

April 2019

Volume 41 Issue 4



# *The Binnacle*

Victoria Model Boats  
Victoria, B.C.



Victoria Model  
Shipbuilding Society



Ken Lockley on the tug Tusker and progress  
on Glenside.

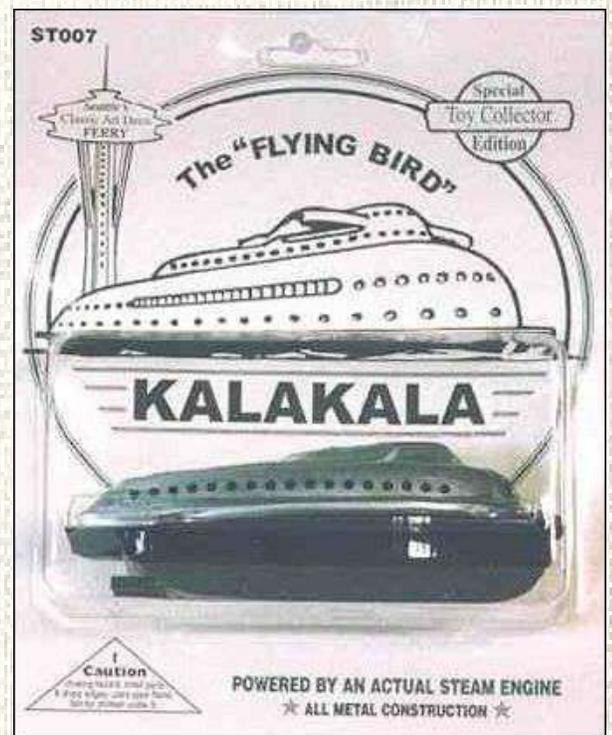
(Ken, this is your rival model, Tusker in Lego.  
<http://www.moc-pages.com/moc.php/423024>)

Seattle's Flying Bird  
Kalakala

Thursday's meeting is Swap Meet!

Nanaimo Club Show this Weekend!  
Country Club Mall.

Members' Survey Results



<http://www.vmss.ca>

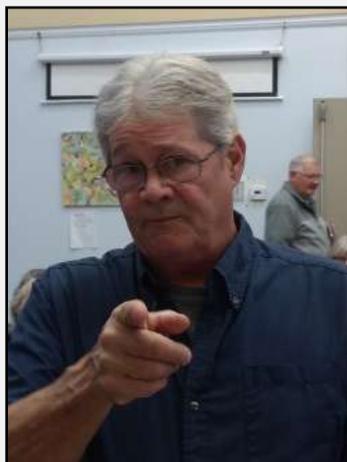


**From  
The Bridge**

Hi Everyone,  
Welcome to Spring, Harrison Pond is looking good. The weather and the light are cooperating so we are going to meet informally at the pond on Wednesday evenings as well as Sunday mornings. Hope to see you there.

Coming right up this week is our Swap and Shop meeting. Please bring all the model boat stuff you don't need any more and some money to buy some new stuff that you may need or want to hoard. There will be tables set up before the meeting to put it all on, but we are asking that you don't complete any deals until after our business meeting is over, so everyone at least gets to look over all the stuff. I'll let you know when the dealing is to begin. We will be putting some things that have been donated to the club on silent auction concluding 9 pm. and we'll have silent auction forms for any of you that would like to sell something that way. Reserve prices are up to you!

Mike Bush.



**2019 Executive Committee**

<i>President: Mike Bush</i>	<b>418-5527</b>
<i>Vice-Pres: James Cox</i>	<b>382-3266</b>
<i>Secretary: Vacant</i>	<b>479-2761</b>
<i>Treasurer: Mike Creasy</i>	<b>888-4860</b>
<i>Director @ Large: Vacant</i>	
<i>Show Coordinator: Vacant</i>	
<i>Binnacle Editor: Edward White</i>	<b>385-6068</b>
<i>Quartermaster: Bob Rainsford</i>	<b>383-2256</b>
<i>CRD Liaison: Adrian Harrison</i>	<b>592-4232</b>
<i>Parks Liaison: Mike Claxton</i>	<b>479-6367</b>
<i>Sailing Director: Peter Stevens</i>	<b>656-8999</b>
<i>Membership: Bev Andrews</i>	<b>479-2761</b>
<i>Facebook: Rick Gonder</i>	<b>744-8610</b>
<i>All above area code (250)</i>	



**ON THE RADAR**

Upcoming Events

Spring Swap and Shop, April General Meeting, April 11th.  
Nanaimo Club Show, April 13th and 14th, Country club Mall.  
Battle of the Atlantic Day, 5th May, Harrison Pond.



**Meetings: Second Thursday 7:30-9:30**  
**St. Peter's Anglican Church, Lakehill**  
**3939 St. Peter's Road**  
**Upcoming meeting: April 11th.**



**POWER: Sundays 10-12**  
**Harrison Model Yacht Pond (HMYP)**  
**Dallas Road at Government Street**



**SAILING: 1st. and 3rd. Sundays**  
**Beaver Lake**



**LANGFORD LAKE**  
**Wednesdays 9:30**  
**Langford Lake, Leigh Rd. at Trillium**

Victoria Model



Shipbuilding Society

# **SWAP & SHOP**

**Thursday, April 11 7:30 pm**

After the monthly meeting at  
St. Peter's Church Hall, Saanich

**Some of the donated items for sale by the VMSS**

***Solder/desolder machine***

***Soldering gun, pens***

***.062 and 22 ga solders***

***Dremel scroll saw***

***Desktop vises***

***Chargers***

***Large f/g speedboat hull***

***Rudder and strut kits***

***Motors***

***Wire—14 to 30 ga.***



## Membership Survey Results

Several months ago we asked club members to participate in a survey. 35 of 37 forms were completed and returned. The following is a brief review of the survey results:

- Most members are happy with the benefits of membership in our club.
- Majority suggested that our membership dues are too high.
- Members would like to see changes in the annual banquet, including dropping the draw in favour of some form of entertainment. A display (at the banquet) of members boats was also suggested. Several requested that we have a Master of Ceremonies who can keep the evening interesting and give a history of the two major yearly awards. In addition to the wall plaques, the actual award should be presented and held by the recipient for one year.
- A majority of members suggested inviting a guest speaker to our monthly meetings.
- Members are split on the idea of creating a second venue at Heritage Acres. Discussion at recent monthly meetings suggests we should keep moving forward with the idea and if we can develop a proposal, then let the membership vote on it.
- Survey results showed that nobody has an interest in volunteering for an Executive position.
- General comments suggested an unhappiness with the current Executive.

Rick Gonder.

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## BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

On Sunday, May 5th. at Harrison Pond we will be doing our bit to commemorate the Battle of the Atlantic, as we do each year. This is a reminder to dust off your warships or WW2 era ships to bring down to the pond that day, if you have any. If you don't, of course you and any boat you have are very welcome to join us. It is simply a memorial of those who sacrificed so much at sea.

**NEXT BUILD;**

by Ken Lockley

APRIL 2019

For the last 20 years I have been storing this plan by Jim Pottinger of the Scottish built tug "Tusker". It's only recently that I became more aware of the ships history. Originally built for Australian owners, but what took me by surprise was the fact it was in Canadian waters for about twelve operating years. I found the following text by "TugFax" extremely interesting.



### *TUSKER - CALLED HALIFAX HOME FOR A WHILE*

A recent posting in Boatnerd brought back memories of the tug **Tusker** that had several far flung careers, one of which had its beginnings in Halifax on this day in 1980. In July 1954 Rich and Smith of Port Adelaide South Australia commissioned Alexander Hall + Co to build the coastal, harbour and salvage tug at their Footdee shipyard in Aberdeen, Scotland. Hall built the tug with a traditional rivetted steel hull (one of the last ships to be so built in ). However her massive 12 foot diameter bronze prop was housed in a Kort nozzle, which was welded to the hull (a first). Also uniquely, the ship was fitted with two 8 cylinder 850 bhp 2cycle British Polar engines fitted with fluid coupling

drives connected to a reverse reduction gearbox. The arrangement allowed the tug to operate economically on one engine, bringing the second engine into operation when full power was needed. Electric bridge controls allowed the engines to be run a 18 rpm up to 128 rpm. At 10 knots she was said to have a range of 1,000 miles. Her top speed was 14 to 15 knots, which was useful for racing to the scene of a casualty. Of very



Tugfax © Mac Mackay

conventional appearance for the time, she had what looked like a steamship funnel. (In fact numerous steam trawlers built by the yard had almost identical funnels). Her crew of 20 were accommodated below deck aft and forward, also in a very traditional arrangement evolved from steam tugs. Nevertheless she had an aluminium wheelhouse and aluminium lifeboats. During construction the Hall yard merged to form Hall Russel, and although the tug was launched in April 1955 strikes and delays meant that she was not commissioned until January 1958. When it was discovered that her riveted hull was leaking and had hogged after installation of the heavy engines and gearbox, the yard welded in new plates between the ribs from the engines aft. A shallow water bollard pull test came up with a 24.8 ton rating, but it was acknowledged that a higher reading would have been made if the tests had been done in deeper water. Sailing from Aberdeen February 2, 1958 en route for Gibraltar, the ship ran into bad weather within a week, and was called by the broken down T2 tanker *Stanwell* for assistance. Taking the tanker in tow in worsening conditions, **Tusker** had the tow line part once but re-connected very close to shore. When the line parted again the German tug **Seefalke** was called in. However her line parted and **Tusker** reconnected with mooring lines, safely delivering the tanker to La Coruna. No doubt a substantial salvage award was paid. The rest of the trip, through the Suez Canal was uneventful, and the tug arrived in her new home port March 29. She had logged 11,604 miles with 47 steaming days. During the next several years, the tug carried out many long distance tows and salvage jobs, ranging well out into the Pacific and Indian Oceans, including one 4700 mile round trip salvage tow. By the time she was retired from

Nigerian owners and sailed in May 1992. Renamed **Bode** she set out towing the barge *Remi ex Scurry* the rebuilt hulk of the burned out tanker *Hudson Transport*. They apparently reached Africa, via Sydney, NS, Bahamas, Canary Islands and Dakar. In September 1993 **Bode** was called to assist the ferry *Jumbo* in difficulties near San Pedro Ivory Coast, but stranded and was abandoned. McAsphalt now operates two articulated tug / barge combinations, **Everlast / Norman McLeod** and **Victorious / John J. Carrick** (Source & Photo: Mac Mackay-Tugfax)

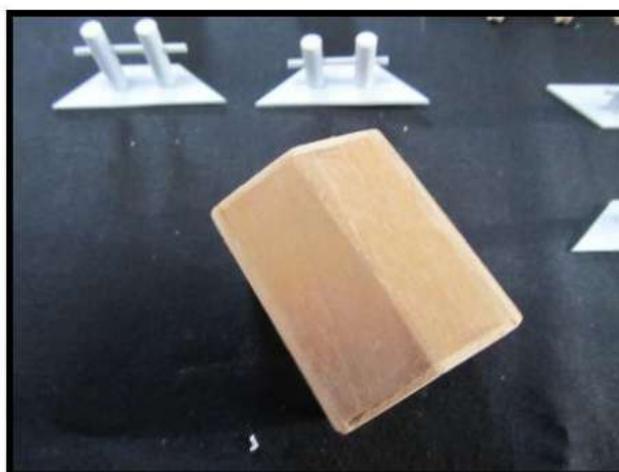
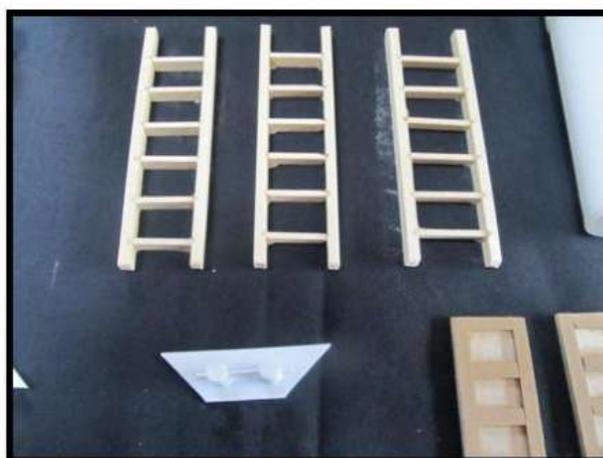
I found about eight good pictures of the “Tusker” on the net and there is likely more with a extensive search. The Jim Pottinger plan I have is 1/4” to the foot scale, making for a model 31” in Length with a 8 1/2 “ Beam. I suspect copies can be printed at Island Blue print if anyone is interested in building this vessel. Plans are also available on E Bay. Tugfax and Mac Mackay have created a great source of material on East Coast vessels for modelers and interested parties. Thanks for the use of this material. If any readers have additional information, I sure would like to add it to my “Tusker” file. Thanks in advance.

Since the last “Binnacle“, I have got the deck on my tug “Glenside” and these pictures show some progress.



These three shots show my effort in building up the bulwarks and gunwales. I don't have much experience in this area so the “bulwarks” was a challenge. Did learn something, yes, make the best paper patterns you can before cutting to shape. It's easy to spoil some material and thin plywood is semi precious.

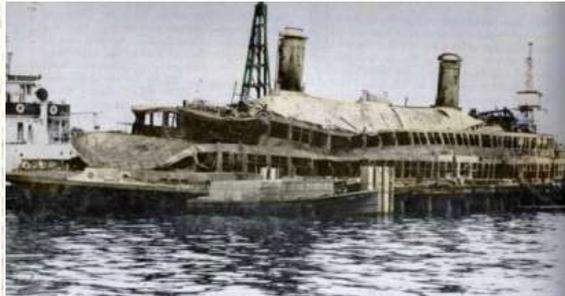
The gunwales are made out of yellow cedar and pegged every 1-1/2 “ with round toothpicks and was an easy process.



The ship is progressing with most of the woodwork on the hull complete. Currently the weather is a little cool for painting. I am getting a lot of the small fittings made from wood or styrene. Also just about ready to place an order with "Harbour Model" for port lights and some of the small details that add so much to a model.

## Kalakala, the dream ferry.

In 1927, the Moore Shipbuilding Company launched the Peralta, a steam turbine/electric double ended ferry for the run from Oakland to San Francisco. Peralta served that run for six years, but on the



night of May 6th, 1933, she burned to her waterline. The fire was the result of arson on the Key System ferry dock where Peralta was berthed and she drifted, burning, across the bay. By morning she was so badly damaged that the insurance company wrote her off, and the remaining hull was offered for sale or scrapping.

Captain Alexander Peabody, of Seattle's Black Ball line, was looking for a new flagship, and he decided to buy the hull and rebuild her. The nicest story of her design is that Captain Peabody had an artistic wife, who sketched the outline on a tablecloth, and then Louis Proctor, an aeronautical engineer temporarily laid off from Boeing, carved a 5 foot wooden model that is now at Seattle's Museum of History and Industry. Certainly the streamline designs of Norman bel Geddes must have been part of the



inspiration, because what emerged from the Lake Washington shipyard in 1935 was an all welded, curved steel superstructure like no

ship before or since. She was 276 feet long, 56 feet wide, and 21 feet 6 inches draught. Her power was a Busch-Sulzer 10 cylinder two stroke diesel engine rated at 3000 horsepower directly driving a single screw. This gave her a cruising speed of 17.5 knots and a maximum of 20.1 knots.

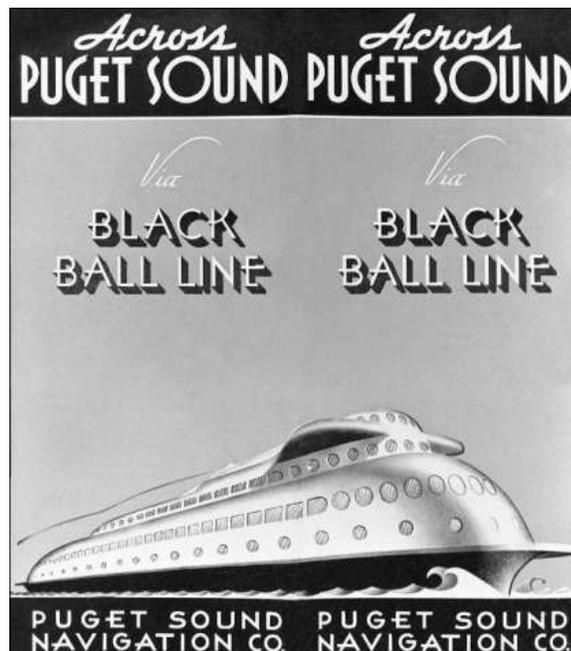
Kalakala, meaning flying bird in Chinook, was a sensation. Her interior was all curves, art Deco, and she gave the impression of being the very latest in luxury, although in actuality her furnishings were quite sparse by the standards of the time. During the day she ran as a ferry between Seattle and Bremerton, and in the evenings she was used for moonlight cruises with her own orchestra, the "Flying Birds".



There were other idiosyncrasies in the design, the bridge, of copper instead of steel because of concerns about the magnetic compass, was elegant from the outside but had very limited visibility, especially of the bow, and docking was frequently adventurous. Then the vibration aboard was tremendous, especially in the cafe, where the waitresses often could not fill the coffee cups above halfway for spillage. The vibration was eventually reduced by 40% when a new, five-bladed, screw was fitted in 1956.

But still, the Kalakala was a great success and a Seattle icon all the way through to the 1962 Seattle World's Fair.

The war years brought a sterner service. The Bremerton shipyard was strategically vital to the war in the Pacific. Ferrying shipyard workers and Navy personnel between Seattle and Bremerton was the priority and the schedule was extended around the clock and the cruises eliminated. Rowdiness and vandalism aboard led to the closure of the bar, and Washington ferries were to remain "dry" until 1974. The "luxury" cane furniture in the Palm room was removed and the heavy upholstered wooden chairs in the bow were taken out and curved bench seats welded in.



At the end of the war, the Kalakala was the first ship to be fitted with a commercial radar set, a major asset for her regular service in foggy Puget Sound. With the reduction in Seattle-Bremerton traffic and her new navigation ability, Kalakala added weekend excursion cruises from Seattle to Victoria to her work.



Ten years later, in 1956, the Black Ball line transferred Kalakala to the Washington State Ferry system, and at the request of W.A.C. Bennett, British Columbia's Premier, she was put to serve from Port Angeles to Victoria, four round trips a day. On her inaugural trip, she was met in Victoria harbour by a fire boat spouting fountains of water, a kiltie band, and by Mayor Claude Harrison, (That's Harrison Pond Harrison)

presenting a commemoration plaque. Kalakala served this route for four years until it was taken over by the Coho at the very end of 1959.

She returned to the Seattle-Bremerton run, and while still in service there was considered to be the second biggest attraction at the Seattle World's fair 1962, after the Space Needle. Quite something for what had been, thirty years before, a burned out shell of a hull.

But the writing was on the wall for Kalakala, the post-war period had seen America build much wider, bigger, cars, and Kalakala's narrow deck limited her capacity. Ferries had become

more utilitarian, and the cruise/excursion business had declined. In 1967 the new Super-class ferry Hyak replaced Kalakala on the Bremerton run, cutting the crossing from 60 minutes to 45. Kalakala was sold to American Freezerships and converted to a crab-processing ship in Alaska.

Five years later, in 1972, she was beached in Gibson Cove, near Kodiak, and back-filled around the hull to make her a land-based shrimp cannery. That lasted till 1980, when the title reverted to the town of Kodiak after bankruptcy, and Kalakala just rotted while local politicians argued till 1988.

That year, a Seattle fisherman and sculptor named Peter Bevis, saw her in her sorry state and decided to try and save her. He formed the Kalakala Foundation and over the next ten years he and other volunteers cleaned, patched, fund-raised, and campaigned to get the hulk to the point where she could be towed back to Seattle. On November 6th, 1998 they achieved the near-miracle, and Kalakala was docked in Seattle again at Pier 66.



But what followed was 17 years of hopes and dreams, small triumphs and major disasters, promises made and broken until, finally, on January 22nd 2015, Kalakala was scrapped in a Tacoma dry dock. A few pieces were sold off as souvenirs, the city of Kirkland has some of them and is considering a public art project, but Kalakala herself is gone.

This article started from a copy of a 2002 article in Pacific Yachting that Bill Andrews lent me.

But in researching the history of Kalakala I have been introduced to an aspect of modelling that I have never before really thought about. A man by the name of Steve Rosenow began a project some years ago to define the Kalakala as an object to add to the scenery in Microsoft Flight Simulator. (I have played with this program in the past and adequately proved why I should never be allowed to pilot anything at all.)

Steve has now gone on to complete a much more detailed computer model of Kalakala and has written it up in a thread on the West Coast Ferries Forum.

(<http://ferriesbc.proboards.com/thread/9427/recreating-kalakala-image-intense-thread>). I really recommend that you put aside half an hour to go look at this, the images are gorgeous and give a real sense of the uniqueness of this ship, as well as what can now be done in computer modelling. It's an eye-opener. The research that Steve has put in is huge.

There's lots of information on Kalakala on the web, all the way to a U-tube of her being dismantled.

And what a challenge it would be to re-create the art deco interiors in a radio controlled model.



The Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society is a non-profit club, open to all, established in 1978 under the Societies Act of B.C.

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