



July 2005 Volume 27, Issue 7

The Binnacle

<http://members.shaw.ca/vmss>

Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society
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TALL SHIPS...we did it!

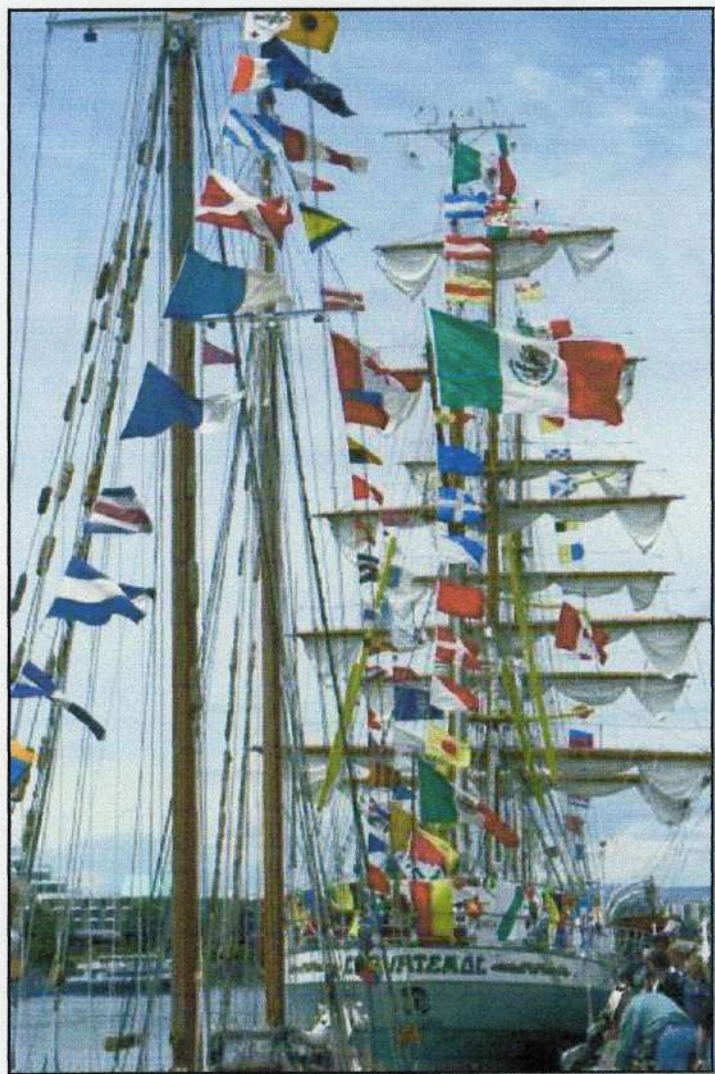


From the Bridge

"Very many thanks to all who organized and participated in the Tall Ships Event. We always wanted more visibility in the Victoria area and we certainly got it with this show. By all reports it was most successful. I personally received many complements from visitors and the Tall Ships Victoria Directors on how well run and how applicable and friendly our exhibit was and it was virtually the only child friendly exhibit.

"A Lion's portion of the credit for the success goes to Bill Andrews and his wife Bev. Bill was not only part of the original organizing; he spent the Tues and Wed before at the event as well as the Thurs to Sun all day at the event and the final closing on Mon morning chasing details to ensure a smooth performance of the exhibit. Others instrumental in making it all happen, just to mention a few, are Mike Creasy, John Gough, Ron Hillsden, Alex James, Jack Lenfesty, John McHutchion, Dave Denton, Jack Plummer, Mike Woodley, Bill Sturrock & most of all Bob Rainsford & clan and the wives that helped out. There was a whole host of folks that gave us a lending hand, including Tom Pound working behind the scenes in the initial planning. Well done to all.

"The Tall Ships followed on the Cowichan Bay one day event the weekend previous and recall we have many of our fine vessels on display at Sidney as well. We are now into the planning for the Club activities for the remainder of the summer and fall." Ken S.



ON THE HORIZON

INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS

**Sunday July 10: Strawberry Festival Beaver Lake
Labour Day Weekend: Saanichton Fall Fair**



Mystery boat seen at Friday Harbor: USAAF P-520.

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Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society

Regular Meeting – 9 June, 2005

Minutes

The President reviewed arrangements for upcoming events at the Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre and Tall Ships Victoria. The club will participate in the Strawberry Festival July 10.

The evening's entertainment was a chance to look at the books and plans in the VMSS Library.

New Member:

George Hickson

603-21 Dallas Road

Victoria BC V8V 4Z9

Telephone: 381-0228

E-mail: george.hickson@gmail.com

He is currently building a model of a schooner, expected to be completed by September, but is interested in all types of ships.

Letter to the Editor,

Subject: Historical Museum display

Please extend our thanks from the Sidney Historical Museum to your members for the wonderful display of model boats this year, and for all the effort put into setting it up.

This exhibit has become one of the highlights of our monthly displays, and we have many people who look forward to visiting the museum specifically to admire the boats. The advertising in the Times Colonist and the local Peninsula Review resulted in a number of people coming from all over the Capital Region, in addition to our regular visitors.

We receive many comments on the superb workmanship and diversity of the models, and some expressions of interest in model boat building. Needless to say we always encourage them to contact the Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society.

Thank you all once again, and we hope you will be able to display your models again in June 2006.

Best wishes

Peter

Peter Garnham
Museum Director
Historical Museum, Sidney
Tel: (250) 655-6355



THE SUB SUBJECT

Many among the long term readers of this column know that, in essence, it is at times blatant and at other times covert propaganda to enlist recruits into the R/C model submarine ranks.

But alas, to date, after a truncated decade of The Old College Try, the monthly writings have drawn a gratifying volume of laughs but . . . no discernible numbers of converts. Yes, yes. There are a few with solid intentions on the backburner. Some have bought plans, and still others claim to have "something" on the go. Aaah.

So far, so it seems the adage that "You can lead a horse to water (HMYP?) but you can't make it drink" still holds sway. But never mind that. My little 5' 2" wife always denied the saying's veracity. She claimed the horse WOULD drink if you'd first made it thirsty. So let's see if that can figuratively be done while readers split their sides over the now suggested enter-the-sub-hobby approach. Here goes.

Presupposing a dormant glimmer of curiosity/interest in subs, saunter into a Radioshack, Toys' R' Us or Wal-Mart emporium, aim for their toys section, reach for your plastic and exit with a sub and two-channel radio for give or take a C-note. Head into the workshop, sand up the slick, gaudycoloured surfaces, paint it all in a credible submarine/ submersible colour, and adorn the job with a handful of decals. Now the toy may look like a model. Somewhat. Once dry, select a grandchild or borrow a neighbour's kid as foil/escort, sneak over to the Pond, and get the feel of how the thing performs. In other words: gauge your reactions to driving something that submerges, surfaces, handles beautifully and doesn't leak—not that soon anyway.

Imagine now that the disguised toy's maiden "patrol" turned your crank as much as your want-to-know. So take it apart and study the workings of its most all likely inspiring and worth-copying engineering—all of which I'm about to do myself. Really.

That done, with little out of pocket and interest kindled, scheme an easy, gradual path toward the ultimate: scratch building a ballast tanked model sub. How? Try this.

Based on what other SubCommittee members have pulled off, buy one of numerous submarine kits intended for static display. Get one that's deep and wide enough to afford space for a pressure hull, to hold one or two small motors, an RX, speed controller, two or more mini servos and, perhaps, a battery pack and one or two switches. Going that route can save both building time and capital. And the end results I've witnessed -are awing. Granted, it will take skill and greater miniaturization than would, say, a 1/96-, 1/32- or 1/100-scale model. But even with just one small motor, the conversions of German U-Boats and U.S. fleet boats can be breathtakingly fast and manoeuvrable.

Supposing all that has been done, you could stop right there. Maintain the fleet, and enjoy. Chances are, though, that by now you'd like to get real serious. To that end, in recent years, it's amazing how many hobby trade manufacturers and vendors are catering to the R/C model sub niche-internationally. Britain, Canada, France, Germany . . . you name it.

Ads in the SubCommittee Report, coupled with a web search by Ron Hillsden show that there are at least 50 purveyors of sub kits, systems and accessories.

Most widely available are GRP or vacu-formed so-called semi kits. These, as a rule, include a two-piece hull (lower and upper), a sail/conning tower, rudders, bow and/or stern planes, sometimes a five- or seven-bladed screw, and some instructions. Prices will range from \$200 or less to \$1,000 or more. By and large, the quality/strength of materials and the workmanship are acceptable to excellent, but there are bummers to be had as well, e.g. poor fits and warping.

Next in line, as of late, complete kits are available—some basic, some intermediate, and some that lack only an RT-RX to be totally complete. But this is the rub: don't believe the "Can be assembled in hours. . . In two evenings . . . and sundry other exaggerated claims. In fact, to do the end products justice, you may as well opt for the semi kit or for scratch building outright. That way, you'll have no more than your OWN mistakes rather than those of others—for which you laid out coin, with frustration tossed in as a bonus. But even the most avowed scratch builders may want to consider acquisition of ready-made sub-assemblies or systems that can defy handymen—even those with lathes, casting facilities and so forth. Look at these samples.

BALLAST SYSTEMS. Either complete, ready to install or needing the tank only. Three types: gas-, piston- or pump-operated.

PRESSURE HULLS. Lexan tubes (3.5" or 4.0" dia.) with "O" sealed end caps/bulkheads.

WATERTIGHT CYLINDERS (WTCs). Available in the mentioned diameters but, RX excepted, ready to pop into a model. They include a motor, servos, battery pack, linkages, an auto pitch controller (APC) and, in their centre, a gas-operated ballast tank. In theory, these units are transferable from one model to another. Despite their lip-sealed hull penetrations, a few buyers still report leakage/seepage, but that could be their own doing. Also, over time, the effects of gas will mar the transparency of Lexan.

TORPEDOS AND LAUNCHERS. Gas-operated torps and nicely machined, duplex launchers are to be had. Cut torpedo doors, tap into a dedicated servo, and Bob's your uncle.

CONNING TOWERS. These are delicately cast and well researched substitutes for kit buyers who want their model to replicate a specific prototype in her class. The workmanship and acid-etching is astounding.

And there you are. But no matter which route you choose, make your first home-built sub a dynamic diver. Save the ballast system for a next go.

For August's Binnacle, I'll do some bragging about my own (as yet unproven) MK II torps for the Molch.

Romanus Unicum

"Sub Subject" correction:

In April's column, I identified the "postcard" sub as the one of a kind M1. However, Len Gibbs had his doubts. He located a reference book in the Library's Oak Bay branch in which a port quarter stern photo of L11 is published. Indeed, in that angled view the downward sloping stern casing makes it very clear that not M1 but L11 is the postcard's subject. A total of 11 of these small, coastal subs were built in various yards, in 1915 to 1917. While M1 measured 165' x 16' x 13'5", the L11 series measured 167' x 17'5" x 13'5". Among them, L8 (built at Portsmouth Navy Yard) had the distinction of having a double hull. All the L/M series featured a retractable 3' deck gun, which lessened drag while submerged. Sorry for April's misinformation. Shows to go juh: research takes great determination. Romanus Unicum

**Item of interest:**

I have just finished reading "Scurvy" by Stephen R. Brown. For modelers of 17th and 18th century ships it is a fascinating story. Those gorgeous vessels we take such care with were stinking, disease-ridden hell-holes. During the Seven Years War between Great Britain and France (and a large supporting cast!) between 1756 and 1763, the English called up 184,899 men. 1,512 were killed in action. 133,708 died from disease, primarily scurvy! Dr. Samuel Johnson said "Why, Sir, no man will be a sailor who has contrivance to get himself into a jail, for being in a ship is being in a jail with the chance of being drowned." After reading Brown's descriptions of shipboard life, I am tempted to say that authenticity requires us to insert a dead mouse, some rotten cheese and spoiled milk into each hull to give an "air" of accuracy!

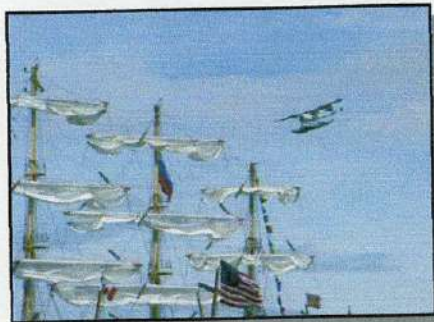
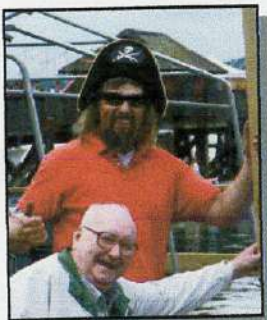
Ken Youngstrom

Another item of interest: Ladybug Lander Lands Lady

While walking to my car after my shift at the Tall Ships Display, I made an amazing discovery: Little boats are a "chick magnet!" As I passed in front of the Empress, carrying my landing barge, a very attractive, stylishly dressed (trendy glasses, lime green chiffon poncho, tight jeans and five inch heel sandals), 30ish woman asked me, "What's that?" She listened intently as I gave one of my usual brief explanations. I could see that she was fascinated. I always knew that taking a dog for walk was a good way to meet people. It never occurred to me that a little boat would work as well.

Mike Woodley







MEETINGS: Second Thursday 7:15-9:15
313 Brunswick Place Next is Aug 11



POWER: Sundays 10 – 12
Harrison Model Yacht Pond



SAILING: 3rd Sunday 1 – 3 PM
Beaver Lake Next is Aug 21



LANGFORD LAKE NAVY Wednesdays
9:30 Langford Lake



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