



The Water Rat

Newsletter of Leander Sea Scouts

October 2000

Skipper's Scrawl

The Group's programme seems to have been very hectic since our return after the summer holidays. We started with the Great River Race in mid September when we entered four crews covering nearly all the age ranges – Scout juniors, seniors, Leaders and Parents, and of course the Guild. Well done to all who took part in what – I think – must have been the windiest and most choppy conditions I have known on the race. All the more commendable that all our crews completed the 23-mile course from Richmond to Greenwich. With Winter fast approaching it will now be time to get the gigs off the moorings and hopefully we can arrange some maintenance sessions.

I was pleased to attend Cubs and invest four new boys, and also five new Beavers. I think of particular note is that one of the beavers was a fourth generation Goodall to the Group. Perhaps our Treasurer George Goodall could reflect on this a little in the next *Water Rat*. As you know, at the last AGM we decided to take girls into Beavers and Cubs as soon as possible. Unfortunately, the entire new intake were boys since we are still short of a female Leader for Cubs – surely we can get at least one female volunteer to help with this section.

On the financial side – have you returned your gift aid form yet? Just by completing one of these it will increase the value of your subs by 28p per pound. Finally a word of thanks to one of our 'old boys', John Roberts, who, after lengthy negotiations on the Groups behalf with the Rating valuation office, has just managed to get our H.Q. rateable value down from £19300 to £10750.

Keith

Editor under fire!

Your editor has taken a couple of broadsides recently. Avid net-scouring Warden of Thriftwood Scout Camp Site objected to a comment in the March 1999 *Water Rat* not putting his site as the Troop's first choice. He has a good website, so why not visit it and make up your own mind at www.thriftwood.org.uk.

The Leander Guild very kindly send me their newsletter which appears faithfully and regularly every month (recalcitrant *Water Rat* contributors please note!). I do honestly mean to include news of their activities here, but I've had two problems. First, recent issues have completely filled their allotted span; secondly, 90% of it is a complete mystery. (Are the MWBC & MWCC private clubs or can any certified person join?) However, when I look at the Troop's Camp Diary, 80% of that is pretty mysterious, so perhaps, *plus ça change*. Anyway, they put a crew in for the Great River Race and all dressed up in European theme for the Chairman's Evening (the winning man being 'The First European – Homo Erectus, complete with string vest and not too much woad to scare the ladies!') There's a brief report of their "Absent Friends' Weekend" later.

If you're seeing the pictures in this issue in boring old **BLACK & WHITE** then you haven't sent your email address to nigel@duffin.demon.co.uk to get the *Water Rat* by email.

Dates for your Diary

November 12th – Remembrance Day Service
(meet 10:00 at 3rd Kingston)
November 20th – Executive Meeting 8pm
December 9th – *Water Rat* copy date

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Coxswain's Corner

As the evenings draw in, Summer Camp now seems to have been a long time ago. 1995 was our last visit to Corfe Scout Camp Site in the Isle of Wight, so we decided it was time to go back again. Although this does involve some serious logistics getting the trailer across and our boats towed across the Solent, it's well worth the effort.

Apart from the opportunity to sail and canoe on tidal waters, there are a wide range of activities all easily accessible by an excellent round the island bus service. The weather was excellent, the site was idyllic, woodland and open spaces right next to a beautiful secluded estuary. It was a pity that the centreboard on the gig jammed, curtailing our sailing somewhat, but the water is very safe and all the scouts had a wonderful time, pulling and canoeing.

It was nice to have a few visitors this time – Mr & Mrs Sealey and Mrs Kearns came across with Oliver, and Malcolm Peacey's parents arrived at the end of camp to pick him up to go off around Europe in a campervan before they return to New Zealand. We were honoured with a visit from Nigel Duffin, a man of many talents – Group Chairman, editor of the *Water Rat* and keen cyclist. Mrs Coxswain also stayed for a few days, cycling across the island and coming out to Blackgang Chine and to Cowes for the last night of Cowes Week. This was quite spectacular, with thousands of people jamming the waterfront, wonderful fish and chips that we had to queue over an hour for and finally a brilliant millennium fireworks display. For the real camp report, see the camp diary written daily by the boys.

As always this autumn is very busy with many events. The River Race once again saw Leander doing well, it made a change having the event later in the month so the Scout crews could get in some decent practice. A team took part in the County Camping Competition at Boiderhurst Scout Camp Site on Box Hill; although one member had to withdraw at the last minute, the remaining three battled through and all gained a bronze county camping standard. This was very well done, considering that a number of other full teams were withdrawn as they were below standard.

The District Swimming Gala took place at the Malden Centre last Saturday; it was a pity that it had been booked during half term week, with families away we only had a junior team of four and a senior team of one. Disappointingly, there were seniors around who did not go away, who are good swimmers and did let us down. We were lucky to come joint second with 2nd Norbiton, but the Gala went very well and everyone there really enjoyed themselves.

The District Night Hike takes place in early November, followed by the Royal Navy Recognised Units six-a-side football competition at HMS Excellent, Portsmouth. A spectacular new kit has been sponsored and hopefully we can give a good account of ourselves, but the competition is fierce and there are some really good teams to beat.

We are pushing on with badge work and seamanship in the weekly meetings, during which every scout has the chance to learn some new skills and demonstrate the abilities they all have. Please note that Saturday meetings are now every other weekend, details will be confirmed, as standard Leander practice, at the Tuesday meeting in the week before.

Coxswain

Troop Questionnaire

There was a very good response to a questionnaire sent to all Scout parents, which asked for comments and suggestions on important matters concerning the Scout Troop. Your responses were most interesting and very valuable and we have now incorporated your suggestions into our planning.

1. Do you think Leander offers enough activities/not enough activities/the wrong sort of activities? 95 % of you considered that a wide range of good activities was on offer.

2. Does your son/daughter talk to you about what they have been doing? 80% regularly and enthusiastically talked about what they did, 20 % occasionally talked about meetings

3. Does your son/daughter have any regular complaints? 90% of Scouts had no complaints, with a few, mainly newer Scouts who felt that activities were sometimes rather physical.

4. What is your opinion of Saturday meetings?/ What suggestion do you have for improving/changing meetings? This had the most detailed and generally constructive comments. With so many conflicting activities – sport, families and homework, it was felt that Saturday meetings were a problem, with most of you suggesting that meetings should be spaced and perhaps centred on a specific theme or activity. Saturday meetings are now fortnightly and we will be bringing in some specific activities.

5. Have you ever been aware that your son/daughter is supposed to be at Scouts and is actually doing something else? 10% had been aware that at some time or another their child had gone to Scouts but in fact went somewhere else.

6. Is there anything that Leander should be doing that is not currently in the programme? 90% of you were most supportive and thought we were doing exactly the right things. There were a few comments about lack of information on events and lack of programmes. Every Scout is given a programme to take home and every Scout is given a notice about events. After every meeting we regularly find a few notices left on the floor or in the patrol dens. Now that speaks volumes about personal responsibility. (The 6th Scout Law – A Scout makes good use of time and is careful of possessions and property)

Many thanks to all of you who returned the questionnaires, it has proved to be a most valuable exercise. Leander has a high reputation for delivering the best quality of Scouting – your comments can only help us continue and build on that tradition.

Cubs

This term was the annual district Cub Gala at New Malden. We did magnificently well with only five boys attending compared to teams of eleven from other packs. Well done to Ben Cockle, Joe Farrell, Charles Kimber, Alex Barley and Calum Lightfoot. As a result of their excellent efforts we came second out of about ten teams.



This term has been a bit hectic as the leaders have spoken a lot away from the meetings, but due to work have only managed to be together once! The meetings however are going to plan and this just shows that planning is everything!

This term we welcome four new cubs to the pack, Harry Maguire, Ben Hudson, Andrew Chappell and David Pearce. All the boys completed the work towards the Membership Award and the First Scout Family badge. As a result, on the 11th October, Skipper attended the meeting and in front of parents he invested the boys into the section. Well Done!

On the same day we said a confirmed hello to the newest member of the leadership team "Shere Khan" (Steve D'Souza). Skipper being in attendance he was able to invest Shere Khan and now we have three confirmed leaders for meetings. Buffy and Claire continue as leaders in the swimming side of the section – thanks to their work the gala team did so well.

We have had meetings working as normal towards the various badges, the Road Safety badge is the main Activity Badge for the term geared towards the cycling side of the boys life. The knowledge of the road signs and road safety is very good. Please help them at home to gain the badge.

The evening 'Conker Bonkers' was a great success with lots of conker competitions and no injuries. The

boys favourite game still appears to be "The Dark Game". I'll let the boys tell you about that one.

We are hoping to get out even though the nights draw in. We will be doing a "Night Hike" on the 15th November, please send the boys with a torch and wrap them up warm. We are dealing with tracking ready for lighter evening as well as brushing up on the mapping.

We are in need of a female leader to attend meetings on Wednesdays – until this happens we are unable to let girls into the Group from Beaver age. The Group is working towards the inclusion of girls in every section and the Cubs are holding this up. So if anyone wants to help out, or knows of anyone who would like to help, please call us as soon as possible. The Beavers are ready, only the cubs are holding this up.

May we remind you that all the work we do in the Scout Organisation is on a voluntary basis. Small errors can occur occasionally, if you have any problems please let us know at the time or as soon as possible so that they may be sorted out to everyone's satisfaction. We work hard to ensure that all the boys meet every challenge with much enjoyment in a fun-filled environment.

Akela (Tim)

Beavers

This term we have welcomed five new Beavers to the Colony: Kyle McKenzie, Ross Wallace, Zack Goodall, Jamie Bowers-Clark and Adrian Barley.

Sam Aldred and William Pearn have achieved their first swimming badge and Rory Lightfoot, Dominic Mellett and William Pearn have successfully completed their Beaver Scout Challenge.

Back in September, we joined in the excitement of Sydney with our own mini-Olympics including world record breaking attempts at welly throwing and a nail biting penalty shoot out! Other sessions have included knot tying, tug-of-war and designing paper boats and planes.

A night walk is planned for later in the year and, of course, plenty of swimming practice with the aim of getting all the Beavers to at least First Swimming badge standard before they join the Cubs.

Ros and Catie

Absent Friends' Weekend

A very successful weekend was again enjoyed by the Guild at the end of September, with exceptional fair weather. Six boats were involved carrying about 28 skippers and crews, a sizeable number to be fed at Yarmouth on Saturday evening.

The weekend started by crews gathering at various parts of the Solent on Friday evening. With high tide being around midday the next event was for the fleet to gather at Cowes for lunch. I believe 'Lisbie Browne' had travelled to Cowes on Friday but the other four out of Portsmouth ('Contessa Annabel', 'Mygal', 'Burgandy Quest' and 'Galevant of Hamble') joined forces off Spit Sand Fort around 10.00 Saturday morning. Spence's 'Hero' coming up from Key Haven.



Our newly appointed organiser, Spence, issued scaled orders to each vessel which turned out to be a sort of treasure hunt on passage to Yarmouth. I have to say that it was well thought out giving all boats equal opportunity to organise next years event!

Seeking out the answers to the clues down by Hurst Narrows proved a test against the strong tide. Pure sail power was not enough for us aboard 'Contessa Annabel' resulting in us being one of the last to arrive at Yarmouth Harbour. On arrival we were to utter the secret words 'Leander Scouts' which should have enabled us to come alongside the rest of the fleet but, because of the vast numbers of craft entering all went by the wayside and we found ourselves far away from the rest but very close to 'Leander' who, at the last moment, also joined us.

So, after duly toasting our Absent Friends in the traditional manner known only to the Guild, we retired to the Wheatsheaf where once again our organiser did us proud providing us with a whole Public Bar in which to eat (he probably has more clout there than at the Folly).

Sunday arrived and, as we were obliged to move early, we were the first to leave with the intention of anchoring off Newtown for breakfast to await the rest of the fleet. But with a pretty nice breeze we didn't actually anchor until we got to Osborne Bay there to await the fleet. The only vessel to make contact was Nigel over the radio who was, at the time, entering Fishbome for a tippie at the Royal Victoria. With the state of the tide it was decided to push onto Portsmouth and there we had a much belated breakfast!

Cyril

Behind the River Race.

Here's a brief idea of what goes on every year before the event. Boats are a bit like people, they get tired and sometimes bits fall off or crack. The gigs entered have to be thoroughly checked for wear and tear and any repairs carried out – 22 miles pull down to Greenwich will loosen anything that is not secured and can cause serious damage. The older gigs, Hercules and Hermes, both needed attention, but we left the work a little late this year. The week before the race saw some intensive activity on the boat deck, with new knees being cut for Hermes (these are strengthening pieces that help keep the sides rigid), new blocks for the stretchers, replacing a rotten thwart (seat), retightening the crutch housing and crutch plates and fitting a new pintle.

The pintle is a stainless steel shaft on which the rudder is mounted; the original one on Hermes had pulled out and been lost – by another group, not us! Fitting a new one was somewhat complicated as part of the keel had rotted away and there was nothing to secure it to. A new piece of mahogany was cut to size, screwed in and then liberally coated with some amazing new fast setting epoxy resin, resulting in a fixing that is rock solid. The fender round the top of the gunwale had come loose on both gigs, so a few stainless steel screws and a power screw driver soon sorted that out. Pulling our rotten woodwork takes but a few minutes – putting new wood back in always takes hours, as the shape of a boat's hull dictates many different angles to joints and surfaces.

Many thanks to Ian Chappell, Mike Freeman, Pete Mitchell and David Airon who spent a long night sanding, cutting and fitting new woodwork whilst Skipper and Coxswain finished off installing the pintle and knees.

Modern materials such as stainless steel and highly efficient adhesives have been a lifesaver as they dramatically extend the life of traditionally built boats. (We didn't get time to varnish or paint, that will be done in the winter – any offers?)

Leander has a unique selection of boats and seeing them on the water, being used hard, by the Scouts and by the River Race crews, makes all the work worthwhile.



Beaver Sub Collector

Now that Nick Wileman is moving out of the area, we need a Beaver parent to take over termly collection of subs (cheques only). Please give your name to one of the leaders.

Girls in Beavers & Cubs

Just as soon as we have a female leader in the Cub Pack, we are planning to go ahead with girls in Cubs and Beavers, so if there are any sisters out there, make sure their names are on the list with Nigel Duffin (020 8977 8305).

Between October 4 and 12th Chris Osborne cycled through the mountains of Crimea to raise money for FORC. In total he climbed over 17000 feet!



Friends of Russian Children helps to save children in Russia from the horrors of burns and provides funds to equip the Speransky Hospital in Moscow with specialist facilities.

Please help Chris to raise a minimum of £2000 which can be by way of a donation or by supporting his Charity concert :-

THE DRIFTERS



November 25th
8.00 pm
£17.50 each

Totworth Leisure
Centre

Ticket Hotline 0208541 3107

Scout Summer Camp Diary – Corf Camp, Isle of Wight

Sat 29 July – Today was our first day of the camp. We got up early in the morning and arrived at Leander HQ at around 9.45am. The first thing we did was pack the mini-bus with all our bags and then we were off. We went on the long journey to Lymington, and then onto a ferry across the busy yacht-covered Solent. Five miles from Yarmouth we finally reached Corf Camp Site. First we started to pitch the tents, and then about 7pm we cooked dinner, which was beef grills, mash and mixed veg. Finally we ended the day off by sitting around the fire. (*Will M*)



Patrick and Aidan had arrived and Ollie and Patrick were in the canoes with the seniors and Aidan helped Coxswain to take Fleet out in Chief. Once everyone had got off the water, and all kit was taken onto site, and some of the group went for a shower, the rest of us prepared dinner. After dinner we set up the volleyball net and had a game against each other.

Then we went off for a little while to play a game of football with Fleet but they were not there so we came back. For the rest of the evening we sat around the fire and banned Robbie from talking about James Bond. A 10p fine was put on him for every time he mentioned a title of a film. The silence did not last for long. (*Malcolm P*)

Sun 30th July – We woke up on our first morning at camp. At first it was difficult to get up but we managed. After breakfast, we went into the woods and began working on our Ewok village. While we were there, a group of scouts came up to us demanding a piece of rope we had. We challenged them to a wide game to settle it. We went back to camp and were playing cards and chopping wood, when suddenly four of us decided to go canoeing. We got down to the river but the tide was out. It would have been a bit of a struggle so instead three of us (James, Robbie and myself) went running about in the knee-deep mud. After a little incident with Robbie we decided we were very dirty and smelly so we immediately went for a shower. Later we then sat around the diners preparing dinner. Straight after dinner we started a fire and lit the Tillys. At nine o'clock we went to the swing where we were due to play our wide game. It started rather well until someone was hurt on their team (Danny!), and they decided we were playing too rough! Leander lost no bands. We went back to our site and sat by the fire for the rest of the evening rather disappointed about the unsuccessful game! But at least we won. (*Alex K*)

Tue 1st Aug – The day started as all the others with Karen shouting at us to get out of bed. We then had breakfast (pancakes) of which ours were the best. In the tent next to us, though, a strange alien mush was being concocted. Today was the newcomers' first full day as they had been spending their first week of the holidays in some cushy hotel. The day was arranged so we were all off to Robin Hood Adventure Park. For the first half of the day we played a game of pitch and put. The first hole Danny and Karen were on par and Robbie was already nine over. Ollie and I, however, got off to a great start by hoofing the ball right up the green and on to another. The game lasted an hour and a half and we still hadn't completed nine holes, so when we got to the eighth whole it was down to Danny, Ollie and myself to see who would win. Of course it was me, being the pro, I won with a clear lead over the rest, and Robbie, after giving up a hole early, still managed to smash the world record of an over par score of 36 just beating Alex with 35. Later that day after a few sickening rides on the Galleon, on which Ollie refused to go due to his 'unstable condition' we retired, left the park and headed back to Newport. Whilst Coxswain went off to the bank and Karen went off shopping, it left Danny in charge (Big mistake!). Him and Ollie thought it would be a

Mon 31st July – After breakfast, Danny, Alex, James and Karen went over to get the gig, which was on the other side of the estuary. Once they had arrived back we all unloaded the gig, which had all of our boating equipment. William, Mark, Robbie and I then went out in the gig to the open sea. The waves were very high and once we had rowed around for about ten minutes on the Solent. Robbie thought he had motion sickness, but we actually think he was feeling seasick. That was when we decided to go back. Now this was a challenge because the tide was going out and it took longer to get back as we were going against the tide and the wind, but we got there in the end. By the time we got back, Ollie,



good idea to do a bit of bird watching, of the human and female kind. At every second girl that unfortunately made their way in front of the pair they let out a chorus of hooting and whistling and at long last they got lucky! It was a pair of Swiss girls from an exchange visiting the area. After a while Danny plucked up the courage to go and talk to them, and to his and Ollie's horror they were German. Danny tried to talk to them in German and managed to tell them he was a fifty-year-old bank manager from the moon instead of a fif-



teen-year-old scout on a shopping trip. While Danny sat talking, Ollie had perched himself on the wall next him and was grinning and giggling like a sissy girl.

Suddenly to their surprise, out of nowhere came a whole battalion of strange looking exchange students. When Karen and Coxswain had returned all there was left to do was wait for our bus and go home. (*James F*)

Wed 2nd Aug – Today was a fun day, because after breakfast Danny, Patrick, Ollie, James, Alex and I went out on the gig and it was hard to row because of all the waves pushing against us. We had to dodge through all the boats to get back, we went a bit further on to have a look at the massive sheep that were living on an island just across the lake. After that, Robbie, Karen, Mark, Malcolm and I went down this really shallow stream and it was hard to move at points because it was so shallow. We were going to see where it led to, but a tree was covering the way of the river so we went back. When we got back, Robbie, Mark and I jumped in and Mark got stuck in some mud; it took about five minutes to get him out. When lunch was finished, we tried to have a start at making a 3D map of Corf Camp. First we had to collect some wood, then Alex wanted to make the tuck shop look like a proper cabin, so he sat down and started to make points on the ends of sticks. We played rounders after that and the groups were based on the group of our patrol for camp with Coxswain and Karen on a team each. (*Aidan H*)

Thur 3rd Aug – After Danny accidentally told two German girls that he was fifty, he thought he would redeem himself by doing a double pegging-out of Malcolm and Patrick. Ooops again!!! Malcolm managed to somehow untie his arm by splitting the knot on the peg, tied by a certain Mr Wileman Snr. Patrick, however, was tied to a tree, sitting in a small wooden chair acquired from somewhere on our travels. That at least worked and left Danny with some satisfaction of a good night. During the day, however, we hiked to Carisbrooke Castle, a medieval fortress to protect them from the Normans (I think). Along the way there was the usual banter of Robbie Mitchell talking absolute rubbish. James managed to throw himself down a ditch or two and virtually everybody got stung. At the castle, James, Ollie and Danny were gob smacked at the size and depth of the well. Patrick, Robbic and Alex manage to taste the fine foods, drinks and every edible thing in the whole castle. As for Karen and Coxswain, they had a very educational visit. After that we made our way to a swimming pool by bus. That was always going to be a good laugh and a refreshing dip from the long hike. With Danny and Ollie practising butterfly and Robbie giving his belly a good reddening off the diving board, things didn't go totally to plan. We spent the evening with Fleet Sea Scouts, as we befriended them from the very beginning. Nothing to do with the fact that we now had an extra ten canoes to paddle around in. (*Danny W*)

Fri 4th Aug – When we woke, we were greeted with the thought of cleaning the loos. These were in a real state and

we were not happy with the thought of cleaning them. After we had done the loos we went to Black Gang Chine, an adventure park placed right on the side of a cliff. There was one really good water slide but there was quite a queue to get in. We then went to the arcades in the park and Danny wasted a pound on the 2p machines. There were lots of weird houses around the park with names like the Crooked House and Smugglers Caves. There was a nice house in the park that had been converted into a ghost house and that was quite good. There were also some slides but we didn't really get a go on them. We then went back to the arcade we wasted some more 2ps and Danny happened to put in a 10p and got fifty 2ps back. After the great amusements we got the bus to Newport and then onto Cowes. When we arrived at Cowes we queued up and got some fish and chips. While waiting for the food James and I managed to open and close a record of seven businesses. We didn't make any money though. When the food came, we all sat down and happily munched on our grub. We then went to the waterfront and got ready to watch the fireworks display. After 25 minutes of talking about chat-up lines and what we would do if we met any girls, there was a chance. A girl saw our hats and came over with her boyfriend, who turned out to have gone to Grey Court and also Leander. He knew Chips, Chief, Ness and my brother Charles. The lights turned out and the fireworks started; at this point we were surrounded by drunk 16/17 year old girls. Danny saw his chance and as the fireworks exploded his tongue entangled in the mouth of a rather large girl. In the words of Coxswain: "Danny's uncanny sexual magnetism managed to attract the most ugly girl by the sea." On the way home Danny bragged about his great pulling tactics as we all laughed at him. There was an argument going on whilst all this was taking place, between a 16-year old girl and a 34-year old man. We then got a taxi back and I explained to the driver that I was a Jamaican Bobsledder. That was the end of our day. Danny was still bragging about the fact he snogged a girl who was completely drunk and stank of smoke. (*Oliver S*)

Sat 5th Aug – Today was a sort of do what you like day within reason. After we had some breakfast the Ventures that had come over to see us (Alex, Alexis, Johnny and Chris) went off on a little coastal walk around Alum Bay. The first thing the Scouts had to do was to finish off one of the projects that was

set at the beginning of the camp, to make a 3D map of the camp-site. While they completed that, Jon Bridger of Surbiton Sealion and myself went food shopping for the last three meals of the camp. Once back on site it was time to let the boys on to the water, possibly for the last time of this camp. Whilst on the water the juniors that were canoeing with Jon asked could they do capsize drill, but to a later discussion I found that when the canoes were going over some of them were bailing out before the canoe was



completely upside down (a bit of work still needs to be done, boys!). While they were having a canoeing lesson and I was preparing the evening meal, Coxswain was having a bit of trouble trying to rig the gig so it could be taken out for a sail. Finally things had been sorted out and off they went (Coxswain and some of the seniors) but sadly not to far, and this ended up with James having to jump out of the boat and tow it in by hand (He-Man!). Once



every one was showered and warm, the Ventures turned up and went out on the water for a while. About 9.30pm we decided to go on a Leander Meander (a little night walk) off the camp site, back down the edge of the river, through a field and back onto the campsite, all taking about an hour, then it was time to say good night to the juniors. *(Karen)*

Sun 6th Aug – This morning we had to say goodbye to the ventures and Hazel, Coxswain's wife. With that we decided to send the seniors out on a little walk, between 6 and 10 miles depending whether they got completely lost. Whilst they wondered around the Isle of Wight, the juniors were shown the basics of using an axe and back to basics on cooking, using wood and no gas. The seniors finally turned up around 4pm and with a flat snake in tow. For the rest of the day they played an outdoor laser quest game with everyone on the campsite. This was organized by a group from Newport that were staying on the camp. The idea of they game was simple, all of the participants taking part were split in to two teams and were given a gun and helmet. They were then sent to opposite ends of the site with a flag, then a hooter sounds to let the shooting commence and one or maybe more to obtain the other team's flag. As I did not play I did get to hear little bits of the game but I do know that our Will Mitchell stole the flag with two others from ours to win the first game. When they finally came back from virtual warfare, dinner was cooked and ready to eat, then it was goodbye to Jon from Surbiton. For the rest of the evening I ended up washing up, as Danny and the rest sat around the fire. *(Karen)*

Mon 7th Aug – After a morning of running around and saying goodbye to Malcom we finally got to our destination, our spirits were high and our minds filled with thoughts of adventures. With ham and tomatoes and lashings of ginger beer in our backpacks, we had the whole of the Needles and Alum Bay to explore. Our first visit was to the old Second World War fort at the Needles. First of all, I bought some post cards to send to Auntie Meg (to see whether my dog, Timmy, was alright) and then inspected all the rooms that were in the fort. There was a spotlight room, a storage room for unused shells and, to our immense surprise, they still had a few guns in the open courtyard. After having lunch (Jimmy Bernard Warnamaster had forgotten his, James Ford) we set off for the journey back to Alum Bay. We passed a garden of

interesting garden gnomes, holding signs of famous sayings that were changed to show even better advice, or just the truth, e.g. 'Never put off anything tomorrow that can be avoided all together', or 'Sex is the most fun you can have without laughing'. We then reached Alum Bay and had a jolly splendid paddle then had a ride on the cable cars. We had done the whole of the tourist-swarmed town that was host to the actual bay (I have

forgotten its real name). Jimmy Bernard Warnamaker (James Ford) and I explored a bit then headed straight to the sweet factory. After coming out of the factory with our pockets bulging with sweets and our wallets with much less money in (£5 to be exact) we went to watch the extremely boring show of the old fashioned method of how to make white mint (my least favourite sweets in the shop). We left the shop after five minutes, only to end up watching a desperately poor magician. To save our mind from going completely dead, we got back on to the bus and headed back to the campsite to make our sleeping accommodation for the night. *(Robbie M)*

Tues 8th Aug – Today was the last day of camp. We were all awoken by Karen and Coxswain at 6.30am so a crew could take the gig (Chief) over to the pick up point, so a leader from Lymington could collect it and tow it back to the mainland for us. As I woke up in the bivi that we built, I did start to wonder where I was. It wasn't very cold but there was a strong wind blowing and about 15 minutes after we all got up, it started to rain. So as we got up we had to pack up all of our kit. As the tents came down, the fire was started, to burn off the rest of the rubbish and wood. It was all chucked on at once, so the heat was immense. I then picked up all of the little bits of wood chippings and chucked them also on to the fire, I noticed after a while that some of the wood had fallen on to the floor and started a small fire. After about an hour and a half we were allowed to have some breakfast, but it was eaten quickly, so we could pack up the rest of the kit and load it on to the trailer. It took a few attempts but it all in the end it was packed on perfectly. While we waited for the bus, we played a bit of football and then had a rest. At the start everyone slept and talked quietly, but then it started to liven up, with James being tied up inside a tent bag and then sat on. Then out the blue we heard a van coming and so we packed the last few bit and we were ready to go. The last thing of the camp was the presentations and they were...

- ★ Camper of the Camp: William Mitchell
- ★ Waffler of the Camp: Aidan Hazard
- ★ Crapola of the Camp: Robbie Mitchell

Danny also got an award by the leaders to say thank you for all of his help and good luck in Wales and getting a girl. We then waved goodbye to the Isle of Wight and left. The journey back was long and we were all very glad to get back home. *(Patrick H)*