



The Binnacle

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

Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society
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ON THE HORIZON

INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS

- Mar 14-16** *Pirate School* at the *Maritime Museum* (see below)
Harrison Pond
- Mar 26** *Spring Fling*—Opening regatta
10:00 Harrison Pond * Free Sail
- April 16** *Powell Cup Series 1*
10:00 Beaver Lake
- May 7** *Battle of the Atlantic Regatta*
10:00 Harrison Pond
- May 20-21** *Maple Bay Marina Wooden Boat Show* Genoa Bay
- July 22** **HARRISON POND BIRTHDAY PARTY**



MEETINGS: Second Thursday 7:15-9:15
313 Brunswick Place **Next is April 13**



POWER: Sundays 10 – 12
Harrison Model Yacht Pond



SAILING: 1st & 3rd Sunday 1 – 3 PM
Beaver Lake **Next : Mar 19 & Apr 2**



LANGFORD LAKE NAVY Wednesdays
9:30 Langford Lake



From the Bridge

How the time flies. Since our last meeting we've had a real good talk with Parks Dept, started planning for July 22, got my new tug into the water, and built a mold for Ken Scotten, I've hardly had time to do chores, tough break.

Ron Hillsden had the foresight to lay out the years activities and dates. By the time you read this we will have been to the Seniors Celebration— had a blast, seen some new hobbies, and met some new members.

The Maritime Museum event is coming up and we will need a few good boat builders now that John Gough is under the weather, but the good news is that he is on the mend.

We've been doing so much planning for future events that the opening regatta has escaped our gaze. The event will go ahead, it will be a gathering of boaters, nothing really organized, but everyone will have a good time and try his hand at whatever presents itself.

More fun heading our way in the future, so keep those cards and letters coming in, and keep your antenna up.
Dave Denton

POWELL CUP AND RACING REGATTA

APRIL 16 10 A.M. – 3 P.M.
BEAVER LAKE.

Sailors, join us for a day of fun at Beaver Lake. The program is to complete the Powell Cup before lunch. After about 1:00 pm, we will have 5 short ranking races, followed by a Round Robin of match racing. Each pair will start at 4 minute intervals. We hope to make this different and fun. Come out and join in!

It's appropriate at this time to mention that Gary Fox, a member since the first of the year, has volunteered to help with the running of our sailing program and with his help we are resuming our twice a month program. As usual 1st. and 3rd. Sundays, 1-3 P.M.

See you at the lake !!!!
Cheers Ken

Pirate School

Maritime Museum Spring Break Program

Tuesday, March 14 through Thursday, March 16

This event is great fun, and a good source of revenue for the Society. We need volunteers to help children design and build simple models from pre-cut pieces.

Two shifts for each day: 10 am – 1 pm, and 1 pm to 4 pm.
Sign up at tonight's meeting or call Tom Pound.

Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society
Regular Meeting – 9 February, 2006

The President welcomed all.

The Harrison Model Yacht Pond Improvement Committee will have a meeting at City Parks Headquarters, Beacon Hill.

Arrangements are confirmed for upcoming events: Seniors Celebration, and the Spring Break Program at the Maritime Museum.

Following the break, Len Thomas and John Gough presented working steam engines.

Respectfully submitted,

T. Pound
Secretary-Treasurer

2006 Executive Committee

President	Dave Denton	478-1800
Vice-Pres.	David Taylor	652-6480
Secretary/Treas	Tom Pound	595-6487
Show Coordinator	Bill Andrews	479-2761
City Parks Liaison	Mike Woodley	598-8379
Binnacle Editors	Ron Hillsden Bill Sturrock	479-5760 479-0239
Quartermaster	Bob Rainsford	383-2256
Entertainment	Mike Claxton Mike Creasy	479-2258 658-1731
Librarian	John Gough	479-1843
Publicity	Jack Ross	478-3191
Director at Large	Ken Scotten	472-6187
Director at Large	Derek Woollard	658-1150

OBITUARY - PETER SMITH-STAR CLASS SAILOR

The sailing group has shared many races with Peter and his STAR 45. Peter joined VMSS in the early 90's and was a strong supporter of our sailing program. Always a gentleman and those of you who had the opportunity to sail with Peter and Vic on Mayne Island can remember those days as special times. We VMSS sailors salute you, Peter!
KL

For Sale:

Chinook IOM,

measured and certified as Hull CAN05. Complete w/two keels, two rudders, A & B rigs in a simple sail box, Graupner Regatta sail winch, Hitec 5645 digital rudder servo, folding boat stand and in great condition and ready to sail as is. Less radio \$600. Radio can be supplied for a negotiated difference. This is well below the price these boats are selling for but I would like to sell it locally and increase competition.

Barry Fox
743-5729 bdfx1@gmail.com

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Under the weather...

John Gough suffered a couple of strokes, but is now back at home and the prognosis is good! We're pulling for ya, John!

Battery Charging Calculator

(thanks Jack Plummer for passing this tip on)

There is a website calculator to figure out how long to charge your Nickel Metal or NiCad batteries with a fixed rate charger. Just type in the mAh of the battery, the mA charge rate of your charger and it calculates the length of time you should be charging your batteries. This factors in about 20% to allow for a certain amount of inefficiency.
www.greenbatteries.com/batterycalc.html

Thanks to Robert Gibson of Goldstream Ave. He donated the A-L kit of the Bluenose 11 which was auctioned at the February meeting to the betterment of our finances!

Newsletters from other clubs

We receive some newsletters from other clubs by e-mail. I forward them to some members of our executive. If you would like to see them as well, please let me know and I will add you to the distribution list

Ron H vmss@shaw.ca

History of Harrison Yacht pond #2 by Mike Woodley

Three days after the Times reported on the start of construction of the pond on Sept. 9, 1955 this editorial appeared in the Times:

Monday, Sept. 12, 1955

SAILED MANY MODELS LATELY?

Apparently Mayor Harrison's favored model yacht basin - a project he champions as a beautification measure to be financed from the Capital City grant - is being widely received with all the warmth of the water such an installation might contain in winter. That has not prevented a start on excavations for what seems an improvident development. With many earnest citizens pressing for much more popular undertakings - constructions which range from an aquarium to a civic auditorium— a simple question arises: Who wants a model yacht basin?

If there is a demand for model yacht sailing surely there is ample water around the coastline to meet the most exacting needs. And a youth employed during the warm weather to man a rowboat at any particular bay, as a safeguard against the loss of models, would be a great deal cheaper than a \$17,500 artificial pond.

Or are beautification funds, so successfully spent on public works last year, to be used on schemes to keep children off the beaches? Conceivably there may be merit in such a counter-attraction as long as one of the most accessible stretches bears signs warning of pollution and the garbage floats back to shore from the city disposal system.

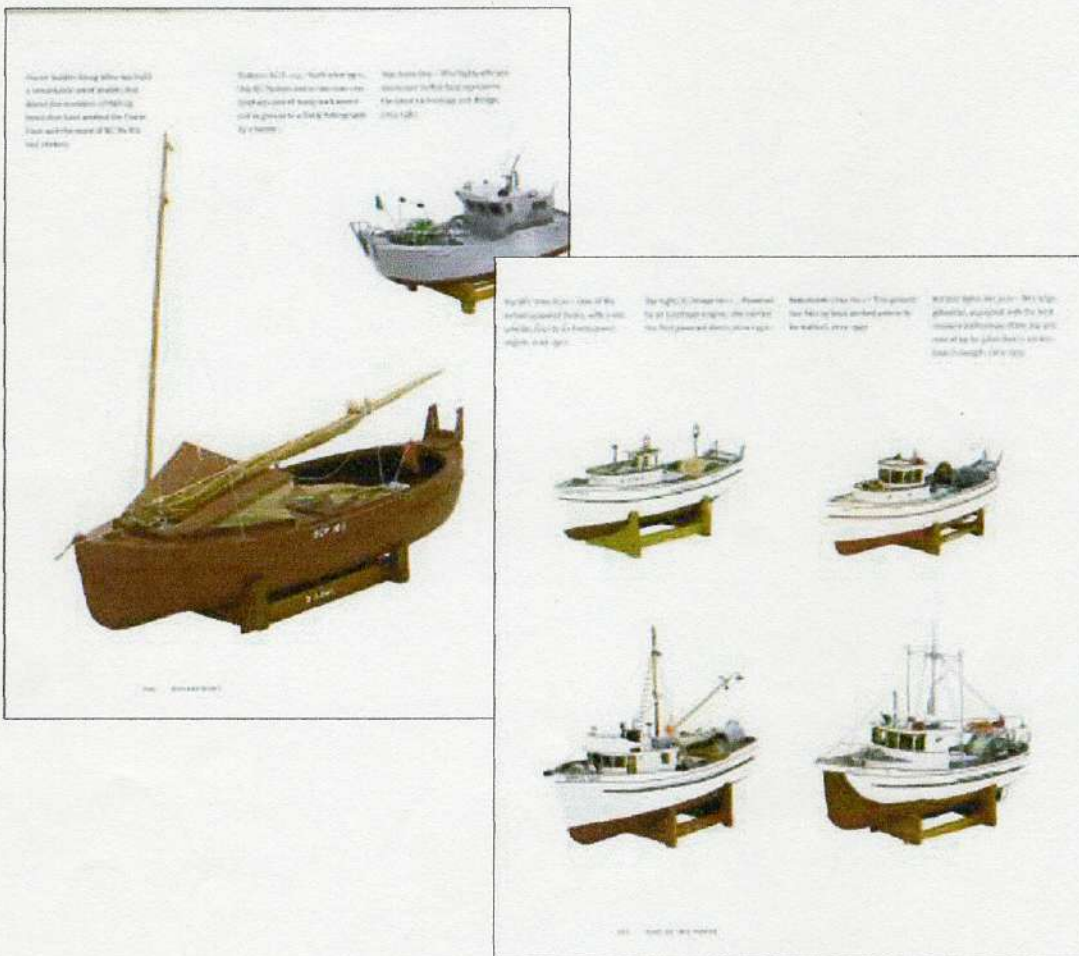
Perhaps the people, or at least their representatives, should be asked how much they desire a model yacht basin. Possibly they might rate it slightly lower than hitching posts for a physical return to the horse and buggy era. As Mr. Courtney Haddock asked: "How many people are sailing model yachts today?"

Doug Allen's work featured in a new book

Check it out—it's in our library! The book is **WATERFRONT** by James P. Delgado. Delgado has written about 30 books, many award winning. He hosts The Sea Hunters TV program and has been down to the Titanic aboard the submersible Mir. He is a marine archeologist, Executive Director of the Vancouver Maritime Museum and a real nice guy.

Doug's models represent the history of the BC fishing fleet from the age of sail to modern times. He donated these models to the Vancouver Maritime Museum where they are proudly held.

Well done, Doug!



THE SUB SUBJECT

AS FLAGGED LAST MONTH, what's to follow is an opinion piece. It's meant to reflect a "balanced view," but since it concerns the Canadian Navy's acquisition of the RN's four erstwhile Upholder-class submarines (Victoria-class in Canada) it's bound to draw both "hear, hears" as well as salvos of flak—the latter louder than if the opinion (s) had been better researched. But I can take it, because I'll get a load of long-simmering views (nay, festering) off my mind and onto paper. I'll get off on positives (yeas) first.

No doubt about it: if Canada wants to wear the prestigious cloak of a G7 (is it "8" now?) nation with NATO expectations, the Canadian Navy had to replace its superannuated, on life support Oberons. The Oberons were senior citizens, and their long-term care costs reached deeper and deeper into taxpayers' pockets than cold-hearted financial watchdogs could tolerate. Furthermore, their crews' lives were also a valid consideration. The Oberons were honourably struck off the list.

Planning for their replacements, however, had most of the earmarks of 'The New Helicopters Saga.' Study groups were funded. Did the Canadian Navy really need submarines at all? The conclusion—late in the 80s, early in the '90s—was an unequivocal "yes." So a serious study budget was approved, office space, equipment and staff were allocated, and away they went in search of answers to two main questions: (1) what class/type of boat(s) and, (2) how many?

To the chagrin of those involved, a change in government caused the early conclusion that nuclear was not the way to go. Acquisition costs (from American, British, French or Russian yards) were steep, i.e. billions, and the Canadian electorate's mood was judged to be such that a government could topple on just that score. (Some politicians, even at that time, were old enough to remember PM Diefenbaker's bad press provoked by the parking of nuclear-tipped U. S. ground-to-air missiles on Canadian soil.) Nukes were out. But the final 'no' hit with such a discombobulating thud that it took much time for the study group to resume its work. That may have been just fine, because the purchase price of nukes is the mere tip of the tip of the iceberg. It's their operating costs that hurt like amputations during anesthesiologists' strike.

After much delay, with the salt chuck on three out of four of Canada's sides, and NATO partners breathing down both the government's and Canadian Navy's neck, another solution had to be found. Solution? Diesel-electric, of course—with partial AIP propulsion, perhaps. But still: which ones? and how many?

Answer to the last part of the double header: at least two—one for Halifax; a twin for Esquimalt. Good oh. But what to buy or . . . what to build? Choices were out there, albeit not as broad as in shopping for a new car.

Early in the '90s, the Dutch could come up with copies of their Walrus-class boats. Australia wouldn't have minded cutting a deal on their Collins-class (of Swedish parentage) and in Germany Howaldswerke could have whipped up a few more of their 209s that already were finding a worldwide market. But hold it.

The RN had, for not too transparent, translucent and otherwise still controversial reasons, put all four of its first Upholders into "Care and custody." To an insider that meant they'd been taken out of service and tied up, but not mothballed. And this because the RN's brass had told Admiralty and government that, once offered for sale, many nations would run fast and furious to get in first. Not quite so. Even Chile (too busy making good wine) forwent the opportunity. At long last, Canada showed an interest.

By June 1998 (already yet so soon) Treasury Board approved \$751.6M or, in 2004 Bucks, some \$812.0M. Ultimately, but not finally, that went up to \$896.8M. Annual operating costs for the foursome were projected at \$121.0M. Coarse banknotes, perhaps, but going nuclear has been estimated at 2.5 to 4.0B—with commensurately higher operating and political costs.

Now: Now, add on all of the unanticipated, in-Canada rehab and Canadianization costs (with USN technical help), and the Canadian Navy could end up with four subs for about one billion. Not bad: about 25 to 40 per cent of going nuke, and no doubt much less than ordering up/building new diesel-electrics. But what has all of this done to international prestige, and to the near certainty that the Canadian Navy will have been 'sub less' for over a decade? If it was acceptable to operate at an annual \$121M budget, that decade must have been worth quite a lot to Canada and its Armed Forces. Further, it has deprived the Navy of true hands-on training opportunities for submarine personnel. Meanwhile . . . the Upholders now provide full-time work for some 200 tax-paying employees. And there's more spin-off. Think of all the Medias' payrolls and newsprint production devoted to panning the Upholder pro-

gram. No small potatoes in tax revenue.

The frustrating part of it all is that the full and true cost, from start to finish, will never be known to anyone, anywhere. They are as elusive as a magician's rabbit. They cannot be realistically allocated or isolated--no more so than the precise weight of the Earth or the extent of the universe can be measured or guesstimated. Too bad.

In spite of all of the foregoing, I tend to believe that the initial decision to get the four boats, at the anticipated cost, was not altogether a bad one. It seems, though, that the project went off the rails because of the four plus years that slipped by between signing the purchase order and acceptance/delivery of the first boat. All the same, criticisms by the press and Monday morning quarter backs cannot be taken with cavalier indifference. Some must stick.

Let's make the presumptuous assumption that, come 2008; any three out of the four boats will be on the job. That would be great. Bear in mind though that then the youngest one (Windsor, launched in '93) will have a 15 year chronological age, while the patriarch (Chicoutimi, finished in '90) will have clocked up 18 years. In other words: 50 to 60 per cent into the generally accepted 30 year life for subs. True, come that time chronological age may exceed effective age (viz. updates, upgrades and years of inactivity) but most things built of metal will age regardless of use and care. A new car put in dry storage, up on blocks will no longer be new after 15 years. Tires, seals, wiring, battery and gaskets will have deteriorated. And even a properly mothballed sub (hermetically sealed and filled with an inert gas) will suffer the effects of time. But worse.

Over the past decade and in the foreseeable future, the Canadian Navy's four boats will have fallen way behind in systems and overall technology of state-of-the-art equipment of other navies. No updates or modernizations can either negate or catch up with on-going and accelerating worldwide progress in submarine design, equipment and construction.

Yes, new boats, built offshore or under license in Canada, could have served the nation better, and perhaps sooner. Fillet costs more than hamburger. Which one is the better value?

For next month, some material on recreational subs and on subs operating as tourist attractions may fill the bill.

Romanus Unicum

Harrison Pond Improvements

Ron Hillsden

City Parks officials met with Mike Woodley's committee Feb 22 at Harrison Pond to get a better understanding of what we are requesting for improvements. This is the second time I met with these folks and I am really impressed with their dedication and their interest in what we have to say. It is also interesting to learn about the things they are attempting to accomplish in city parks and some of their constraints.

A milestone has been reached. Our requests are now closed and no new ones will be added. That will enable the Parks Planners to incorporate our requests into a plan to improve Holland Point Park. We will be contributing something toward the improvements in partnership with the civic taxpayer. To this end, Dave Denton is having tables to work on boats designed, and if they are acceptable to the city, we will build them.

The next step will be getting a peek at a draft plan for the park. This has been a positive and enlightening experience, and we owe a lot to Mike Woodley and the folks at the City Parks Department!

Our requests (in abbreviated form to conserve space)

- Ease parking and dashing across Dallas Road
- Tables to work on boats (also picnic tables)
- Storage building and electricity availability
- The Willow tree
- Boat launch and recovery for seniors and disabled
- Garbage cans
- Sidewalks fouled by fowl
- Widen lawn at SW side to relieve congestion
- Widen path on south to allow more breeze
- Drinking fountain and washing water
- Signage
- Bicycle rack
- Water also fouled by fowl and the tree
- Bushes on wet end block breeze (already removed)

PASSAGE FROM TRINIDAD TO GALVESTON -

JULY 1941.

Through the years I have often thought of my last few minutes on the upper after-deck of the 'ROBERT E. LEE'. I was hanging over the rail watching the unusual antics of a whale. Suddenly it turned and headed for the ship. It was an acoustic torpedo. I was in a stupor from the explosion. Everyone on the upper deck ran forward to the boats. Suddenly I was now alone on the afterdeck. Bells were ringing, the whistle was blowing, and people were shrieking and shouting. The ship was taking a starboard list. Two boats were now in the water. People were jumping and sliding down lines. It was a terrible scene, I was reluctant to join it.

Suddenly, out of a saloon door came a woman hanging on to a large brown purse, shouting for her husband. She saw me, and hanging on to the rail she staggered towards me. She was in a very hysterical state that galvanized me into action. I removed the purse from her and forced the straps over her head. With it around her neck, her hands were free. I had tied a one-person raft to the rail and placed it into the water which was up to the deck. The struggle to get the woman over the rail was a fight. We had no life-jackets and she was screaming that she couldn't swim. She wanted me to go and find her husband. I convinced her to kneel on the raft and hold on to the straps. I let the line go and, still screaming she drifted away. I stepped into the water, swam to an empty large raft, I climbed on, turned to look, and the ship was gone.

The after-math of all this was that the woman ended up in a Naval Hospital for three days. Her husband was gone but she still had her purse. The lost husband was the manager of the construction crew that was building air fields in South America. While there, they had bought 'free gold' (unregistered). The gold was in the brown purse.

The S.S. 'ROBERTEE. LEE' was an 'over-nighter' in the 'twenties' and 'thirties' that ran between New York and Boston and she was ready for the wreckers. The passenger list was made up of construction workers and distressed seamen.

I thought I had saved this woman's life, but in reality, she possibly saved mine with her frantic screaming and struggles with her, wakened me from my stupor.

This happened a long time ago but the memory of it remains clearly in my mind.

Bill Birch

2006 Frequency Survey

Two extra pages with this Binnacle containing the 2006 Frequency Survey are being distributed to VMSS members only because we do not necessarily want to put your names out onto the net. We are including the names of the users of each frequency, and whether it is for sail or power, to help you to decide whether you want to order up an extra set of crystals if you are in a crowded frequency. You can decide based on your perception of the activity of the other users. This is an very useful tool for anyone purchasing a new radio or extra crystals.

Thank you Bob Rainsford and family for compiling this information, and also to everyone who responded to the survey.

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