



The Binnacle

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

Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society
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vmss@shaw.ca

ON THE HORIZON

INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS

- Mar 22-24 Maritime Museum Spring Break
- May 1 Battle of Atlantic Regatta, Harrison Pond
- May 20-23 Maple Bay Marina Wood Boat Show



MEETINGS: Second Thursday 7:15-9:15
313 Brunswick Place **Next is APRIL 12**



POWER: Sundays 10 – 12
Harrison Model Yacht Pond



SAILING: 3rd Sunday 1 – 3 PM
Beaver Lake **Next is MARCH 20**



From the Bridge

Major events for the year are planned or in planning and this will be a full year; particularly with Tall Ships if it happens.

We are starting to get a divergence and variety of activities so I urge all to participate in as many as possible - it is fun and what we joined to do.

Hope to see you all at the Pond, Lake, Events and Meetings. "

Ken S

Meeting Protocol

This is how we are trying to run our meetings

7:15—7:45 Club Business

7:45—8:00 Socialization Break

8:00—9:15 Guest/Presenter/Entertainment

Please keep your comments 'on topic' to help us stay focused in the business discussions.

Also, as a courtesy to speakers, guests, and fellow members, do not participate in private discussions while the meeting is in progress. The background din reduces our enjoyment of the meeting.

New Model Ship Competition

We are announcing a competition aimed at stimulating some new construction. There will be a prize awarded at Can-West 2006 for the best model of any ship which saw service in BC waters.

There are 3 rules:

1. the model must be documented (plans, photos, etc)
2. service in BC waters must be documented, and
3. the model has to be new construction.

So dust off those plans and start having a little fun! We don't care if it is a kit or scratch, big or small, old or new, or if it was a resident or visitor.

Thanks PJ for the idea. So lets start building!

Dues are OVERDUE—please mail \$35 now if you are a delinquent!

Minutes Extract

The abbreviated form of the minutes from the February 10 general meeting.

We have two new members:

Harold Walker
1485 Piercy Avenue
Courtenay BC V9N 3E7
No e-mail address to date.
No information about him or his interests.

Colin Longpre
3908 Jean Heights
Victoria BC V8Z 7H2
E-mail: clongpre@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca
Works at the Royal British Columbia Museum; has built a model of St. Roch. He expresses interest in static models of work boats (fishing boats, tugs, etc.) plus models of cars, aircraft, and HO-Scale buildings.

Regards, Tom

Condensed 2004 Financial Statement

Revenues:
Membership Dues: \$2,240.00
Show Fees: 900.00
Donation Boat: 334.18
Donations: 40.00
Interest: 2.19
Total Revenue: \$3,516.37

Expenditures:
The Binnacle \$551.36
Club Expenses: 663.94
Show Expenses: 615.27
Secretarial: 366.15
Insurance: 792.00
Total Expenditures: \$2,988.72

Excess of Revenues over Expenditures: \$527.65

Concerning Membership Dues:

Those who have not paid membership dues for 2005 should note the following:

Under VMSS Bylaws, Section 2.5 (b) membership in good standing requires payment of annual dues, in advance, on or before the first of January each year.

Under VMSS Bylaws, Section 2.7 (d) a person shall cease to be a Member of the Society on having been a member not in good standing for three (3) consecutive months.

Section 2.5 (b) is in effect now; Section 2.7 (d) applies beginning April 1.

Tom
Secretary-Treasurer,

2005 Executive

President	Ken Scotten	472-6187
Vice-Pres.	Dave Denton	477-1800
Secretary/Treas	Tom Pound	595-6487
Entertainment	John Gough	479-1843
Binnacle Editor	Ron Hillsden	479-5760
Assistant Editor	Bill Sturrock	479-0239
Quartermaster	Bob Rainsford	383-2256
Director at Large	Bill Andrews	479-2761
Director at Large	Mike Woodley	598-8379

2005 Committee Heads

Librarian	Jack Ross	478-3191
Publicity	Jack Ross	478-3191
Webmaster:	Ron Hillsden	479-5760
City Parks Liaison	Ed Boddaert	746-4459
Binnacle Mailing	Bill Birch	592-6456
Bandit Coordinator	Rick Rainsford	382-0898

**Under the Weather**

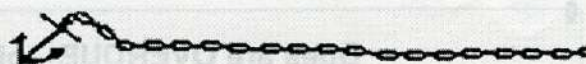
We are sorry to report
Nels Coombe
Is not well.

New Sailing Schedule

Please note that the one Metre Sailing at Beaver Lake is scheduled for the third Sunday of the month. Scale sailing will take place at Harrison Pond on Sunday mornings with the power boats

Raingutter Regatta

We have purchased 6 "gutter boats" for use by our younger guests at various functions. The boats are 7" sailboats and they are propelled down a section of rain gutter by the skipper who bows on the sail. These boat are well decorated and should be a lot of fun for the kids to use.



Congratulations to our CanWest Award Winners

Public Choice:

1. Bulldog John Gough
2. Jane Brogan Jack Ross
3. Princess Kathleen Jack Lenfesty

Modeller's Choice:

1. Bulldog John Gough
2. Inferno Adam Rainsford
3. George R Pearkes Jack Plummer

Steering

1. Bob Rainsford
2. Ken Scotten
3. Ron Armstrong

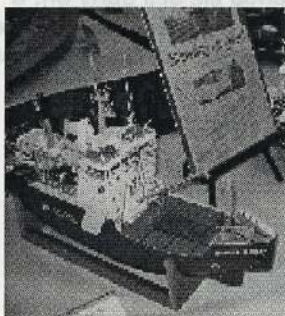


John Gough

Jack Ross

Jack Lenfesty

Jack Plummer



Some CanWest Show Pictures

Bob Rainsford

Ken Scotten

Ron Armstrong



Our Wonderful 'Bonnie C.'

Yet again our veteran club boat proved her worth at Canwest. After the challenge of piloting Bob Rainsford's tug (she of starboard reversing) to a 3rd in the Steering Course, it was a treat to spend the rest of Saturday afternoon introducing one little boy and three smaller girls to the joys of R/C ship handling with "Bonnie C."

I'd like to say the latent teacher in me came out but really our North Sea trawler is so forgiving and SO maneuverable that all four skippered like naturals. All of them made perfect dockings in the U wharf...first time!! The boy said this was more fun than R/C cars (oh, ecstasy) and the girls' father is definitely bringing them to Harrison Pond. We may have the youngest junior member wannabes ever, thanks to such a positive pool experience.

Ron A.

THE SUB SUBJECT

It took foresight to end last month's column on a promise to HIGHLIGHT the grief that Australia has experienced--and continues to experience--with its six Collins class diesel-electric submarines. Going beyond mere highlights would either require a book-length Binnacle, or another (potentially reader-taxing) series of "Sub Subject" installments. My, oh my, do our antipodes have problems by the bucket or the trainload? A rhetorical question. If not, it could be answered with a "YES" neon sign too large for Times Square.

By way of background: Both Australia (RAN) and Canada (RCN) had acquired British Oberon-class boats in the '60s. Australia took six; Canada bought three. All were wearing out, and feet were dragged to rut depth in deciding when replacements would be needed, and what those replacements should be. Both Navies decided on diesel-electrics.

Australia's shopping trip ended in Sweden, where the Kockum's-built Gotland Type A19 (designed primarily for littoral operations) caught the RAN's fancy. The most recognizable design feature of those boats is their "X" (rather than "+") configuration of rudders and stern planes. So, after much debate, back and forth commutes that may have kept a few airlines out of receivers' clutches, followed by much more consultations, travel, political debate and such, the Australian Ministry for Defence decided it would be neat to form the Australian Submarine Corporation (ASC), made up, primarily, of the Australian Government and Kockums Shipyard. They would build the six stretched and highly modified Gotlands in their own backyard. ("May as well keep the jobs at home, what? Gain some national expertise, what?").

The Aussies budgeted shy of five billion A\$. And the fight was on.

Fixed-price contracts had looked quite clever, but caused nothing but delays and shouting matches till, still early on, a complete breakdown in communications, in all quarters and at all levels came about. In spite of that, in mid-1996 (some nine years after signing contracts) HMAS Collins hit the water, while her sisters were on the ways. But the Navy did not accept her--not too unreasonable if one takes a load of these more MAJOR deficiencies:

- The Australian-built diesels (three apiece) had shown some 750 defects by 1999. The 16-bangers were not originally designed for marine power. Great on oil rigs and the like, but not for subs. Defects ranged from oil consumption to breaks in rocker arms and pistons. Even a crankshaft had to be replaced.
- The subs were noisier than WWII U.S. Navy and Kriegsmarine boats. Part of that on account of diesel vibration which, in turn, was caused by the fuel system that wasn't any too good at separating fuel and seawater ballast.
- The screws, built out of special material named Sonoston cavitated, vibrated and cracked.
- Part of the screws' racket was ascribed to cavitation, which was (partly) caused by inadequate tank testing of the hull. Sterns and casings had to be re-contoured with fibreglass applications that improved water flow to the screw.
- The periscopes, ordered from a highly respected manufacturer, vibrated when extended while submerged. The optics were such that no one could look through them for long, and further, distances to potential targets were impossible to read, measure or judge.
- The stuffing boxes (shaft seal) leaked copiously. It was replaced with the Oberon seal/gland design.
- The communications mast did not permit clear contact with either base or satellite (same root problem.)
- Then: worst of all: The electronics of the combat/weapons system did not meet RAN's needs. The specs had not been properly drafted. Now, apparently, the U.S. Navy and U.S. industry have come to the rescue. There is, of course, some self-interest being served by the rescuers. But the Australian taxpayer is getting no presents. But who knows. If it saves the Collins-class' s day, it may be a way toward ending up with a state of the art combat system in new subs that, on paper, must be teenagers. The U.S. Navy, in fact, is already praising the Australian subs and crews for their ace performance in 2004 exercises.

With that on paper, I'll take a chance with internet flak and indulge in a modicum of editorializing.

Was it wise for Australia to set up a national submarine-building program, absent experience?

Perhaps it was. Even the most fervent free trade advocates subscribe to the self-sufficiency of nations in weaponry procurement--regardless of cost or efficiency. I do suggest, however, that any nation with the notion to start building subs should carefully consider the difficulties experienced by industrial giants such as the U.S.A. and the erstwhile U.S.S.R.

Designing, developing and building subs is no picnic. Look at the following table, condensed from page 7 - 5 of a report on the Multi-Mission Platform (MMP) for the U. S. Navy's Jimmy Carter (SSN23)--the last of three current Seawolf-class boats.

	<u>M-1 Tank</u>	<u>Boeing 777</u>	<u>Seawolf</u>
Number of Systems	25	40	230
Crew	4	10	116
Parts to Assemble	14,000	100,000	1,100,000
Months to Produce	7.5	14	72
Assembly Man-Hours	5,500	50,000	23,000,000
Production rate/year	600	72	0.16

"Parts to assemble", no doubt includes pre-manufactured components and systems (switches, cables, hull sections. ...) All of it labour- and skill-intensive. Ain't that something?

With the benefit of hindsight, I am still not scoffing at what Australia tried and is starting to achieve, i. e. a small fleet of the largest diesel-electrics, eminently tailored to the nation's very specific geographies and subsequent needs. Still, "You have to learn to skate before you try a figure-eight." It may have taken more than 14 to 15 years, but wouldn't it have been smarter to build the Collins first, engineer the bugs out of her, and then build Farncomb Waller, Dechaineux, Sheean and Rankin one or two at a go? Just a thought. That's all.

Next month, I propose to regale you to some details about an 86-year-old (submarine) postcard, given to me as a Christmas 2003 present.

Romanus Unicum

Member Profile



Dave Denton

Dave is our Vice President and the manufacturer of several fine fibreglass hulls. He has lived in Victoria for 60 years and worked for 5 different companies in the shipbuilding, foundry and warehousing fields. His approach to model shipbuilding is to construct the model the same way one would a real ship. That means no miniature tools for Dave—he uses the industrial hammer and industrial approach. And does a fine job.

We tried to get Dave to relate an experience that is humorous or death defying, but he only said he nearly died four times under water and stared down a cougar that was 3 feet away. Maybe this cougar?



Proposed Langford Pond - update

In about two years there could be two brand new, state of the art, custom designed, model boat ponds, multi-purpose building, pond side launch and close parking, in a new park Langford is building. The park is west of Jacklin Road opposite Can West Mall.

On Monday night, Feb. 28, 2005, at their invitation, Ken Scotten and I made a presentation to the Parks and Recreation Committee of Langford, (okayed by our executive at the Feb. 24 meeting). We told them who we are, our history and what we do. Then, we showed them an 18 minute video of Harrison, Beaver Lake, the Maple Bay Marina temporary pond and the Saanich Fair Pond.

Our objective was to convince them to build two dedicated model boat ponds: one large for electric and sailing and one small for children (bandits, paddle boats, small store bought and club built); not one multi-purpose duck, geese, seagull, human, model pond, like Harrison and Beaver Lake.

Their P and R chairman, Lanny Seaton, is the driving force behind this. He is also a senior member of the Langford city council. This is all coming about because of his seeing our static and pond display at the CanWest hobby show.

We have been told by Langford that they will build the ponds and immediate surroundings built to our design as long as there is space (which there is) and as long as the money for it can be raised.

This latter point is unclear at the moment. They are putting in a dryland field in a building, an outdoor soccer field, a model boat pond and a landscaped duck pond area, like Beacon Hill Park. We don't know where the funding is coming from for the dryland field building, the soccer field or the landscaped duck pond area.

We have been told the funding for the design, engineering and construction of the model boat ponds, immediate surroundings and multi-purpose building has to come from donated materials, donated labour, government grants and service clubs.

From now on, I and the executive, will be in continuous contact with the Langford officials on all aspects of this project.

Thank you to all members who contributed effort and ideas to what would make the "Ideal Boat Pond". Particularly, Bill Andrews who found the Manx Model Boat Club pond photos on their website and Alex James who emailed the editor of the Model Boats magazine, John Cundell, for tips as to the best model boat ponds in the UK. He emailed Alex the tip of the Eaton Park model boat pond in Norwich, UK. Both of these are custom built, above ground ponds and the photos of them are the best we have found to show Langford what we want.

Mike Woodley



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