



# The Binnacle

Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society  
Victoria BC Canada  
[vmss.ca](http://vmss.ca)



Yahoo! Newsgroup : VIRCB  
Vancouver Island Radio Control Boaters

## Battle of the Atlantic Salute



Columbia makes an appearance



HMS Exeter going down, Photo by Bill Sturrock



Photo by Cathy Munford



Photo by Bill Sturrock



**Bravo Zulu** to all who participated, those who helped set-up & tear down and to Bill, Bev & Mike for serving refreshments



Photo by Bill Sturrock



## Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society

General Meeting – April 12, 2012

Call to order: 7:45 pm

1. Welcome: Guest **Evan Neeves** introduced himself.
2. Outreach: A condolence card was sent to past member **Ron Wild**.
3. Club Finances: **Mike Creasy** reported that we have had income of \$4,814.00 for the year and expenses of \$4,344.00 for a net income of \$469.00.
4. Upcoming Events:
  - The Battle of the Atlantic will be held on May 6<sup>th</sup>. **Ron Armstrong** made a request to the membership for a volunteer to run the event. Ron reiterated that it is not a challenging task and that he has arranged for media coverage so the club should put its best foot forward.
  - The Victoria Day Parade will be happening on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Ron Armstrong reported that the committee had met again and he is arranging for larger boats to be on the display.
  - The Maritime Pacific change of command will be happening at 6:00 pm on May 31<sup>st</sup> at Government House. The club has been asked to provide navy ships for the event.
  - We have received a letter from the church confirming that the congregation will be disbanding on July 31<sup>st</sup> and the club will need to find a new home. Any member who is aware of an opportunity, please let **Barry Fox** know.
5. Business from the Floor:
  - **Dan Baker** brought photos of a ferry model that he is looking to sell.
  - **Rob Ross** gave an update with respect to the jetties at the boat pond. Rob indicated that for a budget of roughly \$100.00 to \$120.00 the jetties can be refurbished. There was discussion from the floor with respect to shortening them at the same time. **Barry Fox** motioned for acceptance of the expenditure, seconded by **Dave Denton**. Motion carried.

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## 2012 Executive Committee

<b>President: Barry Fox</b>	<b>294-0350</b>
<b>Vice-Pres: Ron Armstrong</b>	<b>385-9552</b>
<b>Secretary: Graham Smith</b>	<b>477-8234</b>
<b>Treasurer: Mike Creasy</b>	<b>888-4860</b>
<b>Show Coordinator: B.Andrews</b>	<b>479-2761</b>
<b>Binnacle Editor: Scott Munford</b>	<b>382-1673</b>
<b>Quartermaster: Bob Rainsford</b>	<b>383-2256</b>
<b>CRD Liaison: Barry Fox</b>	<b>598-4619</b>
<b>Parks Liaison: Mike Claxton</b>	<b>479-6367</b>
<b>Sailing Director: Fred Herfst</b>	<b>652-8445</b>
<b>Librarian: Dave Denton (Plans)</b>	<b>478-1800</b>
<b>Librarian: Don Meyer (Books)</b>	<b>381-3356</b>
<b>Publicity: Ron Armstrong</b>	<b>385-9552</b>
<b>Director@Large: Jim Briante</b>	<b>590-5708</b>

All above (250) area code



Your Executive meets the last Thursday of every month!

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

Mailing address:  
**106-4480 West Saanich Road**  
**Box 55**  
**Victoria, BC V8Z 3E9**

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- **Bob Rainsford** updated the group that he was refurbishing the dock and repainting the buoys at the boat pond. **Barry Fox** indicated that he had pool noodles that could be used for the purpose if needed.
  - **Glen Newmeyer** offered the group a new date for a meet at Puffin's Pond. The date is April 21<sup>st</sup> and if you are interested in attending please e-mail Glen and Sue at [glene@shaw.c](mailto:glene@shaw.c).
  - **Dave Denton** updated the group on the availability of name badges and described the method of securing the model boats to the trailer for the Victoria Day Parade.
6. Adjourn and Break: The 50/50 totalled \$24.00 and was won by **David Marryatt**. **Dave Denton** won a book.
7. Show and Tell:

- **Dan Baker** gave a demonstration on 12V lighting that he uses in motorhomes that could work for model ships. The lighting brand is Genvey and is available from Quaile Electronics
- **Scott Munford** showed the group a video displaying how the Titanic split and sunk and then presented a computer game called "Ship Simulator".
- **Bob Rainsford** showed the group his jig for constructing railings as well as his battery load tester.
- **Dave Denton** showed the group his technique for shaft alignment and motor mounting
- **Barry Fox** gave a presentation on how to solder new connectors on a battery.

Respectfully Submitted  
**Graham Smith**, Secretary



## **Contributions to the Binnacle are welcomed.**

**Deadline for submissions: Sunday before the monthly meeting.**

**Editor: [newsletter@vmss.ca](mailto:newsletter@vmss.ca)**

### **VMSS MODEL BOAT PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST**

**OPEN TO MEMBERS OF ANY MODEL BOAT CLUB**

**Just a few Rules:**

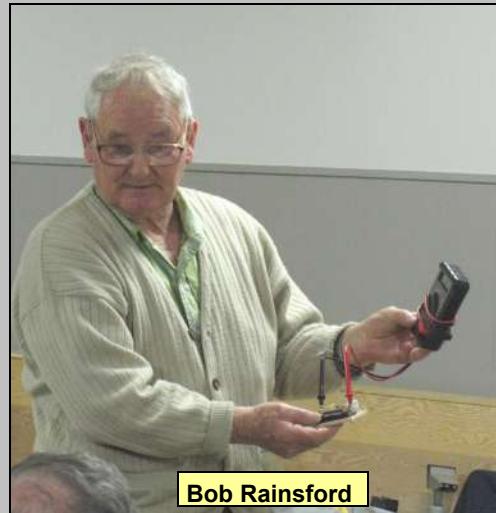
1. Maximum of 3 entries per amateur-photographer/member: **DIGITAL (jpg) only!**
2. Send by email attachment to: [newsletter@vmss.ca](mailto:newsletter@vmss.ca) subject line: "PhotoContest Entry" (important!)
3. Model ships and related topics only, please. **Limit of 3 (three) entries** per person.
4. **Deadline November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012.**
5. Judges decision final; prizes to be announced at a later date in **The Binnacle**.

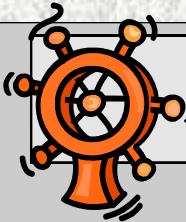
**NOTE:** It is intended that the top 12 BEST entries will be used in our VMSS Calendar for 2013. **Questions:** email to: [newsletter@vmss.ca](mailto:newsletter@vmss.ca)

**GOOD BOATING AND SHOOTING!!**



## Meeting Moments





## The Prez Says...

### Prez Says

A little more positive start this month.

Fresh off of a full day of model boating for me. That started out with a nice turn out of boats for our Battle of the Atlantic ceremony that was accompanied by a just fine day and a pretty nice turnout of spectators to take it all in. Well done to new organizer **Jim Cox** for a job well done and to **Dave Denton** for providing some back up and advice.

One of the things that is most obvious, beyond the nice clean water, was the new breakwater/dock set-up. This is the result of some good hard work from **Robb Ross** and **Bill Andrews** with a great result that should last us for another few years. And the ever present hotdog tent so that we could all enjoy a good snack pond side. **Mike Creasy** as the master chef and ably assisted by **Bev Andrews**. With Bill lurking in the background!! Well done all around.

Why did we have a good audience to watch us? Because **Ron Armstrong** does a very thorough job of keeping our name in front of the media, who in turn include our activities in their community news sections and the proof is that people read and see those notices and come out to see us and our terrific boats.

Then I sped across town to Beaver Lake to have a sail this afternoon. A good number of our regular sailors are either off sailing in a Seattle regatta this weekend or on vacation. We still had 7 boats sailing (it could have been 8 if I hadn't mistakenly left my radio on when I left the lake last weekend and only discovered that upon arrival at the lake) and a lot of good racing in some really very nice winds. Weed reared its ugly head a couple of times but mostly we had many real good races on a terrific day to be outside at a lake. Wonderful.

As you heard last month at the April general meeting, we are losing our meeting place by July. That church is shutting down and so we have to find a new home, again. There are some possibili-



## ON THE RADAR

INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS

### May 21st: Victoria Day Parade



**Meetings: Second Thursday 7:30-9:30  
4050 Carey Road  
Next is: June 14th, 2012**



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



**SAILING: 1st and 3rd Sundays 1 – 3 PM  
Beaver Lake  
Next is May 20th, 2012**



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

ties being looked at but we don't want to jump at the first offering and miss out on something that may be better. If you know of a facility that rents hall space please tell someone on the Exec about it and if can arrange a meeting with the appropriate individuals then that would be great.

One thing we have found at the few places we have already looked at is that they have no space for any storage. For us that means no place to keep our Library. That means we have to figure out what to do with it all. That is a topic for discussion at this month's meeting so come prepared to get involved. It is very conceivable that our option may be to get rid of the Library. It is as simple as it is currently quite under utilized and if there is no place to keep it then the case against dispersing the material and cabinets becomes pretty compelling. Think about it and help us make a good decision at the meeting.

So, the good weather is upon us so let's get out and sail.

-Barry





## THE SUB SUBJECT

I APPRECIATE HOW MUCH ALL OF YOU AND UNTOLD OTHERS have anxiously awaited an update on how it's going with the RCN's four Victoria-class (nee Upholder) subs. Briefly: three are up on blocks, while Windsor makes or made prudent (unescorted) patrols out of Halifax, NS.

For an overview of how the other three are making out in our West Coast dry-docks and waters, I chose this route:

- A. Selected nine newspaper clippings, spanning February 2 to December 21, 2011.
- B. Caught a brief CTV reporter's scrum in Ottawa (ca. late in October '11) in which the Minister of Defence, the Hon. Peter MacKay, gave the reporters some hasty answers to nasty questions.
- C. Tuned in on CBC Radio 1 and TV newscasts that aired on February 24, March 15 and March 16 of this year.

I'll Try hard to unscramble what I've read, heard and saw, using these clippings as a shaky framework.

### February 2, 2011

"Slipping back into the deep" reads the headline. Cmdr. Christopher Ellis is quoted thus: the light is on at the end of the [five]-year tunnel." He had joined Victoria in 2004 and took command in 2009.

### April 20, 2011

Headline: "HMCS Victoria returns to the sea." Cmdr. Ellis talked about many tests still to be made. The goal was to have her fully operational and weapons capable (i.e. firing MK-48 torpedoes) by the end of December. In the meantime, it's not known if 'weapons ready' applies to her sister boats.

### May 27, 2011

Victoria's Mayor, His Worship Dean Fortin

(a brave and optimistic man) and others toured Victoria in Esquimalt Harbour. The article mentions repairs and upgrades running to \$195 mil, and the purchase for all four at \$891 mil. Victoria would now be capable of firing the USN's MK-48 torps. The Mayor suggested mooring her in the InnerHarbour for a spell, and open house for the public. If His Worship sprang for a cold buffet and the right refreshments, some public interest may well result. Who knows?

### June 8, 2011

"Esquimalt sub limps back home." This time the overly active fickle finger of fate had it in for HMCS Corner Brook. Earlier, she'd been brought in from the East Coast for crew training. Then, out in Nookta Sound, she hit a rock wall. Photographs show that the S.O.N.A.R. bow took a wallop. Insulation hanging out. Not pretty, but considered as "cosmetic" damage. No water got in; no fuel got out. That incident then put all four subs out of commission, 'cause Windsor was back in for repairs and more maintenance in Halifax. Victoria is still in harbour for more tests, while the fire-damaged Chicoutimi and Corner Brook are out of commission – safely on dry land in Esquimalt. But not to worry, VERY SOON two boats with well trained crews and up-to-date charts will be back on the job.

### August 10, 2011

"‘Shave, haircut’ transform sub" it reads. Cmdr Christopher Ellis had hoped to take Victoria down into the Strait till about, perhaps maybe late in December. The crews are honing their patience skills.

### September 16, 2011

"Sub fire won't push back planned dive." Cmdr. Ellis is taking her (Victoria) down as intended, so to speak. On September 6<sup>th</sup>, grey smoke had come out of her communications mast – this during a routine radiation hazard test. Six crew got off fast, and a technical investigation will soon be launched. A team is to be selected to assess both the extent of the

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damage and its cause. My, my. But the Cmdr. And Capt. Donald Smith – the commanding officer of Fleet Maintenance at HMC Dockyards – seemed disinclined to lose much sleep.

### September 21, 2011

Vice-Admiral Cmdr, RCN, Paul Maddison, fired off a letter in which he has it that “Submarines are essential to Canada’s defence and security.” He lists a number of compelling reasons. The V-A claims that Victoria will be operational next year, i.e. 2012. He then goes on about (past) missions and accomplishments, but doesn’t mention the Oberon’s and earlier boats involved. The new/used batch had 80 percent of hull life left at the time of purchase, and cost only one-quarter of a new build. The V-A also notes that a number of challenges were underestimated. Meanwhile, the Victoria “will provide a solid return on investment well into the 2020’s.” So there: all good.

With hull life at ±30 years in active service, the RN ran the Upholders for only six out of 14 years.

### October 29, 2011

“Government denies plan to torpedo sub fleet.” The Hon. Peter Van Loan, Federal House Leader, contradicts what the Minister of Defence, the Hon. Peter MacKay, had tossed off in remarks to CTV reporters Ca. October 27, the Minister, unprepared and on his way up a flight of stairs, said that Canada is into the four used subs for somewhere near 2 billion. It would take nukes to operate in deep water under thick ice. That, apparently, shook up the RCN’s top brass. They are pitching for new diesel-electrics, starting as early as 2024. (This from documents obtained by The Ottawa Citizen.) At the end of the clipping, it says that the House Leader acknowledged that there have been problems with the Victoria-class submarines and that “a great deal of money has been sunk into them.” No kidding?

### December 14, 2011

“Submarine closes in on operational status.” Below that hallelujah-provoking headline, it

reads: “HMCS Victoria conduction surface training, testing at sea.” Sea King evacuation was to be practised. The boat was to be demagnetized at the USN base in Bangor, WA, and then off to Nanoose Bay, BC, for torpedo tests. RCN Cptn. Luc Cassivi: they also had to learn to maintain the boat. “We’re not the ones who built her so it takes a little bit more time.” Question: What, in Navy speak, could ‘a little bit more time’ mean?

### December 21, 2011

“Submarine commander stripped of command after underwater crash.” Then, in somewhat smaller print: “Inquiry also blames inadequate submarine training and experience.” Meanwhile, Corner Brook is entering a repair period of uncertain duration. In the meantime, that boat is not likely to dive again till 2016; Victoria will have a go this year (2012) while work on Windsor and Chicoutimi will “wrap up” in 2013. Oh yeah?

All in all, with regard to Corner Brook, the Board of Inquiry came up with 19 recommendations. A lack of crew training was mentioned, and manuals that had not been updated. In Cmdr. Sutherland’s defence it came out that the charts for Nootka Sound did not quite show the location of the rock wall that did in Corner Brook. Still it appears that Cmdr. Sutherland has a lot more to offer to the submarine program, but “will likely never command another submarine.” It isn’t mentioned if he was asked or invited. As such, his possible reply must remain a point of pure speculation.

### Late breaking “news”.

On March 15, 2012, British Member of Parliament, the Hon. Michael Hancock, a former member of his government’s Defence Committee, said on the CBC’s radio and TV that “Canada got ripped off. Some price adjustment or refund, in his view, would be appropriate.” He, too, mentioned that, while under British flag, the Upholders had been lemons, and

brought up the incident of welding shut a torpedo door after one fish had been fired.

On March 16, there was better news. After a decade or so of work, Victoria launched its first torpedo in Nootka Sound. On TV, Cmdr.

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Ellis and his officers smiled as if they'd won a lottery prize big enough to buy a brand new boat. Bully for them.

### **Conclusion** (An “interim” one)

Maybe, just perhaps, in a not too distant year, one retired admiral or another, or an author specializing in naval history, may get a memoir or text published about the whole Upholder/Victoria episode in the RCN’s annals. One wonders, though, if any one individual – regardless of insider knowledge, research and assistance – will ever “get to the bottom” of the chain of events. Too Much of the motivations of the RCN are intertwined with politics and saving – who, publicly and willingly ever admits errors? Did the previous Federal Government buy four pigs in a poke? Was it known that replacement parts would have to be manufactured in the absence of special tools, moulds, working plans, etc.? Was it known that the RN called it quits after firing one torp out of an Upholder and then weld the door shut? Was it known that the Brits had used a thread other than metric or SAE? There’s no end to what could be asked and stay unanswered.

On the “plus” side: lots of personnel was and is employed at decent wages – wages that attract income tax.

So far, no one has suggested publicly that if Defence’s order of F-35 were to be given “a shave and a haircut” there could be something left to cut some mutual-benefit deal with perhaps a reputable, experienced Swedish or German builder. They can do better than ferries.

For June and July, expect something about the operation of an antique, and the Russian high-speed torpedo.

### **Romanus Unicum**



### Website Links

The guys might find these of interest – on making shafts.

Towboat Joe’s page may one day go as he passed away a few months ago but has a ton of info on there:

<http://towboatjoe.tripod.com/shafts.htm>

This other is copied from the RC Groups site – for those wondering about lubricating the shafts:

<http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?t=522762&page=622>

Some members might find this of interest – in early August

<http://www.richmond.ca/culture/sites/britannia/events.htm>

There is a link to last year’s event as well.

**Mike Claxton**





photos by Bill Andrews



## Battle of the Atlantic, Sunday, May 6

Well that was, as the old song said, "A Mighty Day". Golden sunshine, a dozen(?) Parade skippers, and a crowd of over 50 watching the Pond action and moving amongst the models on the tables, fascinated and asking questions. I believe we got some potential members as a result.

**Jim** gave a great speech in a voice that resonated from south shore to north. For the first time he ordered caps off for the minute's silence and you could've heard a pin drop. I'm afraid I can't accurately report how the Parade went because I was desperately trying to get my HMCS Columbia going(upon reflection this was genuine replication because the old four stackers spent as much time in refit with breakdowns as they did at sea!).

**Bill** and **Mike** did their usual sterling job in the hot dog galley, and at least the bottom of the donation tub was covered (and not with pennies).

The whole set up and take down gang are now a whizz of efficiency. **Bob Rainsford** worked like a trojan, loading his truck single handed and dismantling the launching crane. I don't know where he gets his energy.

As for Columbia she needs a) a much shorter steering rod than the present 3.5 feet(!) b) loosening the starboard shaft and c) fixing for good the Last Leak. As it was she attracted a lot of attention, especially from little boys who were keen to see her running.....so was I! At 6 feet she was definitely the longest model there.

**Ron Armstrong**



## Shelbourne Shipyard

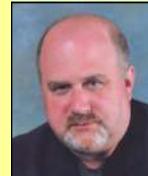
Just a quick article this month as I am being called before a Board of Inquiry regarding the sinking of the HMS Exeter (as seen on the front page). As pointed out by the Shipyard owner, she only hit things with it; I sent it to Davy Jones Locker. My only hope is to put it back in the water and prove that a flaw was present in its design and aided to its demise and not the piloting abilities of her Captain at the time. The only loss was my mini DVR that I had attached to record the festivities from ship level. After drying out, it still would not work properly and my computer could not read it and told me it was malfunctioning. Purchased another one off of eBay, made sure this one was waterproof though.

At least my sub worked great. I had several people ask me about submarines in the club. Which makes me wonder why, for a Naval Event like the Battle, are there not more submarines present? I know there are at least half a dozen or so and the crowd does enjoy seeing them.

This coming week-end, weather permitting, I hope to take the Happy Hunter down to Harrison. With just detail work left to complete, she can go in the water anytime. I planned on waiting until the water was clean, or should I say cleaner than usual.

See everyone on the water or under it sometimes, planned or accidentally.

**Scott Munford**  
Yard Master





# Your Article could be here !!!

I hope the preceding headline caught your attention. Every month, the usual correspondents submit their articles and photos, and I thank them for that. There is such a large untapped group out there that should be heard as well.

I am not asking for everyone to do a monthly column, but with the number of members in our club, the average would be one article every 2 years. I don't think that's too much to ask. It can be anything you would like to write about, what ever project your working on or something completely off the wall. The only guideline is that it be boat related. This is **YOUR** newsletter. Its success is linked to the support it gets.

Looking forward to being inundated with articles for next month.

**Your Editor**



## More Battle of the Atlantic Salute

