our deepest sympathy. To Queen Elizabeth we pledge our loyal service.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

SKIPPER'S SCRAWL.

To all Sea Scouts the frontispiece of this issue exemplifies SPRING - the season of reawakening of life and activity throughout Nature. Thus "Leanders" are extremely busy at the moment with the refitting of boats, the overhaul of camp gear and the renovation of the Headquarters. One "major operation" of the past few weeks has been the completion of a new drain to take the rainwater from the roof. This has involved the excavation of a hole between 9ft and 10ft deep and was a fine piece of team work by Scouts, Seniors and Rovers. This project was "Directed and Produced" by that hard working pair "Bumble" and "Buster" who have also been responsible for fitting a new threshold to the workshop door and many lesser jobs.

The sight of this recent activity prompted one Old Scout of the Group to indulge in nostalgic reminiscences of the 1930's when the Headquarters were taking their present shape. He said what a valuable experience it had been for him to take part in that work. He considered the value lay, not so much in learning how to mix concrete, etc., as in seeing how the combined and sustained efforts of 20 to 30 boys brought to completion what appeared to be a tremendous and complicated undertaking. This willingness to tackle difficult propositions has now become a tradition with "Leanders" and is the secret of much of what we have been able to achieve.

The next occasion for the display of concerted effort is Saturday, 29th March, when the Group is holding its first Jumble Sale for 25 years. All readers living within say 5 miles of Kingston are asked to read the Acrostic at the foot of page 5 and act at once. Place - St. Luke's Social Centre, Elm Road, Kingston. Time 3 p.m.

SENIOR TROOP REPORT.

Despite the inclement weather of the past few weeks, the Senior Troop has continued its activities, starting with a Boxing Day hike.

We have not managed to get away for many week-ends, however, as we have been trying to get in as much sailing practice as possible, but have been a little frustrated in this endeavour by an almost unbelievable succession of windless weekends, and only on two occasions have we managed to get in any worth-while sailing.

We have had another very enjoyable weekend as the guests of the Acton Sea Scouts, when we had the opportunity of trying out the new Gigs in tidal waters, and found them well up to expectations, and in every way ideal in all states of the tide.

We represented the Group at a Civic Service held recently, and it is very gratifying to note that all the members of the Senior Troop were present on that occasion.

Badge work has occupied a good part of our winter programme, and our sincere congratulations go to P/Ls Shennan and Ford, and Senior Scouts Garnish and Johnson, who have recently gained the Ambulance Badge.

At this time of the year we try to forget the chills of winter by making plans for camps and expeditions, and plans are well in hand in that direction. At Easter, not very far off now, we hope to go to Pinhay, in Devon, at the invitation of Major Allhusen, the High Sheriff, to undertake some pioneering work on his estate to prepare some land for the use of Scouts during the coming summer. We have also made plans for our Summer expedition, but this we will give in more detail in our next report. We live in hopes of reaping some results of our Winter's work before long in many directions, and would therefore ask you, gentle reader, to watch for this page in our next issue.

ADMIRALTY INSPECTION - 20th NOVEMBER, 1951.

This unit consists of the Kingston and Cuddington Sea Scouts. Both these troops, of about equal size, have increased their numbers every year since 1948 and now between them have a total strength of 104. The inspection has always been held in the headquarters of the Kingston unit as it was this time. This does not appear to be very satisfactory so far as Cuddington is concerned. I suggest that in future these troops be considered as two Admiralty recognised units.

On inspection the Sea Scouts of both troops were smartly turned out. A great many of the boys had acquired their oarsman's badges. I was told that half a dozen of the "Seniors" were about to obtain their helmsman's badges.

Both troops are to be congratulated on the excellent attendance. No "Scouters" or Scouts were absent except those sick or at night school. This is a fine achievement with such large troops.

The Headquarters of the Kingston troop is situated on the bank of the river and in addition to a main hall, a "Scouters" room and three or four rooms used for instructional classes it contains Boatswains and Naval Store rooms and several boathouses. The troop own the headquarters. They are also extremely well supplied with stores. The main hall was rather bare. More "ship atmosphere" was needed here.

All the boats are kept in very good condition.

All refitting of the boats, including rigging, is done by the Sea Scouts themselves.

In addition to all the usual seamanship subjects that I saw being taught the following were carried out:-

Erection of sheer legs and a dinghy hoisted (in the dark of course).

Flashing exercises from the other side of the river, several scouts having crossed the flooded river in a dinghy.

Both troops have strong teams of "Scouters". Mr. Klinkert, an "extra master", kindly instructs the Kingston "Seniors" in navigation and pilotage.

Sea Scouts of both these troops obtain a good knowledge of seamanship. Their standard is much above that of the average sea scout troop.

This Unit is very well organised and well led. Great credit is due to Mr. Ebbage, the A.C.C. and Kingston G.S.M. and his staff. He is assisted by good support from the Sea Scout Committee. The Kingston Sea Scout Group have their own magazine "The Water Rat".

Six Sea Scouts from the Kingston Troop joined the Sea Services since the last inspection. Perhaps a few more from Cuddington will consider joining in the future.

This is a really first class Sea Scout unit. Recommended for continued Admiralty recognition.

F. D. BROWN, Commander, R.N.

Inspecting Officer for ADMIRAL COMMANDING RESERVES.

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March 29th
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B.P. GUILD OF OLD SCOUTS.

At their last meeting the "Leander" Branch of the B.P. Guild of Old Scouts reviewed the activities of the past year, and suggestions were made for next year's programme. The retiring Chairman, "Bill" Myers, was asked to convey a large bunch of tulips to his wife, as a token of the members' appreciation of her great assistance in providing refreshments on a number of occasions. The following Officers were elected for the coming year:- Chairman - Rex Davies, Hon. Treasurer - Bob Douthwaite, Hon Secretary - Jack Douthwaite. After completion of the formal business, the Skipper showed a number of lantern slides, depicting the Group's activities from 1909 onwards.

HEARD IN THE FO'C'SLE.

Congratulations to Paul Clements who, it is understood, is getting married shortly.

* * * *

Ron Bass and his wife, Evelyn, arrived in Toronto on February 18th, and obtained a furnished flat the same day! Ron has started his new job straight away. We wish them every success in their new venture.

* * * *

Dick Riches was home on leave from Germany just before Christmas. He dropped in at a meeting of the Rover Crew and was somewhat envious of "Snowy" Vaizey, who had been demobbed that day. "Snowy" is now back at work at Cellons and "Leanders" have appointed his "Admiral Commanding Paint!"

* * * *

Since Christmas, the following have returned to Civvy Street from the Forces:- Bill Manning from the Royal Navy; Keith Quinnen from the Army in North Africa; Arthur Davis from the Army in Malaya. While in Malaya last August, Arthur ran up against Ernie Scuthey, who had only recently arrived there.

* * * *

Jeff Dove has recently returned to this country from Cyprus and the Canal Zone, and should be demobbed by the time this Magazine is published.

* * * *

ROVERS! I haven't seen your photographs in the local press, taken at the Rover Dinner. Perhaps there were too many glasses in the way!

I hear W...Y S.....N has developed quite a taste for petrol. When the outboard motor conks out down river, you are supposed to BLOW a blocked pipe, not suck it, W...Y.

Really B....R C..E, fancy falling in the "drink" after 18 years!

What was in that small bottle H...Y M...E, during a recent firelighting competition?

Is S....Y V....Y really "gentle and kind"?

W...Y S.....N and J..K K..N, have you both got a street trader's licence yet? You ought to, with a couple of rotten hats like that!

What's this I hear about the H... 's playing "Postman's Knock", T.D S.....S?

Is it true N...L F.....N that you don't have to eat your meals off the mantelpiece any longer.

Go easy on the spring board during P.T. C.....E H.....N or you will be through the galley hatch.

B..L M.....G, when the Cox'n says "Fall in", he doesn't mean IN THE RIVER!

"D-C", mind you don't fall out of that flying suit - there's a big enough hole in it.

"CUBBING IN THE SUEZ CANAL ZONE." (Cont.)

Behind the rows of Army camps stretched two hot, dusty miles of flat desert, and rising from beyond a ridge of sand hills. One of these hills was rather steeper than the others, and an exciting rugged shape with the interesting name of Gebel Shabruit, commonly known among the British folk as "The Big Flea". Sometimes, when the weather was cooler, we would take the Cubs exploring the Flea, and armed with rucksacks of sandwiches and cakes, and bottles of "pop", we would scramble up the steep sides, puffing and panting, and hauling the smaller Cubs behind us. It took a good three quarters of an hour to reach the top, with short rests in between, and we would stagger up the last few rocks hot, sticky and dusty, and collapse in heaps to get back our breath before admiring the view. It really was a good view too, the lake stretching out blue and calm in the background, and the few green clumps of trees where the General and the Admiral had their houses. The rest of the huts and tents were like tiny models on a relief map, and we used to have great fun trying to pick out which camp was which, and where the Married Families Camp was, and who lived in such and such a house.

Strange though it may seem in such a dry, dusty barren looking place as the top the Flea, we were still able to find little rock plants growing if we searched hard enough, and one Sixer made a collection of fourteen different species of plant gathered from the slopes. On the way down if we were very quiet, sometimes we would see the dark forms of little foxes slinking across the lower ridges of the hills, and this always caused a lot of excited discussions as to what they could possibly live on up there, and the Cubs were really keen on Nature Study after one of our hectic climbs.

My last Scouting affair was St. George's Day Rally at Moascar, although it was nowhere near St. George's Day. We had suddenly been sent a largish sum of money from the British Community in Cairo, and we planned another Rally on the same lines as the one held the previous year, only this time we were not fortunate enough to have Lady Baden Powell with us. However, the Guide Commissioner for Egypt came up from Cairo, and we really had a wonderful day.

After Flag Break, early in the morning, we all dashed to the swimming pool, and afterwards back to the Football ground for a display of lashings and signalling, and all the other more spectacular Scouting activities. The Cubs demonstrated their Jungle Dances, and we all had a huge lunch shortly after that. After lunch we had a film show, and then tea, and a Camp Fire to which we had invited the Greek and French Scouts from Ismailia. The French boys were marvellous, they were smart and lively, and extremely accomplished. During the Camp Fire they sang several of their own songs for us, and gave us a demonstration of musical marching, to which they accompanied themselves by singing and whistling.

Actually I should have said that was my last affair but one, because the ship I was to sail home on was delayed, and I was just in time to go to the Military Tattoo at Moascar Garrison. The Army invited all the Canal Zone Scouts, Cubs, and Guides to the dress rehearsal. It was a torchlight tattoo and thoroughly enjoyed, from the youngest Cub upwards, and I thought it proved rather a nice ending to my days in the Middle East.

The day before I sailed for home, I went back to the Cub Hut to say "Goodbye", and found that there were two more Cubs leaving on the same ship as myself, plus the Group Sponsor, Brigadier Mizen, and one of the nearby R.A.F. Rovers, so this cheered up my farewell a little.

I had better not go into the voyage home here, but I can say this, Cubbing continued all the way back to England, even if we were in the middle of the Mediterranean. The afternoon often found us sitting in a little group telling and re-telling the tales that Cubs and Scouts like to hear, and tying knots and touching our toes. I am convinced that the rest of the Wrens, and in fact the entire ship's company and passengers, thought we were quite mad, but then did not someone say somewhere, that "every Scout is a little mad anyway....."

SCOUT TROOP ACTIVITIES

On 29th December the Scout Troop's Christmas Party was held, and P/Ls Evans and Huckson prepared the tea. Each Scout brought some food along, and games were played, with an interval for eating, and the party finished up with a Film Show by P/L Moody.

1952 started with a Scout Troop Meeting. After P.T. and competition, we had instruction by P/Ls on anchors, lowering the gig, and dinghy procedure. On the following Saturday P/L Evans took charge of a session for the less experienced, on handling a dinghy, with particular reference to coming alongside, while P/L Clark ran a session on semaphore revision. After tea, a wide game was held on Ham Common, where many scratches were suffered, Keith Notley having a "Dettol and Vaseline bath" when he returned. On the 8th January, the lighting circuit went wrong, and there were instant cries of "abandon ship". The P/Ls rallied their Patrols, and all boats were launched. The S/M and A/S/Ms watched, with peculiar expressions on their faces - what they said about our "abandon ship" was nobody's business. On Saturday 12th, there was a meeting at Polyapes, and "Ajax" were also there. After some wide games, a fire-lighting test was staged. Unfortunately Nobby Clark scalded himself, and was taken off to Hospital. After tea, we had various stunts until 8 p.m. when we left, while the Scouters and P/Ls stayed for the weekend.

On the next Saturday the Oarsman's Badge candidates practised rowing in one of the gigs. P/Ls Clark and Moody went sailing, and "Beavers" worked hard "up-top". Sec. Milne organised a flag raid on Ham Common. P/L Clark ran a compass game on Tuesday 22nd. On Saturday 26th, P/L Evans was in charge of a very new gig's Crew, who were even more raw (with cold) when they came in for tea. P/L Clark and Sec. Reed went sailing, and two dinghies were used for practice in coming alongside. "Beavers" did more work 'up-top'. On Saturday 2nd February we entertained "Ajax". A regatta was held, which Herons won. Seals were 2nd, and Ajax 3rd, with Seagulls last. "Beavers" were duty Patrol, and so awful was their tea, coupled with the rough-house which followed, that only 2 "Ajax" Scouts were left at the end of the evening. On Sat. 9th, 2 gigs went out, while P/L Evans and Sec. Spencer were out sailing. The "Seals" used one dinghy and the pram for practice in coming alongside. Seconds Milne and Butcher went on Ham Common with A/S/M. Buer for "estimation".

R.N.L.I. Bronze Medals were gained by J. Scott, J. Sharp, S. Vaizey, N. Fentimen and N. Handley, and Bars were awarded to G. Goodall, C. Bishop and D. Blundell.

At the Crew's Annual Bust-up, Snowy was enrolled as a Rover, and G. Goodall and M. Buer were re-elected as Rover Mates for 1952, with J. Scott and N. Fentiman as A/R Ms. The strength of the Crew is now 18 active members, and 7 in the Forces. We shall soon have to hang out the "House Full" sign.

On 13th January, the Crew assembled at H.Q. to help unload the new gigs when they arrived from Martham. Our two were unloaded and hoisted, and the remaining old gig was then loaded on to the lorry with the new one for Chiswick, and we followed by motor bike, and in the Skipper's car, to help unload them at their destination.

The event of the year was the Annual Rover Dinner, attended in force, with only one Leander being absent. The Crew went in a seamanlike manner, by the new gigs, and leaving H.Q. at 6.15, had an uneventful trip up to Hampton Court where the gigs were beached to await our return. Dinner was held at the Carnarvon Castle Hotel, and taking our leave at 11.30 we returned to our boats. The temperature was 27° far, and we had to prise the oars off the thwarts before launching the boats. Everybody stepped aboard except Bill Manning (who has just been demobbed from the Navy), and he stepped into the river, much to everybody's amusement (except his own). We pulled back to H.Q. arriving at 12.30, when the gigs were hoisted and we assembled in the Ward Room for hot drinks. The bottom of Bill Manning's coat was now like a plank! We all turned in, in hammocks slung on the Main Deck. At 6.00 there was a crash - Ken Martin had fallen out of his hammock.

Our final placings in the Barker Cup were:- Badges, 1st, Inter Crew Visits, 1st. The Barker Cup was won by the 3rd Kingston Rovers, with ourselves coming 2nd. Congratulations 3rd Kingstons!

Work has been well to the fore of Crew activities since Christmas. Pointing the wall at the rear of H.Q. has been completed. New timbers are being fitted to one of the dinghies. The steam chest has now been rigged up in the workshop, and a soakaway has been dug in the garden next door, to assist drainage from the roof.

The latest addition to our programme is an hour's instruction every other Friday evening in Ballroom Dancing, by Nigel Fentiman. The Crew are now making arrangements for Easter, and some intend to go down river while the rest go on a hike. We should like to take this opportunity of saying "Cheerio" to Ron Bass (and Evelyn) who are off to Canada and to thank Ron for all the assistance he has given to both the Crew and the Group.

WHISPERINGS FROM THE JUNGLE.

Well, Cubs, quite a lot of things seem to have happened to us since the last "Water Rat" was published. First of all was the Christmas Party in January, a bit late but still that did not seem to make much difference to the Christmas appetities, they were bigger than ever. I am still wondering how on earth so few Cubs managed to eat so much food in one afternoon. It was nice to have the younger brothers and Waiting List Cubs with us.

Since then Barrie Carr has been made Senior Sixer having gained his Second Star and Leaping Wolf Badge, we shall certainly be sorry to lose him when he goes up into Scouts in the near future.

Baloo has recently been awarded her Cub Instructor's Badge, and we are all very pleased about this because she certainly does work jolly hard with the Pack.

We were sorry to see Alec McJannett go, but he has not forgotten us and has already been back to pay us a visit and lend a hand. Roger Norton took over from Alec as Sixer of the Reds and is making a very good job of it too. In fact, (dare I say this without making the whole Pack swollen headed), everyone has been working hard and well lately, and in a short time there will be a whole lot of new First Star Cubs.

As soon as the evenings get a bit lighter we will have to start practising for the Sports, as the Cub Sports are likely to be earlier than they were last year, and we do want to be really good and bring back the shield for the best Pack.

We will also be starting at the baths very soon and next time the "Water Rat" comes out I hope to be able to say that at least a dozen Cubs have won their Swimmer's Badge.

The next thing on the list is the Jumble Sale, but you will read all about that on another page and I know you will all do your best to help.

This is all for now,

Good Hunting, Pack,

AKELA.